

Bulletin

Channel Islands occupation stamps • Stamp designers

The Golden Wedding anniversary: four new stamps commemorate the marriage of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

1947

AND DIGNITY
IN THE ABBEY

6 KINGS AND 7
QUEENS PRESENT

FANFARES
TRUMPETE

BY CAMPBELL DIX

At Westminster the scene was superb and nothing could have been more English than the contrasts and the joy, and the solemnity of the magnificence of the occasion, and a ceremonial demonstration of the Arch-



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover photograph Four new stamps commemorate the Golden Wedding of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The 20p stamp is shown with a newspaper report of 21 November 1947. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

Late news

The cylinders for the new Harrison definitive printings (26 August) are: 31p and 63p 1 phosphor 45; 37p 2 phosphor 45.

Royal Mail has sponsored a stamp collecting supplement to be published in *The Express* magazine on Saturday 6 September.

Issues Note some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester Colchester, Coventry, Croydon Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter Gatwick Airport, Glasgow Gloucester, Grimsby, Guildford Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester Liverpool, London (Lombard Street, Trafalgar Square and Victoria Street), Manchester Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth Portsmouth, Southampton Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage Stratford-on-Avon, Truro, Windsor and York.

1 September	Withdrawal Stamp rolls – 1st and 2nd NVI (issued 8 July '96)
2 September	Issue Enid Blyton stamp cards
2 September	Withdrawal Children's TV (Big Stars from the Small Screen) stamps, pack and stamp cards
8 September	Withdrawal 10 × 1st book, Cake promotion
9 September	Issue Enid Blyton stamps and pack
15 September	Issue 10 × 1st book (gold stamps) with holiday promotion cover
16 September	Issue Royal Mail International pictorial aircards – five designs. Available from Bureau, philatelic outlets and main post offices in London and Dartford area
23 September	Issue BBC prestige stamp book (£6.15)
30 September	Withdrawals Classic Sports Cars stamps, pack and stamp cards; 1996 Christmas aerogramme • National Postal Museum PO Vehicles postcards. <i>Note: to be withdrawn at the Bureau, will remain on sale at NPM shop</i>
1 October	Issue Horror souvenir book containing stamps of GB, Ireland, Canada and USA; The Golden Wedding Anniversary stamp cards
7 October	Issue The Golden Wedding Anniversary stamps, pack and philatelic numismatic cover; 1997 Christmas aerogramme
21 October	Issue 4 × 1st book with Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting commemorative label
27 October	Issue 1997 Christmas stamps, pack and stamp books (1st and 2nd class); 1997 Yearpack and Yearbook (standard and leather bound editions)
27 October	Withdrawal 1996 Christmas stamps, pack, stamp books and stamp cards; 1996 Yearpack & Yearbook

Contents

IWM



The German occupation of the Channel Islands

On 30 June 1940, German troops arrived in Guernsey. Sidney Amery looks at some of the stamps issued during the following years **18**

The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, Royal London House, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum • **Annual subscriptions** UK and Europe £9.50, rest of the world £13.50. Subscriptions should be sent to British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, rest of world £21.75 • **Copyright** Unless copyright attributed to specific authors, all articles and features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be sent to the Editor, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

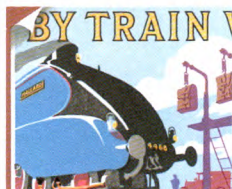
Issues and withdrawals for September and October **2**

Royal Mail news The Royal Golden Wedding anniversary; Christmas aerogramme; Pictorial aircards; New stamp books; Horror souvenir book; Aberdeen mail centre opening **4**



Stamp scene Midpex; Autumn Stampex; Philatelic societies; Railway letter stamps; 150 years of Mauritius stamps **10**

British special stamp designers by William Aubrey Witham **15**



A great hobby Looking back on 40 years as a collector, by the Editor **22**



News from the National Postal Museum **26**

Books 1953 Coronation issue; Collecting GB first day covers; Stanley Gibbons Queen Victoria catalogue **27**

Postbag **29**

Competition Sponsored by John M Deering; Win £100 voucher **30**

Posting boxes **31**

Events for September **31**

Royal Mail news Golden Wedding stamps

- Horror souvenir book • New stamp books
- Aircards • Christmas aerogramme •

The Golden Wedding anniversary Four stamps commemorating the golden wedding of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 7 October 1997. The 20p and 43p stamps feature a wedding portrait by society photographer Baron; the 26p and 63p values show a study of The Queen and Prince Philip specially taken by Lord Snowdon in October 1996. The values cover the basic 2nd and 1st class inland rates, and the 1st and 2nd weight steps for airmail letters.



ed: the Hartnell wedding dress, embroidered with seed pearls, wedding ring cut from the same sapphire, and the Duke's wedding, known as a Royal Navy badge



FIFTY GILDED YEARS

Four children and six grandchildren; more than a million miles of official tours; the tireless dedication to duty and service; a great public and private partnership of 50 years.



Presentation pack and stamp cards

A presentation pack (price £1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, and main post offices. The pack has been written by Mike Barden.



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

A souvenir book will also be available – details next month.



STAMP PORTRAITS OF HM THE QUEEN AND HRH PRINCE PHILIP Over the years The Queen has appeared on thousands of stamps, British, Commonwealth and foreign. She was first depicted, as the young Princess Elizabeth, on stamps from Newfoundland in 1932 and 1938 (SG 214, 270), Canada in 1935 and 1939 (335, 372), and New Zealand in 1943 (637). Newfoundland honoured her 21st birthday in April 1947 with a 4c stamp (SG 293), and she featured on several

stamps for the Royal Visit to southern Africa later that year (Basutoland SG 34-35, Bechuanaland 134-5, Southern Rhodesia 62, South Africa 113, Swaziland 44-45). On some of these she is shown with Princess Margaret or with her parents and sister.

Her marriage to Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark at Westminster Abbey on 20 November 1947 was commemorated by stamps from Australia (SG 222) and Canada (410) although the latter was not issued until the following February. Australia has recently reproduced its wedding stamp on its annual Queen's birthday issue (1691). The British Post Office did not issue a stamp although a special slogan postmark, with the initials 'E' (Elizabeth) and 'P' (Philip) was used at most main sorting offices.

The first stamp to depict Prince Philip appears to be a Canadian Royal Visit stamp in 1951 (SG 440), followed by other Royal Visit issues from New Zealand in 1953 (722) and Australia in 1954 (272, 274).

Photographs of the Royal couple on the days of their engagement (9 July 1947) and wedding have been reproduced on stamps in several Royal anniversary issues in recent years. Engagement day portraits are found on stamps from Gambia (SG 771), Samoa (726), and Uganda (MS 529), wedding pictures on issues from Antigua (SG 1149), Cook Islands (345), Dominica (998, 1109, MS 1113), Gambia (770, 772, MS 774), Seychelles (639), Sierra Leone (1116, MS 1120), and Tuvalu (485).

Technical details

Printers Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process Gravure

Size 41mm square

Sheets 60

Perforation 15

Phosphor One band 20p ●
two bands others

Gum PVA



Other photographs of the Royal couple taken in 1947 feature on stamps of St Helena (SG 477, 479), Solomon Islands (562), and Swaziland (502).

Britain and many Commonwealth countries issued stamps in 1972 for the Silver Wedding anniversary; the British stamps featured a profile portrait of The Queen and Prince by Norman Parkinson. One of the official Silver Wedding photographs, by Lord Litchfield, was reproduced on a Papua New Guinea stamp in 1986 (SG 521). A number of Commonwealth countries also issued stamps for the Ruby Wedding anniversary.



THE DESIGNER AND PHOTOGRAPHERS The 20p and 43p stamps were designed by David Driver using a wedding day photograph by the society photographer Baron (Baron Nahum, 1906-56). Mr Driver previously designed the 1991 Christmas stamps. The 26p and 63p values are the work of the Earl of Snowdon, who as Antony Armstrong-Jones, married Princess Margaret in 1960. The marriage ended in 1978. He is a noted photographer and took the portraits of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer for the 1981 Royal Wedding stamps, one of the six portraits of The Queen used on the 60th birthday issue in 1986, and of Charlie Chaplin for the 29p Film Year stamp of 1985. Lord Snowdon has himself featured on stamps from Antigua (one in the set SG 1777/1808) and from Fiji (715).

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 7 October, price 25p.

Orders for the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or London SW1, price £2.20 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.88 overseas (no VAT), must reach the Bureau by 7 October. Alternatively, collectors may send stamped covers, on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB (London SW1 postmark). The outer envelope should be marked 'FD9717' (Bureau), or 'FD9718' (London SW).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) 'first day of issue' handstamps. Sponsored special handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 rest of world).

Collectors may submit covers bearing just the 20p Golden Wedding stamp for all first day, philatelic and sponsored handstamps in use on 7 October, the 1st class rule for special handstamps being waived for the day ●

Philatelic numismatic cover

A PNC bearing the four Golden Wedding stamps and Royal Mint commemorative crown (£5) will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, but not from other philatelic outlets. Limited edition of 50,000 so early ordering advised. Price £15.95



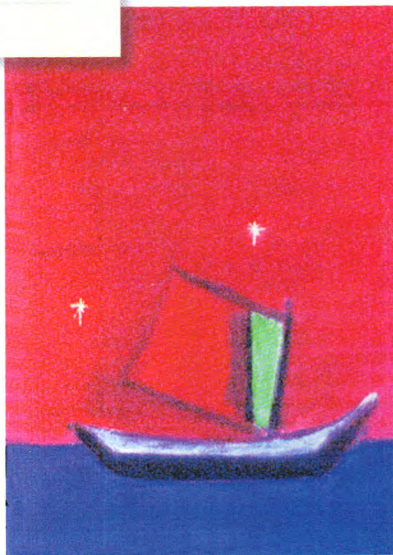
The Christmas aerogramme designed by John Gorham, features boxes of Christmas crackers, marking the 150th anniversary of the introduction of the cracker, and Father Christmas from an illustration by Mark Thomas.

