BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

VOLUME 54 NUMBER 7 | MARCH 2017 | £1.95

Preview: Racehorse Legends

• Machin and Country values



WOWIE BOWIE

Personal perspectives on the new stamps



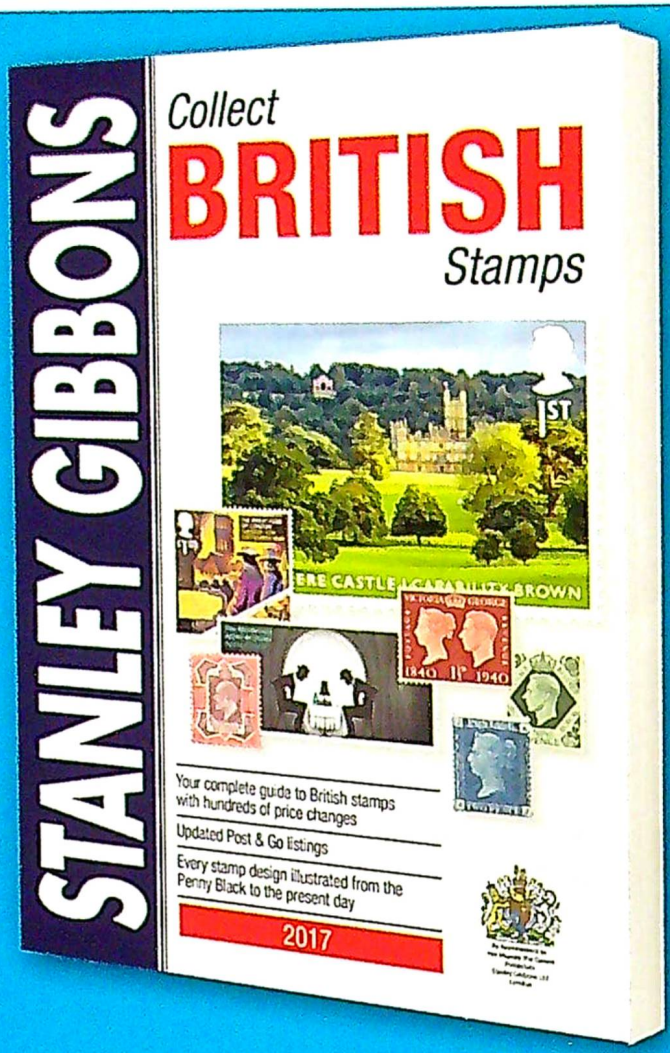
J HOLMAN DIARY DATES • 1977 CHEMISTRY SET • WIN POSTAL MUSEUM SHEET

Stanley Gibbons
New Catalogue

2017 Collect British Stamps

• 320 Pages • 68th Edition 2017

This all colour catalogue provides a straightforward, simplified listing of every British stamp from the Penny Black to Christmas 2016, with all commemorative designs illustrated for ease of use. With fully updated listing of the popular Post & Go stamps and a fully priced list of Royal Mail Philatelic, Numismatic and Medallic covers.



- A handy self-contained reference guide and checklist for the collector.
- A helpful introduction with advice on how to build a collection, choose an album and mount stamps, survey guide to philatelic accessories and the Stanley Gibbons numbering system.
- Post Office year books, PHQ cards, postage dues, official stamps, commemorative and traffic light gutter pairs and much more.
- Design index for commemorative issues from 1953 to aid stamp identification.
- Quick-reference listing of all Prestige Stamp Booklets, 1969-2015.
- First day covers for definitives from 1936, regionals and all special issues listed and priced.
- Graphite lined and phosphor issues are included.

New for this edition:

- Complete listings of all 2016 issues.
- Post & Go listings extensively revised to take account of recent developments.
- Prices have been carefully reviewed and there are a significant number of increases to Machin and Post & Go issues, in particular.

R0289-17 £14.95

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STANLEY GIBBONS
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Jean genius As a new stamp issue celebrates the talents of the world's favourite starman, we talk to leading cultural and creative figures who worked with him – including Glastonbury founder Michael Eavis and the designer of David Bowie's final haunting album *Blackstar* **207**

● **Royal Mail Editor** William Doherty, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● **Publishing Editor** Kate Shaw, 26 Throgmorton Street, London EC2N 2AN ● **Price** £1.95 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **Twelve months' subscription** £18.95 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of world. Subscribe online at www.royalmail.com/bulletin or write to Royal Mail Freepost, Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles, PO Box 1373, Sunderland SR5 9PG, UK. Overseas subscribers will need to use a stamp, as freepost is for UK only ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, and storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95, are also available by post or online ● Stamp images © Royal Mail. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of the Editors ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ

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Mr K Turner
23 Arnside Terrace
Fairburn
West Yorkshire
WY10 3NU

Royal Mail Tallents House 21 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9PB

The mane issue Racehorse Legends stamps pay tribute to the turf's finest steeds – from Red Rum and Shergar to Desert Orchid and Frankel

Above: the Racehorse Legends First Day Cover

Opposite page: the Stamp Set, the Presentation Pack, Tallents House postmark, pictorial alternative postmark, and the non-pictorial alternative postmark

AND THEY ARE OFF! Stamps showing some of the most famous racehorses of all time gallop onto the UK philately scene next month. The eight-stamp Racehorse Legends set features mounts that became household names even among those totally uninterested in turf or Tote – including Desert Orchid, Red Rum, Shergar and Frankel. Accompanying the stamps, out on 6 April, are a Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir, Postcards and limited edition Medal Cover. The stamp images are derived from paintings by the acclaimed equestrian artist Michael Heslop.

Racehorse Legends – Specifications	
Date of issue	6 April
Number of stamps	Eight
Stamp design	Together
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	41mm x 30mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	25/50
Perforations	14.5 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA

Stamp by stamp The Racehorse Legends stamp issue comes in a range of values: two First Class, and two each of the £1.17, £1.40 and £1.57 values. The stamps feature four 'Flat-racing Legends' and four 'National Hunt Legends'.

Frankel Unbeaten in his 14-race career, Frankel is the top-rated horse in the world. He was ridden throughout his racing days by Tom Queally. This champion's best race was the 2000 Guineas in 2011. First Class

Red Rum The only horse to have won the Grand National three times, Red Rum's finest race was







FD1711-PL



FD1711-TH



FD1711-NP

the 1977 Grand National, when he was ridden by Tommy Stack. First Class

Shergar The legendary Shergar was voted the European Horse of the Year in 1978, and in the Epsom Derby of 1981 romped home by the longest-winning margin in the race's history. £1.17

Kauto Star The greatest triumph in Kauto Star's career was winning the 2009 King George VI Chase (ridden by Ruby Walsh). His huge 36-length victory enabled him to replace Desert Orchid as the top-rated steeplechaser. £1.17

Desert Orchid The 1989 Cheltenham Gold Cup was the career highlight for Desert Orchid, ridden by Simon Sherwood. The narrow win simply added to the drama of this famous victory. £1.40

Brigadier Gerard Voted British Horse of the Year 1972, Brigadier Gerard won 17 of his 18 races. His greatest was the 1971 2000 Guineas, when he was ridden by Joe Mercer. £1.40

Arkle Winning 27 of his 35 starts, Arkle's best moment was his victory in the 1964 Cheltenham Gold Cup when, ridden by Pat Taaffe, he dethroned rival Mill House and showed his greatness for the first time. £1.57

Estimate Belonging to The Queen, Estimate won the 2013 Gold Cup at Ascot, the first horse owned by a reigning monarch to do so. It is very rare that a horse becomes a legend from just one race but the 2013 Gold Cup is one of those exceptions. £1.57 ▸



Racehorse Legends Medal Cover – Specifications	
Diameter	38.45mm
Weight	28.28g
Material	Alloy: cupro-nickel
Quality	Brilliant uncirculated

Above: the Racehorse Legends Medal Cover

Below: the First Day Cover insert with information points about all the Racehorse Legends

Accompanying the issue is an action-packed Presentation Pack that reveals the drama of top-level horseracing written by TV presenter and former jockey Brough Scott. It also features comment from experts who knew the horses best, including legendary trainer Sir Henry Cecil and well-known racehorse owner His Highness the Aga Khan. A limited edition Medal Cover, with a run of 9,000, offers a specially commissioned medal depicting the legendary horse Hyperion and the inscription, 'The Sport of Kings'. The Cover also features information on flat racing and jump racing. The Racehorse Legend stamps are cancelled with a special Aintree, Liverpool postmark in tribute to the racecourse that hosts the world-renowned Grand National.

Orders for Serviced First Day Covers should reach Royal Mail by 6 April. For the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark, customers may send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House at the address on page 224. Please quote the *Bulletin* media code 17BUL12 with your orders. The Tallents House postmark shows a jockey's cap and decorative laurels, a symbol of victory. Two alternative postmarks have the place name Newmarket, as it is the home of British horseracing, the headquarters of the Jockey Club, and the location of the National Horseracing Museum. The pictorial alternative version shows a jockey riding a horse •

Racehorse Legends – Prices	
Stamps	£9.58
First Day Cover	£11.92
First Day Envelope	£0.30
Stamp Souvenir	£11.92
Presentation Pack	£10.10
Postcards (8 in set)	£3.60
Stamp Frame	£29.99
Framed Stamp Set	£39.99
Medal Cover	£14.95



Royal Mail News Five 2017 definitive stamps are issued on 21 March, in stately yet striking hues and in a comprehensive range of mint stamps, First Day Covers, Presentation Packs and alternative postmarks







Above: the five new 2017 Machin definitive stamps

Left: the First Day Cover, costing £11.17, with Windsor postmark (FD 1706-PL)

Below: the Tallents House pictorial postmark



FD 1706-TH

Machin definitive stamps New postal rates are being introduced on 27 March, and five new definitives will be released in readiness on 21 March:

- £1.17 Sunset Red is the new tariff for weight up to and including 20g Royal Mail International Standard Letter Europe and World Zone 1 up to 10g.
- £1.40 Dark Green Pine: weight up to and including 10g-20g Royal Mail International Standard Letter World Zones 1 and 2.
- £1.57 Tarragon Green: weight up to and including 20g-100g Royal Mail International Standard Letter Europe.
- £2.27 Harvest Gold: weight up to and including 20g-100g Royal Mail International Standard Letter World Zones 1 and 2.
- £2.55 Garnet Red: weight up to and including 100g Royal Mail International Large Letter Europe.

