

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

Volume 45 Number 12

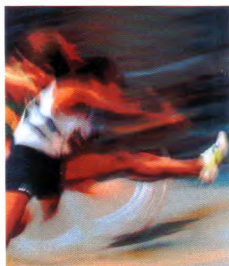
AUGUST 2008 £1.20

Christmas stamps • Olympic Games • Extreme cachets



The Olympic Flag Handover:
Royal Mail's new miniature
sheet celebrates a symbolic
occasion on 22 August.

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals

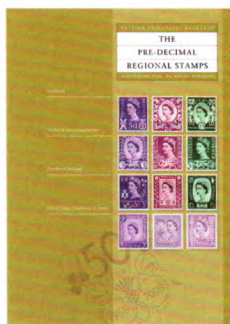


Cover Royal Mail's miniature sheet, marking the handover of the Olympic Flag from Beijing to London, was featured in last month's *Bulletin*.

2 August	Withdrawal Brooklands medal cover
5 August	Issue Beijing 2008 Olympic Expo generic sheet (20 x 1st Hello stamps, with Chinese lanterns on labels)
22 August	Issue Olympic Flag Handover miniature sheet, presentation pack, and stamp cards
25 August	Withdrawal Scouts coin cover
27 August	Withdrawal 6 x 1st Harry Potter advert stamp book
16 September	Issue Edward VIII & George VI Ingot series No 6: 1951 'Festival' 5s high value (White Cliffs of Dover)
18 September	Issue RAF Uniforms stamps, presentation pack, PSB, stamp cards, Royal Mail/BFPO cachet cover
19 September	Withdrawal 1st and 2nd Northern Ireland country stamps, printed litho • 6 x 1st stamp book with post-code advert (issued 20 September 2007)
29 September	Issue 50th anniversary of Country (Regional) stamps miniature sheet, presentation pack, prestige book, press sheet, UK coin cover • Country collectors pack containing 2nd, 1st, 50p and 81p stamps for each country (16 stamps) • National (Machin) definitives stamp cards, 1p-£5 stamps plus NVI issues (24 cards) • Glorious UK generic sheet

Availability All items available from Royal Mail Tallents House (address below). Selected items are available at Post Office branches and Post Office philatelic outlets at the main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, Lichfield, London (Eastcheap & Trafalgar Sq), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Princes Risborough, Southampton (High St and Hedge End), Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro and York.

Royal Mail Tallents House 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK. Telephone order line (08.30-17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641; from overseas +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/shop



Bulletin Publication Free in this month's *Bulletin* is no14 in our series of Philatelic Bulletin Publications, marking the 50th anniversary of the first Regional stamps. Written by the regular *Bulletin* contributor Martin Robinson, it will be of interest to all collectors of the regional/country stamps. Additional copies can be ordered from Tallents House in Edinburgh, priced £2.95 each. Four earlier Bulletin Publications are still in print: no10 *The Travelling Post Office 1838-2004*, no11 *The First Elizabeth II Castle High Value Definitives*, no12 *British Stamp Printers* and no13 *40 Years of Machins – A Timeline*. All are available from Tallents House, priced £2.95 each •

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The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HG • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.20 each from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group Ltd, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any articles should be sent to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail Letters, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HG • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Beacon Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203 registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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Stamp scene News and upcoming events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted

Enquiries The Zoom Digital Microscope is available from Stanley Gibbons Publications, 7 Parkside, Christchurch Road, Ringwood BH24 3SH, priced £79.95. It is also available from Royal Mail Tallents House (handling charges are £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of the world).

Philatelic Microscope Stanley Gibbons has recently introduced a Zoom Digital Microscope, and interest in this product has apparently been high. SG's advertising describes it as 'a powerful digital microscope that displays the magnified image right on to your computer screen allowing you to see intricate details of ordinary objects you never knew existed!' and, for general use, it does what it says on the attractive presentation box.

Features include an integrated digital camera to capture still and video images, a 26-130x digital zoom, 5x optical zoom, a built-in illuminator for clear and bright magnified images, an image resolution of 640 x 489 pixels (VGA), battery-free operation as it connects to a PC via USB and is compatible with Windows 98 through to Vista operating systems. Supplied accessories include a specimen base, three blank slides, one prepared slide, tweezers, eyedropper, USB cable and CD-ROM software.

I recently tested this unit and found installation of the software and hardware simple: it was possible to be up-and-running in a few minutes without needing to use the 64-page printed manual. (The video capture facility was not tested, as I could not think of a philatelic use for this feature.)

Examining a single stamp was easy so long as it was smaller than the area within the base of the unit, which almost all stamps would be. To examine a block of stamps or a stamp on cover, the base needs to physically touch the actual item, which is generally OK. However, care needs to be exercised when moving the microscope into the required position, as it could catch on the edge of a stamp and possibly cause irreparable damage.

The four white LED lighting system worked well, illuminating the item under examination evenly, with a luminosity of three Lux. Focusing and zooming was achieved by rotating two separate rings on the unit and capturing an image was simply a couple of clicks away.

The general collector, who requires a method to closely examine stamps, perhaps for illustrating flaws or retouches on an album page, or to simply use as an electronic magnifying glass, should find this product quite acceptable for their use. However, if producing extreme close-up imagery for a printed publication, then I believe that there are better alternatives.

Many collectors may already possess one or two other methods of examining stamps on-screen without a microscope. I hand-held a digital camera (the latest Fujifilm Finepix F50fd 12 megapixel) with anti-shake and set to macro-focus, and utilised my scanner (a Hewlett Packard HP psc2210, at 1200dpi) to try and replicate the microscope imagery. I produced an average-sized close-up of the top left quartile of the recess printed Penny Black reproduced for Stamp World London 1990 as my subject.

Readers can compare the quality achieved (see opposite), but I marginally favoured the scanner over the camera for its overall sharpness and ease of creation. I could not get the microscope to produce a sharper image than that depicted, despite many attempts at rotating the focussing ring.



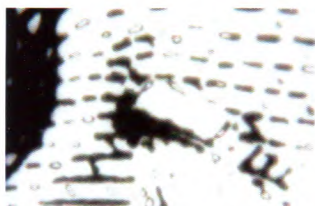
Zoom Digital Microscope enlargement



Photographed with hand-held camera



1200ppi scanner enlargement



Zoom Digital Microscope enlargement



Photographed with hand-held camera



1200ppi scanner enlargement

The microscope can zoom-in closer than shown in the top row above, but I found the results of Queen Victoria's eye area to be less than pin-sharp, having again undertaken repeated attempts at manually refocussing. However, the camera and scanner images were both acceptable quality.

I suspect that microscope technology will improve, perhaps with electronic auto-focussing, and I look forward to the day when it will fully meet my publishing needs, as I liked the ease of use. That said, I believe that the current microscope is a useful addition to the average collector's tools, especially as it also has many other applications beyond philately. •

Red Arrows Air Displays 2008 marks the centenary of the first public air display at Farnborough, and is also the 90th anniversary of the Royal Air Force (RAF). A Business Customised Sheet featuring the paintings of Mark Postlethwaite (Guild of Aviation Artists) with the Red Arrows flying over Fowey (top image) and Silverstone (bottom image) has been designed and issued by Adrian Bradbury. The stamp labels feature 10 of Mark's paintings depicting famous RAF planes from 1918 through to the Harrier, still in use in 2008.

The sheet is limited to 1500 numbered copies, and is also being offered by Royal Mail through Tallents House. Sheets cost £30, including postage and packing to any destination in the world, and can be ordered from www.bfdc.co.uk (type 27474 into the Quick Search box), or by post from A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3RA. •

AIR DISPLAYS
Centenary of the first UK efforts to flight of a heavier than air machine, the Sunbeam City of London, on 16th October 1908.