The Pictorial aircards (below) have been designed by Nick Simmons Design.

Pictorial aircards and Christmas aerogramme Royal Mail International will issue five pictorial greetings 'aircards' on 16 September, price £4.50 per set or 99p each. These are of similar format to the former letter card and bear modern art designs by Craigie Aitchison: Liquorice Allsorts Still-life (1980), Lemon and Jar Still-life (1981), Parrot Glass (1992), Goatfell, Isle of Arran (1993), and Boat in Starlight (1997). Pre-payment of postage is by the 'stamp' impression as used on aerogrammes. The cards will initially be available, singly or in packs of five (one of each design), only from main crown post offices in London and the Dartford, Kent area and from the Bureau and philatelic outlets in main towns and cities (packs of five only). Please note that these cards will not qualify for 'first day of issue' postmarks in use on 9 September for the Enid Blyton stamps.

The 1997 Christmas aerogramme will be available at post offices, the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 7 October, price 45p. It will be withdrawn from sale at post offices on 24 December but stay on philatelic sale until October 1998. The aerogramme was printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd.

Please note that the aerogramme does not qualify for any postmarks inscribed 'first day of issue' in use on 7 October for the Golden Wedding Anniversary stamps •



Horror souvenir book A souvenir book, jointly produced by the British, Irish, Canadian, and US Post Offices will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau from 1 October, price £8.95. It contains Royal Mail's Tales of Terror stamps, also Ireland's Bram Stoker stamps, a Canadian set and five US stamps showing Lon Chaney as the Phantom of the Opera, Bela Lugosi as Dracula, Boris Karloff in Frankenstein and as the Mummy and Lon Chaney Jr as Wolfman. The text includes some interesting facts on terror legends and horror films. It also contains a poster mask and snakes and ladders style board game, "Through the Graveyard" •

Orders for binders should be sent to British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT.

For a free sample copy of the *Postmark Bulletin* write to the Bureau or The Editor *Postmark Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL.

Maynard Davies enquiries (with a stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon) to: Casula, 3 Romans Way, Pyrford, Woking, GU22 8TP.

Bulletin binders and back issues Binders are available for this and the *British Postmark Bulletin*, designed to hold two and one years' issues respectively. The maroon-coloured *Philatelic Bulletin* binder costs £7, the green *Postmark Bulletin* binder £6.50. Order codes PB001 (Philatelic), PB322 (Postmark).

The *Postmark Bulletin*, published fortnightly, gives information on forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans, and includes feature articles by top postmark collectors James Mackay and Colin Peachey.

Back issues of the *Philatelic Bulletin* are available for one year from the Bureau, price 85p each. For earlier issues contact Mr Maynard Davies who offers bound reprints of vols 1 & 2, photocopies of issues from vols 3-6 and original copies of most issues from vol 7 onwards, also a limited stock of used binders. Mr Davies wishes to purchase issues from vols 3-6 but has adequate stocks of later issues. He regrets he cannot search for or provide copies of specific articles. ●

Royal opening for new Aberdeen mail centre On 28 May, HRH The Princess Royal opened Royal Mail's new mail centre at Wellington Circle, Altens, Aberdeen where 550 staff use state-of-the-art sorting equipment, revolutionising letter and parcel services to customers in north-east Scotland and Shetland. Some £10 million has been invested in Aberdeen providing a 96,000 square feet mail centre, road transport workshop, four delivery offices and a depot for Royal Mail's sister business Parcelforce Worldwide. More than 3 million items of mail will be handled every week at the new mail centre, using machinery capable of handling 30,000 letters an hour. The road transport workshop, located alongside, services some 260 vehicles which travel over an area of 2000 square miles. With the new mail centres in Glasgow and Edinburgh, opened in 1994 and 1995, some £56 million has been invested in mail technology in Scotland over the past four years. Aberdeen's new centre replaces Edwardian premises in Crown Street – too small to handle the greatly increased volume of mail and the need for automated handling. Three new delivery offices have been built at Dyce, Bridge of Don, and Kittybrewster; a further office at Mastrick serves the west of the city. ●

1998 stamp issues The dates of issue of some sets have been changed since the list published in the May *Bulletin*. The revised programme is:

20 January Endangered Species

24 February The Queen's Beasts

24 March Lighthouses

23 April Comedians

23 June Health

21 July Children's Fantasy

25 August Carnival

29 September Speed

2 November Christmas

There will now be two prestige stamp books, one for the Stamp Show 2000, on 10 March, the second in October. The issue recalling major events and personalities of 1997 has now been cancelled. Any further changes to the programme will be published in the *Bulletin*. Royal Mail regrets any confusion or inconvenience resulting from these programme changes. ●



Chocks away for Aircraft stamps

Royal Mail's Architects of the Air stamps were launched at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, near Cambridge, on 9 June. Shown here is Mr Adam Novak, Director and General Manager of Royal Mail National, in the cockpit of an historic Lancaster bomber.

New stamp books Readers are reminded that a book of 10 × 1st class XVI stamps (gold) with a holiday promotion cover will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 15 September. The book, printed by Harrisons, contains the same gold stamps as in the book of 10 × 1st class stamps issued in April. The BBC prestige stamp book will be issued on 23 September, price £6.15. Details were published in last month's *Bulletin*.

On 21 October Royal Mail will issue a book of four 1st class stamps (flame colour) with commemorative label for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh, 24-27 October 1997. The book will be produced by Walsall Security Printers, with the stamps and label printed in lithography. The label, designed by Brian Delaney Associates, using a specially commissioned paper sculpture by Jonathan Milne of Edinburgh Castle with five Commonwealth citizens representing the five continents in the foreground. The book will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets on 21 October and from post offices and other outlets as stocks of earlier books are used up. Unfolded panes of stamps and labels will be available only from the Bureau, price £1.04. As no new stamps are involved, no first day facilities will be provided. Details of any sponsored special handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*.

The cylinders used for the books of 4 × 1st and 4 × 2nd class stamps printed by Walsall and issued on 26 August were w1. The same number was used for the books of 37p and 63p stamps as reported in last month's Late News column •

New Postbus service Royal Mail and Dorset County Council introduced the first postbus in the county on 23 June. The bus runs from Dorchester to Bridport, serving the villages of Bradpole, Loders, Uploaders and Askerswell. The new Leyland DAF Convoy bus carries nine passengers and has facilities for elderly and disabled passengers. An article marking the 30th anniversary of UK postbus services, by Martin Robinson, was published here in February (pages 173-5) •

Stamp scene Midpex • Autumn Stampex • Societies news • Mauritius anniversary



Second successful Midpex Despite wet and miserable weather, many collectors went along to the second Midpex exhibition at the Midland Sports Centre for the Disabled, Coventry on 28 June. It was good to see collectors from all over the country, not just the Midlands. This is a stamp exhibition with a difference, mostly comprising displays and stands of about 60 specialist societies. Members of the societies were on hand to talk to visitors about the displays and the activities

of their societies. Many had examples of their publications for sale or examination. The atmosphere was friendly, but at times the halls became rather noisy and slightly stuffy because of the number of people present. Most dealers, offering a wide range of material – from postal history to modern issues and thematics, were busy throughout the day.

There was much of interest to collectors of British stamps, postmarks, postal history and related material in the displays provided by the British Decimal Stamps Study Circle, Midland (GB) Postal History Society, Great Britain Philatelic Society, Postal History Society, Postal Stationery Society, Revenue Society of GB, Scottish Postal History Society, Alba Stamp Group, Welsh Philatelic Society, GB Overprints Society, Postal Mechanisation Study Circle, and Railway Philatelic Group. A few examples will show the variety of material on show. The Scottish Postal History Society displayed covers posted at the Royal Highland Show 1950-67, the postal history of Bo'ness, 1791-1908, postcards and rare postal markings of the Clyde steamers, and a miscellany of interesting postmarks and covers including postage dues cancelled at Beith on the day of issue (20 April 1914) and a cover addressed to Houston (near Glasgow) and delivered after a lengthy journey to the USA and back! The Alba Stamp Club featured stamps showing Scots and their work on stamps (eg John Forbes, USA 1958, Alexander Mackenzie, Canada 1952, and James Chalmers, Marshall Islands 1990), and stamps, cards and covers connected with the Scottish oil industry. The Welsh Philatelic Society's display included some fine Victorian covers, including one from Can Office – a staging post on the road from Mallwyd to Welshpool, rare parcel post labels, postal history of Cowbridge, Bridgend and Swansea, cards of Llandaff, Talylyn Railway stamps, and souvenirs of WPS meetings. The Midland (GB) Postal History Society's displays included TPO cancels, postmarks of Stourbridge and Redditch, and a topographical display of maps, cards and photographs relating to Midlands postal history. The map of the Postroads of England and Wales, c1770 reproduced by the Society from an original in the British Library was on sale (see *Bulletin* February 1997, p171). Also on show was the Rowland Hill Award received by the Society for its research and publications.

The British Aerophilatelic Federation display included some early usage of British air mail labels (etiquettes), and air mail identifications prior to the use of labels. The National Philatelic society displayed part of its extensive forgery collection, the sheets believed to have been assembled by the great Frederick Melville in the early 1900s. The Friends of the National Postal Museum stand provided information on the Museum and the activities of the Friends, souvenir covers and cards were on sale.

The venue was easy to reach, with Tile Hill railway station alongside. The journey from London took just over two hours, changing at Coventry for the local train to Tile Hill. Admission was a bargain at just 50p which included an excellently produced and informative catalogue (worth £1.50 alone), and catering facilities were good and well-patronised. Before returning to London, the Editor spent some time looking round Coventry with its new and old cathedrals, medieval Spon Street, 18th century buildings and some excellent shops.