Machin definitive First Day Cover The cover is available with Tallents House or Windsor pictorial postmarks or the plain Windsor, priced £11.17. The whole philatelic range can be bought from the address on page 224 or at www.royalmail.com/stamps. ▸

Machin Definitive Stamps 2017 – Specifications

Date of issue	21 March
Number of stamps	Five
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	De La Rue Security Print
Print process	Gravure
Number per sheet	25/50
Perforations	15 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive

Beginner's guide...

MACHINS

What? Standard UK postage stamps are known as 'definitives' and also 'Machins', because they all feature bas-relief portraits by Arnold Machin OBE, RA. Their typography is by Jeffery Matthews MBE, FCSD, FRSA.

When? The Machin stamp was first issued on 5 June 1967 and since then the design has featured on more than 200 billion stamps.

Why collect? Over the years the simple design has incorporated a huge variety of Machin specifications to excite the collector's enduring interest – numerous colour palettes, printers and print processes.

COUNTRY STAMPS

What? These stamps reflect the identities of different countries making up the UK.

When? First issued in 1958, they became known as Country stamps when the current four designs were produced in the late 1990s.

Why collect? For their beautiful miniature interpretations of regional identities and lyrical special postmarks.



Definitive Stamps Presentation Pack The elegant Presentation Pack, shown above, contains information written by Postal Museum Curator Douglas Muir, who gives you expert insights into the fascinating Machin story. Cost: £9.50.



Country definitive stamps and Presentation Pack These beautifully styled Country stamps, with their sharp reliefs of national emblems – representing England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – are available individually in their new £1.17 and £1.40 values, as a set at £10.28, or in the £10.80 Presentation Pack with an illustrated information sheet.

Country First Day Covers Two new Country definitives and an evocative landscape are carried on four First Day Covers. You can choose either the Tallents House postmark or alternative mark for each of the four capital cities. Price: £3.50 • *Orders for Serviced First Day Covers for Machin definitives and Country definitives must reach Royal Mail by 21 March 2017.*

Country Definitive Stamps 2017 – Specifications	
Date of issue	21 March
Number of stamps	Eight
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	25
Perforations	15 x 14
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	PVA



Stamp Scene John Holman keeps you posted on events and activities in the philatelic world



4 March Royal Sutton Coldfield Philatelic Society (formerly Streetly Philatelic Society) Stamp Fair & Exhibition, Collingwood Centre, Pheasey, Birmingham B43 7NF, 10am to 4pm. Car parking, refreshments, dealers in stamps, postal history, covers and postcards. Displays by Society members. Enquiries: Steven Harrison, 0121 313 0671; email sharrison500@btinternet.com.

7 March Scarborough Philatelic Society: the Rev. Walden presents 'Wacky-Wacky', an evening of fun and frivolity. The Society also welcomes new members. Contact Chris Phillips on 01723 368475 or email chris@philatelic.org.uk for further information and details of Members' Night on 4 April.

10-11 March Southern England Stamp Show, Farnborough Leisure Centre, Westmead, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7LD, Friday 10am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. Free admission, programme and raffle tickets. Extensive parking nearby. Nearly 60 dealers covering most aspects of philately. See www.southernenglandstampshow.com and page 213 for further information.

11 March GB Philatelic Society meeting at Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY. GB Specialised Catalogue Day by Hugh Jefferies, SG Catalogue Editor (11am). Enquiries: www.gbps.org.uk, email membership@gbps.org.uk.

17 March Strand Stamp Fair, The Galleon Suite, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1H 0DG, 9am to 4pm. Admission free, 20 to 30 dealers. Enquiries: Kate Puleston, 020 8946 4489.

23 March Royal Philatelic Society display: GB Railway Station Cancellations From 1840 by Bill Pipe at 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY, 1pm onwards. Non-members welcome to attend by prior arrangement – phone 020 7486 1044.

25 March National Philatelic Society country meeting at Westbex, Kennet School, Stoney Lane, Thatcham RG19 4LL, 1.30pm.

25 March Association of Essex Philatelic Societies Spring Rally, Sweyne Park School, Sir Walter Raleigh Drive, Rayleigh SS6 9BZ. Enquiries: 01376 585357, email via www.stampessex.org.uk.

30 March-2 April Melbourne 2017 Stamp & Coin Show, Caulfield Racecourse, Melbourne, Australia. See below.

7 April Strand Stamp Fair. See 17 March for details.

8 April National Philatelic Society meeting: An Excellent Afternoon's Entertainment. Display by Christine Earle and Patrick Reid, Welsh Centre, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE. Display 2.45pm, preceded by Members' Auction at 12.50pm. Enquiries: Peter Mellor, 01582 762284.

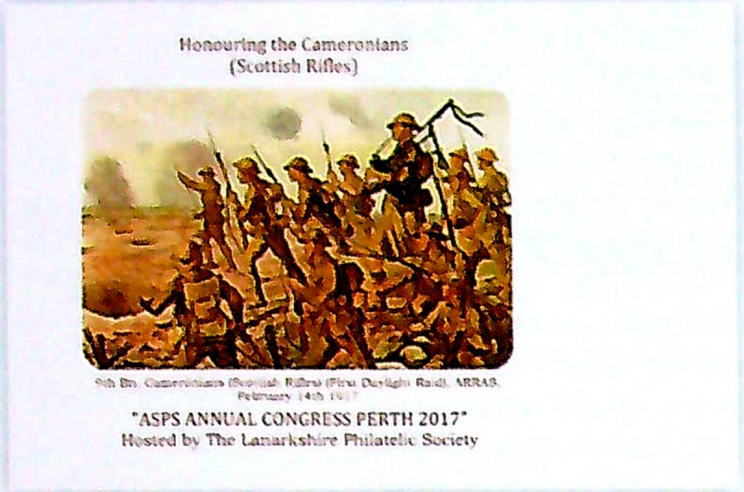
21-22 April Scottish Philatelic Congress, Perth. See below.

22 April GB Philatelic Society display at Royal Philatelic Society, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY: The Maltese Cross: Its Use and Abuse, Replacement and Late Use (Howard Hughes, 11am), GB Used in Malta (Martin Lloyd, 2.15pm). Enquiries: www.gbps.org.uk, email membership@gbps.org.uk ● ▸



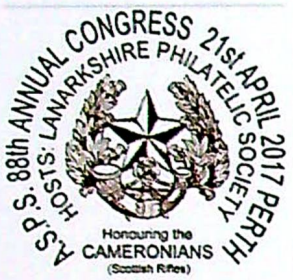
2017 events

The Lanarkshire Philatelic Society will host the Scottish Philatelic Congress at the Dewars Centre, Perth on 21 and 22 April. A Congress cover and special handstamp (shown below) commemorate the Cameronian Regiment in 1917, and the postcard shows postmarks from Lanarkshire. The Tom Rielly Display will be given by Professor Iain Stevenson.



Future UK events include Midpex (specialist society exhibition) at Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, Leamington Spa on 8 July; the 99th Philatelic Congress of GB in Cardiff, 27 to 30 July; and Stampa (Irish national stamp exhibition) from 6 to 8 October in Dublin.

Major international exhibitions will be staged in 2017 in Melbourne, Australia; Tampere, Finland (24 to 28 May); Bandung, Indonesia (3-7 August); and Brasilia, Brazil (24 to 29 October).



The Melbourne 2017 Stamp & Coin Show, at the Caulfield Racecourse from 30 March to 2 April, will display competitive exhibits (1,000 frames) in 14 classes, including postal history, postal stationery, thematics, open, youth, literature and modern philately (1980 onwards). A 200-frame non-competitive display ('Royalpex 125') marks the 125th anniversary of the Royal Philatelic Society of Victoria. Previous major stamp exhibitions were held in Melbourne in 1928, 1963, 1984, 1999 and 2013. For more information see www.melbourne2017.com.au ●

Postal Museum news



The Postal Museum (formerly British Postal Museum & Archive) is now closed to the public and will reopen in new premises nearby in mid-2017 (date to be announced). The Postal Museum website shows progress in the construction of the new museum and the Mail Rail experience. Visitors will be able to take a 15-minute journey in specially constructed trains on part of the former Post Office Underground Railway, opened in 1927, which carried mail beneath the streets of London until 2003. For enquiries, phone 020 7239 2570, email info@postalheritage.org.uk, or write to: The Postal Museum, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL.

The Friends of The Postal Museum look forward to the opening of the new premises – a new beginning for the museum and its philatelic collections and archives. (For your chance to win a tour of the new museum and Royal Mail stamp sheet, see page 222.) When the museum opens it will be offering a membership scheme. At its AGM last December, the Friends endorsed the decision taken by its Trustees: that existing Friends be entitled and encouraged to join this new membership scheme, at preferential rates for two years. As a result no new Friends will be enrolled and The Friends of The Postal Museum will cease to exist during 2017. The Friends, and many collectors, were dismayed when the National Postal Museum closed in 1998 but have faithfully supported Royal Mail in its efforts to find a new home. Many have remained as Friends from the outset, and have been eagerly looking forward to the new museum. Their wait will soon be over, with the added bonus of the opening of Mail Rail ●

Obituary







The 1st Earl of Snowdon, who died in January aged 86, will be best remembered as the husband of Princess Margaret from 1960 until their divorce in 1978. He was also a noted photographer, designer, film-maker and champion of the disabled. His portraits of members of the Royal Family featured on a number of British stamps: 1981 Wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer, 1986 Queen's 60th Birthday (one of six portraits on the stamps), 1997 Queen's Golden Wedding (26p and 63p stamps), 1998 Princess Diana memorial issue (first and third stamps in se-tenant strip), 2002 Golden Jubilee 'E' stamp, and 2007 Queen's Diamond Wedding (stamp showing Queen and Prince Philip, in miniature sheet). He also took the photographs of Charlie Chaplin, the Dr Who Dalek, and Sue Ryder shown on the 1985 Film Year 29p, 1999 Entertainers' Tale 44p, and 2016 first-class Humanitarians stamps.

I spoke to Jeffery Matthews, who designed the 1981 Royal Wedding stamps using a photograph of Prince Charles and Lady Diana taken by Lord Snowdon. Jeffery recalled visiting Lord Snowdon at his studio and showing him sketches of his proposed design which involved similar treatment of the subjects to that on the 1972 Silver Wedding stamps using photographs of The Queen and Prince Philip by Norman Parkinson. He asked Lord Snowdon to take separate photographs of the Prince and Lady Diana, which he could then impose on the design to get the best composition. He found Lord Snowdon polite, affable and businesslike, but was somewhat dismayed when only one photograph of the couple was supplied for use on the stamps. In this photograph, the Prince towers over his fiancee, though they were of similar height. Jeffery believes a much better design would have resulted from the use of separate photographs as requested.

