

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

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Bulletin

A collection of signed covers
• Post boxes • Christmas issue



Five stamps marking the 150th anniversary of the roadside pillar box go on sale on 8 October.



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Installing the first of the Edward VIII pillar boxes, November 1936. Royal Mail's Pillar to Post stamps, issued this month, were previewed in the September *Bulletin*. Cover photograph: Getty Images.

Issues Note some items are available only from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh and Post Office Limited 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, Grimsby, Guildford, Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London (Trafalgar Square and Eastcheap), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud, Truro, Windsor and York.

1 October

Issue Pillar Boxes stamp cards.

1 October

Issue Smilers sheets: generic (with pre-printed labels) 10 × Dennis the Menace and 10 × Teddy Bear greetings stamp (1 sheet); 20 × 1997 1st class Christmas stamp; personalised image 20 × Teddy Bear, 20 × Dennis the Menace, 20 × 1997 Christmas stamp. (Sheets with personalised image available to order only from Tallents House.)

1 October

Withdrawal Nobel Prizes stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards, postbag, and commemorative document.

8 October

Issue Pillar Boxes stamps and presentation pack • Postcard books: Coastlines and Posting Boxes.

8 October

Withdrawal Smilers sheets: Christmas stamps, 20 × 19p Robin; 10 × 1st class Santa Cracker (issued October 2001).

15 October

Issue Northern Ireland E rate stamp printed by De La Rue. (New printings of Welsh stamps and rolls of 500 announced for 15 October have been postponed).

21 October

Withdrawal Flags & Ensigns miniature sheet, presentation pack, and stamp cards; and *Unseen and Unheard* prestige book. (Retail book containing self-adhesive stamps sold out).

29 October

Issue Christmas stamp cards.

5 November

Issue 2002 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp books, airletters (national and Welsh versions) and Christmas cards (three each of five stamp designs in a box) • 2002 Year Book and Year Pack.

5 November

Withdrawal 2001 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards, stamp books and airletters; 2001 Year Book and Year Pack.

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The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p for single copies from Post Office Limited philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £9.50 in UK and Europe; £13.50 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, are available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, which gives details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription, from Edinburgh address above: UK and Europe £10, rest of the world £21.75 • **Copyright** Design and text Consignia plc, unless attributed to a specific author. Requests to reproduce any article should be sent to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Perivan Group Limited • **ISSN** 0953-8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Consignia plc. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203, registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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Thematica Nearly 90 young collectors took up the 'Thematica' 'challenge' and produced displays of stamps on 'The Life and Times of Queen Elizabeth II'. Many of the entries were on show at the exhibition at the end of June. The winners were: under age 8 group Schwetha Srianjan, age 8-12 Jessica Moore, and over 12 Katie Cory. As usual, Thematica attracted a large number of collectors, pleasing the dealers present. Visitors were given a free souvenir sheet (see left). While stocks last, one will be given to each visitor to Thematica II next month; any then remaining will be destroyed. Thematica II will be held at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W1 on 22-23 November, admission free •

Letter Box Study Group For details contact: Val Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES.

GB publications The August issue of the Newsletter of the Letter Box Study Group gives details of recent Group activities, members' reports on letter boxes, and features on the introduction of the first roadside boxes 150 years ago, and the Group's 'Penfold Project'. Editor Arthur Hunt says he is 'very impressed' with the forthcoming Royal Mail Pillar Boxes stamps (8 October). A special FDC is enclosed for members to use when the stamps go on sale. An order form for Group products, available only to members, is sent out with each Newsletter; products include data sheets and lists, fridge magnet, window sticker, badges, and postcards •

Autograph Magazine Price £2.45 from W H Smith, etc. A copy of the August edition is available free from: Emma Whyte, Autograph Magazine, 136 Sandgate Road, Folkestone CT20 2BY.

Internetstamps Ltd has launched the first British *Autograph Magazine*. The August 2002 issue featured articles on collecting RAF covers, identifying signatures, features on new films and many offers of an extensive range of signed covers. The September edition has an interview with Tony Buckingham on his new Buckingham Cover series and a member of an Indian Royal family who met Elvis Presley and got a photograph of them together which he signed. It also has an article on the history of signed covers •

For details of future sales contact Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, 153-157 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY. Telephone 01332 250970.

Auction news In the Cavendish auction on 29 July a corner block of the 1863 6d grey made £4600. In the postal history section a rare oval 'From Switzerland' mark on an 1871 cover realised £575, a 1681 advertisement showing the Dockwra marks £747, and a privately sent letter from Dublin to London in 1611 £1092 •

Telephone enquiries 01425 472363, mail order freephone 0800 611622.

Stanley Gibbons The 2003 edition of the British Commonwealth catalogue lists the stamps of 1840-1952 in a single volume, price £39.95. The 2003 edition of *Collect British Stamps* will be published on 29 November. Enquiries: Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH •

Jersey Letter Boxes stamps On 23 November Jersey issues six stamps and a miniature sheet to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first pillar box in the British Isles. The stamps feature a selection of letter boxes used in Jersey: 23p VR pillar box (Central Market); 29p ERVH wall box (Colomberie); 38p GRV wall box (St Clement's Inner Road); 40p GRV ship box (Boite Mobile); 47p ERH pillar box, 1952 (Parade); 68p ERH pillar box, 2000 (La Collette); and £2 miniature sheet VR pillar box, 1852 (David Place). The stamps, designed by Colleen Corlett, were printed by Questa in sheets of 10 with decorative borders •

Enquiries Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey JE1 1AB.

Bulletin back issues R A Owers has issues from January 1993 to December 2001 that he no longer requires and would like to pass on to an enthusiast for a small contribution. Either collect or cover parcel post cost. Contact Mr Owers at 56 Anthonys Avenue, Lilliput, Poole BH14 8JH •

Royal Mail news New issues and printers • Postcard books • Rowland Hill Awards

New definitive and country stamp printings Following the change in printing contracts for definitive and country stamps (see March *Bulletin* p200), the Northern Ireland £ (European rate) stamp has recently been printed by De La Rue. Cylinders are: 1A greenish yellow 1A new blue 1A black P19 phosphor. These will be available from Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets from 15 October. Rolls (coils) of 500 2nd and 1st class definitives and De La Rue printings of Welsh stamps announced for 15 October have been postponed •

New Smilers sheets Two new generic Smilers sheets will go on sale from 1 October. The first contains 10 each of the Teddy Bear and Dennis the Menace 1st class greetings stamps with 'Knock! Knock!' joke labels attached. The second contains 20 of the 1997 1st class Father Christmas stamp with the words of 'Jingle Bells' on the attached labels. These sheets, price £5.95 each, are printed in litho by Questa.

The opportunity has been taken to upgrade the Father Christmas, Teddy and Dennis the Menace personalised sheets from 10 to 20 stamp sheets, bringing them into line with all personalised sheets in the Smilers series. The minimum order for personalised sheets is 20 stamps, which previously involved processing two sheets of 10 stamps. Generic sheets with pre-printed labels are produced primarily for collectors, enabling them to maintain a collection of the stamps issued in the Smilers series.

The three personalised sheets with personal image printed on the labels are: 1) with 20 Teddy Bear stamps; 2) with 20 Dennis the Menace stamps; 3) with 20 1997 1st class Christmas stamps. These will be used once previous stock is exhausted from 1 October. All printed by Questa in litho. There will be no first day facilities for either generic or personalised sheets •

Personalised sheets Order forms are available from Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Telephone 0845 074 2000 (UK) or +44 131 316 7483 (overseas).

Price £14.95 per sheet. Details of discounts on quantities are available from Tallents House.

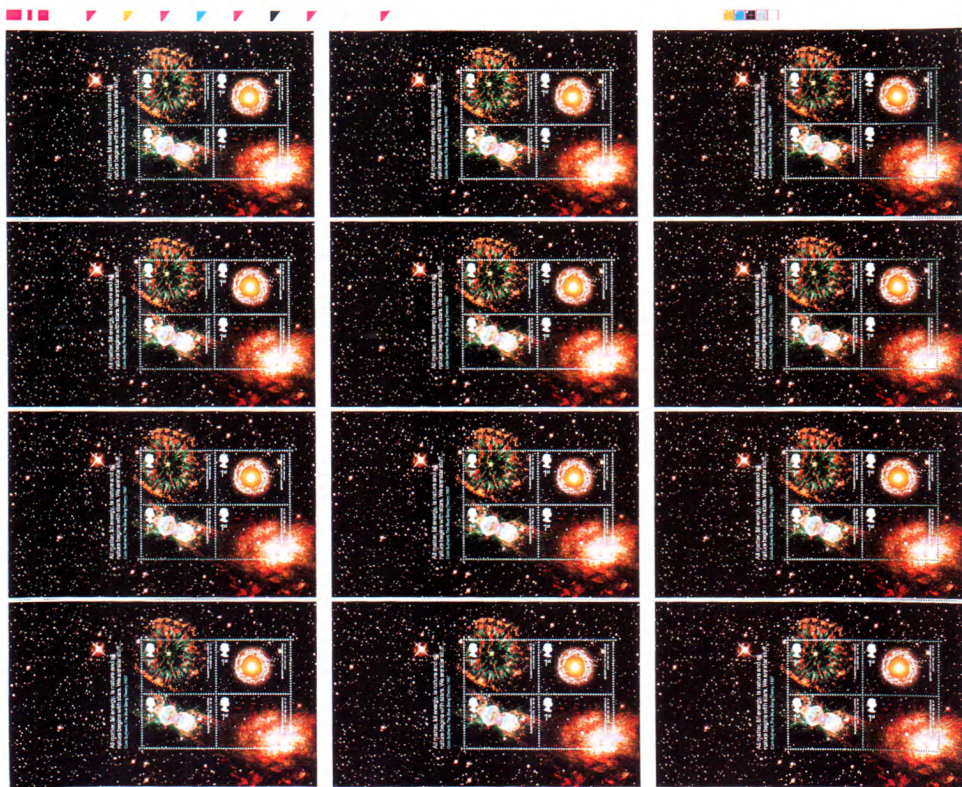
Future issues On 5 December a Wilding miniature sheet will go on sale containing nine stamps in Wilding designs. The values will be: 1p, 2p, 5p, 2nd, 1st, 33p, 37p, 47p and 50p. These will be in the designs of the old ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d, 2½d, 5d, 8d, 1s, and 1s3d stamps. Full details will be given next month. The sheet will measure 123 × 70mm •

The Months of the Year issue, previously announced for December, has now been cancelled.