Congratulations to the organisers and to Phillips, the auctioneers, who sponsored the event. We look forward to Midpex '99 •

Autumn Stampex 97 The exhibition will be held at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1, 17-21 September 1997. Entrance will be free by redeeming the complimentary vouchers, available in advance from the Stampex office, at the box office. Each visitor will receive a free gift sponsored by Marini Albums.

The 120-frame philatelic exhibition, organised by the British Philatelic Trust, will include many fine entries in the international class, and the literature entries will be available for inspection on the National Philatelic Society stand. The National Youth Stamp Group will offer a range of activities for children including a 'Pocket Money' stamp stand. Part of the cost of the exhibition souvenir catalogue (£1) will go towards the NYSG. A supervised crèche, with qualified, registered staff, will be available – a most useful facility for families visiting the exhibition. The BPT, Association of British Philatelic Societies and the Netherlands Philatelic Society will provide displays and advice on collecting.

Over 100 UK and overseas dealers, members of the Philatelic Traders Society, are expected to attend, including many first time stallholders. The range of material on offer will appeal to collectors at all levels. The souvenir catalogue will give details of all the specialised stocks of the standholders.

The Royal Mail stand, manned by staff from the British Philatelic Bureau, offers the full range of stamps and philatelic products. Mail posted at the stand will receive the Stampex handstamp. Collectors unable to get to the exhibition may send covers for the Stampex postmark to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB, stating date(s) required •



The Royal Mail stand at January Stampex 1997

The Business Design Centre is near the Angel underground station (Northern Line) and the area is well served by bus routes 4, 19, 30, 38, 56, 73 and 171A, and local car parks. Furthermore the BDC has its own underground car park.

Accommodation in the area
For details phone the local authority information centre on 0171 278 8787.

Further Stampex information
Phone 0171 490 1005

Orders and enquires

Friends of the NPM, PO Box 40, Uckfield TN22 2SP.
Telephone 01825 766546

Friends of the National Postal Museum The Spring 1997 issue of the Friends' journal *Cross Post*, published in June, contains some interesting articles and features. Don Staddon's 'Ten Years of Window Books' provides an admirable, illustrated, survey of the developments and changes since August 1987. Another anniversary – this time 75 years of meter marks – is the subject of a useful article by Jack Peach, illustrating all the main types of the different meter machine manufacturers, including some interesting specimen types and a recent 'PostPerfect' Pitney Bowes impression with encrypted security data in a series of digits printed to the left of the town mark. Michael Bament reports on several important new acquisitions to the Museum's postal history collections; including a Scarborough ship letter of 1808. Zara Matthews provides information on the prototype letter boxes shown on recent NPM postcards, Graham Smeed a well-illustrated account of the postal history of Staines, and James Negus updates earlier listings of Friends souvenir covers, cards and cachets. Price £2 to non-members ●

Enquiries J J Proctor, 15
Dorchester Park, Portadown,
BT62 3EA. Telephone 01762
334964

Portadown Stampex and Collectors Fair This annual event of the Portadown and District Philatelic Society, at Portadown Town Hall on 27 September, will include displays by Society members and dealers offering stamps, postal history, postcards, accessories, cigarette cards, coins and medals, football programmes, militaria, etc. As in previous years a special commemorative booklet will be available, price £1.50 plus postage. The exhibition will be open 10.00-16.30, admission free. Car parking is sited nearby and refreshments will be available ●

Enquiries T M Smart, 11
Northwood Park, Woodlesford,
Leeds LS26 8PE, enclosing
stamped addressed envelope
or international reply coupon.

Methodist Philatelic Society The Society, formed in 1970 to foster the study and encouragement of philately associated with Methodism and the Methodist contribution to United Churches and Ecumenical Activities, now has 300 members worldwide. It produces a quarterly newsletter and commemorative covers for noteworthy events and anniversaries within the Methodist Church. Interest extends to stamps portraying Biblical scenes and verses from Hymns and Psalms. The April 1997 Newsletter contains features on the Royal Mail Missions of Faith stamps, stamps and postmarks featuring hymns, a 1973 cover commemorating the bicentenary of the Wesley Riots, Wednesbury, stamps commemorating the Rev Johann Heinrich Schmelen, philatelic notes on the New Testament, etc. The 24-page newsletter is well-illustrated ●

Further details from
Franceska Rapkin, Eaglewood,
Sheethanger Lane, Felden,
Hemel Hempstead HP3 0BG

Germany and Colonies Philatelic Society 1997 marks the golden jubilee of the original German Stamp Club, founded by Reg Auckland in 1947. This became the Germany and Colonies Philatelic Society in 1964 when it amalgamated with the German Philatelic Club of Stockton. The Society's 14th Convention takes place on 3-5 October at the Wessex Hotel, Bournemouth. There will be specialist as well as general dealers, competitive exhibits and a Court of Honour. Outings are being arranged for non-philatelic partners ●



Railway letter stamps The Bluebell Railway issued a new 25p stamp showing industrial locomotive *Baxter* on 23 August, printed in sheets of four by Walsall. Available at face value plus 40p postage (or SAE). See *Commemorative Covers Review* for details of FDCs.

The Mid-Hants Railway issued new 25p stamps on 3 May and 5 July, respectively featuring locomotives nos 31674 and 35005. The May stamp commemorates the 20th anniversary of the re-opening of the Railway. Both are printed in sheets of nine and are available at face value, postage 50p.

The Nene Valley Railway issued a 25p stamps showing locomotive *92 Squadron* and a Travelling Post Office carriage on 10 June and 12 August. The TPO carriage was acquired from the National Railway Museum and is currently being restored. Both printed in sheets of nine by Walsall. Available mint at face value plus postage (SAE appreciated). For details of FDCs see *Commemorative Covers Review* last month and this ●



Bluebell Railway Letter Service 64 Gordon Road, Carshalton SM5 3RE

Mid-Hants Railway Postal Co-ordinator, Alresford, SO24 9JG

Nene Valley Railway Letter Service Wansford Station, Stibbington, Peterborough PE8 6LR

A career in philately Good news for collectors seeking a career in philately. Stanley Gibbons Ltd is expanding its business at 399 Strand and have a number of openings with real career prospects. These range from bright, young philatelic assistants who will be trained in all aspects of the business to eager sales assistants in mail orders and the shop. Although previous experience is an asset, the most important qualification is an enthusiasm for stamps and collecting. Gibbons is also looking to recruit philatelists with specialist knowledge for its auction and dealing departments. Full training will be given ●

Enquiries Beverly Thompson, Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX. Telephone 0171 836 8444

150 years of Mauritius stamps On 22 September the Mauritius Post Office issues four stamps marking the sequicentenary of two of the most famous stamps anywhere in the world – the 'Post Office Mauritius' 1d and 2d stamps of 1847. The stamps will be available in books of 10 and an additional value will feature in a miniature sheet. This set follows another for the 150th anniversary of the PO ordinance 'providing for the conveyance and postage of letters' issued last December (see *Bulletin*, December 1996 p109). Mauritius marked the centenary of the PO Mauritius stamps with a set in 1948, and the two classic issues have featured on stamps from some other countries ●

Examples of the PO Mauritius can be seen in the Tapling Collection in the British Library; those in the Royal Collection were shown at the National Postal Museum last year.

To join the Friends of

Thematica write to Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches, SM5 4PQ.

Other enquiries about

Thematica to Brian Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG. Telephone 01372 467652

The next Thematica – at

Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on 21–22 November – will include the Friends' Christmas Stamp Fayre.

For enquiries about availability of the catalogue phone 0171 629 0218

Thematica 97 The organisers' hope that the show, at London's Carisbrooke Hall on 28–29 June, would promote the fun aspect of Thematic collecting was fully justified. The opening day started with a champagne and strawberries reception, kindly donated by a Friend of Thematica, when distinguished guests gave their approval to the displays and the new exhibition hall layout. When the doors opened at 10.30, those in the 100 yards long queue quickly made for the stands of the dealers from Belgium, France and the Netherlands as well as GB.

New attractions this year included a workshop table where watermark and phosphor detectors and perforation gauges were demonstrated and available for visitors to try, advice on writing-up a collection for both competitions and displays, and a Children's Corner with competitions and free bags of goodies donated by many of the dealers.

The John Fosbery Trophy Competition attracted a lot of attention, with the winning entry by Vincent Briggs entitled 'The Whale – its Origins and Demise'. Runner up was John Hargrave's entry 'A Glimpse Under the Big Top'. The BTA Cup competition, judged to national thematic rules, was won by Margaret Shaida for her 'Remember the Ladies' ●

Rare Stamps of the World This lavish exhibition at Claridge's in London, 24–26 July, was every bit as good as the first event in 1995. There was much to interest GB collectors from historic letters of the 17th century to pioneer airmails. The fine display of Penny Blacks (by Dr R Buranasombati) included the finest used strip of six from plate 1a, a pair used on a double rated cover on the first day, and the largest used multiple (18) of plate 111. Alan Huggins's display of postal stationery upratings included some fine 1d envelopes uprated with strips of 2d blues to cover registration.

In Prof Barrie Jay's exhibit on early London Postal History was one of only two known letters from Sir Brian Tuke, Master of the Posts, to Thomas Cromwell, Secretary to Henry VIII, c1530, and one bearing the famous 'Essex Post Goes and Comes Every Day' marking, 1674. Alberto Bolaffi, of the famous Italian philatelic family, showed one of only three examples of the 1d black with 'blank head' and 'BR/VR' corner letters.

HM The Queen's exhibit included the cover and pages from the album of the Tsarevich Alexi (1904–18). This album, kept by one of the guards after the Russian Royal family was assassinated and eventually given to The Queen in 1981, includes some unusual First World War charity stamps. The National Postal Museum's fine 75-page exhibit told the fascinating story of the definitive and proposed accession and coronation issues of Edward VIII through photographs, drawings and essays.