1918
US, General Pershing's 1st World War Air Corps in 1918. The first of the American Expeditionary Force.

1931-40
The first of the British Empire's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

1951-60
A Spitfire in flight, the first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

1971-80
A Harrier in flight, the first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

1991-2000
A Harrier in flight, the first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

1921-30
The first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

1941-50
The first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

1961-70
The first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

1981-90
The first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

2008
The first of the Royal Air Force's first four years of the Royal Air Force.

90th ANNIVERSARY of the RAF

Number of 1500



Celebrating the UK A recent lecture at the British Postal Museum & Archive given by Peter Silk, a joint creative director of Silk Pearce, coincided with the opening of the 'Lions, Leopards, Unicorns and Dragons' exhibition at the BPMA. Peter told the story behind the design of the series of four miniature sheets (MS) issued for each of the constituent countries of the UK, titled 'The Four Countries of the United Kingdom'. Peter illustrated his presentation with several dozen early

drafts and visuals, unusually including many hand-drawn illustrations as distinct from solely the computer-generated artworks that we have come to expect these days. It was fascinating to see the thought process of the graphic designers in action, as initial pencil sketches gradually evolved into final artworks. What is all the more remarkable is that the finished design for the first MS, Celebrating Scotland, was fast-tracked through in just over two weeks from initial brief to submission of the approved design in order that it would be available for sale on St Andrew's Day, 2006.

Royal Mail's brief stipulated a miniature sheet format comprising four stamps, including one of the existing 1st class Country definitives, a flag design and each Patron Saint. The fourth stamp design choice was left to the agency, and they considered the depiction of standing stones, natural features, maps, sport, costumes, music, dancing, patriots and buildings.

They wanted to incorporate old and new techniques on each sheet, so Clare Melinsky created the Patron Saint illustrations by producing linocuts that were printed-off in various colour combinations, with the chosen ones then scanned onto a computer. The Flag designs were by Peter Crowther, who created computer models of the national flags and blew wind through them electronically, adding ripples, changing layouts and adjusting colour values on-screen to arrive at the final imagery. The remaining two elements were the cityscapes, which used modern photographs with many locations being trialled on-screen before settling on the final subjects. The second element was the background design, where it was important that the eventual imagery did not overpower the stamp designs, so was toned-down by reducing the density of the colours.

The latest of the four sheets was issued in March and celebrated Northern Ireland. At the time of issue Peter stated: 'We are always flattered when Royal Mail invites us to design commemorative stamps and it is a great feeling knowing that our work will be seen, admired and treasured across the world as people get ready to celebrate all things Irish'. (For a chance of winning one of these sheets exclusively signed by Peter Silk, see the Prize Draw on page 366 of this *Bulletin*.)

The MS for Wales is eagerly awaited, but you will have to wait until next year before the design is out of its embargoed period and can be revealed to *Bulletin* readers. Peter broke no confidences by confirming that one of the long-format stamps will illustrate St David, while another design is of the Welsh flag.

To close the evening, attendees saw the extent of Silk Pearce's involvement with Royal Mail over a 20-year period, which started with the FDC envelope and filler card for the 1988 Lord Mayor's Show issue. We were then shown the agency's other stamp issues (the Pillar to Post set of 2002 and the Welsh National Assembly Building ms from 2007), FDC envelope and special handstamp designs, yearbooks, airletter forms, event invitations, presentation packs, ingot covers and Philatelic Numismatic Covers (PNCs), all of which have emanated from the imagination of its team of designers.

This lecture gave a fascinating insight into the workings of a design agency and ably illustrated the level and depth of detail that goes into generating stamps and other products for Royal Mail.

Silk Pearce (www.silkpearce.com) is a design-led communications consultancy offering everything from brand development and identity through to literature, packaging and websites. The company was founded in 1984, is based in Colchester, Essex, and works with many regional, national and international businesses and brands aside from Royal Mail, including Aldeburgh Music, Arjo Wiggins, Daler Rowney and Historic Royal Palaces •

White City Exhibitions Don R Knight is the acknowledged expert on the Franco-British Exhibition of 1908, his passion having started back in 1972 when he acquired some of the picture postcards produced for the exhibition. Finding that there was no existing book on the subject, he set about writing one – *Exhibitions: Great White City*. It is now 30 years since that first edition was released, and with 2008 being the centenary of the show, Don has taken the opportunity of reprinting and updating his earlier work, to include colour imagery of the exhibition's delights, labels, postcards, and souvenir china along with a fold-out map of the site as it appeared in 1908.

The exhibition was clearly a success, as over eight million attended, having each paid their one shilling admittance charge. After its closure the site was used for other exhibitions in later years, in 1909-12 and 1914. Various buildings and facilities continued to be used for different events well into the 1980s, but it appears that nothing now remains following the demolition in 2003 of the main entrance in order to make way for a shopping and leisure complex.

The BBC now occupies some of the site, which it uses as offices and to broadcast, among other programmes, *The One Show* each weekday evening. Sharp-eyed viewers will have noticed the Olympic rings and a commemorative inscription reading '1908/THE GREAT STADIUM/SHEPHERD'S BUSH' with a league table of all medal winning countries below on the outside of the building, which records the hosting of the 1908 Olympics at that site. Britain headed the table with 56 gold, 51 silver and 38 bronze medals.

Much of the book is, as would be expected, non-philatelic, but it is still of great general interest. Ten postal markings are illustrated and there are also nine souvenir labels depicted in colour, with supporting text. The book is priced at a very reasonable £5.50 plus £1 postage.

Visit the Exhibition Study Group website at www.studygroup.org.uk if membership of this active group of around 100 members is of interest •



Exhibitions: Great White City
Available from: Don R Knight,
Print Mania, 28 East Barnet
Road, Barnet EN4 8RQ. Price
£5.50 plus £1 postage.

SG Publications Parkside, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SH. Freephone mail order number 0800 611622, open Monday to Friday 08.30-17.00.

Win a GB Concise catalogue
See prize draw on page 366.

GB Concise catalogue The 2008 edition of the popular Stanley Gibbons *Great Britain Concise Catalogue* caters for collectors whose level of specialisation is between *Collect British Stamps* and the multi-volume GB Specialised Catalogue. In just over 370 pages, the Concise covers all issues from the Penny Black to the 2008 Insects issue, with listings of stamp books, generic sheets, officials, postal fiscals, and the 1984 postage label ('Framas'), all illustrated in colour. Prices have been revised throughout, with Queen Victoria, modern errors and booklets showing some notable increases. Many recent special issues are also moving up, particularly those only issued in booklets. The listing of graphite band errors on the 1958 set has been expanded, and a number of new errors added or footnoted. In response to collector requests, Royal Mail presentation pack numbers have been included in the listings and an index to self-adhesive Machins added. As an added bonus, purchasers receive a free copy of *GB Numbers Issued 1840 to 1910* by Rikki Hyde (usual retail price £7.95). The new Concise costs £24.95 from SG's Strand shop in London, stamp dealers and bookshops, and by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications (address at left) •

Postal Stationery Society For details contact Colin Baker, 4 Greenhill Gdns, Sutton Veny, Warminster BA12 7AY or see www.postalstationery.org.uk

Societies news The May issue of the Postal Stationery Society *Journal* includes a four-page 'Amendments and Additions' supplement to the recently published *Collect British Postal Stationery* by Alan Huggins & Colin Baker (reviewed here in March). The supplement includes the new Post Office Postpaks issued in April (see the May *Bulletin*, page 266). Further new discoveries are reported in GB Postal Stationery News, and for collectors of non-GB material there is an interesting article on the Evolution of the Early German View Cards. The Society will next meet at the Royal Philatelic Society on 25 October •

Cricket Philatelic Society For details write to: 11 Weppons, Ravens Road, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5AW.

The Cricket Philatelic Society, which caters for all interested in cricket on stamps, postmarks and other philatelic material, publishes a quarterly bulletin, *Wickets*. Membership is £6 UK, £10 Europe, £12 overseas. Send enquiries to the address at left, or to the Society's Australian Agent David Kirby Sportsworld, PO Box 61, Mount Eliza, Victoria 3930, Australia (Australian subscription \$A24). Website www.cricketstamp.net •

ATA For details, write to the ATA, PO box 57, Arlington, TX 76004-0057 USA or see www.american-topicalassn.org

The May-June issue of *Topical Time*, journal of the American Topical Association, includes features on Corks and Corkscrews (Wine plus Medicine), Star Forts, Canadian Heroines, Symbolism of Flowers, Carmen and Papageno (Operatic characters), and Bhutan's CD-Rom stamps (described by Ron Negus in the May *Bulletin*) •

Applications/enquiries Julian Chapman Memorial Scholarship, Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY.