The 2003 stamp programme Provisional dates

January	Birds	August	Pub Signs
February	Occasions	September	Transport/Toys
February	Medical Science	October	British Museum
March	Children's set	November	Christmas
April	Extreme Endeavours	The Medical Science and Coronation Anniversary issues include prestige stamp books.	
June	Coronation Anniversary		
July	Scotland		

Astronomy miniature sheet Below is the printer's sheet of the Astronomy miniature sheet. They were printed in units of 12, then guillotined into individual sheets. No cylinder numbers were printed in the sheet margins •



Going off sale Last year's Smilers for Christmas sheets containing 10 × 1st class Father Christmas or 20 × 19p Robin in letter box, with Christmas greetings labels, will be withdrawn from sale from 8 October. The sheets cost £2.95 and £3.99 respectively, order codes XA019 and XA018. The 2001 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp books, stamp cards, and air-letters (national and Welsh versions) will be withdrawn on 5 November. Also to be withdrawn will be the 2001 Year Book and Year Pack ●

New postcard books Two books, each containing 25 postcards, will be available from Royal Mail Tallents House from 8 October, price £5.99 each. The Coastlines book offers a bird's-eye view of Britain's magnificent coast. Ten cards feature high quality reproductions of Richard Cooke's Coastlines stamps, and 15 other stunning images of our shoreline from the air. Three pages give information about the British coast. The Post Boxes book celebrates the humble pillar box – an established part of UK street furniture – with 25 high quality cards reproducing superb 1930s-1960s advertising posters, and the new Pillar to Post stamps. These postcard books will appeal to tourists, devotees of poster design and anything British – and anyone wishing to send a short note ●

Queen's Stamps book Royal Mail and the British Library published *Queen Elizabeth 11: A Jubilee Portrait in Stamps* in June. The special edition containing a commemorative document bearing the Jubilee stamps cancelled by a special postmark is now sold out. However the standard edition, without the document, is still available from Royal Mail Tallents House in Edinburgh, price £14.95. Order code PB365 ●

Rowland Hill Awards This month's *Bulletin* includes two forms for readers to nominate in four categories each in the Royal Mail Innovation and British Philatelic Trust sections of the Rowland Hill Awards. The nominations will then be short-listed for judging. The criteria are set out on the nomination forms. The Awards, sponsored by Royal Mail, the British Philatelic Trust and the Philatelic Traders' Society, were initiated in 1997 to recognise individuals and organisations who have made a major contribution to philately during the year. The awards for 2002 will be made at a ceremony in London next March.

Please complete the enclosed nomination forms and return them by 31 December to: Rachel Lonsdale or Susan Ellis at the addresses given on the reverse of the forms. All nomination forms will go into a draw for £100 worth of Royal Mail philatelic products. Enquiries about the Rowland Hill Awards should be sent to Rachel Lonsdale, Stamps & Collectibles, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ, or telephone 020 7250 2267 ●

Pillar box window display Heritage Services will be having a window board display of pillar boxes to coincide with the issue of the Pillar Boxes stamps from 8 October. Heritage Services is located at Freeling House, Phoenix place, London WC1X 0DL. Open Monday to Friday 09.00-16.15 ●

Collecting pillar boxes Martin Robinson on



Bishop's Caundle in Dorset was chosen as the alternative special postmark for the Pillar Boxes stamps in honour of the oldest pillar box on the British mainland (above), which is still in service nearby.



Special offer Shire Books, who publish Mr Robinson's illustrated *Old Letter Boxes*, are celebrating their 40th year. To mark this joint anniversary they are offering *Bulletin* readers a copy of the book at £3 post free (usual price £4.50). Write to: Shire Publications (PB Offer), Cromwell House, Church Street, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 9AA, mentioning the October issue of the *Bulletin* and enclosing a cheque for £3 payable to Shire Publications.

I ONCE TOOK A PHOTO of a new letterbox in a neighbouring village, and several miles away was pulled over by a policeman who had seen me and wanted to know what I was up to. He was amused but satisfied when I was able to produce my Letter Box Study Group membership card. If possible, it is always wise to ask permission before taking pictures, especially in museums and at post offices, and the membership card has proved useful on many occasions.

Letter box spotters like me are celebrating the 150th anniversary of pillar boxes and the issue this month of a set of commemorative stamps engraved by the distinguished designer Czeslaw Slania. Readers whose curiosity is aroused by the designs might like to know where they can come face to face with the pillar boxes shown. There is an example of the Smith & Hawkes 1857 ornate pillar box (2nd class stamp) in the Peel Park Museum, Salford, and another two in the Consignia (Post Office) Heritage collection, which occasionally make public appearances at exhibitions. One example of the 'economy' version of this box, which lacks the decorative mouldings, survives at the Kent Railway Station, Cork, in the Irish Republic. The place to see the 1857 fluted box with horizontal aperture (1st class stamp) is Great Malvern, where there are no less than three examples. There is another in Shirley, Solihull as well as one in the PO collection. Ten examples of the earlier version with vertical posting aperture are in Banbury, Birkenhead, Christchurch, Eton, Gravesend, London N17, Milford-on-Sea, Warwick (2) and the PO collection. Yes, I have visited them all!

Airmail box The George V airmail box (E stamp) is trickier. As far as I know only three survive with the distinctive double collection plate (one for collection times, the other for airmail rates): at the Bruce Castle Museum, London N17, Barming PO near Maidstone and Shoreham airport. However many others survive, having been taken into normal service, painted red and fitted with a standard single collection plate. The practised eye can still tell the difference from small details. Beware, there are other, more ordinary, George V pillars done up to look like airmail boxes (Manchester and Windsor come to mind). Oddly enough, although dual aperture pillar boxes are common, those of the reign of George VI (47p stamp) are rare, only four examples being known. Of these, three are in the City of London and one in Bradford. Finally, the 1980 'K' Type pillar box (68p stamp) is commonly seen throughout the land. Those in Scotland are different, with a large crown instead of the crown and royal cipher (as the Scots forcibly reminded us in 1952, our Queen is not the second Queen Elizabeth of Scotland). What are much rarer are those from the first batch of boxes which bear on the rear a plaque inscribed: 'One of the first / castings of the / 1980 'K' pillar box'. There is a baker's dozen of these scattered throughout the land. For anyone interested in spotting these or any other pillar boxes the publications of the Letter Box Study Group are indispensable – see the Secretary's address at the end of this article.

how to approach this rich topic for collecting



If I had been choosing pillar boxes for a set of stamps to celebrate their 150th anniversary, I would have come up with a range different from the official one. I can understand Royal Mail's choice is representative of styles from Victorian times to the present day, but I should have gone for an all-Victorian line-up, as shown on my own 'stamps' above. My selection is purely personal and is probably made for the same reasons why some people prefer to collect only 'classic' stamps. For me these are the 'classics' of pillar box design.

Collecting boxes How do you 'collect' pillar boxes? Members of the Letter Box Study Group, which celebrated its 25th anniversary last year, would not be short of answers. It is possible to purchase real pillar boxes which have been taken out of service and are not considered rare enough to be acquired by Heritage Services, and many a garden up and down the land boasts one or more. I bought one from my local Head Postmaster 30 years ago for scrap value, but they are much more expensive to buy these days. My favourite method of study is to visit and photograph old boxes in situ, preferably still in service, but there are also many in museum collections, like the early mainland pillar box, a twin of the one at Bishop's Caundle, which was discovered in a private garden and appeared to have done duty as a gatepost, but now holds pride of place as the oldest letterbox in Wales, restored to its former glory at the Town Museum in Haverfordwest.

Many LBSG members also collect cards and models. Several artists and publishers have issued sets of postcards depicting letterboxes, such as Pat Holton's (PH Topics) photographic cards and Rosalind Wicks' charmingly painted ones, to name only two, and many were issued by the Post Office itself during the heyday of regional postcards. The card shown on page 43 (top left) is one of a National Postal Museum set of 1987 and shows a pillar box made by Suttie & Co for use in Scotland in 1856-57. The LBSG issues its own series of black and white postcards. It is always worth visiting any shop selling local postcards to see if any of the street scenes include a pillar box. Greetings cards are another source of images, and a perennial favourite for Christmas cards is the pillar box, complete with obligatory snow and robin. Greetings cards fall into three categories: the accurate, the approximate and the downright fanciful! Model pillar boxes can similarly

The author's five 'classics' of pillar box design: a survivor of the first 1852 Channel Islands boxes, still in use in Guernsey; an early mainland box of 1854-56, still in use at Bishop's Caundle, Dorset; a fluted box with vertical aperture of 1856, one of two in Warwick; a First National Standard pillar box of 1859-66; and one of the much-loved 'Penfold' boxes made between 1866 and 1879.



Above, a postman clearing a pillar box in London's Old Kent Road on 11 September 1940, following an air raid (Getty Images).

Opposite, clockwise from top left: NPM postcard, 1987 set; Inverness special postmark 1990; stamp book cover 1985; 'posted in wrong box' cachet 1933; PO Archives cachet for Spring Stampex 1991, showing a fluted box with vertical aperture of 1856; a Glasgow Museum of Transport cachet; postmark slogan 1980; wrong box cachet 1987; and a stamp book cover of 1972.

