

Philatelic Bulletin

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With barely time to pause and draw breath after the hectic activity and excitement of the 'Royal Wedding' stamps, it is on with another Royal stamps issue, the Duke Edinburgh's Award on 12 August 1981. The subject of this issue, the 25th anniversary of the Awards scheme, is particularly pleasing. Seldom if ever, has a scheme which started with such modest ambitions blossomed to embrace and bring so much pleasure to many people in so many countries. Long may it continue to do so.

In the July 1979 edition of the Bulletin, we published a photograph and a short history of the hexagonal pillar box at St Peter Port, Guernsey, it was planned as the first of a short series on Posting Boxes and it was hoped that the series would be of some interest. Three years later it still continues, we publish no. 27 in this edition, and such has been the interest of our readers, and our good friends in The Letter Box Study Group, that we now have enough material to continue for the next two years. So please, for the moment, no more Posting Box material.

New Stamp Roll

New stamp roll consisting of 700 strips of four stamps, combined value 11½p (3 x 3p and 1 x 2½p), became available from 2 September 1981. Originally produced for a special mailing by a large user of the post, the rolls are available from all philatelic sales counters and the Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, 124 Lothian Road, EDINBURGH, EH3 9BB, price £80.50. The four stamps will also be available in single strips from the Philatelic Bureau only. The stamps are printed by Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd on the usual phosphor coated paper used for these values. No first day of issue facilities were offered.

Challenge, Service, Enterprise and Effort

25 Years of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

'This scheme is intended to help the young and those people who take an interest in their welfare. It is designed as an introduction to leisure time activities, a challenge to the individual to personal achievement and as a guide to those people and organisations who are concerned about the development of our future citizens.'

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

25 years ago in this message for the original Leaders' Handbook, Prince Philip revealed the basic aims of a new and experimental scheme for young people, inspired by the ideas of the eminent educationalist, Kurt Hahn. In the years following the Second World War, Hahn had foreseen the potentially harmful effects on society of an increase in leisure and prosperity combined with a decline in the standards of physical fitness. He was particularly troubled by the problems facing those boys who were leaving school at 15 and who had to wait until they were 18 to enter National Service. Hahn believed that these years could be used to instill a sense of purpose and to develop practical skills and a sense of community involvement. Yet how was this to be achieved outside the normal educational framework of the country in an enjoyable and appealing way?

Through his many influential contacts, Hahn was instrumental in gathering together a committee of interested parties from all walks of life under the chairmanship of his own ex-pupil, Prince Philip. In February 1956 their deliberations resulted in the creation and announcement of the new Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Under the Directorship of Sir John Hunt, a pilot project was devised for boys only and offered to a limited number of sympathetic organisations for a three year experimental period. Hahn's vision was so well suited to the spirit of the time that this tentative experiment became a permanent reality. By 1959 success was assured and a companion Girls' Scheme had been launched.

Today, as the Award Scheme looks forward to its ambitious programme for the 1980s it has given over one and a half million young people the opportunity to extend themselves in previously unavailable areas of experience and to use their leisure time in a productive and enjoyable way for



the good of the community.

Once its appeal and benefits had been proven beyond doubt, the Scheme was able to spread so fast and effectively because it is not designed to be an organisation in itself, needing a cumbersome administration and premises. Instead, it offers a specific programme of activities to existing organisations concerned with young people which have been licensed as Operating Authorities and which administer the Scheme in their own particular area of influence. In the words of its Patron, the Scheme should be seen as a 'service that people and organisations can use as they think fit and as they feel is relevant to their organisations and communities'. Currently over 10,000 such units are operating in the United Kingdom: youth clubs and voluntary organisations, Local Education Authority schools, colleges and youth services, independent schools, the Armed Services, the Police and Fire Services and ever increasing numbers of large firms and industries who realise the enormous benefits of the Scheme for present and future employees. Amongst these, the Post Office is an enthusiastic supporter.

Overall policy decisions are taken by a body of Trustees of whom Prince Philip is the Chairman, aided by an Advisory Committee and the General Council. The permanent staff of the Award Office in London administers the running of the Scheme. Invaluable work is done by the permanent Regional Officers and the Honorary Liaison Officers but the day to day programme throughout

the country is dependent on the voluntary help of such dedicated supporters and leaders as teachers, youth leaders and personnel officers who supervise the courses chosen and arrange for the appropriate experts to train and assess the candidates. This opportunity for adults to pass on their skills to young people and amongst themselves in an atmosphere of free exchange is central to the philosophy of the Scheme. It strengthens the ties between different sections of society and links the knowledge and experience of adults with the enthusiasm and energy of youth.

Soon after it began in 1956, the Scheme began to spread overseas. Today it operates on the same system in over 40 countries of the Commonwealth and the rest of the world, although in some cases under a local name such as the President's Award in Kenya and the Head of State Award in Ghana. So far over 250,000 young people outside the UK have entered the Scheme. An Overseas Field Officer and staff are available to advise any country needing their services, and regular news letters, magazines, regular exchange visits and international conferences ensure that all participating bodies remain constantly in touch with projects and achievements in other nations.

In 1978 the Scheme's present Director, Robert Heron, commented:

'It is true of the Scheme as of any other animate body that if it is to continue to be relevant to its environment and to develop successfully within it, it must from time to time take stock of its aims and its practises and be prepared to adapt.'

In fact, the Award Scheme has continually evolved to reflect changes in the society it seeks to benefit and has only reached its current programme through many changes since 1956. In 1969 the Girls' and Boys' Schemes were combined but a concession was still available to the gentler sex in that they could opt for a special section, 'Design for living' as an alternative to the more strenuous section of 'Physical Activity'!