Criticisms are limited to the poor frame lighting in some places and the relative paucity of material after 1920. Rare stamps are not confined to the classics as Robert Cunliffe's display of 'Inverted Centres' demonstrated. Congratulations are due to Caron de Vico and her team for arranging a fine event. The £10 admission (including luxurious catalogue) was a bargain compared to say seats for Wimbledon Centre Court, the Royal Opera and most London theatres ●

British special stamp designers by William Aubrey Witham

The top twenty Looking through my GB Elizabethan collection it struck me that a large number of stamps appeared to have been designed by relatively few artists and designers, especially in the early 1960s and 1970s. As an exercise I set about compiling a list of individual designers and the issues for which they were responsible, finishing up with a count of the total number of stamps designed by each up to the present.

Before the mid-1960s there were few special stamps issued – so that the designers of the day had relatively few designs to their credit – some indeed only one stamp!

Pre-war sets of stamps were frequently divided among several designers. For example the four stamps for the 1948 Olympic Games issue were designed by Percy Metcalf (2½d), Abram Games (3d), S D Scott (6d), and Edmund Dulac (1s). Even the great Dulac can list only seven designs between 1937 and 1953 and the majority of these were for definitive values.

As the number of issues and the number of stamps per issue increased there was an obvious need to engage the creative efforts of a wider

selection of artists, designers, graphic specialists and engravers. In recent years there has been a tendency to use design groups rather than individual artists or designers.

A list of all individuals and groups would be too lengthy for publication here so I have restricted my list to the top 20, measured arbitrarily by quantity rather than quality of output, although quantity in this case must surely imply a high standard of quality as perceived and set by Royal Mail and its Stamp Advisory Committee. Greetings stamps are included, but definitives and country stamps and To Pay labels are excluded.

The tables list the output of each of the top 20 designers. David Gentleman is clearly in the lead with 88 stamps and a further 11 in conjunction with Rosalind Dease¹.

I am obliged to Mr Barry Robinson, Design Director of Royal Mail National, for assistance in producing these listings, especially where a designer has used the specially commissioned work of an illustrator.

An asterisk (*) against number of stamps indicates others in same set by another designer.

David Gentleman¹ 88



1962 National Productivity Year	3
1963 Lifeboat Conference	3
1964 Shakespeare Festival	*4
1966 World Cup	*1
1966 World Cup Winners	1
1966 Battle of Hastings	8
1968 Anniversaries	*1
1969 Ships	6
1969 Concorde	*2
1969 Prince of Wales Investiture	5

1969 Post Office Technology	4
1970 Rural Architecture	*2
1970 Philypia	3
1972 Broadcasting	4
1973 British Trees	1
1973 Christmas	6
1974 British Trees	1
1974 Fire Service	4
1976 Social Reformers	4
1977 Christmas	6

1980 Liverpool & Manchester Rly	5
3 1982 Charles Darwin	4
1989 Christmas	5
1993 Swans	5

Jeffery Matthews² 38

1965 United Nations	2
1968 Bridges	2
1978 Coronation anniversary	4



1980 London 1980	1
Design also used in min sheet	
1980 Queen Mother's Birthday	1
1980 Christmas	5
1981 Royal Wedding	2
1984 Heraldry	4
1986 Queen's 60th Birthday	4
1986 Royal Wedding	2
1987 Flowers	4
1987 Scottish Heraldry	4

Newell and Sorrell Ltd 38

1984 British Council	4
1985 Safety at Sea	4
1993 Greetings	10
1994 Greetings	10
1995 Greetings	10

Fritz Wegner 28

1969 Christmas	3
1970 Anniversaries	*3
1971 Anniversaries	3
1972 Anniversaries	*1
1974 Great Britons	4
1978 Cycling	4
1979 Christmas	5
1981 Folklore	4
1984 Europa	*1

Based on common Lariviere design

Keith Bassford³ 26

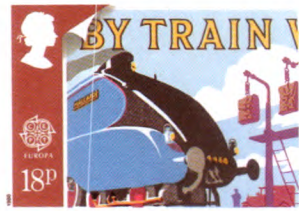
1984 Mail Coach Run	5
1985 Film Year	5



1986 Industry Year	4
1989 Microscopes	4
1992 Europa	*3
1994 D Day	5

Andrew Restall 23

1964 Forth Road Bridge	2
1965 Battle of Britain	*1
1965 ITU Centenary	2
1966 British Technology	*2
1968 Bridges	*1
1970 Commonwealth Games	3
1975 Sailing	4
1977 Racket Sports	4
1983 British Fairs	4

Carroll, Dempsey Thirkell Ltd 23

1987 Victorian Britain	4
1988 Transport and Communications	4
1991 Dogs	5
1992 Christmas	5

Trickett & Webb Ltd 23

1984 Urban Renewal	4
1988 Christmas	5
1992 Greetings (Memories)	10
1992 Green Issue	4

Rosalind Dease⁴ 20

1968 Christmas	3
1970 Literary Anniversaries	5
1971 Literary anniversaries	3
1972 Anniversaries	*1
1973 Inigo Jones	4
1974 UPU Centenary	4

Marjorie Saynor 20

1970 Anniversaries	*2
1972 Polar Explorers	4
1973 British Explorers	5
1976 British Cultural Tradition	4
1982 Maritime Heritage	5

Peter Gauld 18

1961 Post Office Savings Bank	*1
1963 Compac	1
1965 Lister Centenary	*1
1969 Cathedrals	6
1975 European Architecture	5
1980 British Conductors	4

Ronald Maddox⁵ 17

1972 Village Churches	5
1978 British Architecture	4
1984 Urban Renewal	4
1939 Industrial Archaeology	4



Brian Sanders**17**

1979 Metropolitan Police	4
1981 Fishing Industry	4
1982 Youth Organisations	4
1986 History of RAF	5

John Gorham**16**

1990 Queen Mother	4
1990 Christmas	5
Illustrations by J Davidson	
1992 Wintertime	5
Illustrations by K Bowen	
1995 Peace and Freedom	*2

John Gibbs**15**

1981 Year of the Disabled	4
1986 Commonwealth	1
Parliamentary Association	
1990 Thomas Hardy	1
1990 Gallantry	5
1993 Roman Britain	4

**Tony Meeuwissen****15**

1983 Christmas	5
1991 Greetings (Good Luck)	10

Paul Hogarth**14**

1984 Economic Summit	1
1985 Royal Mail	4
1990 Europa (Buildings)	4
1994 Golf	5

Yvonne Gilbert**14**

1984 Christmas	5
1985 Arthurian Legend	4
1994 Christmas	5

Howard Brown**13**

1991 Maps	4
1993 Maritime Timepieces	4
1994 Prince of Wales Anniv	5

Stuart Rose**12**

1973 British Painters	4
1975 Turner	4
1979 Horse Racing	4

Clive Abbott⁶**10**

1965 PO Tower	2
1967 EFTA	2
1967 Discovery	2
1968 Anniversaries	3
1972 Anniversaries	1

Linda Gray⁶**10**

1986 Christmas	5
Same design for 12p and 13p	
1992 Gilbert and Sullivan	5

Michael Peters & Partners⁶**10**

1990 Greetings (Smiles)	10
Designs later issued with 1st NVI	

1 Gentleman also designed a further 11 stamps with Rosalind Dease: 1965 Churchill (2); 1965 Commonwealth Arts Festival (2); 1965 Battle of Britain (*7).

2 Matthews's total of 38 rather belies his important contribution to stamp design. He also designed the 1970-74 To Pay labels, Country stamps for N Ireland, Scotland, and Wales (issued since 1971) and Isle of Man (1971-73), 1977-87 High Value Machins, 1990 150th Anniversary of the Penny Black definitives, 1993 self-adhesive definitive, and has been influential in the colour scheme for the Machin low values.

3 Bassford also designed two further 1992 Europa stamps with S Paine.

4 Dease also designed 11 stamps in 1965 in conjunction with Gentleman (see note 1 above).

5 Maddox's total could be increased to 21 if one includes the horizontal as well as vertical versions of his Industrial Archaeology stamps, issued in miniature sheet format.

6 These designers share 20th place

The occupation of the Channel Islands

Sidney Amery looks at stamps issued under German authority in the Second World War



'OPERATION GELB', the German thrust towards the French channel coast was launched on 10 May 1940. The advance by the Panzer spearhead was so rapid that by 20 May, the forces had advanced 220 miles and had taken Abbeville. By 19 June the naval base at Cherbourg had fallen, and with the British forces only 15 miles away on the CI the Germans had little choice but to occupy the islands. The British government also realised that it was impossible to defend the islands effectively, and all British forces were withdrawn from the islands on 21 June 1940. An announcement in the islands' evening paper on 20 June informed the inhabitants that the British troops were pulling out the following day, but the German authorities were not informed of this fact, as the Foreign Office did not want to issue an invitation to the Germans to occupy the islands. Consequently both Jersey and Guernsey suffered bombing raids before the United States Ambassador in London was asked to inform his opposite number in Berlin that the islands had been demilitarised and were, therefore, no longer a legitimate target.