Letter Box Study Group For details, write to the Secretary: Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES.

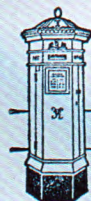
be classified as serious, ie made principally for collectors, and more light-hearted, ie those made as moneyboxes or to contain sweets or bath salts.

I also collect cuttings from newspapers and magazines which show pillar boxes. Sometimes they are part of an item about the Post Office (and there have been plenty of them recently), in mail order advertisements or, more tragically, as survivors amidst the aftermath of a bomb attack, such as those in Omagh and Manchester, and there is a famous photograph of a postman clearing a box in the destruction following a Second World War air raid (shown left). Such is the iconic status of the red British pillar box that it conveys a symbolic message of trust, survival and, well, Britishness. Anthony Trollope, who was responsible for its introduction in these islands, would be proud.

Another rich collecting area is stamps, postmarks and cachets. Apart from those issued this month, Royal Mail have featured letter boxes on stamps before (already mentioned by the Editor) as have many other countries, and an extensive collection could be put together. Let's not forget stamp books either, such as the two shown oppo-

site. There are hundreds of postmarks and cachets, too, from this country alone. There is only space to illustrate a few, like the handsome special handstamp used at Inverness on 27 September 1990, and the 'shopping' postmark slogan used at several offices in 1980-81. Cachets may be divided into the operational and the commemorative. The operational types include those used on letters posted in the wrong aperture of a dual-aperture 'town and country' pillar box. These were applied by machine and used from 1927 to the 1950s, with a later design used in 1987-88. There is a wealth of commemorative cachets to be found, often on cards posted by tourists, but only those mentioning or illustrating a post box can be included in this particular collection, and just a couple are shown opposite: one of several designs from the Glasgow Museum of Transport used over many years, and a stylish cachet used on PO Archives cards at Spring Stampex in 1991.

I should like to make three comments in conclusion. Pillar boxes are only, of course, part of the story and wall boxes, lamp boxes etc, should not be neglected. Letter boxes do not have to be old to be rare: some modern ones, survivors of unsuccessful experiments, are rare, whilst some Victorian ones are common. Britain has a unique national treasure because, somewhere, there is still at least one example of nearly every letter box ever made. It is to be hoped that the Post Office's own wonderful collection will be on permanent display one day ●



100 YEARS
AT
QUEENSGATE
INVERNESS
27th SEPT '90



1ST

10P

Stamps
2 each at
4p, 1p
1p, 2p



Stamp Books

There are three stamp books available across your local post office counter:

First class stamp book

Containing 10 first class stamps

Second class stamp book

Containing 10 second class stamps

Mixed value stamp book

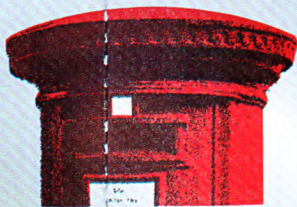
Containing 6 first class stamps and 4 second class stamps

Printed by Harrison & Sons Limited

50p

Royal Mail
Stamps

Three at 17p



Messrs. Pilkingtons Tile & Pot

Clifton Junction

Mr

Item not posted into
correct posting box

SUBJECT TO
POSSIBLE DELAY



DELAYED THROUGH BEING
POSTED IN A LETTER BOX
FOR 'LONDON' LETTERS
PLEASE ADVISE SENDER



EVERYONE'S
SHOPPING
BY POST
THESE DAYS!



NATURAL COLOUR
J. Arthur Dixon

PHOTOGRAPH
POST



POSTED IN THE OLDEST
PILLAR BOX IN HIGHLAND
AT THE BURN
W. J. DIXON

con Ltd., Newport, I.W., England

THE POST OFFICE ARCHIVES preserve the historical records of the British Post Office, from the 17th century to the 20th. The public Search Room at Freeling House, 23 Glasshill Street, London SE1 0BQ is open between 9.00 a.m. and 4.15 p.m. weekdays, except bank holidays and Christmas week.

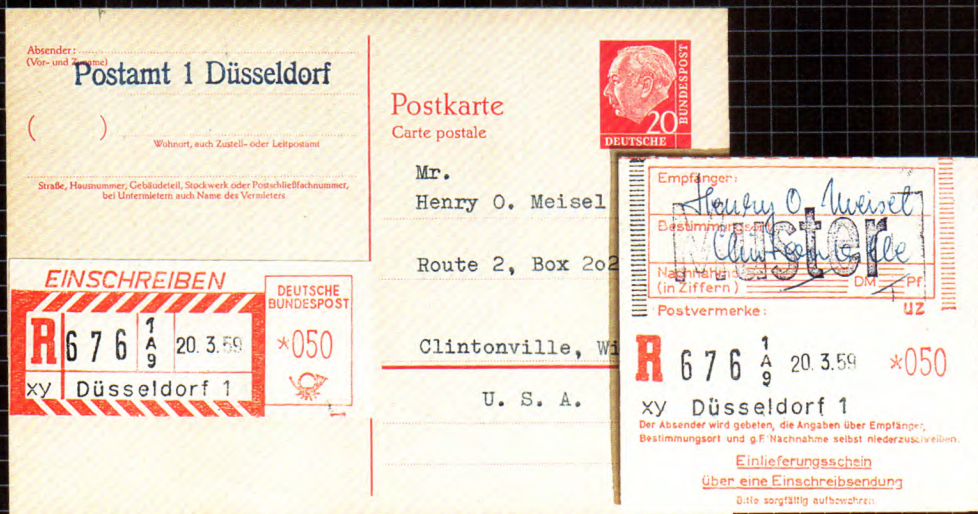
Provincial non-standards
1856-60



POST OFFICE ARCHIVES
SPRING STAMPEX 1991

"Design for an Improved Letter Box", by T. M. Baynes, 1857. This ingenious idea for a multi-aperture pillar box was not adopted.

Letter boxes and stamps by Glenn Morgan



This article follows on from the first published in the Bulletin, November 2001. It expands on sources and offers suggestions to help you collect the topic of letterboxes on stamps, although many aspects of this article are relevant to all themes. Its appearance coincides with the excellent new issue from Royal Mail depicting five letterboxes spanning over a century and marking the 150th anniversary of the roadside letterbox.

AS WITH ANY THEME, there are the usual sources for material, including dealers, auctioneers and, for new issues, postal authorities. For me, though, despite using each of these methods of acquisition, the internet stands out. It has certainly revolutionised the way that I collect.

Ebay (www.ebay.com) regularly contains items that I have never come across anywhere else. I

recently obtained a rare German card that had been processed by an automatic registered mail machine that incorporated a posting box. No, not the common facility from the late 1960s, but a trial from a decade before that is virtually unknown outside of Germany – and the receipt is over-printed MUSTER (specimen). The collector who sold it to me also offered several other items classified under what I refer to as ‘box automation’ from several countries. All items were unknown to me, but are so relevant to my collecting interest.

In the Netherlands there is a dealer called Postbeeld (www.postbeeld.com), from where I have obtained dozens of sets containing stamps depicting or relating to the story of letterboxes. Almost every stamp is illustrated, so you invariably get to see before you buy. They have just launched a sister site that will soon include every stamp issued from 1920 to date, in glorious colour and priced if in stock. Known as Free Stamp Catalogue, (www.freestampcatalogue.com), Postbeeld justifiably call themselves ‘the largest internet stamp shop’.

Fellow collectors are also guaranteed to be a good source for knowledge and material. Let’s face it, who is better suited to help you with your chosen theme than a philatelist with similar interests?



Opportunities Ensure that you become known for your interests, for it presents unique opportunities. Write articles in magazines, ask for help in specialist journals, etc. By doing this, you will be assisting fellow collectors and adding to your pool of collector resources and philatelic knowledge. Incidentally, you do not have to be an expert at writing to get published – that’s what Editors are for! (*I have often wondered!* ED)

I was recently able to assist a postal authority with a letter box stamp issue and a leading cover producer sought clarification on historical facts for the new British issue. This is immensely satisfying and fits perfectly within such a friendly hobby, where helping each other is reward in itself.

At exhibitions, I have often been welcomed by dealers, who know me as ‘the letterbox man’. That’s fine, for it has resulted in items being set aside in anticipation of my attending the show. Incidentally, I would always recommend purchasing the item, if reasonably priced, even if you have it, for you can always sell it on later and who knows what gem might await you at the next show?

Internet research Still in their infancy, internet search engines are a good source. Many agree that Google (www.google.com) stands head and shoulders above the rest. It automatically undertakes indexing 24 hours a day, with perfect results every time and without tea breaks! They are the envy of every librarian, recording most words on thousands of website pages daily. Information on the internet tends to be temporary in nature or the content moves from site to site as the compiler finds a cheaper ‘hosting’ deal. Google can help here by caching (backing-up) obsolete pages, allowing you to retrieve information long after the original page has ceased to exist. This is really useful when researching obscure philatelic facts.



By simply entering key words to identify what you seek (I use 'letter box', letterbox, mailbox, briewebus, briefkasten, brevenbus and dozens more variations of spelling and language), you can then sit back and wait for the results to appear on screen.

Societies There is a society that is featured regularly within these pages, namely the Letter Box Study Group (LBSG). It's well worth the small annual subscription, as benefits include a quarterly newsletter with free letter box postcard, plus the chance to buy surveys, books, catalogues and other collectibles on the theme.

There are no further societies on this subject, philatelic or otherwise, to my knowledge. It is a fine source for background information on British boxes, but caters little for foreign ones. It has a website at www.lbsg.org that is well worth a visit.

Exhibiting If you have the inclination, I can truly recommend exhibiting. Start at local society level and slowly develop the width and depth of your theme. As with most endeavours, give a lot of time to the planning stage for this will pay off and enable you to avoid the early mistakes that I made (too much writing-up, too little material)! Pretend that you are writing a book and lay out your story in the most logical order. (For example, if you have proofs and the issued stamp, then be sure to show the proof first, for this is the order that it was created in.) Exhibiting can result in much useful help and material being offered to you. Why not give it a go?

