

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

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Bulletin

Bath Postal Museum • List of
definitives • Seaside stamps



Sea Life: a new issue of ten stamps captures the wealth of species to be found living in British coastal waters. On sale from 1 February.

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover A grey seal, one of the 10 species featured in the new Sea Life stamps. Background photograph © Jean-Louis le Moigne/NHPA.

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3 January	Issue Beatles stamp cards (11 cards: 10 stamps and miniature sheet).
9 January	Issue Beatles stamps, miniature sheet, and presentation pack.
9 January	Withdrawal Animal Tales stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and generic sheet.
16 January	Issue Stamp book: 5 × 1st definitive & 1 × 1st 'Love' ● Unification of England & Scotland coin cover.
25 January	Issue Sea Life stamp cards.
1 February	Issue Sea Life stamps and presentation pack ● Stamp book: 6 × 1st definitive with postcode advertisement on cover.
6 February	Issue Sky at Night stamp cards.
13 February	Issue Sky at Night stamps and presentation pack.
22 February	Withdrawal Brunel stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards and prestige book (coin cover to be withdrawn 22 March).
28 February	Withdrawal Welsh Assembly miniature sheet.

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The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.20 single copies from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin**, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group plc, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any article should be addressed to the Editor, **British Philatelic Bulletin**, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Beacon Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group plc. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203 registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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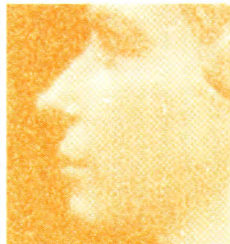


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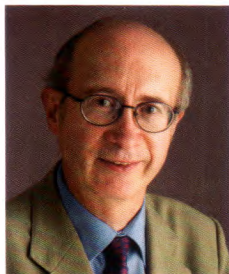
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This month The Editor looks back on the year past, and forward to future events



John Holman, Editor

FIRSTLY, I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and I wish you well for 2007. 2006 was a rather mixed year for philately in the UK. In January Royal Mail lost its age-old letter monopoly with the introduction of competition – part a Europe-wide scheme for postal liberalisation to be completed by 2009. This is perhaps the biggest change in the UK post since the reforms of the 1840s, and one which many collectors are finding rather interesting. In August a new system of charges was introduced (Pricing in Proportion), of considerable interest to modern-day postal historians and with some ramifications for philatelists as well.

Early in 2006 the plans were announced for the Festival of Stamps in London in 2010, involving on-going displays at venues in the capital as well as a traditional exhibition at the Business Design Centre. The proposals have so far met with a rather mixed response. We look forward to announcement of more details of the proposed attractions this year.

Throughout 2006, staff at the British Postal Museum & Archive have been busy with talks, events and a worthwhile Newsletter. A display for The Queen's 80th birthday was mounted, to be followed this Spring by a display on the 40th anniversary of the Machin. As reported in the August *Bulletin*, the Friends of the BPMA celebrated their 21st anniversary in style.

2006 saw major international exhibitions in Washington and Brussels, and at home there were the usual Stampex, Philatex and Thematica shows in London, the national exhibition in Torquay, and north of the border the Scottish Congress and Scotex. All have a regular following.

Notable anniversaries during the year included the 150th of Stanley Gibbons, centenary of the Brighton & Hove and Caledonian societies, and of the Royal Philatelic Society acquiring Royal status, and the 75th anniversary of the Bath society. Two societies merged to form the new Modern British Philatelic Circle for collectors of Elizabeth II stamps.

Amongst losses of the year was the winding-up of the Philatelic Music Circle, and the passing of a number of noted collectors and promoters of the hobby – Ken Chapman, Anne Dummer and Harold S Wilson.

Some of our stamp issues attracted considerable press attention, notably the VC and Christmas issues, and the forthcoming Beatles set. Some stamps have been the subjects of questions on TV quiz shows during the year.

Looking ahead to 2007, the key event for many collectors of modern GB stamps will be the 40th anniversary of the Machin definitive. The BPMA will publish a book, and there will be an exhibition showing the development of the design. Royal Mail will issue a miniature sheet and a number of other interesting products. Exhibitions and shows will include Midpex (June) and Eurothema as part of Thematica II (November) and the ABPS will host the national competitions, with the Philatelic Congress, at the Fairfield Halls in Croydon, 23-24 November. We look forward to reporting on these in the *Bulletin*. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Stamp scene News and upcoming events:

Glenn Morgan keeps you posted

BPMA lecture The Post Office has helped shape London, just as London has shaped the Post Office. On 7 November a large audience joined communications historian Neil Johannesburg on an illustrated journey from Telephone Place to Post Office Way (via Telegraph Street and Poets' Corner) during which he discussed some of the many links between the growth of the modern Post Office and our world-city capital.

Until quite recently I had worked in the marketing department of HSBC, which in 1992 had taken over Midland Bank. Every effort was made to remove the old Midland brand from the high street, but there are still tell-tale signs of the old company visible today to those who know what to look for. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that remnants of the GPO are still visible in our environment today, albeit that the brand was officially eliminated on 1 October 1969, when the government department became a public corporation.

When next in London, look on the ground, at eye-level and high up on buildings to see telegraph poles, telephone manhole covers, street name plates with district codes (E17, EC1 etc), a posting suite at Euston station, a power station on Bankside, and several other examples of the GPO's old identity. Yes, they are getting fewer and fewer as the years roll on, but I for one will enjoy the chance to add a new dimension to my regular city walks and will be sure to take my camera.

Although the talk was restricted to London, the GPO was nationwide, of course, and so wherever you live in the British Isles there is the chance to play along. This was a fascinating evening, made all the more interesting by Neil's obvious love and strong understanding of his subject •



Glenn Morgan

BPMA British Postal Museum and Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. www.postalheritage.org.uk

Swale Philatelic Society Formed as the Sittingbourne Philatelic Society 70 years ago in 1936, the Society took on its present title in 1974, to encompass the towns of Faversham and Sheerness. A Postcard Section was added in 1991, which apart from two joint meetings and AGM, has its own separate events. To mark the anniversary, the Society mounted a display in Sittingbourne Library (1-17 November), held a commemorative lunch on 16 November, and issued a souvenir card reproducing on one side old postmarks of Sittingbourne, Faversham, and Sheerness, and on the other side a representation of a mail coach and wording 'Swale Philatelic Society 70th Anniversary 1936-2006'. The card is supplied in an envelope also showing a mail coach and a reproduction of the Sittingbourne 713 numeral postmark. The cards cost 25p each (plus a stamped addressed envelope), and can be ordered from R M Browne, from the address at right. The Society, which has about 40 members, meets at 19.30 at the Phoenix Hall, Central Avenue, Sittingbourne. The next meeting, on 11 January comprises a joint stamp and postcard evening with a display of postcards and stamps by Frank and Pat Parsons of Bexley Philatelic Society •

Swale Philatelic Society For souvenir cards or details of membership, write to Mr R M Browne, 13 Stanhope Avenue, Sittingbourne ME10 4TT.

Newspaper reading rooms

Telephone 020 7412 7353,
e-mail newspaper@bl.uk or
write to British Library News-
papers, Colindale Avenue,
London NW9 5HE.

Save the front page The British Library's national newspaper collection is considered the finest in the world, comprising some 52,000 titles, with 13,000 newspapers added each month. This 'first draft of history' is used by 30,000 people every year, and the BL is acting to improve access and to preserve it for future generations. A newspaper service is planned at St Pancras, along with online access and improved storage facilities, all of which will guarantee availability for the future. Philatelists should not ignore this treasure trove of information when producing philatelic literature •



Royal visit To mark the state visit of The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh, the Estonian PO issued a special card showing the Royal Couple. A special Royal Visit cancel was used on 19 October at Tallinn, the capital. We are obliged to one of our readers in Estonia, Leho Joumees, for sending an example of this interesting card. For details of Estonian issues write to Estonian Post Ltd, Pallasti 28, 10001 Tallinn, Estonia or e-mail info@post.ee •

Basildon PS For more details contact the Secretary, Alan Taylor, 5 Easton End, Laindon SS15 6QB. Telephone 07899 822881. Anyone interested in joining is welcome to attend a meeting without obligation.

Basildon exhibition The Basildon Philatelic Society's Spring BasPex, a stamp fair and exhibition, will be held at the Barstable School, Timberlog Close, Basildon on 10 March. It will be open 10.00-16.00, admission free. Over 12 dealers will attend and there will be an exhibition of work by members of the Society who will be on hand to answer questions from anyone wishing to join. The Society, founded in 1968, holds regular meetings throughout the year at the George Hurd Centre, Fauners, Basildon •

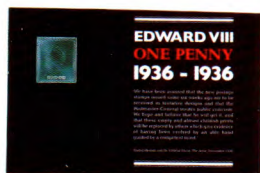
Canadian stamp poll Royal Mail is not alone in running a stamp poll each year, as the Canadian Stamp News held its 16th poll, which saw over 2000 collectors give their views on what they liked and disliked about the 2005 stamp programme. The three favourite stamps were the Homer Watson ms (with 12.8% of the total vote), Daffodils and Biosphere Reserves. Least liked – or 'what's out?', as they put it – were the TD Bank Financial Group (with 20.7% of the vote), MacLean's and Youth Sports issues. The conclusion was that Canadians 'can get pretty passionate about their stamps' •

GB Philatelic Society See www.gbbs.org.uk for details of the Society. The annual subscription is £25 UK, £27 Europe and £33 airmail elsewhere (£27 seamail).