On 30 June, the first German troops arrived by air in Guernsey, and by 4 July the occupation of the Channel Islands was complete and communications between the islands and Great Britain ceased, though communications were re-established in August 1940 through the Red Cross. The CI refugees in Britain were permitted to send inquiries to their relatives on the islands via the International Red Cross. At the start of the service, the refugees could only send the name and address of the relative on the CI, who was allowed to send a 25 word message in reply. At first, Red Cross mail from the island was restricted to replies to inquiries and could only contain news of births, deaths, marriages and similar topics. However, from the Spring of 1941, each family was allowed to send one message per month, though not unnaturally, the contents of the messages were subject to censorship. In Britain, many Citizen's Advice Bureaux acted as collection centres for the messages for the Red Cross, and senders were asked to write their messages in block capitals, written preferably in English, German or French, and an assistant at the bureau transferred the message to an official Red Cross form. The fee for sending these messages was 1s. However, messages, not only to the CI, but to all parts of occupied Europe arrived in such large quantities that delays were inevitable, and the International Committee of the Red Cross therefore approached the warring nations to reach an agreement that, in future, messages could be written on the forms by the senders. Although the early types of Red Cross forms are rather scarce, the later forms are quite common, and form an important part of the postal history of the CI at that turbulent time.



The Channel Islands (CI), consisting of Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, Sark, Herm and a few tiny islands, are a possession of the British Crown, but not part of the United Kingdom. They have been a possession since the Norman Conquest in 1066 and the islanders have always been fiercely loyal to the Monarchy, except during the period of the Commonwealth, when Jersey remained loyal to the King, but Guernsey supported Oliver Cromwell. During the reign of King John, Normandy was returned to France, but the Channel Islanders opted to remain with Britain, though they have always retained their Norman laws and customs, even to this day.



Opposite page The German Kommandant of the Channel Islands and a British policeman, Guernsey, 1940. The Jersey 10s bank note, below, was designed by Edmund Blampied, the designer of the 1943 Jersey pictorial stamp issue illustrated on page 21.

Above Detail from reverse of the Jersey 10s note.



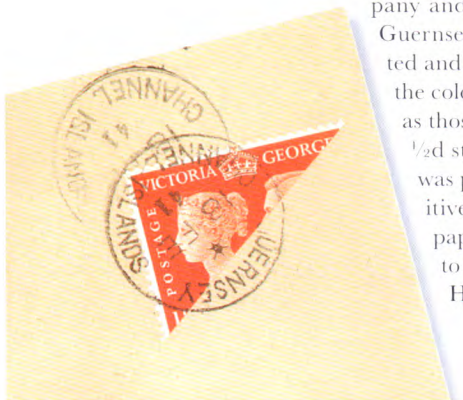
Guernsey and Jersey 1/2d stamps, first issued 1942.

Below, Bisected Stamp Centenary issue

At the start of the occupation, German, British and local money was in circulation, but the situation created so many problems that the Germans insisted that only German currency should be used. The stamps used in the islands were the current British GVI definitives, as well as the Coronation and Centenary of the Penny Black commemoratives. At a Harmers auction some years ago, a set of the definitive issue was offered for sale overprinted with a swastika. If these were intended for use in the CI, they were never released for sale; British stamps remained valid, and were replaced with a local issue at a later date. The story goes that Captain Gussek, the German Commandant on Jersey ordered that all British stamps on the island be seized and suitably overprinted. The overprint, consisting of a Nazi swastika with JERSEY and 1940 printed in two lines below, was carried out by Bigwoods the states printers. The overprint was applied to most values of the 1937 definitive issue, including the 2s6d, 5s and 10s values. Additionally the 1940 Penny Black centenary set was overprinted in a similar manner. However, the 1d value from this set was never overprinted, since stocks were already exhausted when the islands were occupied. The overprint was so positioned that the King's head was obliterated by the swastika. Not unnaturally, the Bailiff of Jersey objected most strongly, and it was also rumoured that the loyal post office staff refused to handle the defaced stamps. The matter was referred to Berlin, and orders given that all the overprinted stamps were to be recalled and destroyed. A few copies did escape the furnaces, but most of those overprinted were, in fact, destroyed and are very rare today.

Although there were sufficient stamps available at the start of the occupation to feed most needs, in Guernsey 1d stamps, the rate for printed matter, did run out, and permission was given to bisect 2d stamps. The first day that these bisected stamps were officially sanctioned was 27 December, 1940. The 1937 orange definitive 2d and the 2d value from the Stamp centenary issue were authorised for use for bisecting, but some of the earlier George V 2d definitives were also pressed into service; however, these are very scarce, especially when found on complete cards or covers. The use of bisected stamps applied only in Guernsey, and were valid for use only on mail posted on that island.

The first stamp to be issued specially for use in the islands was released on 18 February 1941. It was printed letterpress by the Guernsey Press Company and it was designed by E W Vaudin. It shows the Arms of Guernsey and is inscribed GUERNSEY POSTAGE, 1d. It was rouletted and is known in two paper types. Throughout the occupation, the colours used for the printing of the stamps remained the same as those in GB, so the first 1d stamp was printed in red, while the 1/2d stamp, which was the next to be released on 7 April 1941, was printed in green. This second value of the Guernsey definitive issue was eventually printed in seven distinct shades or paper types. The letter rate at that time was 2 1/2d, and in order to economise on paper, it was decided to issue a 2 1/2d stamp. However, this value was not issued until 12 April 1944.



Jersey did not release her first stamp until six months later, when the 1d value was issued on 1 April 1941, followed by the ½d value on 29 January 1942. The stamps were similar to those produced for use in Guernsey, and show the Arms of the island in an ornamental frame and the inscription JERSEY POSTAGE. In the four corners of the 1d are the initials 'A', confirmed by the designer, Major N V L Rybot, as representing *Ad Avernum Adolphe Atrax*, 'to hell with you, atrocious Adolf!' The ½d has the initials 'AA' in the top corners, and 'BB' in the lower corners, to represent 'Atrocious Adolf, Bloody Benito!' These stamps were also printed in letterpress by the *Evening Post* offices in Jersey, but, unlike the Guernsey stamps, they were perforated rather than rouletted.

A completely new, pictorial, definitive issue was released in Jersey in June 1943. The first two values, the ½d and 1d appeared on the first of the month, followed on the 8 June by the 1½d and 2d, and the final two values, the 2½d and 3d were released on 29 June. They were all designed by Edmund Blampied, based on six views of Jersey suggested by the then Commandant of the island, Colonel Knackfuss. The scenes on the issued stamps were Orgueil Castle at Gorey, Elizabeth Castle at St Helier, Corbiere Lighthouse, Portlet Bay, Rocco Tower, and the gates of an old farmhouse at Homptonne. Knackfuss had originally suggested that St Ouen's Manor and Grosnez Castle be included in the designs, but whether Blampied did not like the subject, or whether they proved unsuitable for a stamp design, is not known. The Farm Gates at Homptonne and the Rocco Tower were the two replacement designs submitted by Blampied, and these were accepted. They were engraved by Henri Cortot and were printed in letterpress at the French Government Printing Works in Paris on unwatermarked white paper, though on later printings there were noticeable paper variations. Like Rybot before him, Blampied used his stamp designs to register his disapproval of the occupation. On either side of the value plate of the 3d is a decorative scroll, which, if looked at closely, reveals the initials 'GR'.

The hardships for the islanders were incredible. This becomes obvious to anyone who visits the Museum of Occupation on Guernsey. It seems surprising, therefore, that with the shortages and other deprivations the islanders had the time, or the inclination, to produce first day covers and other philatelic souvenirs. Perhaps it acted as a light relief and an escape valve. Yet that this was the case is proved by the abundance of philatelic material available today, though naturally, some of the more elusive shades are rare on cover. Plain unprinted covers are the most easily obtainable, and the cheapest with first day of use cancellations. The illustrated fdc's, mostly with a fairly simple design, are more desirable, and consequently more pricey. Probably, the most interesting fdc's are those on reddish home-made envelopes, being made from paper produced for the island's tomato boxes! The Germans too were not slow in producing first day covers, and many of these were addressed to Karl Hennig, a well-known Hamburg stamp dealer. Many of these covers are additionally franked with German stamps which have a field post cancellation ●



Jersey pictorial definitives of 1943, designed by Edmund Blampied

For the serious student

With 25 post offices on Jersey and a further 13 offices on Guernsey, there is sufficient local commercial mail to make an interesting study of the period, and paper shortages created some novel envelopes to house the contents.

If the German occupation of the Channel Islands is of interest, then further information is available from:

The Channel Islands Philatelic Society Secretary
A N Moorecroft, Eastwood House, Myland Hall Chase, Colchester CO4 4EU, or

Germany and Colonies Philatelic Society Secretary
Pat Rothnie, 16 Curlew Hill, Lancaster Park, Morpeth NE61 3SH.

A great hobby The Editor looks back on 40 years collecting

FORTY YEARS AGO THIS MONTH I started collecting stamps and, with just a short break in 1986, have collected ever since. Writing about stamps and philately is now my full-time job, but collecting stamps, writing books and articles, involvement with philatelic societies and a large correspondence with collectors around the world takes up most of the time I am not in the office. Even away on holiday I still find material to add to my collection or to write about. It is a wonderful hobby, there are so many aspects I never get bored. If I tire of one subject I simply move on to another, and have done so several times over the 40 years.

My interest started when I noticed the 1957 2½d Scouts stamp on an envelope addressed to my father. I asked him if I could have it and he told me he had collected as a boy and if I wanted to start a collection he would buy me some stamps and an album. The collection started, in an album from Woolworths, with the Scout stamp in pride of place. My local sub-postmistress sold me one of each of all the stamps I could afford, up to the 7d definitive before the pocket money ran out, but gradually I obtained the higher values. The Wildings remain a great favourite of mine – far more interesting than the Machin. I read in the daily paper of the forthcoming 1958 Empire & Commonwealth Games set and posted the 3d on a plain envelope to myself on the day of issue.