Hopefully this short article will have offered a few suggestions to get you started on that new thematic collection that you've always talked about undertaking •

An interview with Mr Morgan was published in the Bulletin of February 1998.

Philately on-line A master engraver's work, by Ron Negus



<http://slaniastamps.school.dk> A website run by Danish philatelist Ann Mette Heindorff, who believes Slania's engraving deserves to be seen by as many people as possible.

The Czeslaw Slania Study Group can be contacted at PO Box 1382, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201, USA for readers wanting more information about his life and work.

IF YOU TALK to anybody who has collected for a number of years, you are likely to find they have a strong preference for stamps that have been printed by line-engraving. The sharpness of their design and the skill exhibited by the engravers of these specimens make them of outstanding beauty as miniature works of art.

Amongst the most highly regarded of current engravers is Czeslaw Slania. He has been in the news recently for celebrating his 80th birthday in October 2001, and in March of this year for receiving the Royal Mail Lifetime Achievement Award. Both these events were recorded in pages of the *Bulletin*, and the former was marked with a double-page colour spread of some of his work. This showed just a few of the more than 1,000 stamps that he has engraved during his career.

His work is so popular that there is a web site devoted to it at <http://slaniastamps.school.dk>. This is the site run by a Danish philatelist, Ann Mette Heindorff, who believes Slania's engraving deserves to be seen by as many people as possible. For this reason, items other than postage stamps are included within the pages. These incorporate biographical details, work Slania has done on banknotes and revenues, private engravings and a section devoted to special postmarks featuring the man himself.

The philatelic section, however, is comprehensive and contains excellent illustrations of the stamps he has produced arranged by country. A navigation bar on the left of the screen contains the heading 'Stamps' and when clicked this produces a drop-down listing of each country in alphabetical order. Selecting any particular country

locates the relevant pages that contain the actual stamp illustrations in date order. Suitable annotations are given against the stamps to list the purpose of each issue. The high quality of the illustrations on these pages allows the full talents of this master engraver to be admired.

Another part of the site contains a summary of all the stamps from all countries and all years. This has been arranged so that it can be printed out in the format of an Excel spreadsheet, and then be used to create a personal checklist. The printout currently occupies 41 pages. A copyright notice explains that the list is for private collecting purposes and reference only.

Apart from the stamps, many of the pages on this site have reproductions of other engraving work that Slania has created over more than half a century. Included is the picture he submitted for his graduation from the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, Poland. This intricate design showed the battle of Grunwald as depicted by the Polish painter Jan Matejko. The work took Slania two years to complete.

The GB stamps produced by Czeslaw Slania include the 1982 set commemorating Maritime Heritage, the 1987 set of four to mark the 150th anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession, the Pioneers of Communication stamps issued in 1995 and the high value Machins of 1999. His latest work for Royal Mail is, of course, the set of Pillar Boxes issued in October this year.

Whether you collect Slania's work or not, this site is well worth browsing. To see how a master engraver obtains such marvellous results in this miniscule art form is breathtaking ●

Christmas stamps Five new self-adhesives



Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Process Gravure

Size 32 x 30mm

Sheets 50

Perforation 14.5 x 14 die-cut

Phosphor 2nd class one band,
others two bands

Gum Self-adhesive

Gutter pairs Vertical

Cylinders and colours

All values 1B greenish yellow
● 1C bright carmine ● 1D new
blue ● 1E black ●

Cylinder 1A printed lilac for the
2nd class, greenish grey 1st,
dull mauve E, silver 47p, and
light blue 68p. Except for the
47p, the 1A cylinders combine
the listed colour plus silver.

Phosphor P25 2nd class, P24
other values

Stamp books

2nd 1A 1B 1C 1D 1E 1F (blue)
P23 phosphor

1st 1A 2B 1C 1D 1E 2F (gold)
P22 phosphor

1F and 2F cylinders are for
the book heading panels

THIS YEAR'S Christmas stamps go on sale at Post Office branches, Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 5 November. All five stamps feature Christmas flora: 2nd class Spruce star, 1st class Holly, E (European rate) Ivy, 47p Mistletoe, and 68p Pine cone. The Queen's head and value/service indicator are printed at top left in metallic ink.

These Christmas stamps are all printed, as last year, on self-adhesive paper; the stamps have die-cut perforations and can be removed from sheets by rouletting which surrounds the 'perforations'. The stamps are slightly smaller in size than last year's issue. They were designed by Rose Design using photography by Carol Sharp.

Owing to the method of production, the sheets are printed in units of three instead of the usual two, so three sets of cylinders exist – no dot, dot and double dot (: as colon).

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 5 November, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House Edinburgh or Bethlehem must reach Tallents House by the date of issue. Price £2.74 UK (including VAT) or £2.34 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA (Bethlehem postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO223' or 'FDO224'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Bethlehem postmark. Details of sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House.

STAMP BOOKS Two Christmas stamp books (folded sheetlets) will be available from 5 November: 12 x 1st class stamps (£3.24) and 24 x 2nd class stamps (£4.56). The books have been printed by De La Rue. Both books carry a message 'Find the One Ring and Win £1 Million' – referring to this year's Christmas promotion. The books have blue and gold headed panels, matching the new stamp books. Barcodes are positioned right of the Royal Mail logo. Last year, readers will recall, there was a 'Find the £1 Million Stamp' promotion.

feature seasonal flora to celebrate Christmas



CHRISTMAS 2002
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

These stamp designs will be reproduced on Christmas cards, sold in boxes of 15 (three of each design). Price £6.95 from Talents House.

The 2002 Year Book and Year Pack will be available from 5 November. Year Book £32.50 (£75 deluxe edition), Year Pack £26.95.



CHRISTMAS AIRLETTERS Two airletters (aerogrammes) will be available from 5 November. As last year there will be a national and a bilingual (Welsh/English) version. The bilingual version will be available only from Post Office branches in Wales, Talents House and Post Office philatelic outlets. Price 49p each. The colourful design, spread over the front, central and back portions of the airletter features people at a party pulling crackers. The airletter was designed by Silk Pearce, using an illustration by George Hardie, and printed by BONG UK Limited. It bears the usual 'stamp' comprising the Machin head of The Queen and 'Postage Paid' indicator. The airletter does not qualify for 'first day of issue' postmarking •

A well-illustrated Christmas pack (above, price £2.35) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets.

12 x 1st class (above left) and 24 x 2nd class stamp books will be available.

Signed covers The Editor visits Lord Mason of Barnsley and



Queen Mother FDC signed by Lord Callaghan, Tony Blair, the Speaker Michael Martin, and sculptor Ian Walters.

IN RECENT TIMES, interest in signed covers has grown considerably, with more and more collectors keen to acquire covers signed by a person or persons relevant to the stamps or postmarks on the cover. Two years ago I met Lord Mason of Barnsley, a former Cabinet minister, who told me that he had been collecting signed covers for many years. Recently I was privileged to meet Lord Mason again and to see his remarkable collection. I am pleased to show here a number of the most significant covers from his collection.

Lord Mason is perhaps better known as Roy Mason, the Northern Ireland Secretary in James Callaghan's Labour government of 1976-79. A former miner, he represented his home town of Barnsley in the Commons from 1953 until 1987, when he was created a life peer. He is still very active in Parliament, and next year joins a small select band of Parliamentarians who have served continuously in one or both Houses for half a century. From 1960-64 he was the Opposition spokesman on defence and postal matters and expected to become Postmaster General when Labour won the 1964 General Election. Instead that job went to Tony Benn and Harold Wilson sent him to the Board of Trade as minister in charge of shipping. He then moved to Defence, and in April 1968 took on the job he had wanted as Postmaster General. 'I felt I had arrived', he told me, 'I now had a job running a department and a grand office at GPO Headquarters'. The PMG had probably the best car of any government minister, certainly the only one with a phone. Roy Mason was involved with the telephone side of the GPO, concerned about the



A cover bearing the booklet label pane issued for the Prince of Wales' 50th birthday, signed 'Charles P' by the Prince.

green colour of the telephone vans which were difficult to see in leafy lanes, leading to many accidents. His plan to change their colour led to much opposition. He also wanted to alter the size of telephone directories which were bulky and cumbersome to use. His attempt to raise the TV licence caused a storm with his ministerial colleagues and he upset the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he became involved in a postal union pay dispute. On the postal side, he was involved with a proposed issue of stamps to mark Celtic becoming the first British team to win the European Football Cup. The stamps were never issued but Lord Mason recalls the designs showing players in the distinctive green and white hooped Celtic shirts. But his time as PMG was short-lived and after just three months he was promoted to the Cabinet as Minister of Power on the resignation of Ray Gunter. The call from Downing Street came at 2am on a Sunday morning with the order to get to Chequers by lunchtime to see the Prime Minister. The office of PMG ended the following year when the GPO ceased to be a government department and became a public corporation with a Chairman. Had he stayed in office Roy Mason would have been the last PMG; that distinction went to his successor John Stonehouse.

His tenure at Power was also quite brief, and in 1969 he was promoted again, this time as President of the Board of Trade. In 1970 Labour lost the election but were returned four years later, when Mason became the Secretary of State for Defence – the government job he enjoyed most. When Wilson resigned in 1976, Callaghan moved

finds a remarkable collection of famous signatures on covers



Signatures of the last four Postmasters General: Tony Benn, Edward Short, Roy Mason and John Stonehouse.

him to Northern Ireland – one of the most important and difficult of government jobs.

Lord Mason's interest in covers began when he was at the PO; since when, as a former PMG, he has been sent a FDC of each new issue. These are carefully filed in his collection, which now amounts to over 30 albums. In addition he buys several sets of each new issue at the Commons Post Office and affixes them to Royal Mail FDCs which he gets cancelled with Commons, Lords, and Buckingham Palace datestamps. Then, as opportunities arise, he gets the covers signed by relevant people. Some he writes to, others he meets at ceremonies and events, whilst some signatures are obtained through good friends and contacts.