Snowdon's portraits of The Queen, along with others by John Hedgecoe, were used by Arnold Machin when producing the plaster cast of The Queen used on the Machin definitives. His portraits also appeared on a number of Commonwealth stamps such as that of The Queen on the 30p Falkland Islands stamp marking Her Majesty becoming the longest reigning monarch in 2015.

Lord Snowdon himself featured on stamps from Antigua and Fiji issued in 1993 and 1986. The aviary he designed for London Zoo in 1962 appeared on the final stamp in Royal Mail's UK A to Z series in 2012. His marriage to Princess Margaret was commemorated by local stamps (local carriage labels) from Herm in the Channel Islands in May 1960 ●

Children's art competition



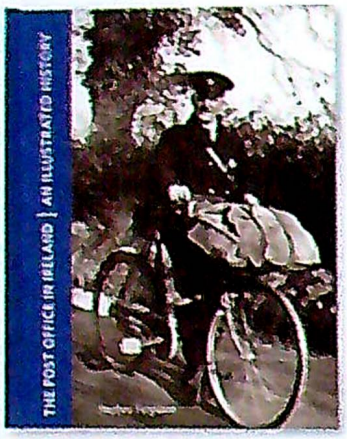
Royal Mail and iChild are once again collaborating to run a national art competition for schoolchildren. Primary schools are invited to participate in this prestigious contest to design stamps for Christmas 2017. This follows the hugely popular Christmas 2013 competition, where 240,000 entries were received.

The competition theme is 'What does the Christmas season mean to you?' – a fun and engaging art lesson activity for children aged four to 11 years. There are great prizes to be won and the two overall winners will have the honour of seeing their designs made into one of the Royal Mail First or Second Class Christmas stamps in November. The winning designs will be approved by The Queen and used on millions of Christmas cards during the festive season.

A record number of entries are expected by the closing date of 17 March. For details and entry conditions, see www.royalmail.com/stampcompetition ● ▸

BOOK REVIEW

John Holman dives into Irish history with a new book by Stephen Ferguson



The Post Office in Ireland is published by Irish Academic Press, Newbridge, Co Kildare. It is available from the Irish Philatelic Bureau, GPO, Dublin 1. Price: €24.99, plus handling charge of €7.05 (Ireland) and €8.50 (international, including UK)

Stephen Ferguson, Assistant Secretary of An Post (the Irish Post Office) and curator of its museum and archive, has written what will long be its definitive history – *The Post Office in Ireland: An Illustrated History*. In his preface, he notes that the Post Office '...is a creation of the state and it has also served the state's interests from time to time. Indeed, the theme of politics, in particular the relationship between Ireland and Britain, is woven through the history of the Irish Post Office. Long before Pearse and Connolly occupied the GPO in 1916, Napper Tandy and the French had proclaimed independence from a remote Donegal post office'. The GPO in Dublin played a key role in the story of Irish independence and was the focus of events marking the centenary of the Easter Rising last year.

Ferguson's first chapter, Letters, Franks and Stamps, tells the story of early communication. Learning and literacy were long the sole preserve of the church and the only postal system was that of the abbots and scholars who wrote to each other in Latin – the great abbeys and monasteries of Ireland and Europe were the general post offices of their time and travelling monks their postmen. Among the items illustrated is a copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses* mailed from Dublin to London and intercepted under the British obscene publications legislation. The Fitzgerald-Thomas letter of 1840 is described as the first unambiguous usage of the Penny Black on a letter from Ireland.

In chapter two we read of the creation of a Post Office from 1572 to 1736, and Ferguson suggests that a postal network in Ireland, with a regular system of dispatches and staging posts accessible to the public, dates from Evan Vaughan's appointment as Postmaster in Dublin in 1638. Vaughan, however, did not have a happy time as Postmaster, suffering at the hands of his London counterpart Edmund Prideaux, a man 'whose spleen, covetousness, and desire for revenge' brought Vaughan to imprisonment and the brink of ruin.

Chapter three, entitled Postboys and Mail Coaches, explains the transportation of mail, much improved by John Palmer's mail coaches. The Holyhead coach, introduced in 1785, cut the time taken to convey mails from London to Dublin from five to three days. In Ireland mail coaches, run by John Anderson and Charles Bianconi, were relatively short-lived before being replaced by the railways. Among interesting illustrations is one of a modern Irish postbus which operated for a few summers in the 1980s on a circular route in Co Clare. Chapter four – Developing an Identity, 1736-1831 – looks at the close connection between the 18th century Post Office and the distribution of news, epitomised by newspaper titles such as *The Dublin Post*, *The Dublin Postman* and *The Flying Post*.

The fine GPO building in Dublin, opened in 1818, remains 'one of the oldest continuously functioning GPOs in the world'. Its creation owed much to Sir Edward Lees, PO Secretary, a man who evoked strong feelings and said to have made considerable personal profit from the Post Office.

The role of shipping in transporting mail is covered in chapter five. The mail packets also conveyed travellers such as John Wesley on his frequent evangelising visits to Ireland, and George IV for a successful royal visit in 1821. When Sir Edward Lees left Ireland for Scotland in 1831, the Irish PO came under London control. Controversy continued over the use of Howth or Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire) as the main packet port; eventually Kingstown won out.

The integration of the Irish postal service with the British is covered in chapter



seven; chapter six deals with the railways and the Post Office. Although Ireland had good roads, by the standards of the time, economic development was hampered by the limited nature of inland waterways. The railways profoundly changed the nature of Irish society and speeded the carriage of mail. Under an Act of 1873 railway companies had to accept mails for conveyance by any train without prior notice and made it unlawful for them to delay the mails in any way. There are some good photographs of mail carriages, including one of the last Travelling Post Office carriages built in 1968. TPOs were withdrawn in Ireland in 1994.

Home Rule became a contentious matter in the period covered by chapter seven (1831 to 1922). Among the intriguing items shown is the 'Redmondus Rex' design, a spoof of the George V Downey Head showing John Redmond and a smiling pig standing on the British lion – this satirical stamp design appeared in *Punch* during the 1912 Home Rule debates. Also featured is the 'Union Stamp' designed for protest use by those opposed to the Home Rule Bill. Chapters eight and nine are devoted to the introduction and use of the telegraph and telephone, and chapter ten looks at working for the Post Office. Prior to the 1867 civil service reforms, many PO careers in the higher echelons (Anthony Trollope, for example) owed much to patronage. At the other end of the scale the country postboys of the 18th and 19th centuries were poorly paid, ill-educated and sometimes yielded to temptation to open letters in their charge. The picture of the bare-foot ragamuffin telegram boy in Roscommon in 1892 is in stark contrast to the respectably dressed staff as shown at the Dungarvan office in 1904. Ferguson notes that 'today's postmen and postwomen remain a symbol of stability and service in modern Ireland. While technology has greatly changed the sorting of mails and altered to some extent the work of the counter clerk, the essence of delivery has not changed much at all'.

The relationship between the state and its employees (chapter 11) was never straightforward and the Post Office, as the largest employer of labour within the civil service, grappled with its response to labour relations. The 1922 strike left a bitter feeling in the Post Office for many years; Christmas Day deliveries, a cause of grievance to many staff, were abolished in 1937; and in the 1970s ministers feared opportunists might use postal strikes to undermine the government.

The final chapter deals with the period 1922 to 1984 from the setting up of the Irish Dept of Posts & Telegraph to the establishment of An Post, the state-owned company which now runs the postal service. This chapter is of particular interest to philatelists, with mentions and illustrations of British definitives overprinted for use in Ireland in 1922, and the first Irish stamp, the Map design, by James Ingram, issued on 6 December 1922. The new government was keen that Ireland would be represented as an independent state as soon as possible and a photo shows the Irish delegation at the Universal Postal Union Congress in Stockholm in 1924.

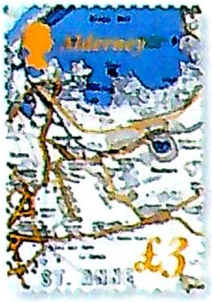


The Post Office has encouraged the use of the Irish language and another photo shows Michael D Higgins (now President of Ireland) as Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht launching the Conradh na Gaeilge stamps in 1993. Ferguson concludes that the Post Office 'faces a rather challenging and uncertain future, it draws strength from what has been a very distinguished history of service to this country, a cast of characters that, in the main, embodies the virtues of human nature and, above all, a traditional intimacy with the people and circumstances of Ireland that can be claimed by no other organisation' ●



Island news

Guernsey Post launched six new Post & Go designs at Stampex last month. Beautifully illustrated by Robin Carter, the set includes depictions of Castle Breakwater lighthouse in Guernsey's capital; Alderney – or Mannez – lighthouse; and the still active lighthouse on Sark, which guides vessels passing through the Channel Islands away from Blanchard Rock to the east.

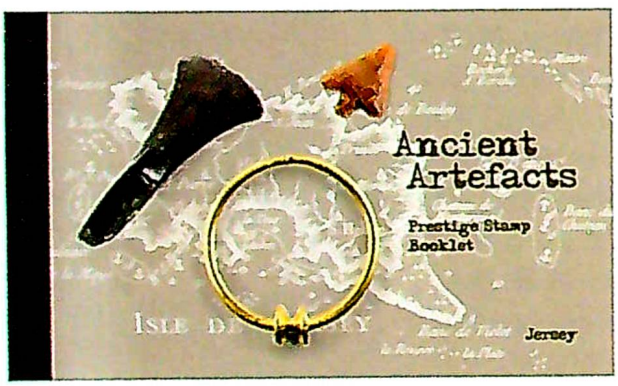




The unusual miniature sheet shown above left features a map of Alderney and Burhou, created by gifted architect Addison "Roger" Warren, whose maps provided invaluable intelligence during the D-Day landings of 1944. Enquiries: Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost GU267, Envoy House, La Vrangue, Guernsey GY1 5SS, email philatelic@guernseypost.com •



The Isle of Man Post Office marked the development of its new variable rate self-adhesive definitives with the release of Treskilion Definitives in February. Their four designs are based on the Isle of Man's national emblem, the Three Legs of Man (shown left) as it appears in Douglas Town Hall; a design incorporating the Millennium of Tynwald three legs; as seen on a quayside building in Castletown; and a new modern interpretation on a green background. The set of four stamps is also available in a mint set and presentation pack for collectors. For details see www.iomstamps.com or write to: Isle of Man Stamps & Coins, PO Box 10M, Douglas, Isle of Man IM99 1PB •



Jersey Post has a 2017 Europa issue, Jersey Castles and Forts, is released on 2 March and an Ancient Artefacts issue is out on 11 April. The latter will comprise eight stamps and a prestige booklet (left) and the 73p stamp features the logo of SEPAC (Small European Postal Administration Cooperations). The SEPAC stamp theme set for this year is 'Local Handcraft'.