In 1979 more radical reforms swept away this and other distinctions and today the same Conditions apply to all candidates, including those who are disabled or disadvantaged in any way. The Scheme is strictly non-competitive and effort and progress are as important as the achievement of a set standard. The various activities and goals set by the programme are extremely demanding but the wide choice of subjects puts the Award within the scope of every boy and girl and no-one is excluded from entry on grounds of individual circumstance or hardship. Coincidentally, the Scheme is celebrating its anniversary in the

International Year for Disabled People and can be proud of the many outstanding achievements by its many Award holders and candidates with physical or mental handicaps. No concessions in terms of personal effort are made to these young people and the Award's philosophy remains that 'the handicapped have as good a chance of gaining an Award as the able-bodied *but no better*'. In cases where physical mobility is extremely difficult or where the candidate's own health or safety would be at risk, there is the National Handicap Panel to advise on compensatory programmes of equal difficulty and challenge. Confinement to a wheelchair or sensory impairments should deter no-one and even an iron lung has proved no barrier to eventual success.

As it stands at present the Scheme is open to all young people between the ages of 14 and 25 and as all the requirements must be completed by the candidate's 25th birthday no-one may join after the age of 23. Not all entrants stay the course to qualify but on average participants stay in the Scheme for at least 18 months to 2 years and currently over 36,000 Awards are granted each year.

There are three Awards open to candidates depending on their age. The Bronze Award is for those over 14, the Silver for those over 15 and candidates over 16 can enter for the Gold. To obtain an Award at any level, the candidate must reach a qualifying standard in terms of progress, proficiency and sustained effort in each of four sections which have been designed to stimulate personal development, community involvement, adventure and a creative use of available leisure time. The wide choice of activities gives candidates a comprehensive range of interests and makes it easy for the Operating Authorities to adapt the Scheme to their programmes.

Perhaps the most widely publicised aspect of the Scheme is the *Expeditions* section, designed to develop a taste for adventure, discovery and self-reliance in an environment with an element of risk. Candidates are trained and supervised by highly qualified adults in the theoretical and practical aspects of survival in the countryside and must then plan and undertake a journey on foot, cycle, canoe, boat or horseback. At Bronze level the expedition must last for at least two days and include a night away in tents or Youth Hostels. Silver and Gold expeditions last three and four days respectively in demanding territory. Provided that they include at least 10 hours of travelling, Silver and Gold candidates may decide to conduct special investigations or explorations.

At the heart of the Award's philosophy is the

Service section in which participants become involved with helping others in the community. They undergo a period of training and practical service in areas such as hospital work, work with the elderly or handicapped, child care or conservation. Bronze entrants must keep up this work for three months and Silver for six months. Gold entrants carry on with their chosen field of service for one year and often maintain it afterwards.

To encourage the development of worthwhile interests in leisure time, candidates must also fulfill the *Skills* section. From a choice of over 250 activities ranging from stamp collecting to boat building entrants must show perseverance and progress in acquiring skill and knowledge. Bronze entrants must follow the subject for six months, Silver 12 and Gold for 18.

At all levels there is the *Physical Recreation* section. This involves choosing a sport or physical activity from over 70 possibilities ranging from Archery to Yoga. After at least six weeks candidates must show real evidence of improvement or reach a set standard.

To broaden their experience of sharing purposeful activities with other companions, the Gold Award entrants must also attend a residential project away from home for at least five days to carry out voluntary service or training.

For all those who complete the requirements, Awards are given in the shape of a Certificate and a badge, with the choice of an attractive brooch for girls receiving the Gold Award. Whenever possible, Awards are presented by eminent members of the community. The Gold Award ceremonies take place at one of the Royal Palaces and are normally attended by Prince Philip himself. Royal Tours abroad to those countries which participate in the Scheme will usually include a Gold Award ceremony: just one example of the Patron's continuing support and active interest.

The 25th anniversary of the Scheme will be the occasion for a wide variety of celebrations throughout the United Kingdom and overseas including a Royal Gala Performance, a Commonwealth Ball and an Interdenominational Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral. A time for tens of thousands of young people and adults to reflect on 25 years of challenge and success which have fully justified HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's initial hopes expressed in 1956:

'I am quite sure that all who enter for this scheme and all those who help run it will gain that special sense of satisfaction which comes from the discovery of hidden abilities and from helping others to overcome a challenge.'

Posting Boxes



No. 27. Our picture this month is sent to us by Mr. Clive Banks of Wimbledon Park, London, to whom we are grateful. The posting box is permanently on display at the Bassendean Rail Transport Museum in Perth, Western Australia. It is a 'Penfold' type box bearing the date 1888, and the royal 'VR' cypher.

Withdrawal of Definitives

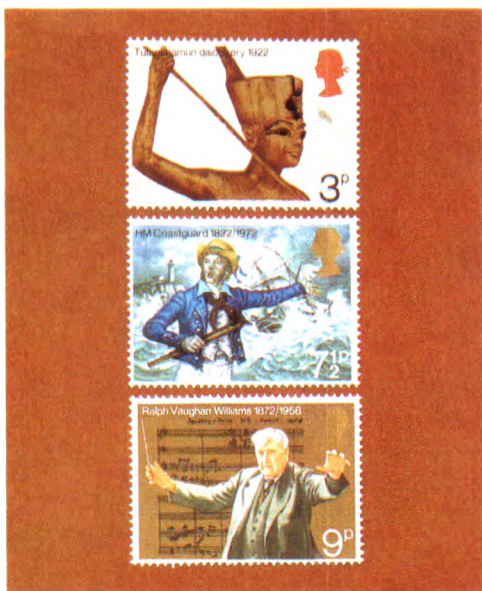
The 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ p, 17p and 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ p definitive stamps together with the 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ p 'Country' definitive stamps will be withdrawn from general sale at the close of business on Friday 14 August 1981. The stamps will be available from the Philatelic Bureau only, for a period of 12 months from that date, or until stocks become exhausted.