25 April, day of issue of the Queen Mother stamps, happened to coincide with the unveiling of the bust of Lord Callaghan, Mason's former boss. He managed to get the Queen Mother FDC signed by Lord Callaghan and Tony Blair, also the Speaker, Michael Martin, and the sculptor of the bust, Ian Walters. Another probably unique FDC is that for the 1988 Australian Bicentenary stamps signed by the then British and Australian Prime Ministers, Margaret Thatcher and Bob Hawke. Certainly unique is a cover bearing the booklet label pane issued to mark the Prince of Wales's 50th birthday cancelled by the Buckingham Palace postmark and signed 'Charles P' by the Prince.

Another cover, for the 1998 Health stamps, is signed by Lord Bruce of Donington who was the Parliamentary private secretary to Nye Bevan, the Minister of Health who introduced the NHS,



The 150th anniversary of the Penny Black: signatures of Bill Cockburn and Rowland, David and Stephen Hill.

by the then Secretary of State for Health Frank Dobson and Vince Frost, designer of the stamps.

A cover I found particularly interesting was one for the 1985 350th Anniversary of the Post Office stamps signed by the last four Postmasters General: Tony Benn (1964-66), Lord Glenamara (Edward Short, 1966-68), Lord Mason himself (1968), and the late John Stonehouse (1968-69). Other covers relating to Post Office history include one carried on a special train in May 1990 to mark the 150th anniversary of the issue of the Penny Black and the naming of a locomotive *Penny Black*. This ran from Euston to Kidderminster (Rowland Hill's birthplace) where guests, including Lord Mason, transferred to the Severn Valley Railway for a journey to Bridgnorth. Souvenir covers, bearing the double-headed stamp marking the Penny Black anniversary cancelled by a Midland TPO postmark, were given to the guests. Lord Mason got the cover signed by Bill Cockburn, then Managing Director of Royal Mail, and members of the Hill family: Rowland, David and Stephen. (A photograph of the ceremony at Kidderminster station featured in the *Bulletin* of July 1990.)

Sporting signatures Lord Mason is a keen follower of sport and a number of the covers are signed by prominent sportsmen such as the boxer Frank Bruno, athletes Steve Cram, Steve Ovett and Sebastian Coe (on 1986 Commonwealth Games cover), footballer George Best, rugby player Shaun Edwards (on 1995 Rugby League FDC), and racing-driver Michael Schumacher. Two of his particular heroes were Sir Len Hutton and

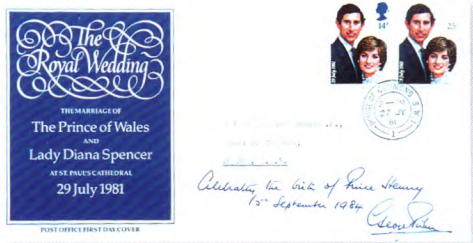


The 1988 Sports stamps: signatures of Sir Len Hutton and Sir Stanley Matthews.

Sir Stanley Matthews, who both signed a cover for the 1988 Sports stamps, one of which marked the centenary of the Football League. This was not an easy cover to obtain, as Matthews lived abroad at the time and Lord Mason's letter requesting a signature was returned marked 'Gone Away'. Eventually Matthews returned to the UK and Lord Mason tracked him down to obtain the elusive signature. He recalls seeing Matthews play for Stoke against Barnsley, and has a fine photograph of Sir Stanley taken with Mr Blair.

A particular sporting friend is cricket umpire and fellow Yorkshireman, Harold (Dickie) Bird. Indeed Lord Mason has four albums devoted entirely to covers signed by Bird at many cricket grounds and events, including one from Lords endorsed 'On my last Test Match' in June 1996. Lord Mason regularly attends Lords cricket ground (as well as the House of Lords) and chats to Mr A Melville-Brown who produces numerous cricket covers under the name Stamp Publicity (Worthing) Ltd. Dickie Bird used to send Lord Mason postcards from his overseas tours; these too have been added to the collection. On one card Bird records having umpired a record-breaking number of test matches, making the card an important item of cricket history.

Royalty As well as the cover signed by Prince Charles, the collection includes a Henry VIII and his Six Wives cover signed by Princess Alexandra and her husband Sir Angus Ogilvy, and a 1994 Royal Naval Cover commemorating the dedication service of RFA *Fort Victoria* signed by Sarah, Duchess of York. Two covers relate to the births of Princes William and Harry. The Prince



Sir George Pinker signed this cover, adding 'Celebrating the birth of Prince Henry, 15th September 1984'.

William cover was sent Special Delivery from Buckingham Palace on 21 June 1982 to Lord Mason when he was still in the House of Commons. Realising the significance of the date on the postmark, he asked Sir George Pinker, The Queen's Gynaecologist who delivered Prince William, to sign the cover. Sir George not only signed the cover himself but arranged for the other members of his delivery team to add their names. The 'Special Delivery' labels on the cover add to the attraction – marking the birth of a future King, perhaps it is rather a case of Extra Special Delivery! Sir George also signed a FDC of the 1981 Royal Wedding stamps, for the birth of Prince Henry on 15 September 1984.

The late Duke of Norfolk signed a cover 'Norfolk EM', explaining in the accompanying letter that EM stands for Earl Marshall and adding that he hoped this would cause some amusement. A Royal Mail commemorative cover produced in 1984 for the Famine in Africa campaign is signed by Bob Geldof the organiser of Band Aid, and Sir Geoffrey Howe, then Foreign Secretary.

Most covers bear British stamps but there are a few with overseas stamps such as that bearing the \$2 stamp of the Grenadines of Grenada, issued in 1991 for The Queen's 65th birthday. This shows The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh but included in the picture, in error, was the Lord Mayor of Birmingham – this caused quite an interest at the time. Lord Mason has a cover bearing the stamp, alongside a 24p definitive, both cancelled by the House of Commons machine postmark and signed by the Lord Mayor, Harold Blumenthal. Contemporary press cuttings are mounted alongside in the collection.



This unique cover, for The Queen's 60th birthday, bears the signature of all the eight Prime Ministers then living.

Multiple signatures As a former government minister, Lord Mason of course has access and contacts denied most collectors. However, that does not lessen the amount of thought and effort that goes into obtaining some of the signatures. He wanted a cover signed by all living Prime Ministers and the cover went to each in turn, from and back to Lord Mason by registered post. The most difficult was Harold Macmillan, by then Lord Stockton and very old. His secretary told Lord Mason that Lord Stockton was almost blind and unable to write but she would guide his hand on the cover. It duly came back with the coveted signature. This unique cover, for The Queen's 60th birthday, bears some eight Prime Ministerial signatures: Harold Macmillan (1957-63), Sir Alec Douglas Home (1963-4), Harold Wilson (1964-70 & 1974-76), Edward Heath (1970-74), James Callaghan (1976-79), Margaret Thatcher (1979-90), John Major (1990-97), and Tony Blair (since 1997).

Another multi-signed cover, this time for the 1988 Welsh Bible issue, bears the signatures of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, and no fewer than seven bishops – Rochester, Truro, Hereford, Salisbury, London, Sheffield and Liverpool.

In 1982 Royal Mail produced a special cover in aid of the South Atlantic Fund following the Falklands War. This carried the Maritime Britain stamps which Lord Mason had cancelled at the House of Commons on 2 July. The cover is signed by four admirals at the time: Lord Lewin (Chief of the Defence Staff), Sir Henry Leach, Sir John Fieldhouse, and Sir Sandy Woodward. The signatures are neat yet bold and disciplined, in con-



1991 Greetings stamps cover with signatures of the Gulf War Cabinet.

trast to the rather more flamboyant signatures on some other covers in the collection. Following the Falklands War in 1982, Lord Mason was one of a group of MPs to visit the Islands. He recalls the 22-hour long, rather uncomfortable flight to Port Stanley, the RAF plane refuelling en-route. During the four-day visit, Lord Mason was able to indulge in a bit of trout fishing, being flown over Argentinian mine-fields in a helicopter to the fishing grounds, and receiving the first post-war fishing licence.

The cover for the booklet pane of the Northern Ireland prestige book (July 1994) bears no fewer than 11 signatures of ministers in charge of the Province as Home Secretary or Secretary of State for Northern Ireland: William Whitelaw, James Callaghan, Merlyn Rees, Francis Pym, Patrick Mayhew, Peter Brooke, Jim Prior, Robert Carr, Lord Colnbrook (Sir Humphry Atkins), Tom King, and, of course, Lord Mason himself.

A FDC of the 1991 Greetings stamps bears the signatures of the Gulf War Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister John Major, with Tom King (Defence), Douglas Hurd (Foreign Secretary), Patrick Mayhew (Attorney General), John Wakeham (Energy) and Sir Peter de la Billiere (Gulf Commander). Another cover connected with military matters commemorates RJ Mitchell and the Spitfire. It bears the 1996 Mitchell stamp, cancelled by a special Southampton postmark, and the signatures of his son Dr Gordon Mitchell, Lady Bader (widow of Sir Douglas), Dame Vera Lynn, and TV presenter Raymond Baxter and Christopher Foxley Norris, both Spitfire pilots.

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Coronation and of the ascent of Everest. Two of



A cover signed by Sir John Hunt and Sir Edmund Hillary, of the 1953 Everest expedition.

the conquerors, Sir John Hunt and Sir Edmund Hillary signed a 1990 cover bearing the five stamps marking the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black.