Enquiries: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost JE793, Jersey Post, Jersey JE1 1AF, www.jerseystamps.com •

Stamp images: © issuing postal bureaux

Starman remembered



As new Special Stamps celebrate superstar David Bowie we explore his legacy with those who knew and worked alongside him

Interviews: Andrew Neish

Mesmerically mismatched eyes, jagged teeth at once devilish and wolfish, the nose of a Roman senator, cheekbones carved by a sculptor. David Bowie always looked a natural-born star. But it was his originality that made him shine: he invented fantastically named alter egos that Olivier would have killed to play – Major Tom, Ziggy Stardust, Aladdin Sane, Thin White Duke. And he wrapped his personas in fabulous couture: alien rocker Ziggy's outrageous jumpsuits, Aladdin's lightning bolt chic, the spectral Thin White Duke's sinister black three-piece, the sabre-sharp bolero jackets from the cocaine-wasted days of *Young Americans*.

The impact of David Bowie's personas and concert performances translates beautifully into the miniature stage of stunning stamps. And as we look we recall the music: singing out from the images are those lyrics. Lavish, cryptic and laced with strange poetry, Bowie's words are seared into the memories of millions. Let 'serious' collectors mutter disdainfully about the place of Britain's pop culture on stamps (and we do appreciate letters on this subject), but Royal Mail's stamp suite released this month is a timely, glorious celebration of Bowie's life. Unsurprisingly, the response from philatelists and Bowie fans worldwide has broken all sales records.

Yes, these Special Stamps are 'different'. But everything Bowie did was different – how he sang, how he looked, how he dressed, from the androgynous superglam of *Ziggy Stardust* to the brilliantly bleak goodbye of final album *Blackstar*. Bowie conscientiously defied definition, such a renaissance man was he, flitting from one creative medium to another with ease – music, song, film, theatre, art, fashion – in a career that shone for over four decades before his death last year at 69.

On the following pages we examine Bowie's legacy and genius by exploring the new stamps with people who worked with him: the Glastonbury founder who recalls Bowie's festival debut at sunrise one Seventies summer morning; the art director who created the legendary Aladdin Sane lightning bolt look on a winter's day in Primrose Hill; the album designer who Bowie surprised with a very special wedding present; and the curator who had the surreal honour of guiding Bowie around an exhibition about his own life. Turn over for our David Bowie stories… ▸

'My own memory of Bowie was seeing him perform his new album *Let's Dance* and all the classic tracks at the Milton Keynes Bowl on a blazing July afternoon in 1983 during the Serious Moonlight Tour. He had ice cream-coloured hair and a Cornish cream-yellow suit to match. I was 18, I'd just finished my A levels and had my whole life ahead of me, and here I was at the Bowl, with a lovely girl at my side, watching my hero strutting his divine stuff. I'll never forget it.'
Andrew Neish

Aladdin Sane

Celia Philo art directed the shoot for the album cover that has become a true design classic



Timelessly dazzling, it is possibly the world's most recognisable record album. With the extraordinary image of David Bowie sporting that legendary lightning bolt, *Aladdin Sane* is instantly identifiable from New York to Tokyo. The album's celebrated cover shot was created at a tiny studio in Primrose Hill, north London, on a grey January day in 1973. Here the lightning flash burst into existence during a ten-hour shoot with Bowie dressed only in his underpants.

Leading fashion photographer Brian Duffy took the shots, hip graphic designer Celia Philo art directed. *Aladdin Sane* was the first job for their new creative agency Duffy Design Concepts. Elizabeth Arden make-up artist Pierre La Roche was on hand to paint the bolt on Bowie's ethereal features.

'When I saw the pictures, I knew we had something special, a fantastic cover; we had created magic,' says Celia of the day she helped build the Bowie legend.

Celia, who also designed the album, says rising star Bowie was no egomaniac. 'He didn't come with a big entourage or a big ego. There was no pomposity. He was simply a very intelligent guy, very charming and polite, a pleasure to work with.'

And work they did. The shoot began in the afternoon and stretched into the early hours of the next day. Duffy took hundreds of shots. Bowie posed patiently. At one point in just his pants for an image of him standing, which was used for the album gatefold. In her design for this layout, Celia placed two lightning flashes across the image of Bowie. The shot was finished off by Seventies airbrush king Philip Castle (famously the creator of the film poster for Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*) crafting a painted silver Ziggy Stardust-style suit onto Bowie's pale, lithe form.

Ah, the legendary lightning flash. There are so many stories of how it came into being. Duffy is said to have had the idea from the lightning flash logo on a rice cooker in his studio kitchen. Others claim Bowie was inspired by one of Elvis Presley's rings that featured a lightning bolt.

But Celia reveals the flash was a collaborative effort: 'I recall David mentioning he'd like to use a lightning symbol, and we'd seen the lightning before, on one of his drum kits. So at the shoot we had a big pad at the studio, and we were messing about with lightning ideas on paper.

'I had the idea of putting flashes across the inside photo. Then, I think it was Pierre La Roche who said, "Let's try the flash across David's face".' And magic happened. Pierre applied the make-up that made style history.

Given the title of the album, and the classic song *The Jean Genie* on it, Celia and Duffy had

Hunky Dory

Glastonbury founder Michael Eavis recalls Bowie's debut when he played tracks from his brilliant early album



Michael Eavis remembers the magic moment in 1971 when an unknown David Bowie made his debut at the world-famous festival with a dawn gig. Bowie, then 24, played to a crowd of dozy festival-goers who had emerged from their tents after hearing his set start. Among the songs he sang that historic early morning were the now-legendary *Changes*, *Oh! You Pretty Things* and *Kooks*, from his album *Hunky Dory* – on the first stamp in the Bowie set.

'He wandered in, he didn't even have a vehicle or anything. He just arrived on foot with a guitar on his back, lovely long hair and pretty, hippy clothes,' remembers Michael of Bowie's appearance. 'He really looked the part. I didn't have a clue who he was but I did listen to him singing at 4.30 in the morning!'



The crowd grew as the sun



planned a genie look. The flash worked perfectly with this, so Celia's art direction focused on a shot which captured that fairytale aesthetic.

'David had sent us the *Aladdin Sane* lyrics,' says Celia, 'so we thought we'd shoot him with his naked torso because of the genie connection, as though emerging from Aladdin's magic lamp.'

Celia recalls the origin of the iconic 'teardrop' pooling on Bowie's collar bone in the cover image: 'Duffy thought the drop would look surreal and Salvador Dali-like, so Philip airbrushed it in.'

Bowie apart, there are beautiful touches on Celia's cover design. Like her shimmering typography, and her clever hint at the Aladdin story glowing in the flame-shaped dot on the 'i', as though from Aladdin's lamp itself. All of which Bowie loved: 'When he'd seen the cover, David phoned me up and said how thrilled he was. We were very happy he was happy.'

The cover is still a legendary work of art, copied and reworked for generations – long after Celia had children (her eldest daughter is Céline creative director Phoebe Philo); and became a Bond Street art dealer.

'The design has been hijacked in wonderful ways all over the world – in my travel pass I have an image of a hamster with a lightning flash on it, which one of my daughters got me!' chuckles Celia, who lives with husband Richard in Notting Hill.

'I was in Koh Samui years ago and saw a barber's shop with a sign that had bright red hair and the lightning flash. Friends email images of the flash when they see it on their travels. One had spotted a guy on a beach with the flash tattooed across his back.'

Aladdin Sane is taking centre stage again on one of the Bowie stamps: 'The design is very strong graphically. I like the way the vinyl comes out of the sleeve and over the stamp's edge – very effective,' says Celia. The stamp also respects the original album art, refusing to obscure Celia's work. Quite right, for such a design classic ●



Above: David Bowie with Pierre La Roche, who created the legendary lightning bolt make-up for *Aladdin Sane*

came up over the Pyramid stage on that morning of 23 June, lighting up Bowie in his yellow Oxford bags and floppy cavalier-style hat.

Bowie had stayed at Michael's home, Worthy Farm. There is a famous picture of him emerging from the farm for his gig. After the show – in which he was joined on stage by a fan on acid – Bowie went into the studio to complete *Hunky Dory*, released that year.

In 2000 he returned to Glastonbury for the second and final time. Bowie, now 53, sported long hippy-style hair, a seasoned version of that slender young man who had climbed onto the same stage at the threshold of his career.

His 2000 set included his most famous songs: *"Heroes"*, *Starman*, *Life on Mars?* and *Changes*. Remembering that summer's morning 39 years before, he told the crowd: 'I'd just written this one, the first time I played Glastonbury in 1971,' and sang *Changes* with a youthful energy that drove Glasto wild.

Michael Eavis's daughter Emily, who runs the festival with her father, recalls Bowie's 2000 return: 'He did a storming, incredible set at the Pyramid, one of the best things I've seen' ● ▷



Above: happy hippy David Bowie emerges from Worthy Farm for his debut concert at Glastonbury in 1971

"Heroes" & Blackstar

Bowie album designer Jonathan Barnbrook's moving story of working with the Starman



Jonathan Barnbrook still speaks with quiet wonder of his wedding day in 2013 when he presented new wife Anil with a very special surprise gift.

It was a copy of Bowie's classic *"Heroes"* album signed by David Bowie himself. On the cover, quoting from the title song, he had written a tender message to the happy couple: 'For Jonathan and Anil, well, we can be heroes for ever & ever, what d'you say? Congratulations, David Bowie.' Jonathan, a long-time designer of Bowie's albums and a fan of his music since childhood, had told Bowie that *"Heroes"* would be the song for Mr and Mrs Barnbook's first dance at their reception. 'Anil and I both cried over the present,' Jonathan recalls. 'It was such a generous, kind gesture.'



Jonathan first met Bowie when he designed a book for his wife, model and activist Iman, in 2001. The collaboration climaxed in Jonathan's design of Bowie's brilliantly dark last album *Blackstar*, released two days before his death from cancer on 10 January 2016.

Jonathan is sharing his memories of Bowie following the inclusion of his *Blackstar* design on one of the Bowie stamps: 'I like the way that the stamp issue design doesn't get in the way of the cover designs. I think that's what the fans would want and what Bowie would have wanted.'

Jonathan designed four David Bowie albums: *Heathen* (2002), *Reality* (2003), *The Next Day* (2013) and *Nothing Has Changed* (2014).

And then came *Blackstar*. Its atmosphere is bleak. Its haunting songs reference death. The album design is black and bare and beautiful as space itself. There is a sombre finality about Jonathan's exquisitely spare aesthetic.