Julian Chapman Memorial Scholarship Applications are invited from philatelists for a travelling scholarship, worth up to £2500, to study Commonwealth stamps or postal history. Applications, by 30 September, should outline the subject to be studied and how it relates to the applicant's previous philatelic research, intentions as to the publication of the results; an accurate costing of the trip, including places and organisations to be visited, and a short cv including personal details, collecting interests, previous publications, and philatelic achievements •

Forgeries seminar Philatelic forgeries are often more valuable than some of their genuine counterparts, judging by auction results. The National Philatelic Society, which holds its own forgery collection, is devoting a seminar to the subject when John Shaw FRPSL will describe some of the modern ways in which forgeries can be detected and discuss material produced by some renowned forgers before opening the meeting to discussion.

John is a notable philatelist in the many specialist societies to which he belongs, at societies in his neighbourhood, and as member of the notable expertising committee at the Royal Philatelic Society London. This is an opportunity to learn more about forgeries and some of the philatelic items of which you should be wary.

The seminar is at 14.00 on 28 August, at the Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. It has been organised through the BPMA, and Royal Mail are kindly providing the room. The NPS Library will be open to attendees on the day from 11.00-18.30. Tickets are £5 (£3 for NPS members). Places are limited and the deadline for applications is 23 August •

Enquiries For further details and a booking form, send a stamped addressed envelope to Christopher Oliver, National Philatelic Society, c/o British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL or visit www.ukphilately.org.uk/ nps where a booking form is also available.

Royal Mail news New issues and products

2008 issues The special issues are shown at right, with the alternative First Day of Issue postmarks. Miniature sheet is abbreviated 'ms'.

This month's special issue is the Olympic Flag Handover miniature sheet, previewed here last month. The four stamps in the sheet feature the Beijing National Stadium, London Eye, Tower of London, and Corner Tower of the Forbidden City, Beijing. This is a joint issue with China Post, which will issue stamps of a very similar design on 24 August 2008. Collectors may prepare their own joint covers. Royal Mail will apply a China first day postmark by authority of China Post but in accordance with UK handstamping practice. The postmark will be used to cancel all China Post stamps of this issue only, and only on covers that bear at least one UK Olympic Games stamp in order to facilitate the creation of dual covers. No other stamps will be cancelled on such a cover. Covers should be sent to any of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres to arrive by 18 September. The addresses of the Handstamp Centres are given at right.

On sale from 5 August will be a new generic sheet for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Expo. This will contain twenty of the 1st class Hello stamps (large size, as issued in 2002), plus labels bearing illustrations of traditional Chinese lanterns. The sheet was shown in the July *Bulletin*, on page 330. Designed by Hat Trick design group of London, it is printed by Cartor in litho. Price £7.75, available only from Tallents House •

22.08	Olympics Handover (MS) London E15
18.09	RAF Uniforms Hendon, London NW9
29.09	Country Definitives anniversary (MS) Gloucester
14.10	Women of Distinction Aldeburgh, Suffolk
04.11	Christmas Bethlehem, Llandello
06.11	Lest We Forget (MS) London SW1

London Special Handstamp Centre Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB

Wales & The West Special Handstamp Centre 220-228 Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA

Scotland & Northern Ireland Special Handstamp Centre Rutherglen DO, Duchess Place, Rutherglen, Glasgow G73 1BT

Northern England Special Handstamp Centre South Shields DO, Keppell Street, South Shields NE33 1AA

Midland Special Handstamp Centre Birmingham Mail Centre, St Stephens Street, Birmingham B6 4AA

Future special issues The special issue next month is the RAF Uniforms set and prestige book, previewed here in June. They go on sale on 18 September, the second day of Autumn Stampex. The plate numbers and colours are: w1 silver w1 yellow w1 magenta w1 cyan (blue) w1 black w1 phosphor. Perforation is 14.5, and stamps have two phosphor bands. Each stamp includes the year of issue '2008' in microprinting as part of the design. ●



Lest We Forget Shown here are the miniature sheet and generic sheet to be issued on 6 November. Both were designed by Hat Trick design group of London. The miniature sheet contains a new Poppy special stamp and the four 81p country stamps. The new Poppy stamp, plus those issued in the miniature sheets in 2006 and 2007, will be available as single stamps in sheets of 30 stamps containing 10 of each of the three designs. Sheets of 60, with gutter margins, will be supplied to Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets. The miniature sheet and stamps in sheets of 30/60 are printed in litho by De La Rue, and the generic sheet in litho by Cartor. Six stamp cards will be available, featuring the three Poppy stamps and three miniature sheets. Details of an End of War medal cover will be given later.

First Day Covers will be serviced with Tallents House or London sw1 postmarks. Collectors may submit their own covers for these postmarks to Tallents House (FD0829) or one of the Special Handstamp Centres (London postmark, FD0830).

This issue marks the 90th anniversary of the Armistice ending the First World War, at 11am on 11 November 1918, always cited as the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The anniversary is marked each year by the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall and the ceremony at

Lest We Forget prices

Miniature sheet	£ 3.60
Presentation pack	£ 4.10
Generic sheet	£ 7.75
Stamps (3 x 1st class)	£ 1.08
FDC envelope	£ 0.30
Serviced FDC (UK customers)	£ 4.71
Serviced FDC (overseas customers)	£ 4.01
Stamp cards (six)	£ 2.40
End of War medal cover	£14.95

the Cenotaph in Whitehall, both attended by HM The Queen and by members of the Royal Family, government ministers and other politicians, representatives of the Commonwealth, and of those who fought in the two World Wars and other conflicts. Numerous other ceremonies and services in memory of the fallen are held in cities, towns and villages throughout the UK and the Commonwealth. •

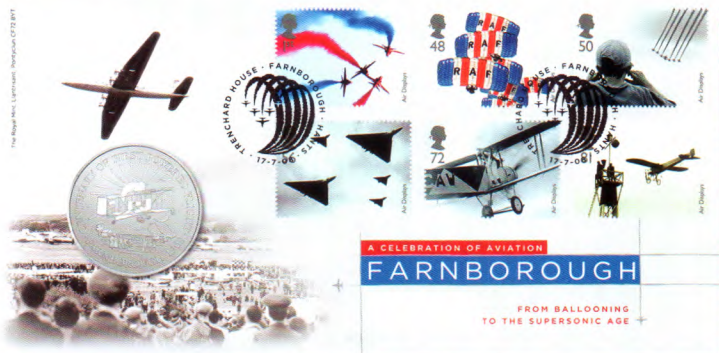
[illegible]

New definitive and country stamp products To coincide with the miniature sheet and psb for the Country Stamps Anniversary, a new collectors pack containing one each of the current 2nd class, 1st class, 50p and 81p stamps for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (16 stamps) will go on sale on 29 September, price £8.30. Also out that day is a set of 24 Machin definitive stamp cards showing the 17 current valued stamps from 1p to £5, plus seven nv1 stamps, price £9.60. The nv1 stamps comprise 1st and 2nd class standard and 'Large' size, Europe and Worldwide to 40grams and Worldwide postcard. All these stamps were shown in the April *Bulletin* •

Stamp Ingots The sixth and final ingot in the Edward VIII & George VI series will feature the George VI 1951 5s stamp of the 'Festival' high values set, depicting the White Cliffs of Dover. The stamp, together with the 2s6d HMS *Victory* stamp, were the work of Mary Adshead. This ingot will be available from 16 September, and replaces the 1948 1s Olympic stamp, the cancellation of which was announced in the April *Bulletin*. Price £27.95 •



Films postcard and stamp pack Shown here is the pack containing a special printing of postcards reproducing the Carry On and Hammer Films stamps. The stamps feature film posters, and on these cards are shown as posters on a brick wall. The cards are a larger size than our usual stamp cards (PHQ cards). Supplied with the cards is a wallet containing three 1st class and three 56p Films stamps. Price £4.39 from Tallents House and Post Office philatelic and postshop outlets ●



New medal cover The Farnborough Air Displays medal cover is now available from Tallents House, price £14.95. The Royal Mint medal marks the centenary of powered flight at Farnborough in 1908, and the 60th anniversary of the first Farnborough International Airshow. The six Air Displays stamps are cancelled with a special Trenchard House Farnborough postmark. Trenchard House is named after Lord Trenchard, commander of British air forces in France during the First World War, whose advocacy brought into being the independent Air Force, previously the Royal Flying Corps. He featured on the 29p Royal Air Force stamp in 1986. A Farnborough cachet cover, shown here last month, is also available, price £14.95 ●

Carry on Hammer stamps

Actress Fenella Fielding (second from right), with members of Royal Mail's Stamp Design Team, at the launch of the Carry On Hammer stamps at the National Theatre, London. Ms Fielding starred in *Carry On Screaming* which featured on the 72p stamp.