Arts and entertainment Some covers are signed by important people in the world of the arts and entertainment. Conductor Andre Previn signed a cover bearing the 1985 Music set; other covers are signed by the violinist Yehudi Menuhin and actor (Lord) Richard Attenborough. From the scientific world there is a cover of the Medical Discoveries stamps signed by Lord Winston, a leading figure in the world of medical research. A Concorde cover is signed by Brian Trubshaw, the airliner's chief test pilot. Lord Mason recalls travelling on an early test flight. On a holiday cruise, Lord Mason encountered Sir Jimmy Saville walking on the deck; a cover was duly enlivened by Sir Jimmy's distinctive signature.

Stamp designers A number of covers are signed by the designers of the stamps they bear – such as Yvonne Gilbert, Lynda Gray and Ken Lilly for the 1985, 1986 and 1995 Christmas issues. Pride of place goes to the FDC of the 1992 European Market stamp signed by David Hockney. A cover of the 1986 RAF History stamps bears the signatures of descendants of Lords Dowding, Tedder, Trenchard and Portal and Sir Arthur Harris beneath the stamps showing their famous relations.

As a former PMG, Lord Mason clearly has an interest in covers having a postal connection. These include a special cover for the opening of the new South Western District Office (now London South Mail Centre) signed by Prime Minis-



Among covers signed by designers, pride of place goes to the 1992 European Market cover, signed by David Hockney.

ter Margaret Thatcher (Downing Street is within the London SW area), one of the policemen guarding No 10, the Postmaster of the House of Commons and the Manager of the SWBO. Other covers are signed by Post Office Chairmen including Sir Ron (now Lord) Dearing.

Political signatures As might be expected the collection is rich in covers signed by politicians of all political colours, including FDCs of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales country stamps signed by the respective Secretaries of State such as John Reid, Donald Dewar, Alun Michael, Mo Mowlam, Peter Mandelson and Sir Malcolm Rifkind. Signatures of overseas leaders include President Gorbachev of the former USSR, the Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Lord Mason has tried to obtain covers signed by US Presidents; although they declined, he was sent signed photographs, with personal messages, from Presidents Reagan, Bush (father and son), and Clinton.

Barnsley Philatelic Society Lord Mason takes a keen interest in his local society of which he is an Honorary Life Member. When he was PMG, he arranged for the town to have its own first day of issue postmark. The Society has around 30 members and meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at the Friends' Meeting House, Huddersfield Road, Barnsley. The adult subscription is a modest £3. Readers in the Barnsley area who would like more details of the Society and its activities should contact the Secretary: N Booth, 10 Margaret Road, Wombwell, Barnsley S73 0JB, telephone 01226 210746.



The 1988 Australian Bicentenary, signed by the then British and Australian Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and Bob Hawke.

Other interests Lord Mason is a keen angler, and the founder of the House of Commons Fly-fishing Club which each year organises a sponsored event to raise money for disabled anglers. He also collects match boxes, a study known as phillumeny, and enjoys comparing the many varied styles and designs on the boxes from different countries such as China and Japan. He thinks it is a pity that more young people are not interested in collecting hobbies, finding fun and satisfaction in philately and phillumeny. Lord Mason clearly enjoys obtaining the new stamps to service covers for his collection, although he does believe that the large number of new issues is 'unfair to collectors'.

Another interest is designing and collecting ties, for which Lord Mason suggests the name cravatology. He has designed ties for Labour peers, Chequers, the Commons Fly-fishing Club, the Ministry of Defence, and the Police Federation. He also took a keen interest in the designing of his coat of arms when he became a peer, the arms embodying aspects of his career as a miner, his home town of Barnsley and its industries, and his other interests.

I am grateful to Lord Mason for taking the time to show me his collection and allowing us to illustrate some of the covers in the *Bulletin*. I hope it will serve as an inspiration to cover collectors, demonstrating what can be achieved, albeit over a long period, with thought, determination, and perseverance, and perhaps a little bit of luck. The 'thrill of the chase' to obtain the signatures has given him much pleasure and satisfaction. That is, after all, what collecting is all about ●

Artwork

The Editor reviews David Gentleman's new book, published this month

DAVID GENTLEMAN has been a household name amongst collectors of modern British stamps for the past 40 years; since the National Productivity Year stamps he has designed over 100 British special stamps – more than any other designer. Yet he fights shy of being called a stamp designer, philatelic work being just part of a wide range of illustrative work. This book is a very personal record of David's career, methods of working, and his own views on the success or otherwise of his designs expressed in seven chapters headed Working, Beginning, Concentrating, Persuading, Storytelling, Printmaking, and Reporting.

He defines artwork as 'what printers and publishers call drawings, paintings and designs – anything to be printed that isn't plain text – when they are ready for reproduction.' Initially he disliked the term but now accepts it as an accurate description of what he produces to earn his living. He mostly works alone, taking an assistant only to help with a particular task, and confesses to being 'habitually unfaithful, always starting something new and then abandoning it lightly and without regret or guilt when something else became more interesting – wood engraving, photography, screenprinting or lithography; posters or symbols, stamps or book illustrations; writing, painting and designing books of my own.' He works on the top floor – the lightest, quietest and least disturbed – of his house in London. The description (page 10) of his working tools and equipment makes fascinating reading – everything from an 1870s cast-iron table-top proofing press to a worn-out lap-top computer, a hair-dryer for stretching watercolour paper or drying gum arabic, several cameras, heaps of books and magazines, satchels for carrying drawing materials, and no fewer than 23 drawing boards!

Different aspects of his work have overlapped – 'stamps also inspired me to make some big bold screenprints, and helped me to make my posters

and book jackets simpler and stronger... Designing posters in turn showed me how to draw with shapes and colours, with tones and contrasts and silhouettes... And posters' and stamps' needs for boldness and simplicity made it easier in due course to design symbols...'

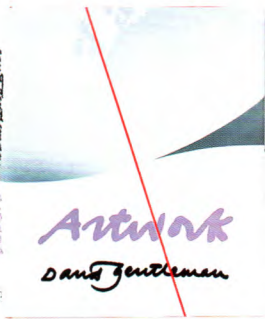
Both his parents were artists and as he 'grew up, drawing and painting were taken for granted, considered customary, normal, as natural as walking or breathing.' He attended Hertford Grammar School and then St Albans art school which was 'full of sparky young teachers and wonderfully eager, carefree, beautiful and friendly students.' After national service, as education sergeant in charge of an art room at a camp on the edge of Bodmin Moor, he went to the new School of Graphic Design at the Royal College of Art where he was taught by, amongst others, stamp designers Reynolds Stone, Barnett Freedman and Abram Games, and Herbert Spencer, a long-serving member of the Stamp Advisory Committee. Fellow student Rosalind Dease became the first Mrs Gentleman; they collaborated on several stamp issues. Some of his earliest work after graduation was designing Penguin book covers, including E M Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. 'The breakneck pace at which' advertisements for the new *Sunday Telegraph* 'had to be engraved prevented me from being over-critical of the results; some were better than others.'

The chapter entitled 'Concentrating' is the one of most interest to philatelists. He writes: 'The sixties were a good time to become involved with stamps for up till then British issues had been few and stuffy; staid, respectful and traditional. New designs were selected by a cautious Stamp Advisory Committee but gradually the brakes were being taken off.' David's aim in designing stamps is 'to make an idea visible, to encapsulate it into a tiny space, and to make it intelligible – neither trite nor obscure, but clear and beautiful.' He admits this isn't easy but trying 'is tantalising, elusive and fascinating.' Although he 'soon grew sick of the label of "stamp designer"... stamps taught me a great deal about design: about repeating pattern, about precision, about how to find an image that can somehow suggest, make visible or



Artwork, published by Ebury Press, is available from Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, price £27 (order code 03 AAC).

clarify elusive abstractions like the idea of evolution or social reform.' Many of his stamps are shown, along with the engravings and sketches for the 1963 Lifeboat, 1964 Shakespeare, and 1965 Battle of Britain issues, and unused designs, similar to the issued 4d, for the 1966 World Cup set. Pages are shown from the famous 'Gentleman Album' of suggested designs produced at the request of Tony Benn, then Postmaster General. These feature British monarchs (James I/VI to Elizabeth II), transport, flora and fauna, landscapes, etc – some with The Queen's head, others with the Royal cypher. Benn's wish to remove the Royal head from special stamps is well documented. We move on to the issues for the Prince of Wales's Investiture, Philympia, and the contrasting 1969 Ships and Concorde stamps – 'the ship's fussy but fascinating details and Concorde's flowing supersonic lines called for completely different drawing techniques.' The BBC/Marconi stamps of 1971 involved 'exciting but time-consuming and exhausting' visits to Television Centre, the Science Museum and the Marconi company in Essex. He remembers 'sitting late one afternoon in a café by a roundabout at Chelmsford feeling done for, in despair and in totally the wrong job.' However the end results are quite pleasing and collectors will be glad David didn't then abandon stamp designing. Happily 'no such



An exhibition of David Gentleman's work is on show at the Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7, 7-13 October. Admission free.

anxieties clouded the Christmas stamps for 1973' – a colourful depiction of the carol Good King Wenceslas. Sketches for the 1974 Fire Service were drawn on stamp blanks which 'being small, stop one putting in too much detail too soon.' He enjoyed working on the 1980 Railway stamps as he 'had loved trains as a boy, real ones and model ones', and became 'passionately involved' with the 1976 Social Reformers stamps as 'their subject, the alleviation of misery, was serious and idealistic'. The stamps were attacked as dark and gloomy, but Auberon Waugh's 'lengthy go at them' in the *Spectator* cheered him up. Another selection of sketches is shown for his Timekeepers stamps in the Millennium series. For the miniature sheet he 'wanted to suggest the endlessness of time by making the curves of the clock face and globe meet on the all-important cusp and flow, through the echoing pattern, from stamp to stamp.' Clever as they may be, they are not, in my view, amongst his most effective stamp designs.