Although I collected every stamp I could muster, my main interest was in GB and Commonwealth and when I bought the 1961 SG *Two Reigns* catalogue (brand new!) decided to become a GB specialist at the tender age of 11. Soon I was immersed in green and blue phosphors, watermark sideways and inverted (not then listed by SG), and by age 15 had quite a good collection of Wildings, including many cylinder blocks. The commemoratives were of less interest but I

bought each issue, posted myself a FDC and for a while bought the presentation packs as well. However interest soon waned and I gave up collecting GB commemoratives in 1968. Whilst I still see merit in definitive collecting, I now see little in special issues and cannot really see the need

or the point of many of them. I persevered with the definitives and in 1968 spent all the money I earned as a temporary Christmas postman on cylinder blocks of the £sd Machins. The GPO might just as well have paid me in stamps! But I found the Machin design a poor replacement for the Wildings and stopped the collection at decimalisation. With the complexi-

ty of phosphors, papers, gums, and coatings since 1971 I am very glad I did so. Since 1971 my GB collection has been restricted to postal stationery, postmarks and postal labels – a big enough subject in itself.

Specialised collections My two main specialised collections comprise British Private Posts and Official Mail, both of which I have written about in magazines in the UK, USA and Sweden. Interest in private issues started when a fellow school-boy collector showed me a stamp from Lundy. It took a while to find where Lundy was and it was some months before I acquired a Lundy stamp of my own. At the international exhibition at the Festival Hall in 1960, I discovered local stamps from Herm and during the 1960s build up a reasonable collection of island issues, later adding railway letter stamps and the parcel stamps of bus companies. Over 100 bus companies then issued stamps and I wrote regularly to each to obtain specimens.

My interest in official mail from the Royal household, government departments and other official bodies grew apace when I joined the civil service in 1975. I rescued many interesting covers, bearing official paid handstamps and certi-



'The collection started, in an album from Woolworths, with the Scout stamp in pride of place...'

RE-USE OF ENVELOPES

TO FASTEN. Fold this label along the dotted line. Affix it to the envelope so as to seal it and cover the old address (or address panel) and post marks.

OPEN by slitting along this edge.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

J.L. Willson Esq.,

Co-operative Union Ltd.,

Holyoake House,

Hanover Street,

Manchester 4.

P. Ltd. Wt. 6118. 4/44. (Lablot).

E Bevin

S.H.L.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.



HORNING OFFICE.

D. Macgregor Esq.
Solicitor
Oban



Items from my Official Mail collection Postal form of the Registers of Sasines and Hornings, Edinburgh, 1916 and re-used envelope from Foreign Office, certified by signature of E(rnest) Bevin, Foreign Secretary 1945-51.

John Holman Editor of the *Philatelic & Postmark Bulletins*

fying stamps (official cachets), from the office wastepaper baskets. Later I bought two major collections of such mail and still add new material. My articles on certifying stamps in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* in 1981-82 prompted James Mackay to publish his *British Official Mail* handbook in 1983, leading to a lasting friendship and a philatelic co-operation which I greatly value.

Other collections include British and Irish postal stationery, PO labels (airmail, registration, etc), British postmarks (especially Scottish islands), tourist cachets, cinderella labels, and exhibition souvenirs. In addition, I maintain a general 'All-World Used' collection which gives me great pleasure: I enjoy soaking off stamps from kiloware and personal mail, sorting them into countries, and mounting. It is always satisfying when I complete a set of definitives after a long period of time.

Collecting and writing I have a fairly relaxed policy towards most of the collections. I am not a great one for catalogues and ticking off each stamp as I get it. Nor am I obsessed with completeness, although try to keep the Private Posts collection up to date. All collections are regularly added to but I will not buy items just because I do not have them, especially if priced at more than I think they are worth. I spend an hour or

two each evening on my collections, and a full day every weekend writing articles or dealing with the resulting correspondence. So far I have written or revised six books, and over 2000 articles and book reviews.

I have learned greatly from other writers, particularly three Jameses – Watson, Negus and Mackay. One of my first tasks on joining Stanley Gibbons in 1980 was to find the illustrations for Jim Watson's monumental *Stanley Gibbons Book of Stamps & Stamp Collecting* and I was very pleased to be asked to undertake the second edition, after Jim's death. His easy to read style belied a vast knowledge of the subject; many will recall his articles in *GSM* and this *Bulletin*.

Even more prolific is James Mackay who has penned over 100 books and probably 10,000 articles over the past 35 years. There is hardly a philatelic subject he has not touched on. His knowledge is encyclopaedic and in my view he rates as one of the greatest philatelists and philatelic writers of all time. A conversation with Jim is an education in itself. The scope of his collections and writings were outlined in my interview with him in last November's *Bulletin*.

James Negus was the Catalogue Editor when I joined Gibbons and although I worked with him for little over a year, I learned much then and since. He is a quiet scholarly man who has spent

a lifetime studying philatelic literature and trying to improve its quality and usefulness. His book *Philatelic Literature* (1991) serves almost as a history of philately as well as a practical guide to editing, writing and researching philatelic books and articles.

Over the years I have met many noted collectors. Sadly some have gone to the great philatelic society in the sky. The late Len Newbery, a regular *Bulletin* contributor, taught me much about stamp printing and the importance of postal notices, rates leaflets and the like, Ian Wilkinson's enthusiasm for Lundy and posting boxes was infectious, and Arthur Blair and Peter Collins epitomised the good nature of the gentleman stamp collector. As a history graduate, I have an interest in the people who have shaped the hobby over the years and am working on a Who's Who of prominent British philatelists from the 1850s to the present.

Changes in the hobby Stamp collecting in the late 1950s had probably not changed greatly since the turn of the century. As in many areas of life, there have been enormous changes over the past 40 years – and not always for the better. To begin with there are far more stamps being issued from virtually all countries. There is nothing wrong in this *per se*, collectors just need to be more selective. But the old pattern of completeness dies hard and has led to many complaints about postal administrations exploiting collectors. Just as one cannot read every newspaper published, watch every TV programme broadcast, or buy every new gadget that comes on the market, so we collectors should not expect to buy every new stamp. I now acquire just those new issues which particularly appeal to me. This incomplete collection gives me more pleasure than would one containing everything but including much of little interest.

The design and printing of stamps has changed dramatically since the late 1950s. Although often well designed and printed, most modern stamps seem to lack the dignity of their predecessors and many collectors restrict their collections to older issues. Yet some modern stamps still maintain old

Items from my Private Posts collection Highland Railway letter stamp; Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway parcel stamp and Blackpool Corporation Transport.

Few bus companies now carry parcels or use special stamps, but I still occasionally add new items to my collection. Some are very difficult to obtain and it took me over 20 years to find the stamps of one particular bus company which had long ceased carrying parcels.



traditions, such as issues from Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and some US stamps. One could do a lot worse than collect modern engraved (recess) stamps – the process used for the Penny Black. Happily British £1.50-£5 high values, and the occasional commemorative issue, are still printed in this way; the 1995 Rowland Hill and Marconi stamps were fine examples.

The past 40 years has seen an enormous growth in the collecting of first day and commemorative covers and I think it has now reached the point where it is almost a separate hobby from stamp collecting. Many philatelists would not touch such covers with the proverbial barge-pole and many cover collectors do not understand what stamp collecting/philately is about. My own interest in FDCs was enthusiastic but relatively short-lived and I thank the late Len Newbery and others for persuading me that commercial covers are more rewarding to collect than ones produced solely for collectors to collect. But each to his or her own, and I do not decry FDCs even if nowadays they do little for me. Souvenir covers for posting at stamp exhibitions and other events were popular in the 1950s and 1960s but seem now a thing of the past. Today's collectors miss the fun of addressing and posting a cover to themselves and awaiting its delivery next day with an infrequently used special postmark. Special postmarks are now mostly used on first days of issue and for anniversaries. Sending covers to the Special Handstamp Centres is not the same as posting the cover yourself in a special box.



Thematics and postal history Thematic collecting was quite unusual in the UK 40 years ago but is now an important branch of philately with a growing number of practitioners. The ways and means of thematic collectors may differ greatly from the traditional collector but are just as demanding if a really good collection is to be formed. I always look carefully at the thematic displays at Stampex and other exhibitions and marvel at the research that has gone into them. With so many collections already on the go, I dare not start a thematic one at present but look forward to doing so when I retire. Thematic collecting deserves the recognition it now enjoys in the philatelic world.

Postal History too has grown over the past four decades and is vital in fostering links between philately and other areas of research in social and local history. The literature on postal history increases not only in quantity but improves in quality. My own efforts at postal history collecting are not confined to particular periods as I like to see how changes have come about over time. For example I find today's official mail covers as interesting and worthy of a place in my collection as those from the early 19th century. It is important that we save (and record) current material for the collectors of the future.

Exhibitions and societies I was fortunate to be taken as a schoolboy to the international exhibition at the Festival Hall in 1960 and still have two Victorian covers I bought there for under one shilling (5p!) plus the souvenir covers I posted to

myself. Next year I went to Stampex and I have visited virtually every Stampex and BPE since, plus, of course, the 1970, 1980 and 1990 internationals. The 1960 exhibition remains my favourite. Today's exhibitions differ from those of the early 1960s in many respects and are, I feel, more inviting and friendly. As a schoolboy I found Stampex – at the old Central Hall – rather forbidding – dealers seemed to have little I could afford, and the exhibits seemed all of classic stamps I could admire but not really relate to. As I recall the Post Office counter was in a back room at the Central Hall – nothing like the prominent position it now enjoys.

I joined my first specialist society when I was 19 and am now a member of several as well as of the Royal and National Philatelic Societies. Although I have given displays to local societies I have never joined one. The number of specialist societies has grown over the past 40 years and they are replacing the local societies as the backbone of the hobby, producing excellent publications and magazines, and providing many facilities for their members. I have been a member of the Cinderella Stamp Club for 20 years, have served on its committee and helped establish one of its study groups. I was very proud earlier this year to be asked to sign the Club's Maurice Williams Roll of Notable Cinderella Philatelists, named in memory of one of the famous philatelic brothers (L N and M Williams). It was a double honour to be invited along with Mr Robson Lowe, one of the foremost philatelists of the 20th century.