Glorious United Kingdom Following the issue of Glorious Country sheets for Wales (1 March 2007), England (23 April 2007), Scotland (30 November 2007), and Northern Ireland (11 March 2008), a UK sheet will be available from 29 September containing five each of the 1st class stamps for the four countries and appropriate labels for Wales (*Cynulliad Cymru*/Welsh Assembly, *Castell Harlech*/Harlech Castle, *Tonypanyd* (statue of miner), *Capel Sant Gofan*/St Govan's Chapel, and *Helvetia*, *Rhosili*/Helvetia, Rhosili), Northern Ireland (Beaghmore Stone Circles, Belfast Customs House, Scrabo Tower, Lough Erne White Island Figures, and Mussenden Temple), England (Tower of London, Brighton Pier, Turf Fen Mill, Royal Liver Building, and Eden Project) and Scotland (Scottish Exhibition Centre, Declaration of Arbroath, Edinburgh University Cloisters, Glenfinnan Viaduct, and Italian Chapel, Orkney). The stamps and labels, set against the background of the Union Flag ('Union Jack') are self-adhesive.

A UK coin cover will also be available, priced £13.95. This marks both the 50th anniversary of country (regional) stamps and the 25th anniversary of the introduction of the £1 coin. It bears the country stamps miniature sheet, cancelled by a special London SW1 postmark, and the 2008 £1 coin. The cover features the designs of the £1 coins depicting the thistle (Scotland), leek (Wales), flax (Northern Ireland), and oak tree (England), with the George VI diadem worn by The Queen for the State Opening of Parliament and in the portraits of Her Majesty on the Wilding and Machin definitives. (For details of the diadem see the feature article in the July 2002 *Bulletin*.) The coin cover insert gives a history of the stamps and coins ●

Glorious United Kingdom

The sheet was designed by Neon design agency, London, and printed in litho by Cartor. Price £7.75.

Correction Please note that the Harry Potter generic sheet was withdrawn, along with the stamps and other products, on 16 July. It is not remaining on sale, as indicated in the July Bulletin. We regret any inconvenience caused.



A 1946 design for a Channel Islands Regional stamp

British Postal Museum & Archive A BPMA Machin exhibition is on display at the Wedgwood Visitor Centre, Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent until 23 December, and a Travelling Post Office exhibition is at the Crewe Heritage Centre until 31 October. An exhibition marking the 50th anniversary of the Regional (Country) stamps is now on show at the BPMA at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Entitled 'Lions, Leopards, Unicorns & Dragons: the first "Regional" stamps', the exhibition features some of many designs submitted for the 1958 stamps, and some unissued designs from the reign of King George VI when regional stamps were first considered. The exhibition graphics were designed by Rupert Denyer of Sedley Place, who has created the new stamps for the Country Stamps 50th anniversary miniature sheet and the prestige stamp book to be issued in September. Mr Denyer will give a talk '50 years of Country Definitives' at the BPMA on 18 September (19.00). Places can be booked by calling 020 7239 2570; Minicom: 020 7239 2572.

The BPMA offers an opportunity to see its extensive collections in its store on Wednesday afternoon, 3 September, 1 October, and 5 November, and on Monday evening, 1 September. Behind-the-scenes Archive tours take place on 25 September and 27 November, and there is an Archive Open Day on 13 September. Contact the BPMA on 020 7239 2570 for further details of these events.

The BPMA contains the collections of the former National Postal Museum and Post Office Archives. For further information contact the BPMA on 020 7239 2570 or see website www.postalheritage.org.uk •

Bulletin back issues Mrs Mary Hulin offers a run of the *Bulletin*, volumes 37-44, to anyone who can collect from a few miles south of Oxford. Contact her on 01865 739876 •

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GREAT BRITAIN
NUMBERS ISSUED
1840 to 1910

by Rikki Hyde



IN COLOUR

WE HAVE TWO prize draws this month. Firstly, thanks to Stanley Gibbons, we have three of their new *GB Concise Catalogue* (retail price £24.95) together with the reprint of *GB Numbers Issued 1840 to 1910*, by Rikki Hyde (£7.95). Secondly, we have four of the Celebrating Northern Ireland miniature sheets signed by Peter Silk of Silk Pearce, the designers of the sheet. To enter, simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard(s) and send to: GB Concise Draw and/or Northern Ireland Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ, to arrive by 29 August •

Philately online Ron Negus visits a site devoted to Smilers



www.smilers-info.com Designed to sell a catalogue entitled *Customised Stamp Sheets of Great Britain*, this site contains information that will be invaluable to collectors of Smilers Sheets. An extract from the publication, including details of how to order it, can be found on the site in the 'Contact Us' section, by following the 'Smilers Catalogue Information' link.

ual interest groups. There are a number of these that have been produced by local philatelic societies in connection with their own anniversaries.

Another useful aspect of this site is the inclusion of Smilers Information Notes. These have further background details of selected sheets, explaining their origin and giving further details about the issues included. They are available in pdf format for ease of printing.

One particular Note is worthy of special comment. This is entitled 'A White Mix-Up', and is copied from a news article in the *Southern Daily Echo* newspaper. It describes the sheet issued by Royal Mail under the title of Glorious England. The se-tenant labels bore photographs of tourist sites, such as the London Eye, Stonehenge, etc. However, on the photo of The Needles, the famous rock formation off the Isle of Wight, the caption on the label reads 'Isle of White'. This error, which was recalled by Royal Mail, has given rise to a spoof Smilers sheet with captions that read Queue Gardens, Adrian's Wall, and Glastonberry among other mis-spelt inscriptions. No doubt, given the British sense of humour, this sheet will be featured in many future displays at local stamp clubs throughout the land.

Apart from the sheets themselves, it is possible to collect single specimens from them to include stamp plus label. These have been used to create what have become known as 'smiler covers'. A section of the site gives names and addresses of stamp dealers who sell Smilers sheets and Smilers covers. This is helpful for anyone wishing to start collecting these items, or for those who want to increase their current holdings.

Undoubtedly, this aspect of the hobby is likely to grow in popularity. This site is a welcome addition to the philatelic information sources on the internet, and is easy to navigate and use •

SMILERS are sheets of stamps, issued se-tenant, with labels on which an individual's picture or message is printed. Royal Mail introduced this concept at the London 2000 International Exhibition. This followed the idea being successfully adopted by Australian and Swiss postal authorities in the previous year. Smilers was registered as a trademark by Royal Mail, and the equivalent sheets abroad have their own names. The sheets, each containing stamps, with labels, in a decorative frame, have become popular with collectors, and Royal Mail and independent producers have now created a large variety of them.

This website (address given above) is sub-titled 'Everything for the GB Smilers collector', and is maintained by the publishers of a 200+ page catalogue devoted to Smilers. This catalogue, which can be bought online, covers the complete range of sheets issued in the period from 2000 up until February of 2007. Updates giving details of later issues are recorded on the site, and have coloured illustrations of the sheets and details of the organisations that issued them.

In the catalogue, the sheets are classified under the following main headings: generic, business, and themed. The generic class covers those sheets produced by Royal Mail in connection with new issues of regional stamps, or of selected special issues. The business category includes sheets that have been designed and sold by independent suppliers. These were often in limited numbered editions, and copies of some earlier sheets have now sold out. The themed category has Smiler sheets which have been designed and issued by individ-

Christmas Royal Mail celebrates sentiment,



THIS YEAR'S Christmas stamps feature traditional pantomimes. In addition, the 1st and 2nd class Madonna and Child stamps issued last year will go back on sale for those who wish to use a specifically religious image on their Christmas mail. All these stamps go on sale on 4 November.

The Pantomimes set comprises: 2nd class and 2nd class Large, the Ugly Sisters from Cinderella; 1st class and 1st class Large, the genie from Aladdin; 50p, Captain Hook from Peter Pan; and 81p, the Wicked Queen from Snow White. They were designed by Steve Haskins and team at so design consultants of Bristol, using photographs by Peter Thorpe, and printed in gravure by De La Rue on self-adhesive paper in sheets of 50. They will also be available in a conventionally gummed miniature sheet.

The Madonna issue, designed by Peter Willberg, features the religious paintings *Madonna and Child* by William Dyce, c1827, and *The Madonna of Humility* by Lippo di Dalmasio, c1390-1400. The two paintings are respectively held by the Tate Gallery, and the National Gallery in London. These two stamps are printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 50, on a self-adhesive paper.