Journals The November/December issue of *The GB Journal* (GB Philatelic Society) includes features on King George VI 'Emergency Stamps' (Alan Huggins), HMS *Atalanta* and the 'Bermuda Triangle' (John Forbes-Nixon), and Seahorse Discoveries (Bryan Kearsley). The accompanying GBPS *Newsletter* has reports of Society displays, and articles on the 1d Black, George VI Coronation issue, the 1966 GBPS exhibition and the new edition of *Collecting British Squared Circle Postmarks*. There are also members' letters and details of the Society's next Philatelic Weekend in Gateshead, in May •

ATA PO Box 57, Arlington TX 76004-0057, USA or visit www.american-topical-assn.org

The November-December *Topical Time* (American Topical Association) includes articles on Life in the Neolithic Age, Bremen Town Musicians, Russian Gzhel Porcelain, History of Moldboard Plows, War of the Pacific, and Philatelic Tornadoes and Waterspouts. There are many other interesting features and a review of recent literature on thematic collecting •



Stamp ingots The series of ingots featuring stamps from the reigns of Victoria, Edward VII and George V proved popular with collectors, and we are continuing the series with six new ingots reproducing stamps from the reigns of Edward VIII and George VI. The first of these, which features the Edward VIII 1d stamp, is now available, price £27.95. The next in the series, featuring the George VI 1d definitive, will be available from 20 February. The handling charge on all ingots is £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 Rest of World. All orders and enquiries to Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK order line 08457 641 641 (overseas +44 131 316 7483) •

The insert for the Edward VIII stamp ingot, which is now available. Ingots are priced £27.95 plus handling charge.

Forthcoming special issues The 2007 programme starts on 9 January with The Beatles issue, comprising six stamps and a further four 1st class in a miniature sheet. The stamps were previewed here in October. There will be two issues in February – 10 stamps showing Sea Life (1 February), and six stamps commemorating the 50th anniversary of Sir Patrick Moore's famous TV programme *The Sky at Night* (13 February). Both issues were previewed here in November. The World of Invention and Abolition of the Slave Trade stamps were previewed last month.

The 2007 special issues are listed below, with the alternative First Day of Issue postmarks. The date for the issue of the Wembley Stadium miniature sheet is still to be decided, depending on the date of completion of the new stadium •

09.01 The Beatles: Liverpool

01.02 Sea Life: Seal Sands, Middlesbrough

13.02 The Sky at Night: Star, Glenrothes

01.03 World of Invention: Menai Bridge, Gwynedd

22.03 Abolition of the Slave Trade: Hull

23.04 Celebrating England MS: St Georges, Telford

15.05 Beside the Seaside: Blackpool

05.06 40th Anniversary of Machin MS: to be announced

03.07 Grand Prix: Silverstone, Towcester

26.07 Scouts: Brownsea Island, Poole

04.09 Endangered Species – Birds: Dartford

20.09 British Army Uniforms: Boot, Holmrook, Cumbria

16.10 Queen's 60th wedding anniversary: to be announced

06.11 Christmas: Bethlehem, Llandeilo

08.11 Lest We Forget MS: London SW1

New stamp books A book of six 1st class stamps – five definitives and a 'Love' stamp (as the 2005 Smilers pictorial definitive) will go on sale on 16 January. This is followed on 1 February by a book of six 1st class definitives with a postcode advert on the inside front cover. Both books are printed by Walsall •





Welsh generic sheet labels

Menai Suspension Bridge
 Caerphilly Castle
 Worms Head, Rhossili
 Wales Millennium Centre
 Tintern Abbey
 Second Severn Crossing
 Merchant Seafarer's Memorial
 Cader Idris, Snowdonia
 Brecon Beacons Waterfall
 Caernarfon Castle

Welsh Generic & Smilers sheets A new generic sheet entitled 'Cymru Wych – Glorious Wales' will be issued on 1 March (St David's Day), containing 20 Wales 1st class country stamps and adjoining labels featuring scenes in the Principality. The stamp and labels will be printed in litho on self-adhesive paper, making this the first self-adhesive country stamp. The sheet was designed by Glenn Tutssel, with the Welsh flag photographed by Andy Seymour, and printed by Cartor. The 10 labels are used twice, captioned in English and Welsh. Price £6.95. Similar 'Glorious England', 'Glorious Scotland', 'Glorious Northern Ireland', and 'Glorious United Kingdom' sheets follow on 23 April 2007, 30 November 2007, 17 March 2008, and May 2008. The sheets will remain on sale until September 2009.

To order Smilers versions of the sheets, with your own image printed on the labels, phone 0845 074 2000 (UK customers) or +44 131 316 7489 (overseas) or pick up a Smilers leaflet/order form at a Post Office branch. Orders can also be placed over the web (at www.royalmail.com/smilers) using digital photos. Prices start at £14.95 for one sheet of 20, £13.95 each for 2-4 sheets, £11.95 each for 5-9 sheets. Enquire for prices of larger quantities ●

Coming off sale The Animal Tales stamps, presentation pack, generic sheet and stamp cards will be withdrawn on 9 January. Remember the generic sheet contains self-adhesive stamps, the only source of the stamps in this format. The Isambard Kingdom Brunel stamps, miniature sheet, pack, stamp cards and prestige book will be withdrawn on 22 February ●



The Sky at Night coin cover, available from 13 February. Price £14.50.

Coin & medal covers A coin cover will be available from 16 January to mark the 300th anniversary of the union of the English and Scottish Parliaments. The date is the anniversary of the ratification of union in Scotland, which came into effect on 1 May 1707. The cover bears Union Flag Smilers stamps (definitive size) cancelled by a special postmark, and has a commemorative £2 coin encapsulated. Price £15.50, available from Tallents House.

A 'Sky at Night' medal cover will be available from 13 February, price £14.50. This bears the six stamps cancelled by a special Greenwich postmark. The well-illustrated cover insert gives details of *The Sky at Night* programme and lists some of the key historic events since it started in 1957, principally the first landing on the Moon in 1969, and Halley's Comet passes Earth and is visible for the first time since 1910 (1986).

A coin cover for the Abolition of the Slave Trade issue (22 March) will bear a £2 coin, priced £15.50. Details of will be given next month. Other coin/medal covers in 2007 will include the Machin anniversary, Scouts and Queen's Diamond Wedding issues. The 2006 Brunel coin cover will be withdrawn from sale on 22 March; if you require this, order now from Tallents House, price £15.95 (order code AN042).

The last of the four country coin covers goes on sale on 23 April – this bears the England country stamps and £1 coin showing the Millennium Bridge, Gateshead, price £13.50. The three earlier covers (Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) are still available, price £13.50 each. The four covers will be available together as a boxed set, price £54 •

Collect British Stamps The 2007 (58th) edition of Stanley Gibbons' *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist is available from Royal Mail Tallents House as well as from Stanley Gibbons and stamp and book shops. Price £9.95, Tallents House handling charge £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 elsewhere •

Favourite stamp poll If you haven't voted yet for your favourite stamps and *Bulletin* author of 2006 there is still time to return the voting form sent out with the December *Bulletin*. All forms are entered in a prize draw. Return your form by 12 January to: 2006 Bulletin Poll, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ •

Treasures of the BPMA Martin Robinson's selection from

AS WELL AS STAMPS and stamp-related material, the British Postal Museum & Archive has a comprehensive collection of postal stationery, in other words envelopes, registration envelopes, lettercards and postcards, all of which are pre-stamped with the monarch's image. It is difficult to know where to begin to make a choice, but as the 'Elizabeth Queen & Icon' exhibition will still be on at Freeling House when this article is published, it might be appropriate to choose something which can be viewed therein.

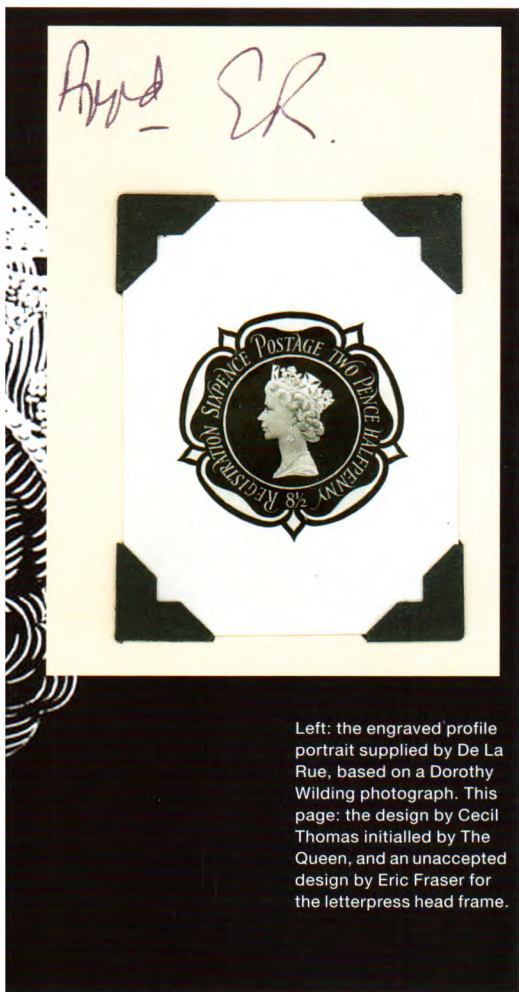
The three-quarter profile photographs of HM Queen Elizabeth II wearing a diadem, needed as a basis for the first postage stamps of the present reign, were taken by Dorothy Wilding in February and April 1952, but these were only suitable for the photogravure printing process, whereas the portraits on postal stationery were to be embossed (envelopes and registration envelopes) or surface-printed, otherwise known as letterpress, on postcards and lettercards. For those unfamiliar with lettercards, not produced in this country for 25 years, it was a postcard which could be folded and then sealed with the message inside, and the recipient opened it by tearing perforations along three sides.