I enjoy the meetings of the Royal and have seen some magnificent displays at Devonshire Place. The atmosphere there, once aloof, has become more friendly of late, especially under Presidents Francis Kiddle and Jane Moubray. I have great affection for the National Philatelic Society, regularly use its fine library, and have enjoyed many chats with Mr Whittaker, the Assistant Librarian, over the past 17 years. I recommend these two societies to all readers.

Philatelic career When I started collecting 40 years ago, I did not envisage it as a career. This

came about almost by accident. Unable to follow the career I wished, I became a civil servant. Quickly disillusioned, I looked around for other work. As luck would have it, James Negus, the *SG Catalogue* Editor, needed an assistant and I was offered the job, largely as a result of my articles in *Stamp Collecting*. I joined the famous firm in 1980 and when their editorial offices moved from London to Ringwood in 1984 I was appointed Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. After three years I fancied a change of scene and returned to London as Editor of the *Philatelic and Postmark Bulletins*, then based at the National Postal Museum. Editing the two *Bulletins* is a busy job but I miss the philatelic camaraderie of Stanley Gibbons and editing features on stamps from all over the world. Happily I remain on good terms with my former colleagues and still write for *GSM*.

There are no clear career paths in philately

and jobs are relatively few and far between. It came as quite a revelation to me that many of the people in high positions in the philatelic world were not collectors and I wondered why they wanted the job. To be fair, some have made a useful contribution whereas others might only be described as a waste of space. To anyone reading this who wants a career in stamps, be prepared for some surprises, and keep an open mind. Keep your own collecting going: after a hard day at work, relaxing with your collection is still hard to beat. After 40 years, I cannot imagine not collecting stamps. I tried to give it up once – this lasted just three weeks – and I know what anyone trying to give up smoking goes through. I look forward to forming new collections, writing more articles and observing changing trends. I don't know what the hobby will be like in 2037, but if I'm still around I'll still be collecting! ●

News from the National Postal Museum



Terence Millington display

An exhibition of works by Terence Millington, designer of the recent Post Offices stamps, can be seen in the temporary exhibition gallery on the ground floor of the Museum. This interesting display will continue for several months.

The National Postal Museum

in King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is a short walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. Open Monday to Friday 09.30–16.30. Closed public holidays. Admission is free.

Enquiries 0171 776 3636

Golden and Glorious exhibition Readers are reminded that an exhibition of Royal stamps, for the golden wedding anniversary, is currently on show at the National Postal Museum. The displays concentrate on the 1953 Coronation and 1972 Royal Silver Wedding issues, artworks, essays and proofs as well as the issued stamps. The exhibition will be on display until next summer.

A new NPM book on the 1953 Coronation issue has recently been published and is reviewed elsewhere in this *Bulletin*. Four NPM postcards reproducing unadopted artworks for the 1972 Silver Wedding stamps, were issued in April and are still available from the Museum shop or by post from the Bureau in Edinburgh, price £1 the set.

Royal Collection display A special display of Gibraltar, Cyprus, Malta, Crete, Long Island and Ionian Islands stamps from the Royal Collection can be seen at the NPM from late September until the end of the year.

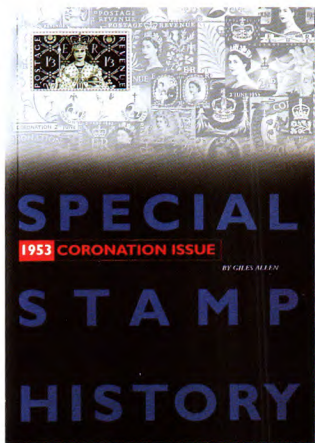
Other attractions Permanent displays include postal artefacts and vehicles, the famous R M Phillips Collection of British Victorian stamps, and an all-world reference collection. A booklet on British Victorian stamps, illustrating material from the Phillips Collection, was issued free with the May *Bulletin*. Copies of the booklet are still available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, price £2.95 ●

Books 1953 Coronation issue history • Collecting GB first day covers • Stanley Gibbons Queen Victoria catalogue

Special Stamp History 11: 1953

Coronation Issue For the past few years a National Postal Museum research team has been carefully going through files in PO Archives and the stamps and essays in the NPM collections to produce a series of detailed histories of British special stamp issues since 1924. Over 100 such histories have been written and a few published in the NPM's *Reviews*. Publication of the first history in book form coincides with the opening of a new exhibition of Royal stamps – Golden and Glorious – now on show at the Museum. The book has been painstakingly researched and written by Giles Allen, with Douglas Muir as the series editor.

Just days after George VI died on 6 February 1952 PO officials considered the need for a special Coronation stamp in July or August, with the design ready for Royal approval in April. When it was known that the Coronation would not take place before May 1953, plans were revised. In consultation with the Council of Industrial Design, a list of suitable artists was drawn up and invitations for designs also extended to the main stamp printers, the College of Arms and the Royal College of Art. Allen provides detailed accounts of the production of a suitable Queen's head from photographs by Dorothy Wilding, and the design instructions supplied to the artists. In July, a Royal family portrait design, including Prince Philip, Prince Charles and Princess Anne as well as The Queen, was discussed but in September, when some 76 designs were considered by a PO panel, the idea was rejected as 'totally unsuitable'. Even when a short list was drawn up, there was much further discussion of two-colour printing, values, an air letter and a £1 stamp. After lengthy discussion, the £1 value was



dropped, not least because of the hostility to the 1948 Silver Wedding £1. The adverse comment about 'nasty commercialism' in the Gibbons catalogue was critical in deciding against such an issue.

The colour reproductions of the various essays are particularly interesting. Some designs were essayed with different heads before final versions were submitted to the Palace in December. The Queen was still not overhappy about her portrayal by Dulac (193d stamp) but placat-

ed by the fact that this would not be the highest selling value. One of the members of the advisory panel described Dulac's design as a failure although it was the most distinctive in the set. Final Royal approval was given on 31 March 1953 – just two months before the Coronation. Similar protracted and painstaking consideration went into the air letter – a special stamp design was considered but eventually an adaptation of the 196d adhesive was used. Sales of the 2½d stamp were enormous – over 415 million. Only 6.2% went unsold although rather higher percentages were wasted of the other three values. Nearly 26 million air letters were sold. Philatelic sales of the stamps was estimated at £300,000. Wastage rates of the overprinted stamps for postal agencies overseas were staggeringly high.

Many collectors posted FDCs onto TPO services after the stamps went on sale at midnight at two London post offices, and at the Bath and West Show where a special cancellation was available at a mobile post office. Mr Allen provides a selection of press comment on the stamps, intriguing details of a proposed souvenir pack and cover and biographical details of the artists of the issued stamps. Sadly Edmund Dulac died just days before his stamp went on sale.

Perhaps the most interesting section of this book is the 'Artwork Catalogue' which reproduces some 84 designs (including some revised), identified by the artist or printer. Readers will decide whether the PO chose the best!

If there is criticism of this work, it is that it is very much an official history and philatelic details such as cylinder numbers and constant varieties are not given; for these refer to the SG *Specialised Catalogue*. Nevertheless, Allen and Muir are to be congratulated on a job well-done, boding well for further titles. Price £7.50, available at the Museum shop, or by post from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT •

The Booth Catalogue: Collect GB First Day Covers

The 25th edition of this popular work is now available. The listings start with the Uniform 4d Post of 5 December 1839 and from then on the publishers 'have tried to list as many known GB first day cover issues and postmarks as possible', but point out that 'there are still some gaps in the Queen Victoria and Edward VII sections, where the problem is one of establishing the "real" first day of issue.' The sections for Queen Victoria to George VI are followed by one on the Channel Islands (1940-48), and then separate listings of Elizabeth II commemoratives and definitives, regionals, booklets, and postage dues. Each is well illustrated. The special 25th anniversary colour feature illustrates some fine covers of Royal issues from the 1935 Silver Jubilee set to the 1994 Prince of Wales Investiture Anniversary issue. The 'Collectors Philatelic Gems' section shows other rare and unusual covers; collectors are invited to submit photocopies of suitable items for the next edition. Prices are worth careful scrutiny, as always the elusive cds or slogan postmark is more highly rated than most first day of issue cancels. For example a basic FDC of the 1979 European Elections set is priced at £3 but with the 'Are You on the Voters List – Check Now' slogan from Lincoln at a whopping £485! 308 pages, card covers. Price £4.99, postage £1 UK, £2 overseas from First Day Publishing Company, PO Box 947, Lewes BN8 6ZS •

Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue: volume 1 Queen Victoria Collectors of Victorian stamps will welcome this new (11th) edition – the first for five years. In their Preface, Editors David Aggersberg and Robert Oliver write: 'In an era of high-speed presses, computer-etched printing cylinders and automatic sorting it is easy to forget the achievements of the Victorians who established the first modern postal service and also the industry to produce the millions of stamps which it required each year.' In the 1880s the design and production of stamps came under intense scrutiny. The government was minded to ignore the adverse public reaction to the 'Lilacs and Greens' issue but when it was pointed out that the Revenue might suffer from inability to check the correct value of stamps used, reaction was immediate. The work of the ensuing 1884 Stamp Committee is described in a completely re-written section (KD) by W A Wiseman, author of *The De La Rue Years 1878-1910* (2 vols, 1984, 1990). Details are given of trial stamps, die proofs and presentation books connected with the Committee. It is interesting to note that 'In addition to essays for intended stamps, some with "impossible" designs, such as exaggerated figures of value, were created to wean the Committee away from various impracticable ideas.'