On the stamp books, the wording (It's behind you! etc) is printed on the selvage edge.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or a Special Handstamp Centre (Bethlehem postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO827' (Tallents House), or 'FDO828' (Bethlehem). For details of sponsored special postmarks see the *British Postmark Bulletin*.

The presentation pack, written by Maev Kennedy tells us about the introduction of pantomime in the 18th century, with profiles of the principal characters – the ugly sisters, the baddie, the dame, the principal boy, the fairy and the panto cow! The pack was designed by so design consultants, with photography by Peter Thorpe, and printed by Walsall.

AIRLETTERS The 2006 airletter (standard and bilingual Welsh/English versions) goes back on sale at Post Office branches on 4 November, having remained on sale from Tallents House since November 2006. The airletter features reindeer and Father Christmas by Tatsuro Kiuchi. The standard version was shown in the November 2006 *Bulletin*, on page 74.

slapstick and anarchy: the British Pantomime



The illustrated presentation pack, above, describes the introduction of pantomime in the 18th century, with profiles of principal characters. The FDC is shown at right, with the miniature sheet.



Royal Mail First Day Cover



Royal Mail "Talent House" (1) "Oh No It Isn't!" (2) "Oh Yes It Is!" (3) "It's Behind You!" (4) "Abracadabra!" (5) "Oh No It Isn't!" (6) "Oh Yes It Is!" (7) "It's Behind You!" (8) "Abracadabra!" (9) "Oh No It Isn't!" (10) "Oh Yes It Is!" (11) "It's Behind You!" (12) "Abracadabra!" (13) "Oh No It Isn't!" (14) "Oh Yes It Is!" (15) "It's Behind You!" (16) "Abracadabra!" (17) "Oh No It Isn't!" (18) "Oh Yes It Is!" (19) "It's Behind You!" (20) "Abracadabra!" (21) "Oh No It Isn't!" (22) "Oh Yes It Is!" (23) "It's Behind You!" (24) "Abracadabra!" (25) "Oh No It Isn't!" (26) "Oh Yes It Is!" (27) "It's Behind You!" (28) "Abracadabra!" (29) "Oh No It Isn't!" (30) "Oh Yes It Is!" (31) "It's Behind You!" (32) "Abracadabra!" (33) "Oh No It Isn't!" (34) "Oh Yes It Is!" (35) "It's Behind You!" (36) "Abracadabra!" (37) "Oh No It Isn't!" (38) "Oh Yes It Is!" (39) "It's Behind You!" (40) "Abracadabra!" (41) "Oh No It Isn't!" (42) "Oh Yes It Is!" (43) "It's Behind You!" (44) "Abracadabra!" (45) "Oh No It Isn't!" (46) "Oh Yes It Is!" (47) "It's Behind You!" (48) "Abracadabra!" (49) "Oh No It Isn't!" (50) "Oh Yes It Is!" (51) "It's Behind You!" (52) "Abracadabra!" (53) "Oh No It Isn't!" (54) "Oh Yes It Is!" (55) "It's Behind You!" (56) "Abracadabra!" (57) "Oh No It Isn't!" (58) "Oh Yes It Is!" (59) "It's Behind You!" (60) "Abracadabra!" (61) "Oh No It Isn't!" (62) "Oh Yes It Is!" (63) "It's Behind You!" (64) "Abracadabra!" (65) "Oh No It Isn't!" (66) "Oh Yes It Is!" (67) "It's Behind You!" (68) "Abracadabra!" (69) "Oh No It Isn't!" (70) "Oh Yes It Is!" (71) "It's Behind You!" (72) "Abracadabra!" (73) "Oh No It Isn't!" (74) "Oh Yes It Is!" (75) "It's Behind You!" (76) "Abracadabra!" (77) "Oh No It Isn't!" (78) "Oh Yes It Is!" (79) "It's Behind You!" (80) "Abracadabra!" (81) "Oh No It Isn't!" (82) "Oh Yes It Is!" (83) "It's Behind You!" (84) "Abracadabra!" (85) "Oh No It Isn't!" (86) "Oh Yes It Is!" (87) "It's Behind You!" (88) "Abracadabra!" (89) "Oh No It Isn't!" (90) "Oh Yes It Is!" (91) "It's Behind You!" (92) "Abracadabra!" (93) "Oh No It Isn't!" (94) "Oh Yes It Is!" (95) "It's Behind You!" (96) "Abracadabra!" (97) "Oh No It Isn't!" (98) "Oh Yes It Is!" (99) "It's Behind You!" (100) "Abracadabra!"

GENERIC & SMILERS SHEETS The 2008 Christmas generic sheet contains eight 2nd class, eight 1st class and four 81p Christmas stamps, priced £8.85. It will be printed in litho by Cartor. The adjoining labels feature pantomime scenes and panto cries. Four Christmas Smilers sheets, with customers' own images printed on the labels adjoining the stamps, will be available, containing 10 × 1st class (£7.50), 20 × 1st class £13.50 (£12.50 each for two or more sheets), 20 × 2nd class £8.50 (£8 each for two or more), and 10 × 81p £13.50 (£12.50 each for two or more). Handling charge of £1.45 on all orders. These sheets will be shown in a future *Bulletin* •

Christmas prices Miniature sheet is abbreviated MS

Set of stamps or MS (Pantomime)	£2.88
Set of stamps (Madonna)	£0.63
Presentation Pack (Pantomime stamps)	£3.40
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC: Pantomime stamps/MS (UK orders)	£3.86
Serviced FDC: Pantomime stamps/MS (overseas)	£3.29
Stamp cards set (6 Pantomime stamps and MS)	£2.80
12 × 1st class book: It's behind you!	£4.32
12 × 1st class book: Abracadabra!	£4.32
12 × 2nd class book: Oh no it isn't!	£3.24
12 × 2nd class book: Oh yes it is!	£3.24
Generic sheet	£8.85
Airletter (standard or bilingual version)	£0.63

Solving a 100-year mystery Richard West about the history of the Olympic Games from



Bob Wilcock, of the Society
of Olympic Collectors

FINDING that collecting modern Great Britain in the 1970s was presenting no challenge, Bob Wilcock sought something new. Almost simultaneously he saw an article in a French magazine detailing the postal history linked with the Montreal Olympic Games, and an advertisement in a British magazine offering such specialised material. Despite having no sporting interest whatsoever, his mind was made up – he would collect the 1976 Games, quickly extending the parameters to encompass all the Olympics. It was the many avenues to be explored that were fascinating, and the stamps proved secondary. After all, unlike today, the early Olympic Games did not give rise to thousands upon thousands of stamps. But there was the postal history – and postcards. It is postcards that provide the glimpses back to Paris in 1900, St Louis 1904, London 1908, Stockholm 1912 and so on.

Bob discovered that there were vital sources of information: a society for sports philatelists in the United States, while the German international society of sports and Olympics produced catalogues and offered a new issue service, and already had about three British members including the late Francesca Rapkin. It is, of course, impossible to collect everything, so Bob has concentrated on the British involvement at each of the Games. He also decided to draw a line at the centenary of the modern Olympics, with Atlanta in 1996. He has found it far more fascinating to focus on used material – what better than a postcard written by one of the medallists? What have proved important are the relationships he has formed with collectors in this country and overseas in his quest for material. He recalls how vital was his contact in Moscow to obtain material released in Russia for the 1980 Olympics. He visited Barcelona in 1992, joining long queues to secure all that was issued by the Spanish Post Office. He may only want a few items personally, but he is happy to assist other society members with items for their collections, plus there is the all-too-important task of recording all that has been produced.

Olympic collectors In 1984 came an important development: Francesca Rapkin approached about a dozen collectors including Bob with a view to forming the Society of Olympic Collectors (soc). The concept was clear: the society would concentrate solely on the Olympic Games, and not on sport in general. It quickly grew, reaching 300 members, who mainly keep in contact through their quarterly magazine, *Torch Bearer*, plus the regular auctions and circulating packet, while there is also a library.