79. General Anniversaries, 1972

Three designers contributed their individual interpretations of three widely differing subjects for the 'General Anniversaries' issue of 26 April 1972. The designs were uniform and attractive, the style consistent – even to the extent that each of the three characters depicted had an upraised arm! The 3p stamp, designed by Rosalind Dease, commemorated the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun by Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon at Luxor on 4 November 1922, and shows a statuette of the boy king found in his tomb, in particular his head and his upraised arm, wielding a harpoon. The stamp design was based on a photograph by Mr F L Kenett (copyright of G Rainbird Ltd), and the statuette was one of three small, gold-leafed figures on display at the memorable exhibition of Tutankhamun's treasures at the British Museum during the summer of 1972.

The 7½p stamp, designed by Fritz Wegner, had a completely different theme – the 150th anniversary of the formation of H M Coastguard – and it depicts a 19th-century coastguard in contemporary dress, pointing the way to a vessel aground on the shore. Smuggling and the consequent loss of revenue led to an enquiry into the working of the Customs and Excise service – the report of the Commissioners (who used the term 'coast guard' for the first time) published in 1821 recommended that the six existing organisations, all concerned with different aspects of the smuggling problem, should combine their resources under one authority, the Preventive Water Guard, later H M Coastguard. Today, Her Majesty's Coastguard, which is administered by the Department of Trade, is responsible for co-ordinating all civil marine search and rescue operations around the 2,500-mile coastline of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and 1,200 miles into the Atlantic.

Clive Abbott's design for the 9p stamp, marking the birth centenary of Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), shows the great composer with arms raised in typical conducting posture, taken from one of several available photographs – in this one he is depicted in 'Cotswold' tweeds, conducting the orchestra at rehearsal, and his right hand, omitted in the photograph, was drawn in by Mr



Abbott. When he finally obtained an original print from the Keystone Agency, he was gratified 'and not a little amused' to find that the 'missing' hand was almost identical to his 'invented' one. The musical background shows the opening bars of the prelude to the composer's 'Symphony of the Sea' – best known as the 'Sea Symphony', an adventurous kind of cantata for solo voices, chorus and orchestra with words by Walt Whitman, first performed at the Leeds Musical Festival in 1910.

The son of a clergyman, Vaughan Williams was born in Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, and was educated at Charterhouse and Trinity, Cambridge. He devoted several years to study at the Royal College of Music where, after the first World War, he became professor of composition. His subsequent musical career was devoted to operas, symphonies, church hymns and choral music, concertos for piano, strings and orchestra, music for ballet and films, and numerous songs. He was awarded the Order of Merit in 1935, and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

The stamps were printed in photogravure by Harrison and Sons in sheets of 100 (10 x 10) on unwatermarked paper with two phosphor bands, the Queen's head additionally embossed in gold on the 7½p and 9p values. The quantities sold were: 3p 60,602,200; 7½p 7,182,300; 9p 5,468,900; and presentation packs, 89,113. The one listed variety was a dark spot under the lower end of the telescope on the 7½p stamp.

JAMES WATSON

9. I for Interiors

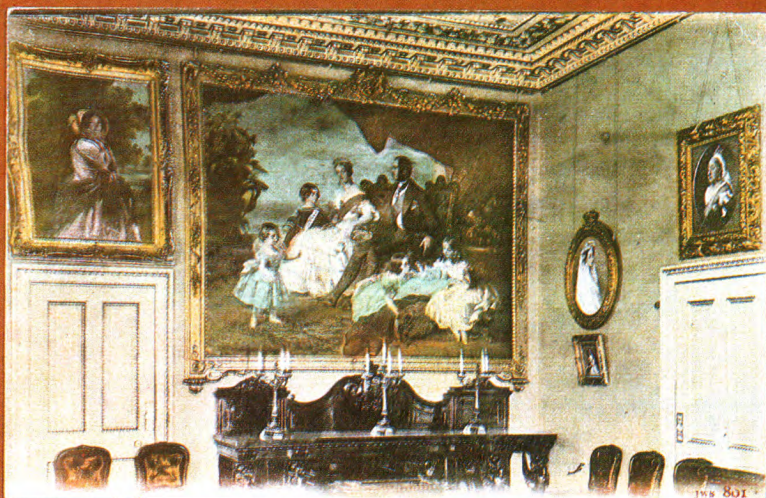
Among the earliest picture postcards, published circa 1900, there were many which catered for visitors – the present-day ‘tourists’ – to London and the provinces. Such cards often depicted the interiors – as well as the familiar exteriors – of abbeys, cathedrals and churches, castles, palaces and stately homes, and anyone interested in interior architecture and decoration, fine paintings, furniture and sculptures, a collection of postcard ‘interiors’, judiciously selected and arranged, could give lasting pleasure.