As far as envelopes were concerned, a photograph of a new coinage design by Cecil Thomas was supplied by the Royal Mint, and this artist was commissioned to submit a design for an embossed stamp, with the head facing left, unlike on the coinage, which he did in May 1953 – on the understanding that he himself carried the work to completion, and that his design was not altered or added to by any other artist. One drawing with the profile set within a Tudor rose was shown to The Queen, who commented that there were 'too many roses' and suggested that the design should be simplified by removing the inner rose. Thomas accordingly submitted two revised proposals, one according to The Queen's suggestion, and another in which the inner rose was replaced with a thin white circle, and it was the latter that The Queen approved, initialling the bromide herself (shown on opposite page, left).



The printers McCorquodale were installing new machinery for printing airletter forms by photogravure, but it would not be possible to use this for postcards and lettercards, so the letterpress process would have to suffice. This necessitated an engraved profile portrait, which was supplied by Messrs De La Rue, using another of the photographs taken by Dorothy Wilding. Three artists – John Brinkley, Eric Fraser and John Farleigh – were invited to design frames and, after Brinkley and Farleigh had been asked to resubmit simpli-

the Museum's comprehensive collection of postal stationery



Left: the engraved profile portrait supplied by De La Rue, based on a Dorothy Wilding photograph. This page: the design by Cecil Thomas initialled by The Queen, and an unaccepted design by Eric Fraser for the letterpress head frame.



die and punch used for the embossed design. The Museum has two volumes containing all the artwork, proofs, modifications and colour trials of the issues, and files POST 122/1118, 1119 & 1120 have all the correspondence and minutes relating to the progress of the designs. These reveal all sorts of interesting details: Cecil Thomas was paid £498 15s 0d in January and July 1954 for his work, and next year complained that the portrait was not quite straight on samples of the issued envelopes. After investigation it was found that McCorquodale's folding machine was slightly worn, and the fault was corrected by fitting new parts. Samples of the new items were sent to The Queen, Princess Margaret, the Prime Minister and a number of foreign Ministers of Post •

fied designs, both these were proofed. Farleigh's was the one selected by the Council of Industrial Design's Stamp Advisory Committee and eventually approved by The Queen in July 1954. The die was engraved at the Royal Mint and a number of modifications were then made before the finished postcard was issued in April 1955, and the lettercard in the following month.

The 'Elizabeth Queen & Icon exhibition', now showing at the BPMA, illustrates much of what is referred to in this article, including the master

The British Postal Museum & Archive is open Monday to Friday and selected Saturdays 10.00 -17.00, Thursdays until 19.00. Call 020 7239 2570 or see www.postalheritage.org.uk for details. To make an appointment to view philatelic material call the Curator of Philately, Douglas Muir, on 020 7239 2565.

Bath Postal Museum The Editor reports on the Museum's

IN 1977, BATH RESIDENTS Audrey and Harold Swindells, passionately interested in their city's postal history, developed a plan to create a postal museum to celebrate two famous sons of Bath – Ralph Allen and John Palmer, both important personalities in national postal history. The first Bath Postal Museum opened at 51 Great Pulteney Street in April 1979, proved popular with visitors, and by 1984 required larger premises. By coincidence the lease of 8 Broad Street was available – the location of Bath's main post office from 1822 to 1854, and from where the first letter bearing a Penny Black was posted on 2 May 1840, four days ahead of the official date for the stamp's validity. The Museum moved there in 1985, the opening ceremony performed by the late Leslie Crowther (a collector and *Bulletin* subscriber) and the actor Richard Briers. Three years ago the Museum was told it would need to vacate Broad Street, which was to be redeveloped. Fortunately a new home has been found in the basement of the city's new main post office in nearby Northgate Street. Both the new post office and the Museum were opened officially on 7 November, day of issue of the 2006 Christmas stamps. Richard Briers was again present, and other distinguished guests included the Marquess of Bath and author Terry Pratchett of Discworld fame, who did the research for his book *Going Postal* at the Museum. Courtesy of Buckingham Covers, a mailcoach was provided for the occasion, which toured the nearby streets, much to the pleasure of bystanders who waved enthusiastically to Lord Bath and Mr Briers. Buckingham Covers also sponsored a special handstamp to mark the event.

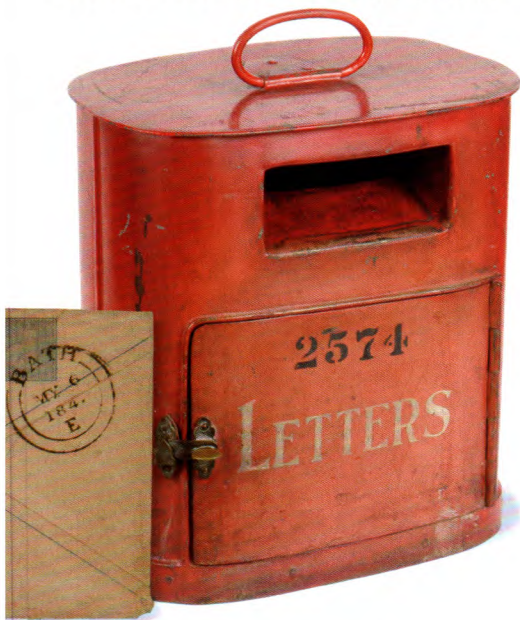
The first thing to say about the new Museum is that it is not very large but the variety and quality of the displays and a helpful and friendly staff more than make up for this. It is not a stuffy, academic type of place; one can learn about the postal service and its personalities and have fun at the same time. The displays are designed to appeal to philatelists as well as postal historians. Among the attractions are touch-screen displays including videos of actors playing characters such as



Ralph Allen, who introduced the By-Post system in the 18th century, and Thomas Moore Musgrave, the Postmaster of Bath in 1840, who used the first Penny Black, and, some say, also the first 2d Mulready envelope. He tells us that his salary was £450 pa, a princely sum in those days, sufficient to ensure him a quality of life, a servant and a good education for his children. His letter carriers earned just four shillings a week and his staff included a post office cat to catch the mice. A reproduction Victorian Post Office is fully equipped with desk, letter sorting frame, quill pen, ink pots, letter press, and truncheon, not forgetting the post cat asleep on a stool!

Another display tells the story of the carriage of mail to the American wild west, using pictures of Henry Wells (1805-78) and Will Fargo (1818-81), and of their Wells-Fargo 'Concord' coach. A number of original letters are displayed, and we are shown the Pony Express crossing the Sierra Nevada. The different means of transporting the

recent move to a new home beneath Bath's main post office



From the Bath Postal Museum's collection: Figgis perforating machine in action, top left, a 2d Mulready sent from Bath on 6 May 1840, and a tramcar letterbox.

mail is a major theme of the Museum, and there is a good model of a TPO train and the famous letter exchange apparatus. A display shows mail routes around the world, accompanied by stamps and examples of letters carried.

The city's postal history is another important theme. On show are early letters mailed between 1717 and 1841 including a 1d Mulready sent from Bath PO (Broad Street) on the Sunday after issue.

There are many artefacts, as well as philatelic items and illustrations; these include model vans and postboxes as well as a number of actual wall and lamp boxes, also a box carried on a tramcar in the 1890s. Other items include stamp vending machines (4 × 25p stamps for £1, and for 2 shilling book containing 1d, 3d, and 4d stamps), seal matrixes, and a Victorian book of instructions for rural postmen. Amongst the most fascinating display is that relating to stamp perforation with some vintage perforating equipment and a video showing perforation of sheets of the 1968 Queen

Elizabeth 1 painting stamp. Visitors can test the perforating machine by using sheets of Museum 'stamps'. Another worthwhile activity is using an old PO telephone to 'Dial a Memory' of the postal service in the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s or 1970s. This attraction will bring nostalgic pleasure to older visitors or former PO employees.

The 'Collectors Corner' display tells us about famous collectors – the popstar Freddie Mercury, President Roosevelt, the actor Kenneth Griffiths (died 2006) who collected Boer War mail, the late Marquess of Bath who formed a thematic collection of Churchill stamps, and perhaps the most famous collector of all, George V, the Philatelist-King. Less convincing is the inclusion of tennis star Maria Sharapova, who announced last year that she was a keen collector, only to retract this shortly after, saying that she did not want to be regarded as 'a geek'.