On the vinyl version a star cut out from a matt black cover reveals a black record with a wordless black label. Fragments of the star spell out 'Bowie' in a kind of hieroglyphic code. But Bowie's face is, in a design first, missing from the album front. Prescience or coincidence? We might never know. However, when Jonathan met Bowie



the movie *The Man Who Fell to Earth*. Bowie came for a 90-minute before-hours visit to the London show (now on a world tour) with wife Iman and daughter Alexandria in 2013. The show has attracted

Earthling

Style commentator Victoria Broackes on Bowie's sartorial genius and taking him on an intimate tour of his life



What a career one-off – taking David Bowie on an emotional guided tour of his life.

That is exactly what Victoria Broackes did as co-curator of the V&A's David Bowie Is exhibition, featuring over 300 artifacts from Bowie's career, including Kansai Yamamoto's Ziggy Stardust costumes; lyrics for *"Heroes"* he had written on graph paper; and clothes he wore in

at his New York office in June 2015 to discuss the design of *Blackstar*, he did talk at length about his dark view of the world at that time.

Jonathan recalls: 'First we listened to the whole album played very loud. It was quite nerve-racking having David Bowie sitting next to you as you listen to his album and he's checking to see if you think it's good. But I could see he was nervous about my opinion. This was typical of his modesty, a famous artist who is anxious to know that what he's created is worthwhile.'

In an all-day meeting, Bowie and Barnbrook talked politics and the plight of the world. (This was typical Bowie. Jonathan never once received a client brief from him. The brief was always in the conversation.) 'David talked about how a darkness had descended on the world, about its terrible political state,' explains Jonathan. Does he see the idea of mortality in his *Blackstar* design? 'Yes, but only because of the atmosphere of the music did we talk about mortality as something all of us faces. Not David's own mortality. I had no idea he was ill.

'David then showed me drawings he'd done. They were of humans with tails, and knees bending backwards, of women with facial hair. It was about gender fluidity – David said that amid all this darkness, gender fluidity was one of the few positives.'

As for the cover, *sans* Bowie, he says, 'It connects with the fact that Bowie had withdrawn from the public gaze. When he was young he'd had a very strong desire to be famous. But as he grew older, he realised that wasn't the route to happiness. In this sense, for *Blackstar* I suggested that there should be distance between Bowie and the viewer. He agreed. So I created something more abstract, a symbol rather than a portrait of Bowie, for the cover.'

Jonathan also buried visual 'secrets' in his design: when the album comes under sunlight a star field appears on it. Exposed to a UV light, the star artwork shimmers blue. These secrets offer a lightness of spirit in these dark days following Bowie's death. Indeed, despite his lingering sadness over the singer's passing, Jonathan says, 'I'm so honoured to have contributed to Bowie's output. I only hope that what I have designed is worthy of the great art that is his music' •



1.5 million visitors, including celebrities such as *Vogue* doyenne Anna Wintour and Hollwyood legend Robert Redford.

But the acid test would be the visit by the man who owned most of the exhibits. (Victoria and co-curator Geoffrey Marsh had trawled Bowie's New York archive for items to populate the show.) The V&A passed the test. For what began as a fun family tour turned into a poignant journey through the museum's hushed, visitorless halls. 'My impression was that David thought that he was largely bringing his family to see the show because, as it was mostly his stuff, he wouldn't need to look very closely himself,' recalls style commentator Victoria, Senior Curator in the V&A's Department of Theatre & Performance.

'But while he was going around the exhibition I think his attitude changed. He became more and more interested and was impressed and moved by the experience.'

The costumes on display at the V&A show reflect, like the new David Bowie stamps, the exquisite evolution of Bowie's sartorial style – from his Ziggy days (seen on one of the Miniature Sheet stamps where he wore Yamamoto) to his later years (seen on the main set with the cover of his 1997 album *Earthling* where he

wore Alexander McQueen).

'The Kansai Yamamoto costumes were extraordinary and they show how David Bowie had a knack of spotting trends, of being, in style terms, ahead of the pack,' explains Victoria.

'Yamamoto was the first Japanese fashion designer to show in London and Bowie attended his show on the King's Road in 1971, and was inspired by what he saw.

'The models wore these long red wigs from Japanese kabuki theatre and Bowie was influenced by the look.

'He began wearing Yamamoto costumes before anyone else here even knew who Yamamoto was, and of course was famous for his spiky red Ziggy Stardust hairstyle.

'He did exactly the same thing with Alexander McQueen in 1997 with the coat he wore for the *Earthling* album cover. McQueen wasn't famous then as he is now, but again Bowie was in there first, using the talents of a fresh, young designer before McQueen had become a star.'

Victoria is drawn to analyse the cultural and style messages of the *Earthling* cover, and reveals how Bowie worked with McQueen to achieve exactly the right aesthetic.

'*Earthling* is a powerful example of how Bowie, rather than following a conventional route, loved to take an unexpected perspective: here Bowie seemingly adopts the pose of an English gentleman, an 18th century landowner, surveying, perhaps, his estate, in the style of English landscape painting. But look at the countryside: the light and colour make it seem hyper-real, certainly not conventional.

'And neither is the coat: it has a traditional style, but makes very unorthodox use of the Union Jack – looking back to the 1960s when Pete Townshend wore a Union Jack jacket, and yet being of the present, with its nod to Britart and Cool Britannia of the 1990s.

'And there is a Bowie twist with the punk aesthetic of the cigarette burns in the jacket. Bowie collaborated with McQueen on the distressed design, and, we are told, at one point sent the jacket back to McQueen for extra destruction.'

A man, indeed, who loathed convention, and loved individualism. So is this also his legacy?

Victoria would say so: 'Bowie's radical brand of individualism is an inspiration to people not to live by the rules handed down to them, but to question everything and test things to the limit in order to make the best world we can and to make the best of ourselves' •

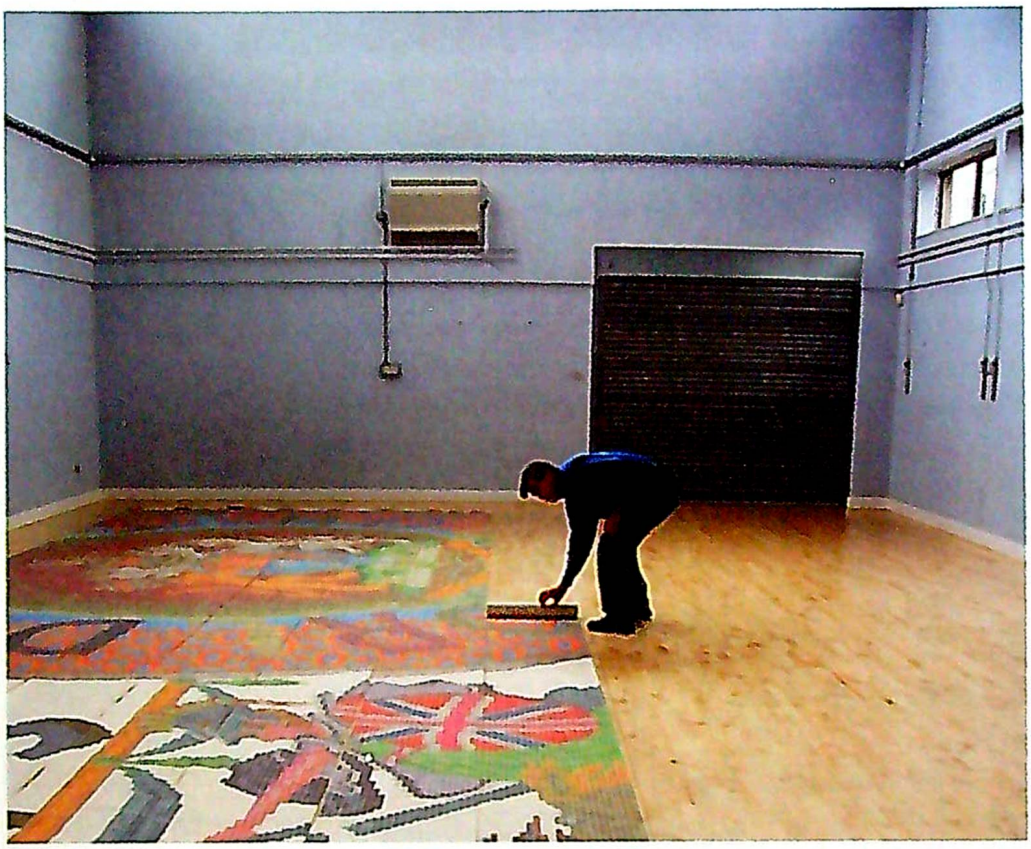


Above: McQueen in 2012's Great British Fashion issue



Left: the stamps in the David Bowie Miniature Sheet show photographs of four different tours – the Ziggy Stardust Tour 1972, Serious Moonlight Tour 1983, The Stage Tour 1978 and A Reality Tour 2004. They are set in a background image of the Glass Spider Tour of 1987

See page 224 for a list of all stamp products available in the David Bowie issue



Stamp mega-mosaic

At this month's Southern England Stamp Show, a huge stamp attraction makes a record-breaking appearance. *Melvyn Philpott* reports

Collector Peter Boyd is making the definitive world record attempt – to create the biggest ever stamp mosaic using over half a million used Machins. In his Guinness World Record bid Peter has spent thousands of hours over the past ten years, patiently gluing together 528,220 stamps to form a meticulously detailed picture measuring 27 metres by nine metres! It shows the famous 2s 6d Seahorse Stamp, a 6½p Machin and special postmark that declares, 'Collect British Stamps – The World's Greatest Hobby'.

On 8 March this massive stamp mosaic will be laid out in the large hall at the Farnborough Leisure Centre, photographs will be taken and printed overnight to produce timely souvenirs, and the whole display can be viewed by the public on Thursday 9 March between 8am and 12pm – the day before the start of the Southern England Stamp Show. The special souvenirs on sale will raise money for the Childline charity.

Says Peter Brown, 'I've enjoyed creating the mosaic so much, I would really like to display it to the public permanently.'