Westminster Abbey was a favourite subject for both publishers and public, especially Poets’ Corner in the SW transept which contains the tombs, busts and statues of Chaucer, Spenser and other eminent English poets. Later cards picture the tomb of the Unknown Warrior (killed in the First World War) in the Nave, and the memorial chapel and window commemorating the Battle of Britain in the Second. The lofty chambers of the Houses of Parliament – the Commons and the Lords – have long featured on postcards, as also has the adjoining Westminster Hall, built by William II (Rufus) and roofed and

remodelled by Richard II – the scene of some famous trials, including Sir William Wallace, Sir Thomas More, Charles I and Warren Hastings.

St Paul’s Cathedral, on the summit of Ludgate Hill in the City of London, is another favourite postcard subject, and a series of ‘Oilettes’ published by Raphael Tuck & Sons includes a fine interior view of the choir and its beautiful ceredos of Parian marble, also some of Antonio Salviati’s great mosaics in the spandrels of the massive dome, and the beautiful pulpit of coloured marbles. The vaultings and walls of the choir are in glass mosaics by Sir William Blake Richmond, KCB, a Slade professor and a Royal Academician. Other cards feature the interior of the dome and its celebrated ‘whispering gallery’.

Picture postcards reveal some of the splendours of the interiors of the royal palaces, notably Buckingham Palace, St James’s Palace and Windsor Castle, also of Hampton Court Palace, built by Cardinal Wolsey in 1515 and presented to Henry VIII in 1526. Queen Victoria’s favourite residence, Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, has many treasures – paintings and furnishings – in



its numerous state and private apartments, and some of these are shown on postcards published by F G O Stuart of Southampton and Joseph Welch & Sons of Portsmouth during Edwardian times. Among them are coloured views of the ornate dining-room including an enormous painting of the Royal Family – Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their children – by Franz Winterhalter (1805-73), the fashionable artist of his day. This card, by Welch, is reproduced here.

Most of the famous stately mansions – all, incidentally, open to the public – are featured on picture cards, among them Ham House, Richmond; Syon House, Brentford; Blenheim Palace, Woodstock (birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill) and Chartwell, Kent (his home); Chatsworth, Derbyshire; Cotehele, Cornwall; Eye Manor, Herefordshire; Haddon Hall, Derbyshire; Luton Hoo, Bedfordshire; Melford Hall, Suffolk; and Petworth House, Sussex. Knole House, near Sevenoaks, Kent, was featured by a local artist/photographer, C Essenhigh Corke, on postcards published by J Salmon Ltd, also of Sevenoaks, including interior views of James II's bedroom with its silver furniture, the 'poets' parlour' (dining-room) and the crimson drawing-room. Knole was given to Thomas Sackville in 1603 by Queen Elizabeth I and is now a National Trust property, though the Sackvilles still live there.

The scope of postcard interiors ranges through all kinds of public buildings – factories, hospitals, prisons, schools and universities, pubs, hotels and restaurants, post offices, railway stations, shops and stores, army barracks, theatres and music-halls. It's fun finding them!

MALCOLM JAMES

Fishing Stamps

Issue 23 September 1981

1981 has been designated Fishermen's Year in recognition of the high skills shown by Britain's fishermen. Appropriately, it is also the centenary of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, a charity originally founded to make the uncomfortable and dangerous lives of the distant seas fishermen a little less harsh. The Post Office will issue on 23 September four stamps illustrating Cockle Dredging (14p); Hauling Side Trawl (18p); Lobster Potting (22p) and Hauling Seine Net (25p).

First Day Cover Services

The following services for first day covers will be provided. Two special handstamps will be available: 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh', and 'Hull'.

SERVICE 'A'

This consists of the official first day cover, addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required and bearing all four stamps. The cover will be cancelled, 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' or 'Hull', as requested and despatched.

SERVICE 'B'

Customers' own pre-addressed covers bearing the correct postal address, will be given the stamps, cancelled as requested and despatched. The following charges will apply:

	INLAND	OVERSEAS
Service 'A'	£1.16	£1.01
Deposit account customers	£1.11	96½p
Service 'B'	£1.03	89½p

Application forms, available from the Philatelic Bureau, and at all Head Post Offices should be returned not later than 14 September 1981.

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes.

Presentation Pack

A presentation pack, price 96p, containing all four stamps, will be available from 23 September 1981.

Postcards

Postcard reproductions of each of the four stamps will be available approximately two weeks before the issue date, price 11p each.

Book Review

Regus 1981 Collectors' Guide to Post Office Postcards

This second edition of the Regus Collectors' Guide to Post Office Postcards is a comprehensive listing of Postal Headquarters and Regional Cards including those issued by the National Postal Museum and PO Telecommunications. All listings are in date of issue except where more convenient to group otherwise. This is a worthwhile guide for the established collector and is available through the trade or direct from Regus Publications, 99 Churchgate, SOUTHPORT, Merseyside, PR9 7JE, price £1.30 plus 20p postage and packing.

Newspaper Stamps

This month's 'Gem' from the Reginald M Phillips Collection looks at another unusual item, namely newspaper stamps.

The history of the Newspaper Stamp Tax goes back to 1712 when it was first introduced, and it continued until Queen Victoria's reign when it was finally abolished in 1855. (The first London daily newspaper appeared in 1702.) Newspapers sent through the post were folded in such a way as to show the tax stamp as they were tacitly allowed the free franking privilege. This continued during the eighteenth century and did not in fact reach the statute books until 1825.

Every sheet of newsprint had to be stamped at the Stamp Office, normally from copper plates of 25 dies. In 1853, however, some newspapers were

permitted to impress stamps on the sheets during the printing process, under the vigilant eye of the Inland Revenue. The examples shown are from the Illustrated London News which was one of the newspapers concerned.