The Museum, which attracts about 10,000 visitors a year, is open Monday to Saturday 11.00–17.00 (closes 16.30 during winter months), and admission is a modest £3.50 for adults, £3 concessions, and £1.50 for children. There is a well-stocked shop selling postcards, models and other souvenirs. The Museum publishes a leaflet showing some of its attractions and a location map, and a short 'Museum Guide' which includes a plan and brief description of the displays. Both are available by sending a stamped addressed envelope. There is also an excellent 52-page 'Guide Book' describing and illustrating exhibits, which also offers a useful introduction to British postal history. This costs £3 and can be supplied by post – add £2 to cover postage and packing. As well as the displays the Museum also has a library and archives for those who wish to undertake studies. Researchers are welcome by appointment, and there is a modest research fee to cover staff costs. For further information contact The Administrator, Bath Postal Museum, 27 Northgate Street, Bath BA1 1AJ, telephone 01225 460333 or see the Museum website www.bathpostalmuseum.org

I much enjoyed my first visit to the Museum, and hope it won't be too long before my next ●

Beside the Seaside A holiday in six stamps



The stamps were designed by Phelan Barker of London with photography by Martin Parr (1st), Rolph Gobits (46p), Ian Britton (48p), Vivien Borrie (54p), Pete Williams (69p) and Steve Benbow (78p).

Please note Stamp values and prices quoted here are subject to confirmation.

SIX STAMPS featuring scenes from traditional British seaside holidays go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 15 May. The stamps feature: a '99' ice-cream cone (1st class), sand castle (46p), fairground merry-go-round ride (48p), beach huts (54p), deckchairs (69p) and donkey rides (78p). The stamps will be issued to Post Office branches in sheets of 25. However sheets of 50 with gutter margins will be available from Post Office philatelic outlets and from Royal Mail Tallents House.

Technical details

Printer De La Rue Security Print

Process Gravure

Stamp size 35mm square

Sheets 25 and 50

Perforation 14.5

Phosphor Two bands

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 15 May, price 30p. The cover features, on both front and back, seaside scenes – a sandcastle, donkey rides and sitting in deckchairs and playing on the beach; it was designed by Iris Associates of Sheffield. Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or to their nearest Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centre (Blackpool postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FD0723' or 'FD0724'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Blackpool postmark. The postmarks feature a Ferris wheel and Blackpool Tower.

For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a free sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

Philatelic products A well-illustrated pack has been written by Simon Calder, the Travel Editor of *The Independent*. He reminds us that despite the current penchant for overseas travel, our memories of a traditional seaside holiday recall some of the most powerful, formative days of our lives. The pack is enlivened with family holiday photos from 1916 (Blackpool) to Cleethorpes (2006). The pack was designed by Iris Associates and printed by Walsall Security Printers •

Beside the Seaside prices

Set of stamps	£3.04
Presentation pack	£3.80
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC (UK customers)	£4.34
Serviced FDC (overseas customers)	£3.70
Stamp cards set	£1.80



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Royal Mail Talents House (2) South Quay Crescent Edinburgh EH1 1NF



Beside the Seaside

Royal Mail First Day Cover

Celebrating the original family holiday



As a 21st-century nation, we take for granted travel to distant horizons. Pay a return visit to your former British seaside haunts, though, and you will make a great escape – back to some of the most powerful, formative days of your life.

Decades on, the images remain as sharp as ever, etched with clarity in the cerebral scrapbook of childhood. The first beach holiday of my tiny life, at Bembridge on the Isle of Wight, the indulgence of the Grand Hotel in Swanage in Dorset, switching Punch and Judy on the sand, then taking High Tea in a high-chair; and the cheap and, er, cheerful cosiness of six of us sharing a caravan-for-four at Robin Hood's Bay in North Yorkshire. From tot to teenager, my sole experience of travel was the Great British Seaside. How I cherished it, and the instant friendships made while crowding around a rockpool or jostling around the dodgems. Even inclement weather could be a boon, permitting expeditions to the souvenir shops. These emporia infiltrated every lane of the jolly fishing villages that lie at the heart of many of Britain's resorts, amplified and elaborated in the 19th century.

What did the Victorians ever do for us holidaymakers? Provide an elegant infrastructure of promenades, punctuated by the regulation wrought-iron bandstand. Every resort surely has a local by-law that brass or silver bands must end their sets

Do we still like to stroll along the prom? The cheap and easy availability of flights abroad led to the decline of the family fortnight at Blackpool or Bridlington. But the increasing hassle of foreign travel, coupled with the renaissance of coastal resorts from Begun's Regis to North Berwick, is rekindling our love affair with the Great British Seaside. Why seek tropical when Tenby is so tempting, or look for the exotic when Exmouth is so enticing?

Little life can beat a sunny summer's afternoon on a British beach, enriched with colour that defies any ordinary spectrum. In my younger days, it seemed absurd to contemplate leaving the sand for any reason short of a torrential downpour. Now, though, I can see why our parents wanted to drag us off on long, invigorating walks beyond the bay. Much of Britain's coast is simply lovely, with cliff paths tracing a dramatic course between land and sea and the horizon decorated by islands or sailing boats.

With a family of one's own, the seaside gets even better. I share

Torquay 2006 The Editor reports on the national exhibition

TORQUAY 2006
the 6th
A B P S NATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION




24th & 25th

TORQUAY 2006
the 6th
A B P S NATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION




24th & 25th
November
2006

at the Riviera Centre TORQUAY



THE SIXTH OF THE SERIES of biennial national exhibitions organised by the Association of British Philatelic Societies was held at the Riviera Centre, Torquay, 24-25 November. Following on from successful exhibitions in Newcastle, Hove, Glasgow, Chester, and Basildon (1998-2004), the Torquay show was the first to include exhibits in all rather than selected classes. The Riviera Centre proved to be a fine venue, providing plenty of space for both the exhibits and the dealers' and societies' stands, and good seating, refreshment and toilet facilities. There were a number of exhibition souvenirs available, including well-produced cards (as shown above) showing both sides of an Isle of Man coin for the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black, and the Nyasaland George V £10 stamp, which were sold for £1 each. The exhibition catalogue, also £1, was nicely produced. The one main drawback was the weather (rain), but the organisers could hardly be blamed for that. Barry Horne and his team can be proud of their efforts.

The attendance on the Friday seemed rather sparse, but there were more visitors on the Saturday, and it was pleasing to see a reasonable number actually examining the exhibits – more so than at most exhibitions I have attended in recent years. Perhaps this reflected the very high quality of the exhibits, with some very well presented displays of sometimes neglected subjects. There was much to interest collectors of GB stamps and postal history.

In the 'Social Philately' section, Robert Erskine's entry 'Wilson's of Bannockburn Tartan and the Army Connection' included cap badges of Scottish Highland Regiments, and pieces of cloth as well as interesting covers such as one with a FORT GEORGE mileage mark of 1841. K E Johnson's 'Alfred, Lord Tennyson' included some nice postcards, a letter signed by Tennyson, and relevant stamps and postmarks; some reflected Tennyson's interest in the arts – the 1973 Paintings issue and 1975 Turner stamps. Also shown were three pages of unadopted designs for Tennyson stamps from the first Stamp Advisory Committee Review of 1992 (see the May 1993 *Bulletin*). At the time I wondered if collectors would add these colour illustrations of unused designs in their collections – this is the first time I have seen them used so.

M Buxton's fine exhibit 'The 1971 Postal Strike' also included some material from the 1962 and 1964 disputes, as well as press cuttings and cartoons (Giles), UPW Strike Bulletin, and a notice affixed to a post box advising of the strike. Covers were displayed posted at sub post offices which had remained open during the strike to operate a local delivery service. The 1971 strike is famous for the hundreds of private stamps created, and some examples of the many private stamps were included, also mail sent by Document Exchanges (Law Society, Northern Stock Exchange), railway letter service, and by a service which operated for Charles Taylor, MP for Eastbourne, for his constituency mail.



From far left: two souvenir cards, a visitor examining some of the displays, and a view of the exhibition venue.

The Readers Digest coin strips of the early 1980s are popular with many collectors, and C Jolliffe presented a fine study of them plus similar items from South Africa. He included returned covers from Germany and GB, coil strips affixed to cards (some with stamps cancelled by favour) and genuinely used on covers sent to Readers Digest, and mint stamps with coil leaders.

Christopher King's 'Peace, Politics, Propaganda and the Post', in the 'One Frame' displays, included labels affixed to the reverse of covers in Victorian times. One of these was inscribed 'Anti War Eternal friendship between France and England! It were an impeachment of the Deity to suppose war unavoidable!'

The Traditional displays included A Randall Jones's 'King Edward VII 1/2d Green' – a good example of what can be achieved with a basic inexpensive stamp. He included examples used on cards cancelled by a variety of different types of postmarks, to pay mail, and a postcard of the late King postmarked on 18 May 1910 – the card hurriedly produced by Rotary Photographic London within days of the King's death.

There were many good thematic displays. W McKinlay's 'Gears – The Wheels of Industry' included an excellent mixture of stamps, meters, postal stationery, postmarks and covers. One of the items was the Bureau's first day postmark for the Industrial Archaeology stamps of July 1989.