Revisions have also been made to the listings for 1883-84 and the 1887 'Jubilee' issues and further notes, based on the work of R G Folkard, are provided for plates 155 to 175 of the 1d imperforate. Prices have been revised, especially of essays, proofs and varieties for which demand remains strong – for example essays of the proposed 1890 postage stamp jubilee issue and varieties on some Government Parcels overprints, also many Oxford and Cambridge College stamps, especially used on cover. The overall quality of the illustrations is noticeably better than some in the current edition of vol 2 (Four Kings), and four colourful stamps make the front cover more appealing than the last edition. 464 pages, card covers. Price £22.95 from SG Strand shop or SG Publications, Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH. Postage £3 UK, £6 overseas •

Postbag

Welsh Country stamps I read with fascinated interest in Royal Mail News (June *Bulletin*) the explanation of Royal Mail's decision to delete the 'p' from Welsh – sorry Cymraig – country stamps in conformity with the Welsh Language Act 1993. Is this not political correctness gone mad, at great expense to taxpayers, not to mention stamp collectors? These Celtic tribes commonly speak of penni which curiously begins with a p and continue to buy their stamps with coins minted at Llantrisant which are tastefully inscribed as Saxon Pennies. We Angles managed to get by for 131 years with stamps offensively labelled with the hated Roman coinage of (D)enarii. The Silurians still have to suffer the indignity of the vile Italianate Medici £ sign on their higher values, and one of them is misspelt as Caernarvon Castell though I am not sure what is wrong. To avoid insulting these good Europeans any further, should not the 'p' sign be removed from all other values of stamps on sale in the Principality in conformity with the Act? Scots wha' hae, etc. B CAMERON, ORPINGTON

Great Philatelists I have read with much enjoyment Ron Negus's articles on pioneer philatelists and the interviews with Messrs Kiddle, Harman, Mackay and Goodwyn, and Mrs Rapkin in which they were asked who they regard as great philatelists. Can I suggest that the 1997 Stamp Poll form invites *Bulletin* readers to nominate their greatest philatelists – living and deceased. I was most interested in the results, published in April, of the 1996 poll asking which famous people readers would like to see on stamps. I think Brunel and most of the other deceased nominees worthy of depiction, although am not sure I would like to see any of the living people suggested on stamps even if this was allowed. I support the idea of a series showing British Nobel Prize winners. A J STOCK, EXETER

In support of current issues I am a keen collector of the stamps of Great Britain – commemoratives, definitives, booklets etc, and supporting

material – now having over 40 volumes. To me our stamps and stamp designers are the best, and it annoys me when I read letters in the *Bulletin* or comments in the annual Stamp Poll, saying that British stamp design is declining and they are not like 'the good old days'! Rubbish, you have to be bold and innovative, trying out new processes, new designers, new ideas, etc to lead the field. I look forward to many more years of collecting British stamps! JOHN S CHILDS, NOTTINGHAM

Bulletin back issues Mr G Rowley of 30 Gainsborough Drive, Sherborne, DT9 6DR (telephone 01935 817790) offers a run of the *Bulletin*, 1967-83, to the first person to collect or pay postage.

Stamp collecting – a family activity I am particularly pleased to inform your readers that following the publication in January of *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* supplements on stamp collecting (commissioned by Royal Mail as part of its support for the hobby), the British Philatelic Trust received over 1500 letters requesting advice and information on how to get started, or restarted, as a stamp collectors. The writers of these letters were aged between six and 83. Whilst almost half the requests came from, or for, children, considerably more than a third came from adults. Almost 200 letters came from individuals, schools or other youth organisations wishing to start a stamp club. Letters came from as far afield as New Zealand, Nigeria, North America and the Far East. It is clear that these supplements have fired the enthusiasm of many people, young and old, who are now beginning to enjoy a new hobby that could well last a lifetime and which may be shared with their relatives and friends.

The hobby outside of philatelic circles is gaining positive media coverage and there appears to be a vibrancy within the hobby which has not been present for many years. KEITH WOOD, Philatelic Development Manager, British Philatelic Trust, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT •

Competition Win £100 stamp voucher

1st prize A voucher worth £100 against any purchase of stamps from John M Deering plus one year's free subscription (worth £7.50 UK) to John's combined newsletter and price list, *Modern GB Update*.

2nd prize A copy of the 20p Scottish definitive with a superb perforation shift (current price £39.50) plus one year's free subscription to *Modern GB Update*.

3rd prize One year's free subscription to both *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* (£23.40 UK) and *Modern GB Update*.



FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS YEAR the *Bulletin* competition is sponsored by John M Deering, the Machin specialist. The winners of the first Deering-sponsored competition included a reader from Finland – underlining the *Bulletin's* international appeal. Machins too have an international dimension, being collected and studied in every corner of the world, as John's clientele testifies. For even more efficient links with its customers,

the firm's New Issue service is being computerised to get the latest material to clients faster; but John insists on retaining the service's distinctive personal touch: no client will become 'just a number'!

Collectors can order with confidence from the firm (for its range of material and services, see page 285 of the May *Bulletin*), because of its expert knowledge of Machins, long experience in the stamp trade, comprehensive stocks, and dedication to the highest quality. John says that his firm is not a supermarket and that some other Machin sources may seem cheaper; but the discerning collector compares not only prices but specifications of material and services. With John's firm, you get exactly what you order, without compromise: the genuine article, packed carefully and in first-class condition. It is a thoroughly up-to-date firm – with old-fashioned standards of service.

To judge for yourself, just sample the firm's publications. Try the illustrated leaflets that accompany New Issue distributions of Machin material; the fully descriptive price lists for specific topics like regionals or window books; the regular newsletter-cum-price list, *Modern GB Update*, including Selected Special Items; or the New Issue brochure. John also keeps the readers of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* (perhaps the best-known of all philatelic magazines) up to date with the world of Machins, through his regular 'Machin Watch' articles.

For a complimentary selection of publications write or phone: John M Deering, PO Box 2, South Molton, EX36 4YZ. Telephone 01398 341564.

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: September Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL to arrive by 24 October. Entries must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded. The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*.

The winners of the June competition were B Taylor of Lancashire, P Benning of Ontario, Canada, and J Taylor of Florida, USA.

The answers 1) Sir John Marriott; 2) Jean Luc Benard 3) Joh Enschedé; 4) Empire Air Mail Scheme; 5) Edward Short. Our thanks to all who entered.

The winners of tickets and covers in the Bletchley Park Draw (June Bulletin) were R Wedgerfield, J Crawshaw, K Clark, G Patterson, S Blackwood, I Doggett, A Alexander, Mrs M Parsons, J Champion, M Davies, Ms P Backe, Dr J Warmbrunn, Ms A Glendinning, A Lemmon, P Ives, J Wills, R Chad, P Shead, J Cook, L Donaldson, M Johnson and R Ayers

- 1 On what date will the 1997 Christmas aerogramme be issued?
- 2 Where was the Midpex exhibition held?
- 3 Who wrote the new NPM book on the 1953 Coronation stamps?
- 4 When was 'Operation Gelb' launched?

The competition is not open to employees, their families and agents, of Royal Mail or John M Deering •

Posting boxes 169

THIS MONTH WE FEATURE two Victorian wall boxes. The first, situated at Claypole near Newark was photographed by Mr R A Hobbs who lives nearby. The second photograph, taken by Emyr Thomas and submitted by Mr W A Forse, is set in the wall of a Victorian cottage at Tilehurst, near Reading. This looks particularly smart with the royal cypher and crown in gold and the words POST OFFICE above the posting aperture picked out in black •

For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a stamped addressed envelope, or international reply coupon, to the Membership Secretary, Sally Jones, 43 Miall Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 9BS.



Events

13 September Philatelic Music Circle Annual Convention at Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, London W2. 11.00-17.00. **Enquiries** I Summers, 01706 826655

13 September Preston and District Phil Soc Stamp and Postcard Fair and Exhibition at Canterbury Hall, Garstang Road, Preston, 10.00-16.00. 17 dealers. **Enquiries** Paul Gaywood, 01772 684302

13-14 September BigStamp show at National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. **Enquiries** 01279 871110

13 September Scout Jamboree Commemoration Stamp Fair, organised by Streetly Phil Soc at Town Hall, Sutton Coldfield. Dealers, displays, etc. Admission 20p, children 10p. **Enquiries** Laurie Rennison, 0121 308 2260

13-14 September Brussels '97 exhibition at Sheraton Airport Hotel, Brussels. Displays from some of finest collections in Europe, Belgian Postal Museum,

leading dealers, etc. **Enquiries** Erik Paaskesen Philatelists, 0032 2 676 64 97

15-20 September Croydon '97 exhibition and stamp fair (20 Sep) at Fairfield Halls, Croydon. Organised by Croydon Phil Soc to mark its 90th anniversary.

17 September Display of Victorian Postal Stationery by *Bulletin* contributor Colin Baker to Derby Phil Soc at Queens Hall, London Road, Derby (opposite Royal infirmary), 17.30. Visitors and prospective members welcome.

17-21 September Autumn Stampex at Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, London N1. **Enquiries** Stampex, 0171 490 1005

27 September Portadown Stampex and Collectors Fair at Portadown Town Hall, 10.00-16.30. Displays, dealers in stamps, postal history, postcards, memorabilia. Admission free, car parking nearby. **Enquiries** J J Proctor, 01762 334964 •

ROYAL MAIL STAMP CARDS



Royal Mail's very popular Stamp Cards reproducing the designs of special stamps were introduced in 1973. Some are now highly-priced collectors' items.

Definitive Stamp Cards started in 1993. Currently available are cards showing: the £1, £1.50, £2 and £5 Castles and £10 Britannia high values (£1.25 set of five cards) • £3 Castle (25p) • £1 Machin definitive (25p) • 1994 Bank of England,

1995 R J Mitchell, and 1996 Queen's Birthday commemorative labels (75p set of three) • and 1995, 1996 and 1997 Greetings stamps (£2.50 each set). Stamp cards are ideal to send to your friends, philatelic or otherwise.

Available from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, and from Post Office Counters philatelic outlets