The Society appreciates how important it is to record everything linked with the London Games in 2012. It has forged links not only with the International Olympic Committee (ioc), but also with both the bid and organising committees for the 2012 Games. Appreciating that Royal Mail would not be able to record every step along the way, Bob Farley, the Chairman of soc, saw the potential of SmartStamps. The Society secured the per-

finds out more

Bob Wilcock



Submission of Bid Book
15 November 2004

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CANDIDATE CITY

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POSTAGE PAID GB
Par Avion



2012 Bid Submission



Thomas Lippert
Postfach 10 20 67
D - 18003 Rostock
Germany



Bob Wilcock
24 Hamilton Crescent
Brentwood
CM14 5ES

mission of the bid committee and now the organising committee to use its intellectual property to ensure a full philatelic record of the 2012 Games and their planning. Bob and the soc are pleased that Royal Mail and the organising committee have been able to agree a modest stamp issuing programme from now until 2012. The soc plans one or two SmartStamps each year for important milestones when there will not be stamps.

It has to be remembered that any reproduction of the London logo, the Olympic symbol, or even the use of the words 'Olympic Games', are strictly guarded, being regulated by the roc through the Olympic Act. When Royal Mail issued a miniature sheet to record that London was proclaimed the host city for 2012, even special handstamps could not include the word 'Olympic'. There was one exception: the soc was able to use its name, and thus 'Olympic' could appear on its postmark.

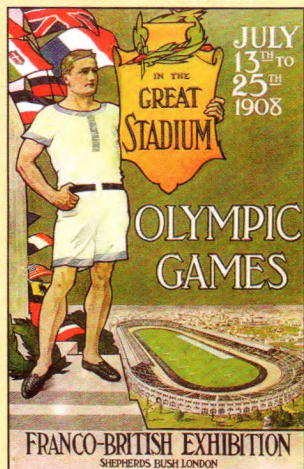
However, it is not only items produced by the soc that should be sought. The sponsors of the 2012 Games can use the logo, an example being Scottish Widows on postal stationery (below).

The year 1984 saw another innovation: a stamp exhibition, called Olympilex, linked with the Games, although the first was not held in Los Angeles that year, but in Lausanne. The Olympic Charter now states that there should be an Olympic collectors' exhibition held in conjunction with every Olympic Games. The soc has already held preliminary discussions with the London 2012 committee, and is excited about the prospects for an international stamp exhibition as part of the cultural events linked with the games. ►

SCOTTISH WIDOWS
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**The 1908 Olympic Games,
the Great Stadium and the Marathon
- A Pictorial Record**



Bob Wilcock
Society of Olympic Collectors

Bob Wilcock's new book has been published by the Society of Olympic Collectors. Priced £14 (£16 Europe; £20 world-wide), it is available from Bob at 24 Hamilton Crescent, Brentwood, Essex CM14 5ES.

The reason for the length of the marathon has long been a mystery. It was stipulated to be about 40 kilometres, or roughly 25 miles, so for 1908 was planned from Windsor Castle to White City. But how was the actual length realised? Bob planned a book to mark the 80th anniversary of the 1908 Games, but it has taken 20 years to gather all the material, and to unravel this conundrum. Basically the result of meeting practicalities, the story is told in his book (above). Bob illustrates and lists over 400 postcards and 50 stamps, plus postmarks, linked with the 1908 Games, and provides much absorbing background information. The book records every event staged, and shows all the known postcards produced at the time, and the stamps that have appeared since. The cards are shown chronologically, detailing the circumstances of each view: many are reproduced for the first time. Some are extremely rare, such as that with a Windsor July 24, 1908 postmark, the day of the marathon. Most of the cards do not feature the word 'Olympic', making them difficult to find, but rewarding when new ones are discovered. More Franco-British Exhibition cards could have been included, but these are secondary to the theme of the book. Particularly significant is the book's cover illustration (above), of the poster for the Games by an unknown artist. No copies of the poster are known to exist, but an image has been achieved from other material produced at the time.

The story of the 1908 Olympic Games will hold your attention: as the expectations for 2012 grow, it is well worth looking back 100 years, not only through this new book, but most certainly by viewing the display at the Picture Postcard Show at the Royal Horticultural Hall •

1908 Olympic Games The 1908 Games were not originally destined for London; what was planned for that year was a Franco-British Exhibition at Shepherd's Bush, to celebrate the Entente Cordiale of 1904. When Italy withdrew from staging the 1908 games, London was the obvious choice. About two years ago Bob suggested that a centenary exhibition be staged in conjunction with the Picture Postcard Show at the Royal Horticultural Hall from 28 to 30 August. This display examines the 1908 Games and links with the Franco-British Exhibition, and also focuses on the marathon of that year. It was a significant race: in setting the length for future marathons, and for the controversy of the Italian Dorando, who came in first, but was then disqualified for receiving assistance, watched by Queen Alexandra, who awarded him a consolation cup, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. This display, mainly of postcards but including stamps, was on display earlier this year in Correggio in Italy, the home of Dorando. Other contributors include John Crowther of the UK. The display will also be shown in Beijing.

1948 Olympic Games issue Bob Wilcock

on complications during the design process

IN JUNE 1939, just before the start of the Second World War, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) awarded the Games of the 13th Olympiad, to be staged in 1944, to London. The war meant that those Games never took place. The war finished in May 1945, and by October 1945 the British Olympic Council were in discussion with the President of the IOC, Sigfrid Edström of Sweden (see below), about the possibility of London hosting the Games of the 14th Olympiad, in 1948. A formal bid followed, and in March 1946 a postal vote by IOC members resulted in the award of the Games to London.

In July 1947 the Postmaster General authorised the issue of two stamps, and in August 1947 invitations to submit stamp designs were issued to twenty artists and printers. One of those designs proved controversial.

At the Antwerp Olympics in 1928 David Cecil, Lord Burghley, won a Gold Medal in the 400 metres hurdles. In 1933 he became a member of the International Olympic Committee, and in 1936 Chairman of the British Olympic Association. From 1946 he was the Chairman of the Organising Committee for the 1948 Olympic Games.

One of the artists submitting designs for this issue, G T Knipe, working for the printers Harrison & Sons Ltd, included two hurdlers in his design, (shown above) one of the hurdlers being Lord Burghley. He made his subject anonymous, removing the number '10' from the jersey, modifying the face to make it unrecognisable and darkening the hair, but the fact that the image was based on a photograph caused some considerable concern. The photograph was owned by Reuters, and the Post Office was worried about copyright. It was thought that Lord Burghley's permission would be needed, but the real concern was 'that it would hardly be proper to depict one of his Majesty's subjects on a postage stamp bearing the King's effigy.' Nonetheless, Knipe's design was one of the six chosen to be submitted to the King; the number of stamps to be issued was increased to four, and four designs were recommended; Knipe's was one of two designs in reserve, so that the King would have a choice. The King followed the recommendations, and did not choose Knipe's stamp, so the potentially delicate situation was avoided. Olympic collectors had to wait until 1957 for a stamp depicting Lord Burghley, issued by the Dominican Republic (shown at far right), as one of a set commemorating Olympic medallists. ►



The stamps for the Olympic Games of 1948 are an attractive set, but one of the proposed designs was to prove potentially controversial.



The issued stamps for the 1948 Olympic Games, shown larger than actual size.



References Bob Wilcock, 'The Olympic Games London 1948' *Bulletin* November 1988; Douglas N Muir, 'The 1948 Olympic Games Issue' *Bulletin* February, March & April 1989; James Mackay: 'Olympic Postmarks', *British Postmark Bulletin* 6 & 20 August 2004, with response by B Wilcock, 17 September 2004.

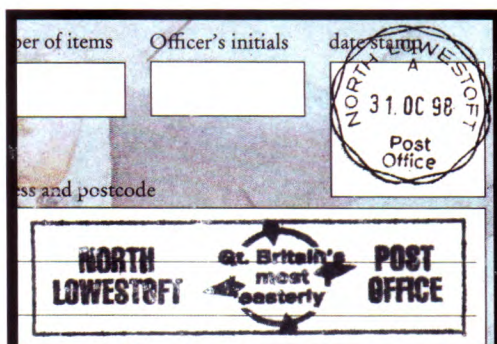
With acknowledgements to the BPMA and Douglas Muir, Curator Philately.

Today the IOC and the Games Organising Committee would be involved at every stage, but it does not seem that they were consulted about the 1948 designs. Had they been, they would almost certainly have asked for changes to three of them. The 2½d stamp, designed by Percy Metcalfe CVO, RDI flattens the Olympic Rings into a line. The 3d stamp, designed by Abram Games FSA spreads the rings rather widely, while the 6d design by Stanley D Scott interlocks them incorrectly. The outline design on the 1s stamp by Edmund Dulac reproduces the rings most closely.