Alan Watson's 'Heraldry – A Basic Course' is always worth seeing, and includes a surprising

number of GB postmarks and metermarks featuring heraldic devices. I was rather impressed by the elaborate handstamp used on mail sent from local court in Asolo in Lombardo-Veneto in 1850. Items featuring the Royal arms of England, Scotland, and the UK, included Post Office labels, telegrams, etc.

Another thematic display worth careful study is Ron Backhouse's 'Tennis' – impressive for the great detail of subject, material featuring tennis equipment (synthetic strings, big head rackets, etc) as well as famous players and tournaments. Amongst some unusual material was a perfin for Tretorn, a Swedish company which was one of the first to manufacture tennis balls. The caption to the Jimmy Connors stamp from Paraguay informs us that he was the first US Open champion to be left-handed and to use a double grip.

Mrs C Turner's 'Man & Malaria' included the front cover for the 1991 greetings book featuring charms – it was pointed out that Paracelsus used charms and amulets containing dead spiders to prevent and treat malaria. R Wheeler's display on the evolution of puppets included Punch adverts on 1930s stamp book covers, the Punch £1 book of 1991, the 2001 Punch & Judy issue, and other relevant stamps from around the world – altogether a very colourful display.

Mrs P Buxton's display 'The Peoples' War' covered British civilian life during the Second World War. Items featured temporary pos during the blitz, and the use of economy labels. In May 1940 the po allowed envelopes to be used again if the old stamps, postmarks and addresses were completely covered by a light coloured paper.

A Holyoake's 'Secured and Registered Mail Within GB 1560-1862' was a superb display, including the earliest known registered letter sent to South America – from Wrexham to Havana, Cuba, February 1857. An early example of internal registered mail with the fee paid by adhesives, effective from April 1853, was shown, also a 1652 Post Haste letter (this secured delivery of mail recording each stage and change-over of horses), a printed proclamation of Charles I 'concerning the Post-master of England for forreigne parts', and the 1656 Postage Act. ►

Professor O'Hara's display 'Movement of Money from Bank to Bank by Post in Scotland' covered a little-known service, the subject of a recent article in *The GB Journal*. His exhibit included many of the scarce HVP labels used on tags, and what must be a rare National Westminster Bank meter for this service, which ceased in October 1973.

B Nielsen's 'King Edward VII' included essays and proofs as well as issued stamps used on mail. Of special interest was a ½d stamp used on its own on a small parcel tag sent to Glasgow, August 1910, and 2 × 4d orange and 7d grey on a Registered Book post label, sent by Stanley Gibbons Ltd to New York in June 1911.

M Oliver's 'De La Rue's Colonial Key Plates' included a short history of this company in Bunhill Row, London EC1, the location of the *Bulletin* office 1999-2002. Thomas De La Rue lived at 108 Bunhill Row; in the blitz of 1940, his company's premises were destroyed, but production resumed in 1942. Some DLR file copies, in poor condition, that survived the blitz featured in the exhibit.

There were some good displays in the Youth class, the best being Jade Needs's 'Australia King George V Side Face Issues' of 1913-38. Including examples on cover as well as mint specimens all clearly annotated for shades, this was an excellent exhibit, which many adult collectors would be proud to own.

The interesting 'Two Pence Post', by Patrick Adamson, included pre-stamp material as well as examples of 2d/2p stamps from each reign, also postage dues and postal stationery. He pointed out that there were only ever two 2d commemoratives – 1940 Stamp Centenary and 1961 CEPT. Jessica Moore's 'The Queen's Jewels' exhibit included a 1977 Silver Jubilee aerogramme signed by the designer, Stuart Rose.

The Inter Federation Competition was won by the Kent Federation of Philatelic Societies, with three displays covering 'Mail by Rail' by the Great Western Railway of Canada, 'Aerophilately', and 'GB King George V'. A display by the Northeast of England Federation included Tony Walker's 'GB Pre-decimal Machin Definitives' – some of which was featured in the *Bulletin* in March and April 2000.

R Simpson's display 'Stamp Perforation: Origins & Development 1840-80' included an illustration of the Napier stamp perforation machine, used for the 1d red, and covers were shown from the transitional period, January-July 1855, bearing concurrently available gauge 16 and 14 stamps on the same cover. M Buxton's 'For Safe Conveyance – Registration in GB until 1907' included a letter of 1705 sent from the tiny island of Gairsay to Kirkwall (Orkney) 'by the bearer Will Mowat' with £1 16s – there was no postal service to the island until 1746/47. His exhibit included official wrappers for money letters, c1835.

A highlight of the exhibition was the display from the Royal Philatelic Collection. One frame showed Treasury Competition entries including the 'Penny Black' design by Sir George Steuart Mackenzie (see the *Bulletin* August 2001); another frame covered the 1870 ½d, with essays as well as blocks of 25, 42 and 72 of the issued stamps.

Four frames of Edward VII ½d and 1d stamps included a photograph of the drawing by Emil Fuchs for the King's head, die proofs, control multiples, imprimatur blocks from booklet sheets, and colour trials for the 1d stamp, including examples on coloured papers.

Other frames featured the Barbados stamp of 1852 based on the 1848 design for Mauritius, but not issued there until 1859; and the early stamps of Tasmania – printed at the *Courier* newspaper office in Hobart. The 1933 and 1938 issues of the Falkland Islands were the topics of a frame each, as was the 1960 St Lucia New Constitution issue. The display from the Royal Collection concluded with a frame of the GB 1953 Coronation issue which showed Edmund Dulac's artwork for the 2½d stamp, unadopted designs, and essays of the issued stamps on a card inscribed 'Approved for design and colour 31 March 1953'. A large signed photograph of The Queen, presented to the Borough of Torbay, 2001 formed the centrepiece of the display.

The next ABPS exhibitions will be at the Fairfield Halls, Croydon (23-24 November 2007) and Harrogate (2008); I look forward to reporting from these shows in due course ●

Checklist of 2006 definitives

We hope the list on the following pages will prove helpful to collectors in completing their collections. Please read the notes on the following page carefully. We quote Royal Mail order numbers (prefixed DS, YB, etc) as given on the Tallents House stock lists. Some stamps were issued only in books and can be bought from Royal Mail only in complete books.



Right: definitives issued on 8 March (top two rows), 1 August (row 3), 15 August (bottom row PIP) and 17 October (Smilers)

Notes Printers are designated C (Cartor), D (De La Rue), E (Enschedé), and W (Walsall), and printing process G (gravure) or L (litho) • Unless otherwise stated, definitive and country stamps have PVA gum, perforation gauge 15 × 14 (with ellipses at lower left and right sides) and two phosphor bands (2nd class standard size, one band) • The dates quoted are those the stamps were first available from Tallents House; in some instances they may have been available at post offices earlier to meet postal needs • All 2nd class Machin definitive stamps are printed in bright blue, 1st class in gold.

Machin definitives

23 February 35p (1 phosphor band), 40p & 1st class printed by E (previously D) in Brunel PSB (YB027)

28 March 37p olive green (DS375); 44p ultramarine (DS441); 49p rust (DS490), 72p red (DS720), all D

1 August 12p dark turquoise (DS121), 14p salmon pink (DS141), 2nd class bright blue (DS231), 1st class gold (DS321) standard size definitives; 2nd class bright blue (DS376), 1st class gold (DS442) 'Large' size definitives, D, 2nd & 1st in new PIP design. Sheets of 200, 2nd & 1st class standard also issued in coils – see Coil section on page 152.

15 August 2nd class, 1st class Large size definitives, PIP design, W, self-adhesive from books (UB265, UB264)

12 September 2nd class and 1st class standard size definitives, PIP design, W, self-adhesive from books (UB268 2nd class, UB266 & UB267 1st class)

21 September 50p and 1st class (PIP design) E (previously D) from Victoria Cross PSB (YB028)

Country stamps

28 March 44p – England (ES440), Scotland (SS440), Wales (WS440), Northern Ireland (IS440);



72p – England (ES720), Scotland (SS720), Wales (WS720), Northern Ireland (IS720), D (N Ireland litho, others gravure)

9 November 72p Northern Ireland, D gravure (previously litho) in Lest We Forget miniature sheet (MZ034)

30 November 1st Scotland – new Saltire design in Celebrating Scotland miniature sheet, D gravure. Sheet also includes current 1st class Scottish country stamp (Lion Rampant) (MZ036)

Pictorial definitives

17 October 6 × 1st class 'Smilers' stamps featuring New Baby, Best Wishes, Thank You, Balloons, Fireworks, and Champagne bottle and flowers. In book, self-adhesive, W (UB274). Also issued in Generic sheet printed litho, C (AT028)

Mixed value stamp panes and miniature sheets

23 February Pane of 4 × 1st class, 2 × 35p and 2 × 40p definitives with central label showing Brunel bust, E. From Brunel prestige book (YB027).



Miniature sheets: Welsh Assembly (1 March), Year of Three Kings (31 August), Lest We Forget (9 November), Celebrating



Scotland (30 November). Prestige stamp book panes: Brunel (23 February) and Victoria Cross (21 September).