The Southern England Stamp Show is at the Farnborough Leisure Centre Westmead, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7LD on 10 and 11 March. Find further details at www.southernenglandstampshow.com or phone +44 (0)1406 350896 ●

Above: Peter Boyd rolls out his record-breaking attempt. The project is supported by the Machin Collectors Club, Arun Stamps, Stanley Gibbons, Gibbons Stamp Monthly, Stamp Magazine, Stamp and Coin Mart, KMS Publishing, Richard Bond (photographer) and Catton Print of Norwich

Begun by Esther Rantzen in 1986, Childline is a confidential, 24-hour advisory service. It is free to anyone under 19 years old in the UK and available by phone, email or one-to-one counsellor chat

ChildLine 0800 1111



Spring and summer Post & Go-ing

Martyn Fry brings news of self-service stamps at three major philatelic events and explains how Post & Goers will soon be rubbing shoulders with Shakespeare

SPRING STAMPEX in Islington saw the launch of the Mail by Rail Post & Go stamps, continuing the heritage theme that began a year ago with the Royal Mail 500 Transport issue. Alongside the new pictorials, the Machin Post & Go carried two different overprints marking two important anniversaries – this year will see the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the Machin definitive stamp as well as the 65th anniversary of HM The Queen's Accession.



As an added philatelic link to the heritage theme the locomotive stamp that was in last year's set made a re-appearance at the show to complement the new issue.

As has been established for a few years now at the Stampex shows, customers could avoid the long queues for barcoded products by paying at one of the Post & Go machines, which is an increasingly popular option for those in a hurry.

To coincide with the Stampex launch date, Mail by Rail Post & Go stamps were also available from the machine at The Postal Museum. The museum logo was available with a First Class Mail by Rail Collector Strip, which made an interesting variant for collectors.







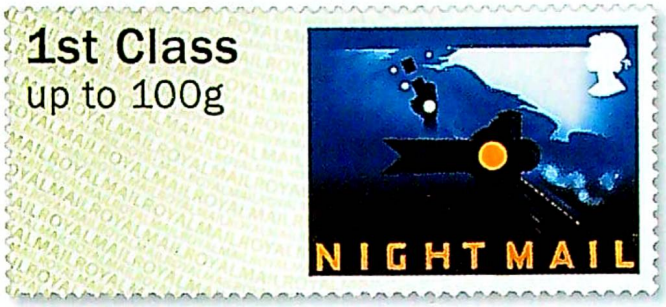
Above: three special Royal Mail first day handstamps and the exhibition postmark for Post & Go Mail by Rail

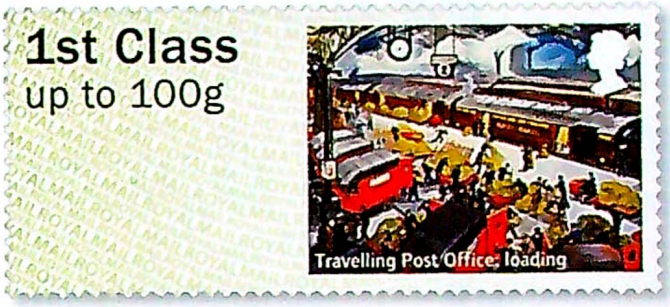
Thistle make them sit up!

Looking ahead, Post & Go machines will be making their annual trip to Perth for the Scottish Congress at the Dewars Centre on 21 and 22 April. The overprint will be '88th Scottish Congress 2017'. On offer for the determined collector will be Collector Strips of the Thistle stamp from the Symbolic Flowers issue of 2014, printed digitally for the first time. Also available with the Scottish Congress overprint will be the Machin and the Lion stamps.

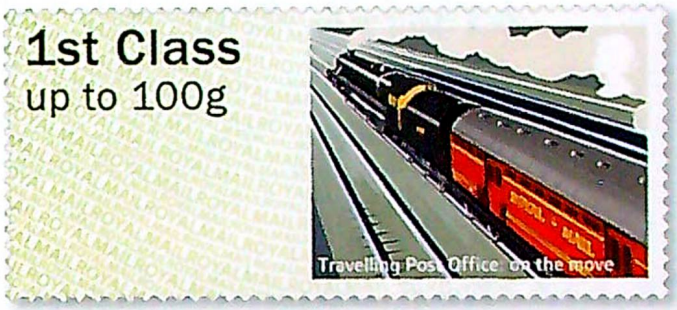
Machin at Midpex

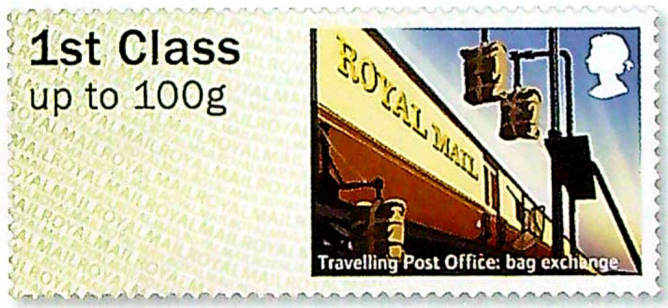
The biennial Midpex stamp show returns to the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre on 8 July. It is likely to be very popular with Machin collectors, not













least because this will be the first exhibition outing for the new Machin Anniversary Post & Go stamps, released as part of the comprehensive suite of commemorative items issued by Royal Mail on 5 June.

Above: the new Mail Rail set includes a timely reference to the underground Post Office railway in London – reopening later this year as an attraction at the new Postal Museum

Below: the pretty and popular Symbolic Flowers stamps, first issued in 2014 and about to peek out again in May. For more details see *Bulletin* Volume 51 page 359 and volume 52 page 16

Symbolic Shakespeare

Machine A009, at Stratford-upon-Avon's Shakespeare Centre, hosts the return of the 2014 Symbolic Flowers set from 1 May. Shakespeare makes references to over 50 flowers in his plays and Centre visitors should enjoy the symbolism in this set. We trust Royal Mail will not be accused of 'gilding the lily' by enhancing the stamp appeal of this popular location! The stamps were produced in digital format by International Security Printers •













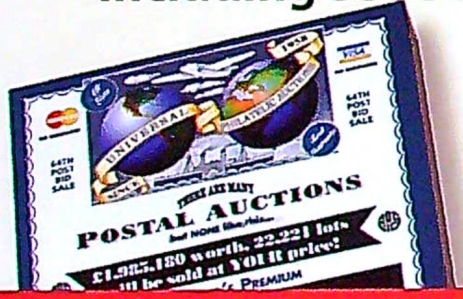
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V ... is for variety of uses

Colin Baker explains some of the rate amendment marks that have resulted from stationery preprinted for one specific purpose being used for another

Fig 1

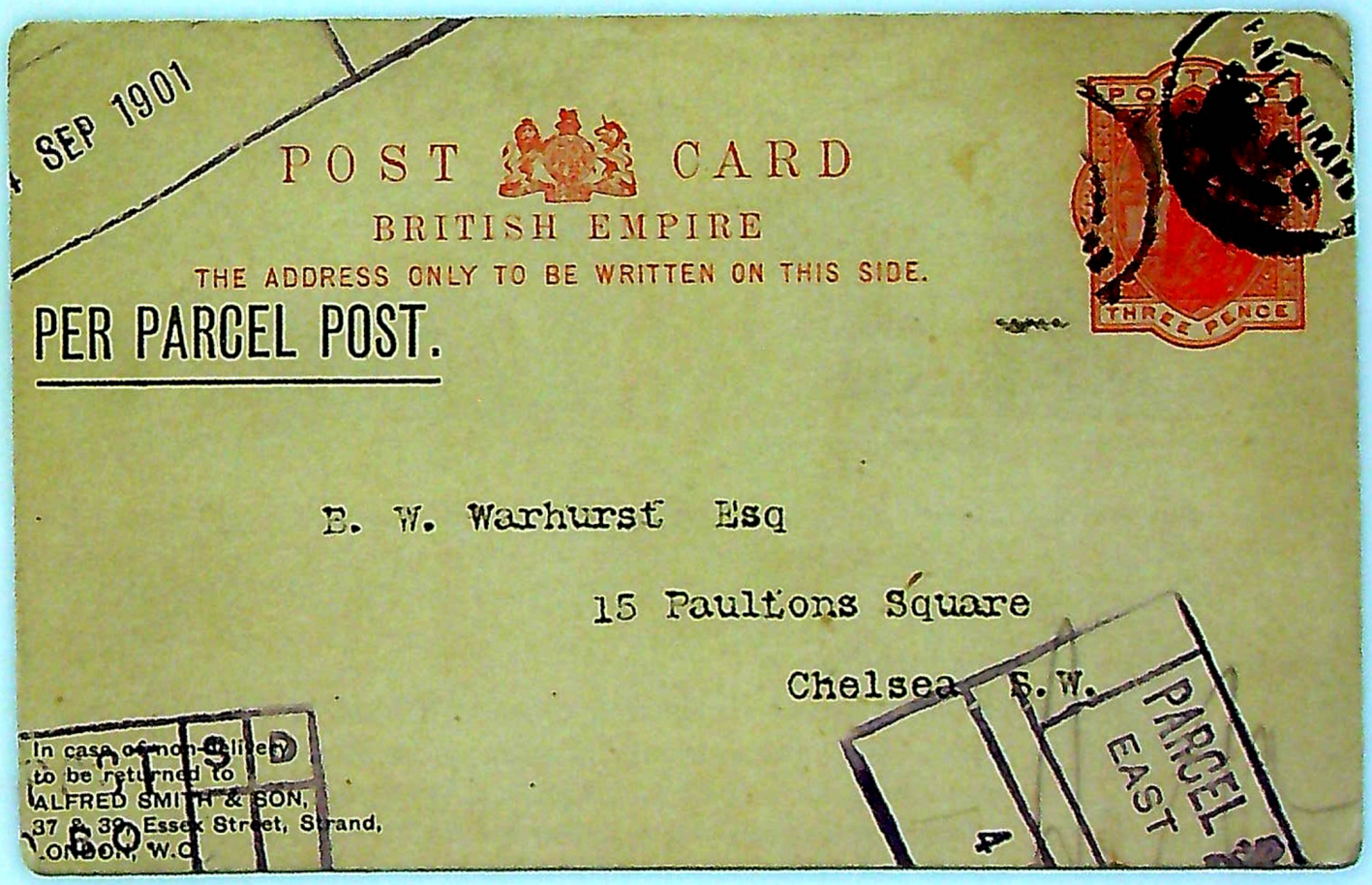


Fig 1 A 3d postcard used as a parcel post label

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE, they say. And that is certainly true of postal stationery. For Post Office issues of postal stationery have invariably been designed for one specific use, while customers' own paper and card stamped at Somerset House had to be shown to have a purpose. But there were always those who bent the rules and used postal stationery for purposes other than that for which it was intended. Among these postal risk-takers were – you will be unsurprised to learn – stamp dealers and collectors.