Olympic Rings aside, the stamps make an attractive set, printed and sold in large quantities – over 24 million for the 6d value, 32 million for 3d and 1s, and well over 155 million for the 2½d letter rate stamp •

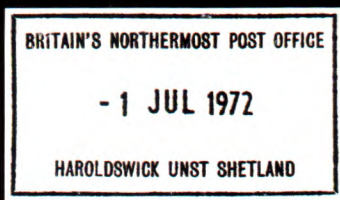
Text © Bob Wilcock 2008

Extreme cachets Martin Robinson reports



August is traditionally considered the 'silly season' when editors, finding a shortage of solid news, fall back upon more fanciful stories. So let us speak of north and south, east and west, and up and down.

ANY consideration of the northernmost, southernmost, easternmost or westernmost points of the land depends upon whether one means the British mainland, the United Kingdom or the British Isles, and whether a point, settlement or post office. My suggestions include post offices or at least places where you can (or could) post a card and obtain a commemorative cachet. Our geography makes it easy to select the easternmost post office, which is presently at North Lowestoft (and in this article one must bear in mind that what is true at the moment may not be true shortly, given the current round of post office closures), whose postmaster introduced a cachet (see left) with the wording 'NORTH LOWESTOFT GT BRITAIN'S MOST EASTERLY POST OFFICE' in 1998.



As for the north and south, the extreme points of the island of Great Britain are popularly held to be Land's End and John O'Groats, but Dunnet Head is more to the north and The Lizard more to the south. Tourist cachets have been used at both John O'Groats and Land's End for a hundred years or more, and another has recently appeared at the post office at The Lizard.

If we include the islands, in 1972 a philatelic postmark was introduced at Haroldswick, Unst, Shetland, at what was then the northernmost (or 'northernmost' as the original postmark had it) post office in Great Britain. After the closure of this office, Baltasound, 2½ miles to the south, became the northernmost office, and a new philatelic handstamp was introduced there in 2001 (above, at left). The post office on the coast road at Samarès, in Jersey, used to proclaim itself as the most southerly in the British Isles, but this is now closed.

The west is more complicated – the westernmost settlement to be found on the British mainland is Grigadale, on the Ardnamurchan peninsula, north of the island of Mull, but nearby Kilchoan probably has the westernmost post office. In the United Kingdom St Kilda is the westernmost settlement (although since the island was evacuated in 1930 there has only been a seasonal military base) but Rockall, if British ownership is conceded, is still further west. It's a close-run thing between St Agnes and Bryher for the westernmost post office in the Scilly Islands, and between Belleek and nearby Garrison, Co Fermanagh, as the westernmost post office in the United Kingdom.

The most westerly post office in the British Isles was on Great Blasket Island, off the Dingle peninsula, and I believe it is or was possible to buy a postcard with a cachet at the village shop. Since its closure, the most westerly post offices are on Valentia Island, Co Kerry, and on the mainland of Ireland at Dunquin, Tralee. Note from the illustration (above, lower right) that Valentia (or Valencía) was once a Railway Sub Office (RSO), even though far from a railway. ►



Several places have claimed to be the centre of Britain, including Meriden (West Midlands), Haltwhistle (Northumberland) and Dunsop Bridge (Lancashire). Dry Drayton is a village near Cambridge with no such claim and its 'Centre of the Universe' cachet is one of a number of whimsical unofficial marks introduced in 1999.

As for the highest post office, this was at Wanlockhead, Dumfries & Galloway (1,500ft), but I don't know what the foremost candidate for this title is now. Between 1886 and 1904 there was an office at the summit of Ben Nevis (4,406ft), but it only handled telegrams for the observatory. Cachets can be found on old postcards from the Ben Nevis Summit Hotel (above, top left), but this was only a wooden hut offering shelter and refreshments for climbers and walkers. Mr J Miller, the proprietor, who also ran the telegraph office, offered bed and breakfast for 7s6d a night, and sold postcards to which such cachets were applied.

The Cairngorm chairlift claims to have the highest post box in Britain at 3,647ft, and there are philatelic souvenirs to be had from the summit of Snowdon at 3,560ft. Just to put things into a wider perspective, these are small beer compared to the Klein Matterhorn cable car station, the highest in Europe at 12,532ft, and the observation platform at 12,736ft, which I was lucky enough to visit in December 2007.

If you look at cachets from tall man-made structures, you have a choice between the BT Tower (650ft) and Blackpool Tower (518ft). Many chimneys and masts, some buildings in Canary Wharf, and the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth (at 558ft the highest building open to the public outside London) are taller; as far as I know, these don't have cachets, but I should be happy to be proved wrong. In fact, I should be grateful if any readers can extend or correct the information given here.

And finally, down below. The Poldark (formerly Wheal Roots) Mine near Helston, Cornwall, has a 'posted underground' cachet (above, at top right), and another is available from the Llechwedd Slate Caverns near Blaenau Ffestiniog in North Wales. Both of these are popular tourist attractions. ●

Mainly Machins Douglas Myall's report for the specialist Machin collector



The LOVE stamp In my previous articles I have mentioned the perforation variations which distinguish the three versions of this stamp that have been issued in booklets. There are two other features of interest. As you know, the design consists of the service indicator in red, the silhouette head in gold and the word LOVE in capital letters in a narrow sans serif typeface, printed in shades of red. The design in the 2006 book differs from that in the 2007 and 2008 booklets in two respects. On the first issue, the head is solid with little evidence of any screening. On the stamps with ellipses it is clearly screened at 250 lines per inch, or 10 lines per millimetre. The letters of the word LOVE are 2.5mm thick in all dimensions on the first issue. On the two more recent stamps the horizontal stroke of the L and the bottom stroke of the E are only 1.5mm thick. In fact, the letter o is affected as well, as can be seen by the shortened curve at the bottom right. These variations were caused by increasing the gap between the head and the letters from 1.5mm to 2.5mm. This was achieved by moving the letters downward so that part of them disappears from view. Just why this was done is a mystery, but there is no mistaking the two designs.

The 2006 'Love' stamp, far left, and the 2007/08 version. Above: enlargements of The Queen's silhouette from the 2006 stamp (top), and from the newer issues.

New Specialised Machin Catalogue Stanley Gibbons has recently published the 10th edition of its GB Specialised Volume 4, Decimal Definitive Issues. This is entitled 'Part 1', as explained below. In the eight years since the 9th edition was published, much has changed. The Queen's longevity and Royal Mail's productivity have combined to present catalogue publishers with a problem. The issues of Queen Victoria spanned 60 years and are comfortably housed in volume 1 of this series in around 200 pages while volume 2, covering the reigns of four Kings over 49 years, needs fewer than 300 pages. Volume 3 covers the pre-decimal stamps of the present reign, including the Machins. Volume 4 used to deal with the decimal definitives, with volume



5 limited to special issues, greetings stamps etc. Decimal definitives include not only Machins but also country pictorials, castles high values, Frama labels etc. To cover all of them at specialised level now requires more space than can be found in a single volume. The printed version of the Deegam Handbook fills two large-capacity binders and the author solved the space problem by switching to compact disc. The sg editors have taken a different route. The former volume 4 has been split into two parts and volume 5 will be renamed as volume 6. The book under review is the first published product of this policy. The loose-leaf format of the previous two editions has been abandoned in favour of the traditional bound method.

The most important question was how to divide the decimal definitives into two parts. Sensibly, the publishers have decided against a chronological split. Instead, they have hived off the existing sections U1 to UX and XB to XE, comprising all the non-Machin issues, including Frama labels and postage dues, along with Machin country stamps, to which they have added self-adhesives and NV1s. All of these will be dealt with in Part 2 to be published at a later date. Presumably that has been deferred until the new volume 6 is ready so as not to have two different volume 5s on sale at the same time. The new volume 4 therefore comprises all Machin national value stamps, including the 1840 anniversary issues, their booklets and panes and the coil stamps, issued up to December 2007.

No matter how the split were to be made, there would be problems. Some booklet panes contain a mixture of value stamps and NV1s. These have all been illustrated in the new volume. This makes sense, but will they need to be repeated in volume 5? Section w of the new volume is titled 'Machin definitive designs used for special purposes'. It includes the two special issues featuring Machin himself and the 4d sepia, issued for the 40th anniversary of the Machin. These are not definitives and seem more appropriate to volume 6. It also includes some NV1s, among them the double head stamp issued in 2000 (and the booklet pane of six). Of the two gold stamps issued in 1997 to celebrate The Queen's golden wedding anniversary, the NV1 has disappeared, presumably to re-appear in the new volume 5, while the 26p stamp has been relocated in section UD with a change of catalogue number. Considering the upheaval caused by the need to divide the content of the former volume 4, such number changes are remarkably few.