Less well-known are his stamps for 'the once-cannibal Pacific island of Nauru'. He stayed there with his family, finding the island's stamp committee less interested in stamps showing its natural beauty than its 'economic glories, like their six airliners and the phosphate boats and Nauru House, the Melbourne skyscraper they had spent the phosphate revenues on.' He found 'Working

in this exotic tropical atmosphere with its odd mixture of primitiveness and spendthrift extravagance, was fascinating and unforgettable.'

From tiny stamps the next chapter (Persuading) deals with the subject of posters, illustrating some bold designs for London Transport, the National Trust and Air India, also trademarks and emblems designed for corporations, for example the silhouette Queen's head used on special stamps, and devices for the Bodleian Library, British Steel and others. The chapter on 'Storytelling' concentrates on David's book jackets – 'a small poster... but, unlike a poster, it's more than mere advertising; it's also part of the product' – showing designs for the New Penguin Shakespeare, books on economic policy, and works by Siegfried Sassoon and Lawrence Durrell. One gets the feeling that book jackets might be David's most rewarding work. 'Printmaking' deals with David's lithographs which 'like engravings and etchings, are not reproductions. They're original prints.' Those shown of Orford Castle, Little Moreton Hall, Covent Garden, and Oxford's Radcliffe Camera all capture the essence of the places and a serenity which may not always be apparent to a visitor.

In the final chapter, 'Reporting', David tells us that he 'has always painted in watercolour, sometimes for commissions but usually just because I wanted to.' When in 1980 he was asked to do a book of watercolour drawings 'it was a tempting idea', leading to a series of books on London, Coastlines, Paris, Italy, and India in which he captures 'the oddities of daily life' – the buses and bullock carts, trains laden with clinging people, and ugly three-wheeled people-carriers.

This is a delightful book to read and view with numerous well-chosen illustrations of David's work that will appeal to a wide audience, not just philatelists. In philatelic terms, it is an important addition to a fairly limited literature on stamp design, probably the most significant contribution since Stuart Rose's *Royal Mail Stamps* in 1980. The last word should go to David who sums up his career thus: 'My kind of work makes me think and use my eyes – in other words, it makes me better able to understand the world around me. In that respect, I've been lucky.' ●

Mainly Machins Douglas Myall looks at three new books of



Books of self-adhesive stamps for overseas rates

The long-awaited books of self-adhesive Machins to meet the most frequently used rates for overseas mail were issued on 4 July. There are three books, containing six of either the dark blue E stamp for basic mail to Europe, or the new 42p and 68p stamps for the minimum and first weight steps for worldwide airmail letters and cards. These stamps are, of course, quite different from their conventionally gummed sheet versions.

Although the new books do not have any notch in the covers they are still part of the re-designed range to meet the needs of users with disabilities. The matrix surrounding the stamps was removed before issue, and the contents printed on the front cover are in the large size mentioned in my previous article. These books feature self-adhesive airmail labels (above). The stamps have kiss die-cut simulated perforations complete with 'ellipses'. The cylinder numbers seen on all three books are w1 (colour) and w1 (phosphor).

Because the matrix has been removed and with it probably part of the phosphor bands, it is not possible to be certain of their width on the cylinder. What one can do is to measure the gap between the bars on a single stamp. This is 11.5mm and, since a normal definitive is just over 20mm, I think it safe to say that the two bars are printed from 9mm bands which is now the standard width. Displacements of the bands caused by incorrect registration of the colour and phosphor cylinders is fairly common and popular with collectors. Stamps with the bars short at the top or bottom are known from all three books, although the extent varies a great deal, from just clear of the perforation tips to a very nice 2mm on the E stamps.

More De La Rue pictorial definitives The new 68p pictorial definitives for all four countries of the United Kingdom were issued on 4 July. As expected, the designs were unchanged from those used for the 65p stamps in 2000-01 and, in the cases of Scotland and Wales, the 64p stamps of 8 June 1999. This must make it difficult for Royal Mail's revenue protection service to ensure that the correct postage is paid, especially as the values on some of the designs, such as the N Ireland Belleek china basket, are very hard to see. The colour and phosphor cylinder numbers (separated by a slash) which I have seen are: England 1, 1 / 49; N Ireland 1A 1A 1A 1A / P19 and 1B 1B 1B 1B / P19; Scotland 1, 1, 1, 1 / 49; Wales 1, 1, 1, 1 / 49. The De La Rue printings are all double pane whereas the earlier Walsall stamps were all single pane. The N Ireland stamp, in view of its smaller print run is printed by lithography instead of gravure and the left and right panels are distinguished as A and B. The cylinders used for the gravure stamps have a dot after the numbers on the right panel while those on the left panel do not have this. The left margins of cylinder blocks from the no-dot panel are wider than those with dots. Both are perforated through the bottom margin with a single extension hole at each row in the left one.

Gold replaces flame Gold has now replaced flame as the 'permanent' colour of the 1st class Machin definitive. This means that the *Questa* book of 6 x flame self-adhesives mentioned last time is likely to be the last flame issue. All future Machin 1st class NV18s, such as those scheduled in the *Bridges* book in September, will be gold. I think this decision is to be regretted. Although there have been

self-adhesives, new pictorial definitives and business sheets



A distinguishing feature of the new books is that the space at the left of the stamps is occupied by six self-adhesive airmail labels, known officially as etiquettes. (Did you know there are collectors who specialise in these and collect nothing else?) As well as being our first self-adhesive airmail labels in books, they have been re-designed with larger text in line with the new policy. They are, of course, imperforate.

improvements in the printing of this colour since the golden wedding anniversary stamps of 1997, it is, to my mind, not up to the high standard of other colour inks and in fact undoes much of the enhancement of The Queen's image achieved by computer-controlled engraving introduced with such good effect in the same year.

Self-adhesive forerunners *Bulletin* reader Richard Jones of Wiltshire has posed a question about self-adhesives, the answer to which might interest other readers. He refers to my comment here in June that the 20 1st class Machins in the 1993 book of 20 were 'the very first GB self-adhesives'. He tells me that he has in his collection a set of self-adhesive GB stamps issued in the early 70s. The set comprises nine values from 1/2p to 5p, each bearing the Machin design within an octagonal frame, with the word POSTAGE on each side and the value. They are printed on a circular self-adhesive label. He asks whether these were valid for postage or issued as collectors' curiosities

These were, and are, valid for postage. Prior to 31 October 1973, when the service was withdrawn, the Post Office would print stamps to order for private firms, subject to a minimum quantity. This was primarily concerned with postal stationery, such as envelopes and postcards, but it also included self-adhesive labels for affixing to envelopes. Just prior to the ending of the service, two enterprising philatelists arranged for some to be printed. There were in fact three series of these Machin labels. The first, comprising 1/2p, 1p, 1 1/2p, 3p and 5p had a square backing and were 'issued' on 10 February 1974 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the world's first self-adhesive stamps which were printed by

Walsall and issued by Sierra Leone. The second series was 'issued' 19 June 1974 and comprised 3p and 3 1/2p printed on an oblong label with a printed slogan at the left reading: 'You Just cannot lick / self-adhesive stamps for / speed and hygiene'. This breached the rules and was removed before use. The third series seems to be the one that my correspondent has, since it was on circular labels and comprised the nine values 1/2p, 1p, 1 1/2p, 2p, 2 1/2p, 3p, 3 1/2p, 4p and 5p. It too was issued in 1974 but I am not sure of the exact date. I believe that only 1000 of the third set were produced.

I did not have these private issues in mind when I wrote my June article. Maybe I would have been more correct had I referred to GB's first self-adhesive NVIs! (*An article on these self-adhesive forerunners was published in the Bulletin of March 1994, p196.* ED)

Enschedé business sheets These contain 100 self-adhesive 1st or 2nd class NVI stamps in five panels folded concertina fashion. There have been a number of rapid changes recently and, to help you keep up-to-date, here are the ones issued at the time of writing (early August). The first sheets were scheduled to be released on 9 May but both were pre-released because demand had depleted existing stocks of the Walsall versions. The top panel had four stamps in a block at left and the 1st class stamps were flame. The matrix around the stamps was not removed. The printer's imprint was at the left of the bottom panel. On the reverse of this, and comprising the only printing on this side of the sheets, are the identification details printed by ink jet; these include the date of printing. The only contact details provided is the www.royalmail.com website address.



Enschedé's new 1st class business sheet, issued on 4 July.

New sheets were issued on 4 July. The four stamps on the top panel were in a row and this time the 1st class stamps were gold. Some of the new policy changes were apparent, such as the larger text for the contents, but the matrix was not removed. Apparently this was because of problems with the die-cutting process, which has to be incredibly exact if removal of the matrix is not to take some of the stamps with it. No doubt these problems will be overcome and the sheets will appear without matrix soon.

Enschedé's 1st class self-adhesives in the upright (portrait) format can be distinguished from those of Questa and Walsall by their value types. Walsall's are the thin type (type 1) while Questa's are the thicker type (type 2). Enschedé's are similar to type 1 but the letters ST are further to the right.

And finally The first reprint of the Walsall 'disability' books of 12 x 1st gold has appeared with cylinder numbers. They are, as expected, w1 / w1. No doubt the others will follow shortly •

Text © D G A M 2002

Hitting the bull's-eye Richard West talks to Christine Earle

It's a familiar story – it was digging out the old schoolboy collection that proved the inspiration for Christine Earle to start collecting. If that seems a little odd, it was in fact her uncle's collection. And although this is only 13 years ago, Christine pounced on that collection with the excitement and enthusiasm of a school child. As she pored over its pages, she thrilled at seeing stamps from places around the world, never visited, and was quickly absorbed by this new hobby.

She had collected in her teens – or, as she describes it, 'stuck stamps in an album' – but at the time the hobby really meant nothing. Then, with two children to bring up, she suddenly found that evenings, after they had gone to bed, were proving to be boring. Her uncle offered an answer, and it immediately struck a chord.