It was just as well that the Post Office took the view that a stamp was a receipt for the payment of any post office service, not just one aspect of it. This allowed creations shown on these pages to pass through the post unhindered. The stamp dealer Whitfield King sometimes used stamped- ▸



Fig 2

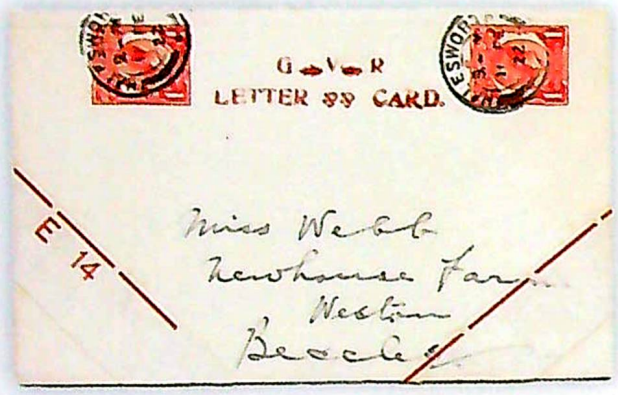


Fig 3



Fig 4

Fig 2 Envelope used as a parcel post label
Fig 3 A homemade letter card
Fig 4 A homemade envelope

to-order envelopes to pay the postage on parcels, even though the Post Office sold a range of prepaid parcel post labels. Another stamp dealer, Alfred Smith, took this idea a stage further and used an outdated 3d postcard as a parcel post label, even having it specially overprinted. He had probably bought a batch of these hoping to sell them to his customers – then, when he could see the time approaching for the Queen Victoria stamps to be demonetised (which happened in 1915), he would be stuck with them. So he decided to recoup his outlay before that happened.

An enterprising soldier who was sent to South Africa to serve in the Boer War created a penny envelope from two ½d newspaper wrappers. It paid the 1d postage for sending letters home, which troops were allowed to do at the beginning of the 20th century, and so it was not stopped.

Another person used a part sheet of stamps that were originally intended to be turned into 1d postcards. However, he used two uncut postcards with their stamps and turned them into his own letter card. He even used his John Bull printing outfit for the heading, but he let himself down by



Fig 5



Fig 6

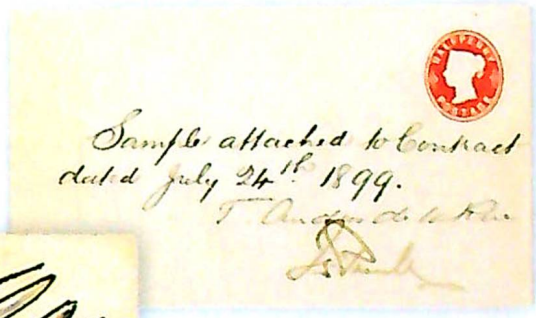


Fig 7

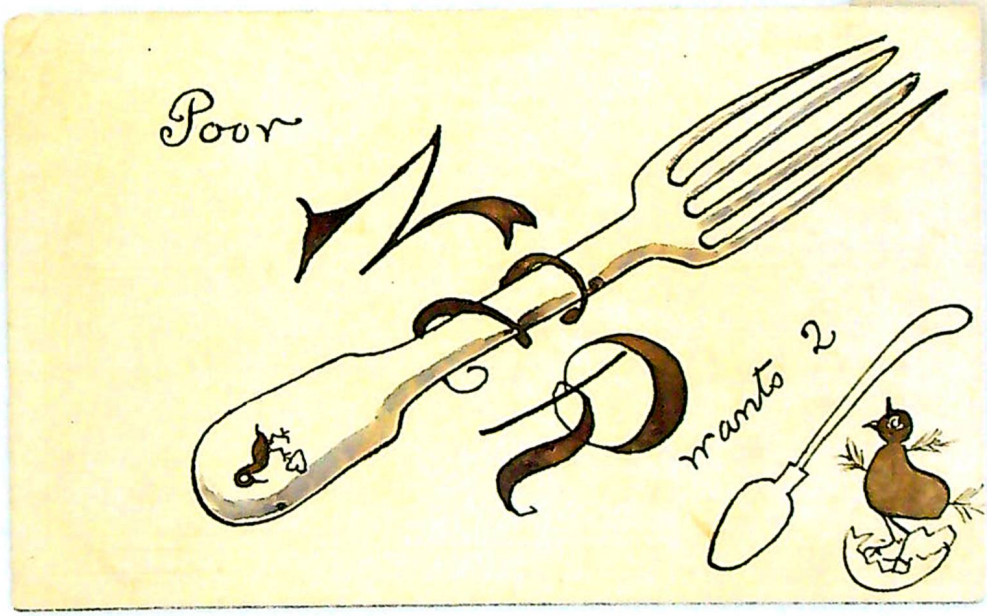


Fig 8

Fig 5 The postcard taken to Brazil
Fig 6 School specimen letter card
Fig 7 Part of a De La Rue contract
Fig 8 Rebus message

sealing the letter card with stamp edging. The postage on letter cards was 2d at the beginning of 1922.

One intriguing postcard was taken to Pernambuco in Brazil by a philatelist, where in 1872 it received nearly every handstamp there was. Despite all these markings, it probably never went in the post, but was handed back to the eager collector. Another postcard used in 1875 carried a rebus message; pictures that had to be interpreted into a letter. The clue here is that the postcard is addressed to Miss Crow.

An envelope from the end of Queen Victoria's reign was used by the Post Office as part of a contract with the printer De La Rue, to order a similar batch of the same type, and was used as a standard that the printer was expected to achieve. Finally in our round-up is the overprinted item that was used at the Post Offices school where new postmasters trained •

Next month: W for Weston, a Victorian stamp dealer with great powers of persuasion.

Colin Baker is Secretary of the Postal Stationery Society and welcomes email enquiries about the Society at pss.secretary@gmail.com.

This Month in History

John Holman revisits this colourful set issued 40 years ago to celebrate British accomplishments in chemistry

On 2 March 1977, The Queen was visiting Australia, *Wonderful World* sung by Lee Marvin was number one in the pop charts, Chris Martin of Coldplay was born in Exeter and the Post Office issued a four-stamp set under the title British Achievement in Chemistry to mark the centenary of the Royal Institute of Chemistry. The colourful stamps illustrate the work of Nobel prize winners.

The 8½p depicts work by Professor Sir Derek Barton at Imperial College on conformational analysis, which enabled the reproduction of complex natural substances in chemical plants. The 10p value refers to the work on vitamin C by Sir Norman Haworth of Birmingham University, which led to the production of the first synthetic version of the vitamin. The 11p illustrates partition chromatography, by which the components of a liquid or gas can be separated, identified and measured, a method pioneered by Professors A J P Martin and R L M Synge. The 13p shows crystallography, the X-ray photography of crystals, developed by a father-and-son team, Professors Sir William and Sir Lawrence Bragg.

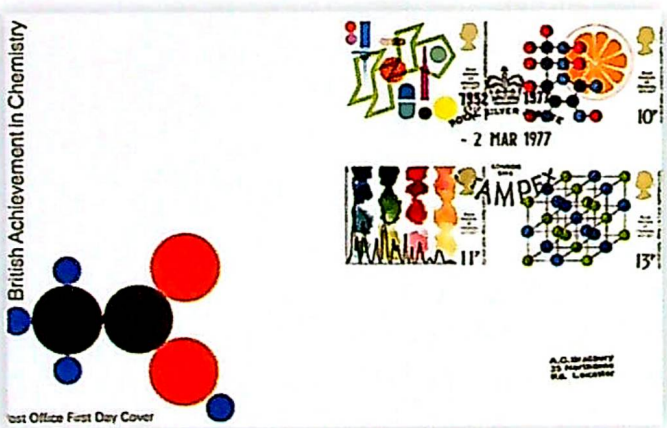
The designs were positioned across most of the stamp area, with The Queen's silhouette at the top right and the caption 'Royal Institute of Chemistry 1877-1977' and value below. Down the right-hand side of each stamp are inscribed the achievement honoured, the name of the relevant scientist and date of their Nobel award. The designer and Post Office were to be congratulated for providing so much useful captioning on the stamps, important as the symbolic images would have meant little to most people looking at the stamps.

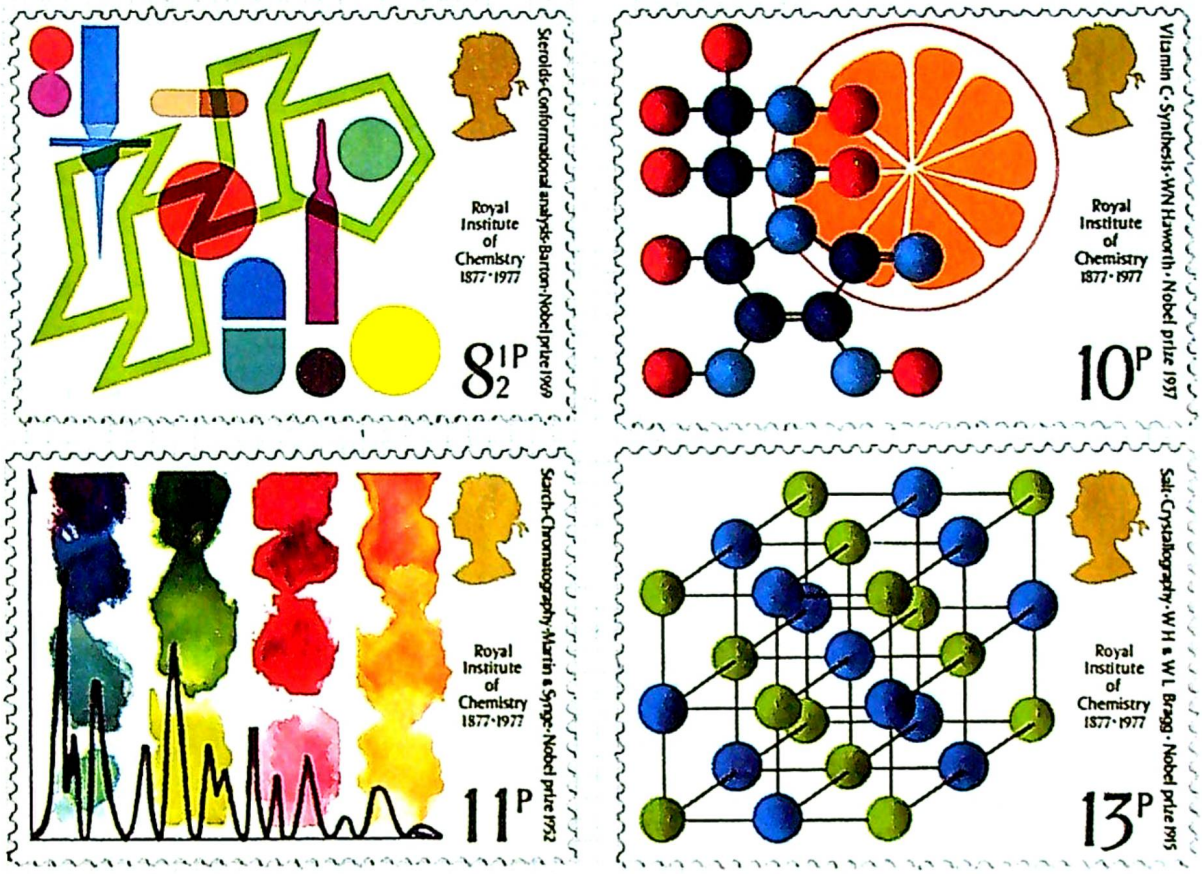
The stamps were designed by Polish-born Jerzy Karo, the Head of Graphics at City of Leicester Polytechnic, and the author of books entitled *Animaloonies* (1973) and *Graphic Design* (1975). Printing was by Harrisons using six colours for the 8½p stamp, five each for the 10p and 11p, and three for the 13p. In addition The Queen's silhouette was in gold and all stamps printed on 'all-over' phosphor paper.