1 March Welsh Assembly miniature sheet containing 1 × 2nd class, 2 × 1st class & 2 × 68p Wales country stamps, D (MZ030)

31 August Three Kings miniature sheet containing £3 definitive (and reproductions of George V, Edward VIII and George VI 1d definitives), D (MZ032)

21 September Pane of 4 × 1st class (standard size PIP) & 4 × 50p definitives with central label showing VC medal, E. From VC prestige book (YB028)

9 November Lest We Forget miniature sheet containing one each of England, Scotland, Wales & N Ireland 72p country stamps, and 1st class special stamp (Flanders Poppies), D (MZ034)

30 November Celebrating Scotland miniature sheet containing 1st class Scotland Saltire stamp (new design) and current 1st class Scotland Lion Rampant stamp, plus two special stamps, D (MZ036)

Stamp books

23 February Brunel PSB containing panes of definitive, Brunel and Ocean Liners stamps, E (YB027)

25 April 6 × 1st class, 12 × 2nd class and 12 × 1st class definitives, books have back cover change giving details of postal validity before and after the introduction of PIP (UB261, UB263, UB262)

17 July 6 × 2005 Smilers pictorial definitives, back cover change re postal validity (UB270)

15 August 4 × 2nd, 4 × 1st 'Large' size definitives (PIP), W, self-adhesive (UB265, UB264)

12 September 6 × 1st, 12 × 2nd and 12 × 1st class standard size definitives (PIP design), W, self-adhesive (UB266, UB268, UB267)

21 September VC prestige book containing panes of definitive, Victoria Cross, and 1990 Gallantry stamps, E (YB028)

2 October 6 × 1st standard size definitives (PIP design), with label promoting stamp collecting on inside front cover, W, self-adhesive (UB273)

17 October 6 × 1st Smilers pictorial definitives (new designs), W gravure, self-adhesive (UB274). Also issued in Generic & Smilers sheets, C litho ►

Stamp coils (rolls)

15 August 500 × 2nd class standard size (PIP design), D (DC109/DC910)

3 October 1000 × 1st class and 1000 × 2nd class standard size (PIP design), D (DC110/DC911; DC111/DC912)

14 November 500 × 1st class standard size (PIP design), D (DC114/DC915)

Note: Tallents House order codes given for complete coils and singles from coils.

Business sheets

16 May 100 × 2nd & 100 × 1st definitives, with sheet text change regarding postal validity before and after the introduction of Pricing in Proportion, W, self-adhesive (DP043, DP042)

12 September 100 × 2nd class & 100 × 1st standard size definitives (PIP design), W, self-adhesive (DP045, DP044)

Generic sheets

4 July 'For Life's Special Moments' sheet containing 2005 Smilers pictorial definitives (4 × Teddy Bear, 4 × Hello, 3 × robin in postbox, 3 × Love, 3 × Union Flag and 3 × Flower), C litho, self-adhesive (AT025)

17 October 'Extra Special Moments' sheet: 2006 Smilers pictorial definitives (4 × New Baby, 3 × Best Wishes, 3 × Thank You, 3 × Balloons, 3 × Fireworks, 4 × Champagne), C litho, self-adhesive (AT028)

Presentation packs

28 March 37p, 44p, 49p & 72p definitives D (DP041) ● 44p & 72p country stamps, D (CP023)

1 August 12p, 14p, 2nd & 1st class standard size (PIP design), 2nd & 1st class Large (PIP) D (DP046)

17 October Pictorial definitives (Smilers) (AP271)

9 November Lest We Forget miniature sheet (AP270)

30 November Scotland miniature sheet (AP272) ●

Posting boxes

THIS MONTH'S PHOTOGRAPHS were supplied by Cathie Campbell, who used to work at Tallents House in Edinburgh. They feature an Edward VII box at Yetholm, near Kelso, in the Scottish Borders. It is attached to a 'Catch-a-Penny' cottage – a building dating back to at least the 17th century that used to be the toll on the road leading to the English border. It was also a smithy, and has the remains of an old forge in the garden. The current owner volunteered to rebuild the supporting wall in which the box is sited rather than have it replaced with a free-standing box. The box faces a road junction regularly used by 'boy racers' on tractors – Cathie suggests this may be the cause of the damage to the wall!

For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a SAE or IRC to the Membership Secretary, at the address given at right ●



Letter Box Study Group For details send a SAE or IRC to: Membership Secretary, Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES. The Group produces many interesting publications and postcards.

Eminent collectors Ron Negus describes the philatelic life and times of Henry Robert 'Bob' Holmes, RDP FRPSL

JUST before the Second World War, two collectors met for the first time at a cricket match and began a life-long friendship. In later years, both men were destined to become President of the Royal Philatelic Society, and both would achieve recognition amongst collectors worldwide. The elder of the two was Ewart Gerrish, RDP, who was always called 'Ebby'. His friend, Henry Robert Holmes, preferred to be called by his shortened Christian name of 'Bob'.

Their love of cricket was obvious to those who knew them both. Ebby Gerrish was appointed as President of the Surrey County Cricket Club towards the end of his life in 1978. Bob Holmes frequently discussed the sport and was proud to own a complete set of Wisden, the cricketers' annual bible, from the first issue that had been published in 1864.

Born on 11 May 1896, Bob Holmes became interested in stamp collecting whilst still at school. He was only 15 years old when he won his first medal at a stamp exhibition. In that year, 1912, he entered his display of Bermuda in the London Jubilee International Stamp Exhibition, held at the Royal Horticultural Hall under the auspices of the Junior Philatelic Society. His reward was a Silver Medal in the Junior Class.

Although his early collecting interests were for Bermuda, over the subsequent years he collected a vast range of different countries. Among these were the Netherlands, Sarawak, all the Scandinavian group, France (1876 to 1900), Switzerland to 1934, Baden, Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Siam, Nepal, Bechuanaland, Griqualand West, Transvaal, Hungary, USA and pioneer air mails.

With such wide-ranging interests, Bob Holmes soon came to be considered a very knowledgeable philatelist, and this led to him becoming a member of the jury for almost all international stamp exhibitions that took place for more than 30 years



from 1947 onwards. The photograph shown at left was taken whilst he was serving in this way at the Exhibition in Budapest in 1971.

Bob's introduction to organized philately came in 1929 when, at the age of 32, he applied for and gained membership of the Royal Philatelic Society London. At that time he was working at the International Labour Office of the League of Nations and had spent some time in their administrative centre in Geneva. He was to

remain involved with this organization following its transition to one of the agencies of the United Nations after 1945.

On the philatelic front Bob Holmes constantly researched the various countries whose stamps he had taken an interest in, and gave many papers on his findings at meetings of the Royal. Notable ones were those on Sarawak in 1934, and on local stamps of Norway two years later. Over the years many of his findings were shown to members in displays, where he joined with others to provide sheets from his own collections as part of a larger topic, such as 'British Colonials'.

He became particularly knowledgeable about the issues of the South African colonies and protectorates of the late Victorian years. This led to the publication of his definitive work entitled *The Postage Stamps, Postal Stationery and Postmarks of the Bechuanaland*, which was published by the Society in 1971. This work was based upon the material in his own collections. It is interesting to note that when Harmers sold his Bechuanaland material at auction after his death, the Government of Botswana bought almost all of it for its own archives.

Other books that Bob Holmes wrote were *The Postage Stamps of Bermuda* (1932), *Stamps of the Private Byposts of Norway* (1938) and *The Postage Stamps of Tibet* (1941). His love of cricket also gave rise to him writing a small pamphlet detailing an 1887

match between America and the West Indies that had previously been unrecorded.

Bob Holmes was also involved with stamp magazines, and served as the editor of the long-established *Philatelic Journal of Great Britain* from 1936 until 1945. In June 1946, Rev A C Larmour, the editor of the Royal Philatelic Society's own publication, was taken ill and had to resign his post. His resignation created a serious gap, and Holmes stepped in to help out, given his proven editorial skills. He was to serve as the editor of the *London Philatelist* until the end of 1954. During the time he was in editorial control of these two significant journals, he contributed a number of articles to them both.

Two of the papers that he wrote for the *London Philatelist* were reprinted as monographs by the Society. The subjects of these were the stamps of Honduras (1955) and of Griqualand West (1963). He was also responsible for preparing the catalogue for the special exhibition which the Royal held in 1953 to mark the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

Apart from his editorial work, Bob Holmes was active in many other areas in support of the Royal Philatelic Society London. In 1941, he joined the Council. In that same year, a stalwart Fellow of the Society, Percy de Worms, who was the Curator of the Society's Forgery Collection and a valued member of the Expert Committee, died. Bob filled both the vacancies caused by his death. His tenure on the Expert Committee lasted until 1976, and for the period from 1974 he was Chairman of that important body.

In June 1956, Bob Holmes became Vice-President of the Society. In 1961, he took over as President – following the term in that office that had just been completed by his old friend Ebby Gerish. During his presidency, Bob Holmes was instrumental in arranging for the purchase of the house next door to the Society's London home in Devonshire Place. This extension allowed the internal rooms and Library to be re-organised in the main building to accommodate the needs of the growing number of members.