Those who have met Christine will readily understand how she was easily bored, for here is someone who loves to be active. And she has incredible determination. It will come as little surprise to learn therefore that, soon after taking up the hobby, she was proving herself to be a true achiever. Having been a participant in the sport of archery for some years, she readily saw the sense of combining two interests. Her thematic collection based on archery, which she called 'The Grey Goose Wing' rapidly began to take shape.

Christine realised that to enjoy her collecting to the full, it needed to be more than a solitary pursuit. She joined her local stamp club, Camberley, and then the British Thematic Association (BTA).

Competitions are not for all collectors, but Christine clearly enjoys the challenge that these

provide. Just three years after embarking on her archery collection she was taking part in local competitions. Then, in 1994, she entered one of the competitions linked with the twice-yearly Thematica exhibition, and won the BTA Cup. In fact, it turned out to be an Earle family occasion, for her daughter, Sam, entered and won the John Fosbery trophy (judged by Thematica visitors), while her son Andrew won the prize draw!

'The Grey Goose Wing' has proved a milestone in British thematics. At Stampex in 1995 it won the Link House Trophy for best thematic exhibit. As donors of the trophy, each year *Stamp Magazine* invites the winner to write about their collection. Christine's article was inspirational, in that it did not simply describe the collection, but outlined its creation and development. Consequently, at the first Rowland Hill Awards, it won for Christine the Journalistic Excellence award sponsored by Royal Mail. 'The Grey Goose Wing' has since won gold medals at Olympilex 96, Italia 98, Olympilex 2000 and at Hafnia 01, and also a gold medal as part of the UK team in the Nations Cup competition in 2001.

As Editor of *Stamp Magazine* I knew Christine had a flair with computers – I did not know at the time that she had once worked as a comptometer operator, in the days before computers. (Incidentally, she also once worked at delivering new cars, driving them wherever required across the country.) After she had written the article based on her collection, I asked Christine if she would like to contribute a regular feature on using com-

puters in the hobby. That feature, 'Chris's Computer Column', is still running in the magazine.

Understandably, having successfully exhibited, Christine is now invited to judge, being fully accredited nationally, and also having judged at Eurothema (a European thematic competition) and at Orapex 2002, held in Ottawa in Canada.

She willingly passes on her expertise, not only through displays given to societies, but with seminars on such aspects as 'thematics', 'judging' and 'computers'. Apart from the BTA, of which she is a Vice Chairman, she is also an Associate Trustee of the British Philatelic Trust (BPT), on the Council of the National Philatelic Society, a member of the Helvetica Society and the Society of Olympic Collectors, while locally she belongs not only to Camberley and District, but also Walton and Weybridge Philatelic Society.

She was particularly active behind the scenes of The Stamp Show 2000, as part of the Jury Secretariat. She has increased her 'international' involvement as a member of the joint BPT and Association of British Philatelic Societies International Committee, and as the United Kingdom delegate on the FIP Thematic and Maximaphily Commissions.

Having achieved so much philatelically in 13 years, is Christine left with any further ambitions? Certainly – she has set herself a new target: to produce a display and exhibit from a vast accumulation of Social Philately material. We know we can look forward to the results ●

Special draw Win a new definitives presentation pack folder

WE HAVE one of the new definitive stamps folder, containing the current range of definitive and country stamps (in presentation packs) to give away to the sender of the first card drawn on 1 November. The Folder costs £29.95. Ten runners up will be sent packs of definitive and/or country stamps. To enter, simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send to: Definitives Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ ●



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



July identify The detail was from the 1987 Victorian Britain stamp. The winner was Marie Burrows of Canada.

July knowledge Answers: 1) Percy Metcalfe; 2) 1971; 3) House of Questa. The winner was J Ironside of Norfolk.

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

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

- 1 Who designed the 1970 Christmas stamps?
- 2 In which city were the Commonwealth Games held in 1986?
- 3 In which year was the locomotive *Mallard* shown on a stamp?

Send your answer (addressed to either October *Identify* competition or October *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 15 November will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs or FDCs will be awarded in each competition. Competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

28-29 September Exhibition Study Group Annual Convention at Holgate Hill Hotel, Holgate Road, York. **Enquiries** Bill Tonkin 020 8777 8861.

7-13 October David Gentleman exhibition at Royal College of Art (see page 57 for details).

5 October Welsh PS meeting at Oswalds, University of Wales, Bangor. **Enquiries** P Gaywood, 2 Fairways, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8FX.

5 October Thatcham and District PS Stamp Fair at Memorial Hall, Bath Road (A4), Thatcham, 10.00-16.00. 12 dealers, over 700 auction lots on view (auction 21 November), refreshments, car parking. Admission free. **Enquiries** 01635 866942.

8 October - December Display of pillar boxes and related stamp artwork, etc at Heritage Services, Consignia (see page 39 for details).

18-20 October Stampa (national stamp exhibition), RDS, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. **Enquiries** (01) 454 6675.

19 October Ashford PS Stamp and Postcard Fair at Norton Knatchbull Grammar School, Hythe Road, Ashford, Kent. 10.00-16.30. Refreshments available. **Enquiries** P Armory, 01233 636695.

22-29 October Cyprus-Europhilex European Philatelic Exhibition, Nicosia, Cyprus. **Enquiries** UK Commissioner Yvonne Wheatley, 0113 260 1978.

26 October Bolton PS Annual Stamp Fair (and North West Federation of Phil Socs Annual Competitions) at Canon Slade School, Tonge Moor Road, Bolton, 10.00-16.30. **Enquiries** B Fielding 01204 307252.

31 October - 2 November Philatex (London International Stamp and Cover Show) at Royal Horticultural Halls, London SW1. **Enquiries** 020 8946 4489 •

Late news

New from Royal Mail Further information is to hand on the new postcard books available from 8 October. The Coastlines book includes high quality reproductions of Richard Cooke's 10 Coastlines stamps, and another 15 of his images of Scottish islands and Borders, Northern Ireland, North Wales, the West Country and East Anglia. Three pages give information about the British coast. The Post Boxes book celebrates the humble pillar box – an established part of UK street furniture – with 25 high quality cards, five featuring the new stamps and 20 reproducing superb 1930s-1960s PO advertising posters including designs by Rowland Emmett, W Machan, Tom Eckersley and Abram Games. These postcard books will appeal to tourists, devotees of poster design and anything British.

Framed Astronomy and Airliners products are now available. The Astronomy product consists of the stamp pane blown up into a print with the stamps mounted underneath. The frame is in silver with black mounts, price £29.95. The Airliners product consists of the postcards framed vertically in a silver frame with ivory mount, price £24.95.

The Royal Mint's Queen Mother memorial £5 crown coin is available at Post Office branches from 30 September. A cover with the coin encapsulated and bearing the four memorial stamps cancelled by a special Glamis postmark will be available from 11 December. The cover features a photograph of The Queen Mother as Duchess of York and a quotation from the Archbishop of Canterbury on the day of her funeral. Price £15.95. Please note that the date of this cover has been changed from that originally announced.

The postcard books, framed products and Queen Mother coin cover can be ordered from Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB •

Exhibitions The David Gentleman exhibition at the Royal College of Art will now be held from 7-13 October, not 4-12 October as originally announced.

The Philakorea exhibition in Seoul (2-11 August) attracted many visitors, especially children, who enjoyed creating pictures with stamps, stamp collecting workshops, and filling exhibition passports with stamps and special handstamps. The three Grand Prix awards were won by Nathaniel Yigal with 'Japan – Etched Stamps, 1871-76'; Peng Hian Tay with 'Netherlands East Indies 1655-1870', and Chang Se Young with 'Korean Kingdom and Korean Empire 1884-1905'. Britain's Otto Hornung displayed his 'City Post of Constantinople' in the Court of Honour. GB entrants were awarded three large gold medals (Arthur Woo, Brian Trotter and Alan Huggins) and three golds (Arthur Woo, Christopher Podger and Zvi Alexander). The three British youth entries received large silver and silver-bronze medals. In the literature class Stanley Gibbons received five medals, including a gold for their GB *Specialised* catalogue.

Monaco will host MonacoPhil 2002 – its fourth international exhibition of rare stamps and philatelic documents – from 29 November to 1 December. The displays will include stamps from the collections of Prince Rainier, HM The Queen and the British Library. Enquiries: Musée des Timbres et des Monnaies, 11 Terrasses de Fontvieille, 98000 Monaco. Telephone (+377) 93 15 41 50 •

Events The Largs & District Stamp Club Fair will be held at Queen Margaret Academy, Dalmellington Road, Ayr on 5 October (10.00-16.00). Enquiries 01475 568136. The Salvation Army Philatelic Circle's 10th Annual Convention takes place at the Salvation Army Citadel, Shakespeare Street, Southport on 26 October (11.00 onwards). Enquiries: Harry Hayes, 01904 764 660.

Harmers of London will auction the Gunther Heyd collection of Disaster Mail on 22 October. Enquiries Alex Blum on 020 8747 6100 •

Bulletin back issues Rebecca Bower of London has a near complete run from September 1980 to date available for anyone who would like them. Contact Ms Bower on 020 8995 5045 •

DAVID GENTLEMAN'S ARTWORK



David Gentleman is internationally respected as an artist and designer, but he is also famed as the most prolific and influential designer of British Stamps. 2002 marks the fortieth anniversary of his first UK stamp and to celebrate this occasion, Royal Mail is supporting the publication of *Artwork*, David's 'creative autobiography' which provides an overview of every stamp issue he has designed, as well as his work in fields as diverse as woodcuts, posters, book design and painting.

Artwork by David Gentleman will be published in October 2002 by Ebury Press and will retail at £30. To ensure that you don't miss out you can order your copy now. What's more, Royal Mail customers are receiving a special 10% discount. For your copy of *Artwork* at £27 simply contact Royal Mail, and quote code 03 AAC. Orders will be sent out for the publication date of 3 October. For more information, visit www.royalmail.com/davidgentleman

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