This new volume is no mere update. Every image has been re-scanned and the text has been re-set. The result is a pleasing freshness, although images are not yet in colour. One of the textual improvements is that the all-capitals headings to the stamp description entries are now partly in lower case, making them much easier to read, and the paper/gum descriptions have been reduced to abbreviations. A feature which marks sg out from other catalogues is the inclusion of illustrations of constant printing flaws. This will not lead to an increased size in future editions as the abandonment of acid-etch engraving in favour of computerised methods means that such things are in the past. Prices have been thoroughly reviewed, and there are many upward revisions especially among the scarcer items such as imperforates and printing date blocks, all of which are listed and priced.

The changes mean that Machin collectors now need three SG volumes to cover their interests. It would be a service to them if they were available on CD, perhaps in addition to the printed books; the contents of all three would fit onto a single disc. This would have advantages for the publisher. For example, postage costs, compared to those for printed books, would be negligible, resulting in increased sales especially overseas. Meanwhile, this is a welcome addition to our shelves; every serious collector will want one.

The catalogue contains 606 pages, and is perfect-bound with a soft cover. Price £34.95 plus postage; available from Stanley Gibbons Publications, 7 Parkside, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SH, from the SG Strand shop in London, and from stamp dealers and booksellers.



Walsall cylinder numbers The Walsall books of standard 1st class gold and 2nd class light blue NVIs have been on sale since 2002 apart from a short period when PIP versions of the stamps took over. This might be a good time to list all the cylinder combinations which exist. They are in the form colour cylinder/phosphor cylinder.

Books of six $\times$ 1st class gold: w1/w1, w1/w2, w2/w2, w2/w3, w3/w2, w3/w3. Books of 12 $\times$ 1st class gold: w1/w1, w1/w2, w2/w1, w2/w2, w3/w1, w3/w2, w4/w1, w5/w1. Books of 12 $\times$ 2nd class (books of six do not exist): w1/w1, w1/w2, w2/w1, w2/w2, w3/w1, w3/w2.

Next time I will write about the nine new stamps with the Wilding head, issued to mark the 50th anniversary of the first regionals. They are being referred to as Wilding decimals but in fact they do not have any currency, all being 1st class Non-Value Indicators ●

Competitions Win a 2007 Miniature Sheet Collection



May identify The detail was from the 1937 Coronation stamp. The winner was P Benning of Canada.

May knowledge The answers: 1) 1972; 2) brown; 3) Harrogate. The winner was P Welburn of North Yorkshire.

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

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

- 1 Who designed the 1970 Philypia stamps?
- 2 What was the colour of the first issued British 2d stamp?
- 3 In which year did the *Queen Elizabeth 2* feature on a stamp?

Send your answer (addressed to either the August *Identify* competition or the August *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 19 September will receive a 2007 Miniature Sheet Collection. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until 23 December 'Timeless & Classic: Elizabeth II, Queen & Icon', BPMA exhibition at the Wedgwood Visitor Centre, Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent. Weekdays 09.00-17.00 and weekends 10.00-17.00. **Enquiries** telephone 01782 282 986 (Wedgwood) or 020 7239 2570 (BPMA).

Until April 2009 'Lions, Leopards, Unicorns & Dragons' exhibition at BPMA, London. See page 366.

24 August STAMP Lincs (Lincoln Philatelic Society) at Washingborough Community Centre, outskirts of Lincoln. Lincolnshire clubs get-together, with about 20 dealers. New collectors most welcome. **Enquiries** Peter Wain 01522 525984.

28-30 August Picture Postcard Show at the Royal Horticultural Society's Lawrence Hall, London SW1. Displays include 1908 Franco-British Exhibition and Olympics.

28 August 'Fascinated by Forgeries' seminar by John Shaw, Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1, 14.00. Organised by National Philatelic Society, £5 (£3 NPS members). Bookings: Christopher Oliver, NPS, c/o BPMA, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL; e-mail nps@ukphilately.org.uk

12-14 September Praga 2008 World Stamp Exhibition, Exhibition Grounds Prague 7, Czech Republic. See website www.praga2008.cz

14 September Modern British Philatelic Circle meeting at Rhodia Social Club, Langley, West Midlands. **Enquiries** Henry Coward, 020 7652 6579.

17-20 September Autumn Stampex at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1. 'Defenders of the Skies' display to complement Royal Mail's RAF Uniforms stamp issue, on sale from 18 September. **Enquiries** 01252 628006 •

Late news



Olympic Games stamps and products Royal Mail is pleased to offer a range of Olympic products from the Chinese, Hong Kong, and New Zealand postal administrations, and the Royal Mint.

The China Post products comprise: a sheetlet of 12 Beijing Olympic stamps (three sets of four) in similar designs to those issued by Royal Mail (price £2.25, order code VAO44); a maxi card set of four with stamps on cards showing Forbidden City, National Stadium, Tower of London, and London Eye (£6.95, VAO45); a Beijing to London Album (shown above) containing a set of opening ceremony stamps and sheet, closing ceremony stamps of China and UK, self-adhesive sheetlet, FDCs of closing ceremony stamps, a personalised sheet, and no-face value sheet of London scenery (£29.95, VAO46); Beijing 2008 Stamp Folder including six stamps and attached labels (£4.95, VAO47); set of prepaid 'My Dream' postcards on themes of green, science, technology, humanities, participation and dream (£2.95, VAO48); and a Torch Relay Cover with a printed autograph of Colin Moynihan (athlete and former Sports Minister) and a UK 78p definitive stamp cancelled with a special 6 April London Torch Relay handstamp (£5.95, VAO43).

The Hong Kong Post collection comprises a miniature sheet and a four-stamp FDC (£5.50, VAO50); the New Zealand Post collection is a set of Olympic stamps and FDC (£7.95, VAO49).

The Royal Mint product is a silver proof version of the London Olympic Centenary £2 coin, in a special presentation box (£29.95, VAO39).



The Beijing to London Stamp Album front cover, left, and the Torch Relay cover with a printed autograph of Colin Moynihan and a UK 78p definitive stamp cancelled with a special 6 April London Torch Relay handstamp.

All these Olympic products will be available from Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB from 24 August. The 'A' rate handling charge applies to all these items, except the Album (rate B).

Royal Mail will be attending the Beijing 2008 Olympic Expo at the Beijing Exhibition Centre, from 8-18 August; a special cachet will be available for application to British stamps in the exhibition passport. A generic sheet for this Expo will be issued on 5 August – shown in the July *Bulletin*, on page 330 •

Great novels on stamps The national press has recently reported on the 50 'greatest novels of all time', according to an online poll. Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* topped the poll. Nine have featured on British stamps: *The Lord of the Rings* (2004), *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1998), *Pride and Prejudice* (1975), *Wuthering Heights* (1980), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (2007), *Jane Eyre* (1980 and 2005), *Emma* (1975), *David Copperfield* (1970) and *Frankenstein* (1997). Novels written by Daphne du Maurier and George Eliot were also featured in the list, although not their titles depicted on stamps in 1996 and 1980 •

Clive Abbott We are sorry to report the death in June of Clive Abbott, who designed a number of significant British stamps in the 1960s and 1970s. An obituary will be published next month, followed by a personal tribute by the noted stamp designer Jennifer Toombs in October •

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(MS) = miniature sheet
PS = Philatelic Society
Each issue contained a supplement listing commemorative covers. The August issue included the British Philatelic Bulletin Publication No 14, *The Pre-Decimal Regional Stamps*, by Martin Robinson.

Royal Mail collections: ideal gifts



2007 Presentation Pack Collection

Price £59.75.
Order code PA728. Handling charge £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of world

2007 Miniature sheet Collection

Price £24.45.
Order code PA727. Handling charge £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 rest of world

Presentation Pack Collection The 16 packs of 2007 are all contained within a stylish black box, embossed in silver with 'Royal Mail'.

Miniature Sheet Collection An attractively packaged set of all nine miniature sheets of 2007: Beatles, World of Invention, Celebrating England, Wembley Stadium, Machin 40th Anniversary, Harry Potter, Royal Diamond Wedding, Christmas and Lest We Forget.



Royal Mail

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