After the repeal of the Newspaper Stamp Tax in 1855, similar one penny stamps were allowed to perform the function of postage stamps, and these were used by the majority of newspapers to frank copies to their postal subscribers. This privilege continued until 1870 when it was abolished on the introduction of the halfpenny newspaper rate and stamped wrapper.

The newspaper stamps and other unusual fiscal items can be seen by visitors to the Museum in volume XLIV/4 of the Reginald M Phillips Collection.



Cumbernauld Philatelic Society

Cumbernauld, Glasgow, recently celebrated its silver jubilee as a designated new town, and to mark the event, The Development Corporation presented the Cumbernauld Philatelic Society with a Jubilee Shield, to be competed for annually by members of the junior section of the Society.

The first winner is Miss Leona Braiden who received the shield from Mr Raymond McKinnon

of the philatelic sales counter in the Head Post Office, Glasgow, who has been most helpful in promoting the Society. It is hoped that the occasion will attract new members to the next session which commences on 4 September 1981. The meetings take place every Friday; anyone interested should contact Mr J Devlin on Cumbernauld (023 67 25729) for details.

Special Issues 1977

ISSUE AND DATE	VALUE	NUMBER ISSUED
Racket Sports	8½p	37,120,000
12 January 1977	10p	8,240,000
	11p	7,420,000
	13p	6,790,000
British Achievement in Chemistry	8½p	37,060,000
2 March 1977	10p	9,360,000
	11p	8,460,000
	13p	7,860,000
Royal Silver Jubilee	8½p	73,960,000
11 May 1977	9p	42,620,000
(8½p stamp with-drawn 11 June)	10p	21,580,000
9p stamp issued 15 June)	11p	19,380,000
	13p	17,720,000
Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	13p	8,560,000
8 June 1977		
British Wild Life	5 x 9p	61,420,000
5 October 1977		
Christmas 1977	7p (x 5 se-tenant)	265,590,000
23 November 1977	9p	111,230,000

Forthcoming Events

Bournemouth and District Philatelic Society

The Bournemouth and District Philatelic Society will hold its annual stamp fair and exhibition in the Town Hall, BOURNEMOUTH, BH2 6DY on 12 September 1981. The Post Office will provide a philatelic sales counter and display, and a number of dealers will also attend.

For the occasion, the Society is producing a limited number of presentation packs with a 'National Trusts' theme and a special reference to Brownsea Island.

Further information can be obtained from: Mr S Gold, 6A Western Avenue, POOLE, Dorset, BH13 7AL.

Basingstoke and District Philatelic Society

Basingstoke and District Philatelic Society will

hold its annual Stamp Fair and Exhibition at the Carnival Hall, Council Road, BASINGSTOKE, RG21 3DH, on Saturday 12 September 1981. There will be a philatelic display of members' materials included in the programme, and a number of dealers will attend. Refreshments will be available throughout the day. Further details may be obtained by ringing Rex Eccott on Basingstoke (0256) 61515.

Poole and District Philatelic Society

This Society will hold its annual stamp fair in the Methodist Church Hall, Chapel Lane, High Street, POOLE, Dorset, BH15 1NV, on Saturday 5 September 1981. The Post Office will provide a philatelic display and sales counter, and a number of dealers will also be present. Refreshments will be available and car parking facilities are nearby. The fair will open at 10 am until 6 pm and prices of admission are 10p for adults, 5p for children.

New Philatelic Sales Counter

A new philatelic sales counter will be opened to the public in the Kings Square Branch Office, GLOUCESTER, GL1 1AD on 25 August 1981. A special pictorial handstamp bearing the words 'Post Office Philatelic Counter Opened Gloucester 25 August 1981' will be applied on that day only to mail posted in the philatelic posting box situated in the Kings Square Branch Office, Gloucester. For customers requiring this handstamp who are unable to call at the office, normal re-posting facilities will apply. Covers should be forwarded to: The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, Eastern Avenue, GLOUCESTER, GL1 1AA. Hours of business at the new counter: 10.00am–1.30pm and 2.30pm–5.00pm Monday to Friday: 10.00am–12.30pm Saturday.

Bulletin – Back Numbers

We have heard from Miss E M Parsons, 31 Redmoss Road, Nigg, ABERDEEN, AB1 4JD that she has devised a non-profit making scheme to help readers who wish to obtain or dispose of back issues of the Philatelic Bulletin. Those interested in such a scheme are invited to write to Miss Parsons enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

Green Light for New Post Office Trains

The first of a new fleet of trains for the Royal Mail's unique underground railway was sent on its way during May by Mr Ron Dearing, Chairman of Posts and National Girobank.

After more than half a century of speeding the mail beneath the streets of London, the Post Office Railway has been given a £1m-plus investment in new trains to help provide a reliable Royal Mail service.

Mr Dearing said: 'The modernisation programme by the Royal Mail ensures that this unique railway will continue to play its key role in helping move both the capital's and nation's mail quickly and efficiently.'

'The Post Office underground railway is just one of the hidden links in the operation of delivering millions of letters to the nation's front doors every day.'

The railway – the only one of its kind in the world – operates 22 hours a day, Monday to Friday, and runs nearly seven miles across London linking two main line railway stations – Paddington in the west and Liverpool Street in the east – with six other major sorting offices included en route. It speeds more than 6 million letters each day below the streets of London, avoiding the heavy and often congested traffic above.