Bob remained as President until 1964, and his contributions to the Society were acknowledged

four years later when he was made an Honorary Fellow. In 1971 the Society awarded him the London Medal, which is given for outstanding service rendered otherwise than in the course of duty as an officer.

Over the years he had given many displays to the Society. In introducing one of these displays in 1962, he referred to the interest to be derived from collecting new issues as they appeared, and mentioned that he had subscribed to a new issue service since about 1910. He was reported to say: 'There was not, of course, the same thrill as the early collectors must have experienced in the sixties and seventies of the last century, but one was able to keep abreast of the trends and changes in the hobby. Recently, however, there had been far too many commemoratives, and the almost complete changeover to photogravure printing had taken away, for him, some of the interest. Further, many of the issues had been prepared more with an eye to thematic collectors than for their primary purpose.' It is significant that these views seem as relevant today as they were when Bob uttered them nearly half a century ago.

Beyond the Royal, his peers from all parts of the philatelic world feted Bob Holmes. He was invited to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists at the Whitley Bay Congress in June 1953. In 1969 he received the Alfred F Liechtenstein Memorial Award for 'distinguished service to philately' becoming only the second British collector to win this premier American honour. The British Philatelic Federation awarded him Honorary Life Membership in 1987. From 1948 to 1955 he acted as the philatelic adviser to the Trustees of the British Museum.

Just before Christmas in 1988, Bob Holmes had a fall at his home in Lymington, Hampshire, and it was decided to move him into a local nursing home. Unfortunately, recovery proved difficult, and his health steadily declined. Finally, he suffered a heart attack and died on 22 January 1989 at the age of 92. His obituary in the *London Philatelist* concluded with the words '...In Henry Robert Holmes philately worldwide has lost one of its giants.' ●

Philately online The R M Phillips collection, by Ron Negus



British postal communications helped to shape the modern world. The British Postal Museum & Archive illuminates the lives of people in the Post Office, the messages carried by Royal Mail, the history we all share. Our history through the past.

Records in The Royal Mail Archive are designated as being of outstanding importance. <http://www.bpa.gov.uk/ourhistory>

Site highlights

Philately collection online
The Penny Black Changed the world project means that 2,000 album pages from the www.bpa.gov.uk/philately collection of Victorian philately are now online, plus a free www.bpa.gov.uk/philately for teaching Victorian history.

Stamps of the month
Every month we showcase classic stamps from our collection, to echo the latest stamps issue from Royal Mail. Find your favourite designs in Stamp of the Month.

News

GB's remarkable triumph at Northern Ireland's first Festival

18 Oct 2006

Donning wigs and formal hats, we worked for the GB's in the 1980s, and in just of the fourth round Northern Lights I am I across the November.

50 years of Queen Elizabeth II

04 Oct 2006

A new exhibition is available online to mark the 40th birthday of Queen's, the newspaper for Royal Mail staff.

What's on

Big Stamp Family Event, 10 Oct

10 Oct 2006

to inspire the next generation of stamp collectors, and then get creative in our Big Stamp Family workshop.

Stamping the 100th Anniversary of the 1840

04 Oct 2006

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www.postalheritage.org.uk This address displays the home page of the British Postal Museum & Archive, which contains a host of interesting detail on current Museum activities. To see the Phillips material, click on the heading 'Phillips Collection Online', which is part of the larger topic entitled 'The Penny Black Changed the World'.

is made up entirely of stamps overprinted 'Specimen'. Three additional sheets are incorporated in the collection – two of these contain enlarged images of the 1837 Wyon Medal, in bronze and silver. The final sheet has examples of engine-turned backgrounds from the printers, Perkins, Fairman and Heath.

A 'Full list of volume titles' provides a simple index explaining the content of each album. If the user knows the volume number required, a navigation bar is provided on the home page that allows immediate access to be obtained to any particular volume. When any volume is opened, the first display gives an index explaining what is housed on each individual page of that volume.

Selecting an index entry here brings up a digitised copy of that particular page in full colour. This can be enlarged for easier reading and study of the actual specimens. For every page displayed there is a cross-reference to allow it to be located in the online catalogue that records the items as shown in the POST archives. This gives details of each page of the Phillips Collection, which are found in the POST 141 archive classification.

In presenting his collection to the nation, R M Phillips expressed the hope that as many people as possible would be able to enjoy the marvellous items he had painstakingly gathered together. By using the internet, this wish can now be fulfilled. On the website a quote is included from Douglas Muir, Curator of Philately at the British Postal Museum & Archive. He says 'The importance of the Phillips Collection to the understanding of postal history is incalculable, and I am delighted that the albums can now be enjoyed around the world by anyone who loves stamps and Victorian design.'

All collectors of early GB will certainly appreciate this website, and the Museum is to be congratulated on producing it ●

FOR THOSE who specialise in Victorian stamps of Great Britain, the Reginald M Phillips collection has always been the best available source of reference. This Brighton philatelist donated his albums to the nation in 1965 and the collection was entrusted to the custody of the National Postal Museum. This body is now known as The British Postal Museum & Archive, and with financial help assistance from the Heritage Lottery Fund it has made access to the whole Phillips collection available via the internet (see address above).

The whole collection is housed in 45 volumes. The first covers 'Pre-1840 documents and essays for adhesive postage stamps and postal stationery'. It includes some of the essays that were submitted for the 1839 Treasury Competition, from which the Penny Black design was selected. Volume 2 deals with the 1837-1840 period and incorporates essays and proofs of the adhesive stamps plus a selection of Mulready stationery.

Volumes 3 to 45 are devoted to the stamps produced from 1840 to 1901. All the issued stamps are represented with mint, used, plate blocks and other multiples, plus essays, proofs, specimens and numerous examples on cover in the volumes numbered 3 to 42. All well-known varieties are included on the relevant pages with the 'normals' added for comparison purposes.

The content of volume 43 includes Postal Fiscals, Railway Letter and Parcel Post stamps, whilst volume 44 has examples of Private Companies' and Post Office Telegraph Stamps, Military and Army Telegraph stamps and proofs. Volume 45

British Philatelic Centre After two decades of service to



The British Philatelic Centre in Smithfield, in London: the entrance in Charterhouse Street and the meeting room.



TWENTY years ago, on 27 February 1987, Sir Ron Dearing, the Chairman of the British Post Office, officially opened The British Philatelic Centre. The British Philatelic Trust had been established in 1981, using surplus funds raised from the sales of three miniature sheets leading to London 1980, after meeting the costs of this international exhibition at Earls Court. Denis Roberts, a former po Director, was given the task of establishing the Trust, and was its first Chairman.

In 1986 the Trustees, then under Chairman Dr Alan Huggins, determined that part of the Trust's strategy would be to provide a base for philately in London, to provide a home for the principal bodies involved in the hobby and offer meeting and display facilities. Properties were considered at Hatton Ground and at Charterhouse Street, opposite Smithfield Market. At that time the area was looking a little worse for wear, but the latter building and its location offered great potential.

The building itself appeared made for the task, with a substantial ground floor, a good basement, a mezzanine floor, and four additional floors. The location was a short walk from Farringdon and Barbican stations, while King Edward Street, at the time housing the National Postal Museum, was not too far away. An approach was made to the National Philatelic Society to share the building, bringing with it its superb library and offices, then housed at the International Stamp Centre

in Covent Garden and as a venue for its monthly auctions and meetings. The building at 107 Charterhouse Street was then owned by an order of nuns, whose intention was to offer the leasehold for the building. An approach was made to see if the freehold could be purchased, and to this the nuns agreed, so the BPT became the owners of the building.

The ground floor was seen as housing the reception area with seating, and the NPS library. The mezzanine was to be used for meetings, but also included glass-fronted frames with the aim of providing short-term exhibitions for visitors to enjoy. The basement provided kitchen, toilet and storage facilities. The remaining floors could be used for offices, including not only the NPS and Trust, but also Stamp World Exhibitions Ltd, at the time responsible for organising the 1990 international in London, Stamp World London 90.

It was not all plain sailing. Having acquired the building and undertaken the planned changes, all was ready for the official opening. That morning saw a deluge of rain that seeped in through the glass roof that led to the mezzanine floor. Buckets had to be placed to catch the water, which fortunately ceased before the guests arrived.

The BPT and NPS have been a constant presence in the building, but other occupants have changed. The former British Philatelic Federation used the premises, but, following its demise,

philately, the Centre is due to close, as Richard West reports

its successor, the Association of British Philatelic Societies, decided not to have an office within the building. Following 1990 there was no need for Stamp World Exhibitions Ltd to have offices, but the Philatelic Traders Society moved in, together with the organisation of Stampex. Sadly, changed fortunes for the PTS meant the organisation could no longer maintain a central London office.

Not all initial dreams were fulfilled. The hope that the Centre might be used as a social centre where collectors could meet for a chat was never realised. The concept of exhibitions never came to fruition. The meeting room proved to be only in demand on Saturdays, and largely lay dormant for the rest of the week.

In contrast, the surrounding area was changing. The run-down feeling was replaced thanks to major refurbishment and rebuilding works in the area. It became the place to be seen, with bars and restaurants springing up almost daily. While the National Postal Museum closed its doors, its treasures could still be viewed at the new British Postal Museum & Archive, not far away at Mount Pleasant. There were plans for a cross-London rail link, Crossrail, that would serve Farringdon, but these still remain as plans.