No missing colour errors are listed, but the 8½p is catalogued imperforate

Below left: British Achievement in Chemistry first day cover with the Stampex handstamp

Below right: the first day cover featuring the Royal Institute of Chemistry special handstamp





Left: the British Achievement in Chemistry set

Below: the issue designer Jerzy Karo and his books *Animaloonies* and *Graphic Design*

and 8½p and 11p imperf between stamp and bottom margin. One constant variety – a black dot over the 'a' of Barton – is of sufficient significance for listing in the *Stanley Gibbons GB Specialised Catalogue*.

The Post Office provided a first day cover, presentation pack and PHQ stamp cards. First day covers serviced by the Philatelic Bureau received the Bureau's Edinburgh postmark; local first day of issue handstamps were applied at about 200 offices. A first day machine slogan was used at Paddington, W2 on bulk mailing of covers to the medical profession. Two relevant special handstamps were used on the day of issue – Royal Institute of Chemistry, London WC and Starch Derivatives for Industry, Battersea SW11.

The stamps went on sale on the second day of Stampex 1977 and covers are popular with the Stampex handstamp, though this referred to the Queen's Silver Jubilee. Also appealing to collectors are covers with these stamps cancelled by the special handstamp for the Annual Congress of the Royal Institute of Chemistry, London WC1, 28 March-1 April 1977, and the 8½p stamp with 'NSD/1977' perfin available as a souvenir at the National Stamp Day Stamp Fair at Bloomsbury Centre Hotel, London on 6 May 1977. Check PHQ cards you have, as the 10p stamp card is known with rosine and black colours omitted, as well as the presentation pack for blue text missing inside.

Stocks of the 8½p stamp were exhausted in December 1977, and the other values were withdrawn on 1 March 1978. Quantities sold ranged from 7.8 million of the 13p to 37 million of the 8½p value. Some 144,499 packs were sold. A special feature on British achievements in chemistry and the work of the Royal Institute was published in the *Bulletin* of February 1977, which previewed the stamp issue •







WIN the new Postal Museum stamp sheet

Put on your postal history hats, answer five questions correctly and you could be one of five readers to win the striking Commemorative Sheet to be issued by Royal Mail in celebration of the opening of The Postal Museum later this year. The first prize winner also receives a guided tour of the museum during Autumn Stampex

1 The Sheet's Smilers® stamps show the Penny Black, Penny Red and Twopenny Blue. Name the printing tests which established the red and blue colours.
a) Scarlet Trials
b) Rainbow Trials
c) Red Is The New Black Trials

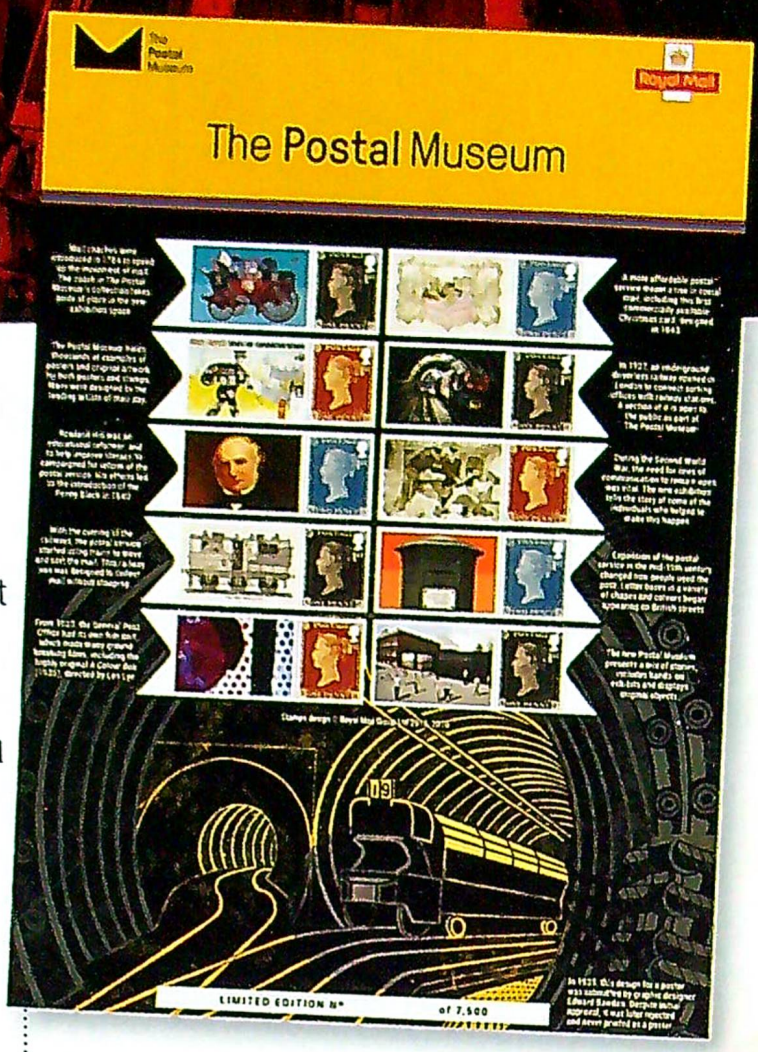
2 The new Museum is located near London's largest mail sorting office, built on the site of Coldbath Fields Prison in 1889 and known as...
a) Mount Pheasant
b) Cold Peasant
c) Mount Pleasant

3 Visitors to The Postal Museum can ride on the underground driverless Mail Rail. When was it built?
a) 1927 **b)** 1827 **c)** 1957

4 What vehicle takes pride of place near the Museum?
a) Morris Minor van
b) 18th century mail coach
c) The curator's bicycle

5 One label on the Sheet shows a 1930s GPO film unit poster – for which film?
a) *A Colour Box*
b) *A Chocolate Box*
c) *A Tool Box*

How to enter Send your answers by email to rmbulletin @rocketmail.com or by post, along with your contact address or phone number, to 'March Quiz', Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB.
Closing date 17 April 2017.
Prizes The senders of the first five correct entries drawn at random after the closing date win The Postal Museum Commemorative Sheet. The first prize winner also wins a guided tour of The Postal Museum.



Above: The Postal Museum Commemorative Sheet has ten First Class pictorial definitives, set over a graphic image of the Mail Rail. See page 188 of February *Bulletin* for more details of stamp labels and pack. Please note, the issue date shown on page 188 has been changed and the new date is not confirmed as we go to press with this edition.

December solution and winners *Solution* 1a, 2a, 3c, 4c, 5a, 6c, 7b, 8c, 9c, 10a, 11b, 12b. *Yearbook winner* J Paulson. *Presentation Pack winners* C Bishop, P Bowater, T Browne, D Dorgan, K Fraser, A Harker, S Hogg, M J Phillips, D Slater, H Ulmann.

Rules and regulations 1 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 2 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. 3 Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date stated. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotion is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to The Editor.

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Royal Mail stamp issues and withdrawals

14 March — **Issue** David Bowie: Stamps (3 x 1st Class, 3 x £1.52), Miniature Sheet (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.52), Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir Cover, Stamp Show Souvenir, Stamp Book (4 x 1st Class Machin Definitives, 2 x 1st Class David Bowie), Postcards (11 in set). Details: preview, page 164; feature, page 207.



15 March — **Withdrawal** British Humanitarians: Stamps (3 x 1st Class, 3 x £1.33), Presentation Pack, Postcards (6 in set). Details: *Bulletin* Vol 53 page 164, 212; Vol 54 page 50.

21 March — **Issue** 5 x new Machin Definitives, Presentation Pack. Preview: page 199. Country Definitives (England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales £1.17 and £1.40 each), 4 x Presentation Packs. Preview: page 200.



5 April — **Withdrawal** Shakespeare: Stamps (10 x 1st Class), Presentation Pack, Postcards (10 in set), Coin Cover. Details: *Bulletin* Vol 53 pages 208 and 242.

6 April — **Issue** Racehorse Legends: 8 x Single Stamp Sheets (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.17, 2 x £1.40, 2 x £1.57), Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir, Postcards (8 in set), Medal Cover, Framed Stamps. Preview: page 196.

21 April — **Withdrawal** HM The Queen's 90th Birthday: (3 x 1st Class, 3 x £1.52), Presentation Pack, Miniature Sheet (4 x 1st Class), Press Sheet, Prestige Stamp Book, Retail Stamp Book (6 x 1st Class), Postcards (11 in set), Commemorative Document, Bespoke Souvenir Pack. Details: Vol 53 page 259.

21 April — **Withdrawal** Buckingham Palace: Stamps (6 x 1st Class), Class Miniature Sheet (4 x 1st Class), Press Sheet, Presentation Pack, Prestige Stamp Book, Postcards (11 in set), Retail Stamp Book.

21 April — **Withdrawal** Long to Reign Over Us: 1st Class Amethyst Purple Definitive, Miniature Sheet (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.52, 1 x 1st Class Definitive), Press Sheet, Presentation Pack, Postcards (6 in set).

To be confirmed **Issue** The Postal Museum Smilers® Commemorative Sheet. Preview: page 188.

Order all philatelic items, including the stamp products listed above, at **www.royalmail.com/stamps** or from **Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles** PO Box 1373, Sunderland SR5 9PG, UK. (Overseas subscribers will need to use a stamp.) Telephone order line (08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday): 03457 641 641. From overseas: +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. We would advise you to quote **17BUL12** the *Bulletin* media code. Selected items are available at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets at main post offices.

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Royal Mail

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