Every train has four 'carriages', each of them loaded with bags of letters and parcels. Mail to and from every part of Britain is carried on the railway and the journey from end to end of the line takes less than half-an-hour at speeds of up to 35 miles per hour. Some 70ft above, central London's traffic crawls along at an average of 12 miles per hour.

New rolling stock was ordered by the Royal Mail when the existing trains started to show signs of age and problems such as metal fatigue started to increase the maintenance costs.

It is expected that the new rolling stock – for 34 trains – will last just as long as the original stock. Some of the old trains are being kept on as 'spares' in case of emergency – an unlikely possibility in view of the railway's amazing record of reliability but nevertheless a sensible precaution.

Reliability, security and speed are the chief assets of the railway. Trains run at about four-minute intervals and each train has its own strict



timetable.

Each station has two platforms and trains run in both directions in a single twin-track tunnel. The trains make 70,000 journeys each year.

All along the route, bags of letters and parcels are loaded and unloaded and marked for their destination. Something like 35,000 mail bags are handled every day.

There are 18 trains running at any one time and since the 1920s have travelled some 90 million miles.

Moving the mail is a job involving thousands of vans, planes, trains, boats – everything from helicopters and hovercraft to motorcycles and push bikes. Every journey has to inter-connect with the nation's posting boxes, the sorting offices and, finally, with some 22 million addresses in order to get the 35m letters posted throughout the country delivered on time.

50p Stamp Books – Change of Contents

The number of stamps in the current 50p booklet (sold from most vending machines) is to be increased on 26 August, from 6 stamps to 8. This is primarily to produce a consistent book thickness which will improve machine reliability, and the new contents will give customers a better range of options about which postal service they use.

The new contents will be three 11½p stamps, three 2½p stamps and two 4p stamps and will enable customers to have a choice of first class, second class, Europe or overseas mailings at a variety of weights.

The new books (cover design Mugdock Castle) will be available at all philatelic sales counters and, by post, from the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh on 26 August and subsequently from vending machines as current stocks are sold out.

Technical Details

The stamps are printed photogravure by Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd on a Chambon machine and made up into books on a Libra book making machine. The 2½p and 4p stamps will have two side phosphor bars. The 11½p stamp will have one phosphor bar on either the left or right hand side. This will be the first time that the 4p value in peacock blue has been printed by photogravure.

Christmas Stamps 1981

The winning entries from the childrens competition jointly organised by the Post Office and the BBC TV Programme 'Blue Peter', to find designs for the 1981 Christmas stamps issue, have been successfully reduced to size and the essays produced.

The essays were presented to Her Majesty The Queen and notification of the Royal approval was received on 12 June 1981.

Preparations are now well in hand for the production of the estimated 500,000,000 stamps required to satisfy the Christmas demand.

An exhibition featuring the original artwork of

the winning designs and fifty runners up, will be on display at the Design Centre, London from the 17 November until Christmas. Exhibitions of facsimiles will be staged in the Postal Regions, the venues and dates of which have yet to be announced.

Midlands Postal Board Regional Postcard

The Midland Postal Board will issue a full colour picture postcard, in its present series of interesting posting boxes. The card, featuring a Hexagonal Penfold box will be on sale from Tuesday 8 September 1981.

The card shows an example of the famous 'Penfold' box named after the architect who designed it in 1865. It was manufactured by Cochrane Grove and Company of Dudley, and was the standard box between 1866 and 1879. Its attractive hexagonal shape was liked but the design had a number of technical drawbacks internally and it was replaced by a cylindrical design. The picture card shows an example at Budby, Newark, Nottinghamshire, one of the earliest models.

Mint cards at 11p each can be obtained by personal application from all Philatelic Counters or by mail order from Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, 1 Brook Street, NOTTINGHAM NG1 1AA. Advance orders for First Day of Sale handstamp should be sent to the same address. The cost of each card, fully serviced with the FDS handstamp and including first class postage is 37p. Orders must be received by Friday 4 September. For postal applications for mint cards add 15p for orders up to £10 and £1 on orders above £10. Remittances should be sent, if possible by Postal Order or Giro transfer, to Nottingham Head Post Office, 1 Brook Street, NOTTINGHAM NG1 1AA. Giro Account Number 413 1002. Mint cards only may be ordered from the Manager (Postcards), Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, 124 Lothian Road, EDINBURGH EH3 9BB where normal handling charges will apply.

Flying Royal Mail Service spreads its wings

The Royal Mail's flying airlift service carries its 300 millionth item this month – at the same time as it adds another link to the already highly successful national network based on Liverpool's Speke airport.

Today, some 12 per cent of all inland first-class mail is carried by the 'flying Royal Mail' service which was introduced two years ago.

Now, a new Scottish link has been added at Edinburgh airport which will help speed the mail between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

The Post Office is now flying 750,000 first-class letters each day via Speke – a load which should increase to nearly 1m items when the inland airmail network is complete. The last planned link – Liverpool to Southend – is due to join the network later this year.

The majority of mail within the UK is carried by rail but some rail routes have poor inter-train connections late in the day and this means that letters catching the last local collections in towns on the fringe of the rail network are often delayed on their journey until the next day. These inland airlifts are successfully solving the problem.

Speke airport was chosen for its ideal location. It is about equidistant from the other airports in the network – Aberdeen, Bristol, Newcastle, Glasgow, Gatwick, Norwich, Lydd, Belfast, Cardiff, Exeter and Bournemouth – and is open round the clock. Aircraft, which have been contracted from six separate airlines, fly to Speke to arrive about midnight where their cargo of mail is interchanged with the other aircraft before heading back to their bases.