However, the most devastating blows to the Trust came from the Charity Commissioners and fire regulations. The Charity Commissioners expressed concern that the Trust met its objectives, resulting in a more stringent assessment of all it undertook, and a more commercial approach to those that used the building. Fire regulations vir-

tually condemned the use of the basement, while the mezzanine floor could no longer be used for public meetings. A re-ordering was needed, with the meeting room moving to the ground floor replacing the library, which now occupies the first and second floors. Following the loss of the PTS, it became necessary to lease out the offices on the third and fourth floors to non-philatelic tenants.

The Trust has found itself more in the position of a landlord, serving the needs of tenants rather than British philately. There remains the problem of a meeting room that sees infrequent use. Closing the basement meant a withdrawal of the kitchen facilities, while the toilet arrangements are far from perfect.

The idea of a British Philatelic Centre was the dream that many had held for some years. Twenty years ago it seemed as though that dream had been fulfilled. Sadly, the Trust now feels it has no option but to sell the building: it is draining too much of its resources in a non-productive way. If Crossrail goes ahead, the area is likely to become a building site for some years, with resulting noise and dirt, while there could be structural damage to the building.

So on 31 March 2007, just over 20 years after it officially opened, the British Philatelic Centre will close. There will be many who will look back with fond memories of meetings there, or of using the library. Maybe, one day, the philatelic centre will return, part of a new initiative. Many may sneak back to discover what is to be the future for 107 Charterhouse Street •

Prize draw Win a Yearbook or two new presentation packs

THE FIRST PRIZE in this month's draw is a copy of the new 2006 Yearbook. Five runners-up will be sent presentation packs of the Sea Life and Sky at Night stamps. To enter, write your name and address on a postcard and send it to: Yearbook Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. All entries must arrive by 31 January •



Competitions Win £200 in two easy-to-enter competitions



October identify The detail is from the 1964 Shakespeare Festival 1s3d stamp. The winner was K Webb of New Zealand.

October knowledge Answers: 1) Jeremy Sancha; 2) Europa; 3) Brussels or Paris. The winner was J Vincent, Hampshire.

Ten runner-up prizes were also sent for each competition. Our thanks to all who entered.

FIRSTLY, identify the stamp from the detail above. Send your answer to January *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to January *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 What colour is the current 72p definitive?
- 2 What was the first watermark used on Elizabeth II definitive stamps?
- 3 Who designed the 1990 Astronomy stamps?

Send your answer (addressed to either January *Identify* competition or January *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 9 February will each receive £100. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. Royal Mail employees are not eligible •

Events

Until Spring 2007 'Elizabeth: Queen & Icon' exhibition at the British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570

22-24 February Philatex (London International Stamp & Cover Show) at RHS Lawrence Hall, Greycoat Street, London SW1. Open Thurs 11.00-19.00, Fri 10.00-18.00, Sat 10.00-17.00. **Enquiries** 020 8946 4489 or website www.stampshows.net

28 February - 4 March Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1. **Enquiries** Stampex 01252 628006

10 March Spring BasPex stamp fair and exhibition, organised by Basildon Philatelic Society at Barstable School, Timberlog Close, Basildon, 10.00-16.00. Free admission and car park. Over 12 dealers.

20-21 April Scottish Philatelic Congress at Dewar's Centre, Glover Street, Perth, 10.00-17.00. Over 50 stamp, postal history, and postcard dealers, national and junior competitions, invited displays. Hosted by Perth Philatelic Society. See www.scottishphilately.co.uk

28 April Assn of Sussex Philatelic Societies Spring Convention at University of Brighton, Lewes Road, Brighton. Talk on The Queen's Philatelic Collection by Michael Sefi.

A useful Stamp Fair & Auction Diary is published six times a year. The annual subscription is £4 UK, £6 Europe, £12 USA & Canada. The Diary covers events throughout the UK, and includes postcard fairs and auctions. It is available from S Reeves, PO Box 109, Enfield EN3 5QF; telephone 020 8292 5361; e-mail fairs@stampdiary.com •

Late news

World of Invention stamps Cylinders and colours are: D1 grey D1 magenta D1 yellow D1 cyan (blue) D1 black D1 phosphor. Perforation gauge is 14.5 × 14 die cut, and gutter pairs vertical. The stamps go on sale on 1 March, the second day of Spring Stampex. A special First Day of Issue postmark will be available for FDCs posted at the exhibition, as well as the regular Stampex handstamp •

A Royal presentation The Court Circular for 8 November has recorded that a delegation from the Royal Philatelic Society, headed by its President Christopher Harman, went to Buckingham Palace to present its Exhibition Medal to The Queen, as the Society's Patron. Mr Michael Sefi, the Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection, was also present.

The Caledonian Philatelic Society continued its centenary celebrations by putting on an excellent display at the Royal Philatelic Society on St Andrew's Day, 30 November. Nine members of the Society, headed by President Ian Hamilton, brought with them 31 displays reflecting the wide ranging interests of Caledonian members. Chris Harman, President of the Royal, reminded those present that the Royal was also celebrating a centenary of its own – being granted Royal status by King Edward VII in December 1906 (see the December *Bulletin*, page 120) •

Auctions Spink will hold auctions of Mailboat Cancellations and St Lucia (Peter Jaffe Collection) on 7 March, followed by Great Britain and Single Vendor sales on 8 and 21 March respectively. A sale of British Empire Stamps will be held on 12 April. For further details contact Spink on 020 7563 4000 or see website www.spink.com •

VC medal In November (page 95) we mentioned that the VC medal of Private W Mariner was on display on the Spink stand at Autumn Stampex. The medal was auctioned on 23 November, realising £120,750 (est £70,000-80,000). It had been put away 60 years ago and found recently when the seller was sorting a late relative's belongings •

New book Barry Floyd has written *Captain James Cook the Explorer: an Historical & Philatelic Review*. The author provides a summary of Cook-related stamps, limiting his selection of stamps to those countries Cook visited. Price £14.95 plus £1.55 post & packing UK, £2.55 overseas. Available from Traveller's Tree Thematic Services, 12 Burystead Rise, Raunds, Wellingborough NN9 6RZ. Remittances payable to B N Floyd •

Obituary We regret to record the deaths in November of two senior British philatelists, Kenneth F Chapman, aged 96, and Alexander Newall, 92. Ken Chapman will be best remembered as the Editor for many years of the former weekly magazine *Stamp Collecting* and as a contributor to this *Bulletin*. Alex Newell was a well-known aerophilatelist and a founder member of the British Aero-philatelic Federation. Appreciations of their philatelic careers will be published next month •

Bulletin back issues Roger Malinski is seeking vols 1-7 of the *Bulletin*. Any reader having copies to dispose of should call him on 01977 619995. Peter Brewer offers a run of the *Bulletin* from July 1980 to December 2004 to anyone willing to pay postage. Contact him on 01225 463665 •

Picture Postcard Annual The 2007 (27th) edition of this popular reference work includes a postcard dealers directory, features, a review of 2006, lists of fairs and auction houses, etc. This year the main features cover Crystal Palace; Hospital Ships of the First World War; Modern Top Ten postcard choices (includes Royal Mail's VC stamp card); and postcards of 1905, 1910, 1915 and 1920. Of value to postal historians is the listing of earliest known dates of posting of postcards (other than PO postal stationery cards) from over 500 places. The 96-page annual is enjoyable and well-illustrated. Price £4.50 (postage UK £1, Europe £2.50, rest of the world £4.50) from: Reflections of a Bygone Age, 15 Debdale Lane, Keyworth, Nottingham NG12 5HT. Telephone 0115 937 4079. Reflections also publish *Picture Postcard Monthly* •

Books for philatelists and postal historians



Stanley Gibbons Collect British stamps The annual full-colour listing of all British stamps since 1840. 2007 edition. Price £9.95, order code PB394.

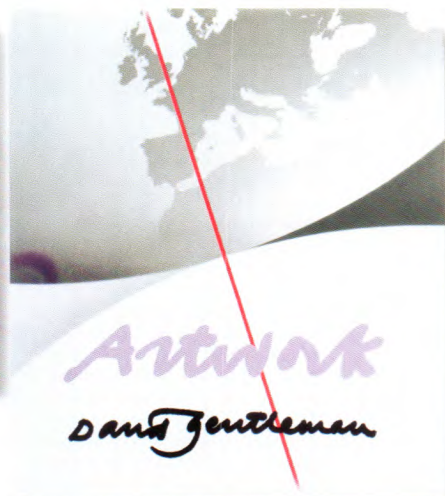


Bulletin Publications *The Travelling Post Office 1838-2004* by Peter Johnson. Price £2.95, order code PB376 • *The First Elizabeth II Castle High Value Definitives*. Price £2.95, order code PB384 • *British Stamp Printers* by Glenn Morgan. Price £2.95, order code PB390.



Stoneham Great Britain Stamp Catalogue

Comprehensive list of GB stamps, books etc. Market prices. 13th edition. Price £15.95, order code PB393.



Artwork Design biography of David Gentleman, Britain's best-known stamp designer. Hardback. Price £27, order code PB363.

Royal Mail

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