The new Edinburgh link can fly up to 30,000 items a day in each direction. The service complements the existing Scottish air link involving Aberdeen, Glasgow and Speke.

Now, for example, a letter posted late in the day in Peebles – one of the towns served by the new Edinburgh link – for an address in Exeter will be delivered by first-class post next morning. It will be flown to Liverpool, off-loaded and then flown on to Exeter by the air link already serving the Liverpool – Exeter route.

National Postal Museum Notes

The Reginald M Phillips Collection

The Philatelic Bulletin and the National Postal Museum both receive many enquiries about Reginald M Phillips, whose collection is permanently on view in the Museum. The following is a brief synopsis of the background on the formation of this amazing collection,

Mr Phillips began his career as a real-estate agent in 1910, later specialising in the acquisition and development of commercial sites and property. His diligence and success as a businessman, where he made his fortune, is reflected in his application to philately in his later years.

The first volumes bought by R M Phillips were the Imperial albums published by Stanley Gibbons Ltd in 1903. The early collection he formed was very much a traditional British Empire one, with particular emphasis on the colonial issues. During the active years of his professional career, Mr Phillips' interest in philately lay dormant, only to be rekindled with the approaching postage stamp centenary in 1940. This was where the specialised collection of Great Britain was started and built up over a thirty year period.

In the years after the second World War, Mr Phillips was fortunate to acquire the whole or part collections of several famous philatelists which came onto the market. (These included C F Dendy Marshall, Bertram McGowan, J B Seymour, H C V Adams, Edward Granger and Fred Aitchison among others). The invaluable work and research done by these pioneers in the field of early British philately, formed the basis of the R M Phillips Collection as it is today. During the nineteen-fifties Mr Phillips devoted much of his time to studying and writing-up this collection. The research done by these earlier students was put to good use and sifted thoroughly so that the complete and definitive story could be told.

The culmination of all the hard work done by Mr Phillips in assembling and integrating this collection was rewarded at the 1960 International Stamp Exhibition held in London. His specially selected exhibit was given the highest possible award, the Grand Prix. This achievement is all the more remarkable because his collection had

never been displayed at exhibitions before.

In 1965 Mr Phillips most generously presented his collection to the nation, providing the foundation for the National Postal Museum. Mr Phillips died on 10 October 1977, but his achievement and generosity will be remembered in perpetuity by the philatelic world. The collection is permanently on display in the Museum housed in King Edward Building, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, which is open five days a week (Monday-Friday) from 10.00 am to 4.30 pm (4.00 pm Fridays).

Pictorial Envelope

The Tenth Anniversary Stamped Pictorial envelope issued by the Museum in 1979 is to be withdrawn from sale on 2 October 1981 when the current exhibition on '10 Years of Decimal Machins' closes. The envelope is only the second pictorial one ever to be issued by the Post Office, and features the Machin Head as used on stamped stationery. Copies are available on the sales counter at 18p each to visitors, or can be ordered by post from the current Museum price lists. (For price lists please send large SAE to the National Postal Museum, King Edward Building, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP).

Forces Covers

Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society

A philatelic cover commemorating the 21st Anniversary of the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society is currently available price 60p. The cover bearing a 14p 'Disabled' postage stamp, depicts two hemispheres and a wavy line motif, is cancelled with a pictorial handstamp including the message '21st Anniversary Leydene Petersfield Hants 25 June 1981'.

Orders with remittances made payable to; 'R N A R S', should be sent to: Mr John Hughes, 74 Fairacres, Prestwood, GREAT MISSENDEN, Bucks, HP16 0LF enclosing a 9 1/2" x 6 1/2" stamped addressed envelope.

Air Training Corps

The open day of 1429 Squadron, Air Training Corps, will take place at RAF Aberporth, Cardigan, Dyfed on 15 August 1981. To mark the event a commemorative cover will be available, produced by the Royal Aircraft Establishment Philatelic Society, depicting a Westland Lynx

helicopter flying above the gates of RAF Aberporth. The cover will have a 14p 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award' stamp affixed, cancelled with BFPO 1754 handstamp and the cost is 60p plus 15p postage, and packing. Orders with remittances made payable to: 'The Project Officer RAEPS' should be sent to: Mr B Legg, Hestia, Parclyn, CARDIGAN, Dyfed, SA43 2DX.

Royal Air Force

RDFC4: This cover bearing the five 'National Trusts' stamps, marks Royal Air Force, Fylingdales, the mammoth radar complex in the National Trust area of the Yorkshire moors. The cover depicts this area of the National Trusts, and was cancelled on the first day of issue of the stamps with BFPS 1739 handstamp after which it was flown from HQ BFPS to Fylingdales and signed by the Commanding Officer, and the aircrew carrying the cover. It can be obtained from the Project Officer, Flt Lt W Rice, RAF Fylingdales, PICKERING, North Yorkshire, YO18 7NT, at £2.65 including postage and packing.

RFDC6: The Apprentice Schools at RAF Halton have been the mainstay of RAF recruitment since 1920. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award features significantly in apprentice training and a special cover is currently available showing apprentices participating in the Award Scheme. It has all four 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award' postage stamps affixed cancelled with a pictorial handstamp, BFPS 1740. The cover was flown from HQ BFPS to RAF Halton from where it was carried by apprentices who took first place in the recent Ten Tors competition. It is signed by the Officer Commanding, RAF Halton and the aircrew, and is available price £2.15 including posting and packing, from the Project Officer, Sqn Ldr B Dodd, RAF Halton, AYLESBURY, Bucks HP22 5PG.

The Royal Star and Garter Home

The first commemorative cover on behalf of this splendid home for disabled sailors, soldiers and airmen, was issued on the occasion of the Annual Outing this year, on 23 June to Worthing. Bearing a 'Disabled' stamp it was cancelled with BFPS 1748 handstamp and flown from HQ British Forces Postal Service to the Home on Richmond Hill, Surrey, then taken with the disabled ex-service men to Worthing in a fleet of taxi cabs organized by the London Taxi Drivers Benevolent Association for War Disabled. A limited number of covers were driven from Richmond to the sea-front at Worthing by Charles Hankins in a specially

adapted hand-operated wheelchair. A member of the Black Watch, he was wounded in the chest and lost both legs in North Africa. This special cover will be signed by Mr Hankins and countersigned by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Denis Spotswood, Chairman of the Board of Governors.

The covers can be obtained from Group Cpt. W S O Randle, Royal Star and Garter Home, RICHMOND, Surrey, TW10 6RR. Standard covers – 75p plus 14p postage and packing. Signed by the pilot delivering the covers, the cost is £1.05 each plus 14p postage, and the Charles Hankins special, £2.50 plus 14p postage. All proceeds go to the Royal Star and Garter Home.

Commemorative Covers

Royal Wedding of Prince Charles to Lady Diana Spencer – 29 July 1981

To commemorate the Royal Wedding a special cover has been produced, bearing the 14p and 25p 'Royal Wedding' stamps cancelled with a pictorial handstamp bearing the Prince of Wales insignia of ostrich feathers. The covers will also have a coloured portrait of the royal couple.

A limited number of these covers are available at £1.25 each from:– Mr A MacLachlan, Marketing Executive, Prince of Wales Hotels Ltd, 72 King St, SOUTHPORT, Merseyside PR8 1LG.

Applicants should send a stamped addressed envelope not less than 10" x 5" together with the remittance made payable to:– 'Prince of Wales Hotels Ltd'.

Airmail Exhibition and Collectors' Fair

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the first United Kingdom aerial post from Hendon to Windsor in 1911, the British Aerophilatelic Federation in conjunction with the Royal Air Force Museum, will hold an airmail exhibition and collectors' fair in the Dermott Boyle Wing of the Museum on 12 and 13 September 1981.

All aspects of aerophilately will be covered by the exhibition including balloon posts, pioneer flights and the inter-war period up to the present day. The collectors' fair will comprise a number of dealers selling a wide selection of collectable material.

Two special covers will be available, the first (FF33) commemorating the first aerial post in 1911 will have a 14p definitive stamp affixed cancelled

with BFPS 1911 handstamp, dated 9 September 1981. The second (RAF C2) designed to celebrate 'The Day of Aerophilately' will also bear a 14p definitive stamp cancelled with BFPS 1912 handstamp dated 11 September 1981. Both covers will be flown in an RAF aircraft and the costs are 75p each, or £1.05 each if signed by the pilot. 15p should be added to cover postage and packing.

Orders accompanied by remittances made payable to 'RAF Museum, Hendon 11/12' should be sent to, The Royal Air Forces Museum, Aerodrome Road, Hendon, LONDON, NW9 5LL.

Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen

1981 is the centenary year of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, and to coincide with the issue of four 'Fishing' stamps on 23 September special covers will be available. They will depict a fisherman with a ship in the background, and all four stamps will be affixed cancelled with a pictorial handstamp. The covers will be carried in a fishing vessel, taken on board at Lerwick, Shetland, and delivered to Aberdeen where they will be accepted by a postman dressed in a uniform as worn 100 years ago. Proceeds from sales will be donated to the Mission.

Orders with remittances made payable to Benham A. Buckingham Ltd, should be sent to: The Fishermen's Mission, 22-28 High Street, HYTHE, Kent, CT21 5AT. The cost is £2.25 each including postage and packing.

In addition a limited number of covers will be signed by Admiral Sir Charles Madden, Chairman of the Mission, at £5 each.

Leicestershire Girl Guides Association

To coincide with the issue on 12 August 1981 of the 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award' stamps, a limited printing of 2000 commemorative covers bearing a full set of the stamps will be available, cancelled with a pictorial handstamp. The covers feature the Expeditions aspect of the Awards Scheme and are priced at £2.50 each. 250 will, in addition, be signed by the County Commissioner and President of the Association, the cost is £4.75 each.

Orders with remittances made payable to A G Bradbury, should be sent to A G Bradbury, 35 Northdene Road, LEICESTER, LE2 6FJ.

Watton Church Restoration Appeal

A special philatelic cover is currently available, produced to assist the restoration appeal on behalf of St Andrews and St Mary Church, Watton-at-

Stone, Hertfordshire. The cover depicts this 15th century church as it appeared in the 19th century, and refers to the Royal Wedding. One or both 'Royal Wedding' stamps are affixed cancelled with a pictorial handstamp conveying loyal greetings from the village.

Bearing both stamps the cover is priced at £1.50, plus 25p if required to be sent under cover, or, with a single 14p stamp the cost is £1.25 plus 25p postage and packing. Orders with remittances, made payable to, 'Watton-at-Stone PCC', should be sent to, Appeal Organiser, 9 Rectory Lane, Watton-at-Stone, HERTFORD, SG14 3SG.

Chingford Old Church, London

In an effort to attract funds for the upkeep of this fine old church celebrating its 800th anniversary in Royal Wedding year, a commemorative cover is currently available illustrating the church against a background depicting St Pauls Cathedral which owned the land around the Church and appointed its ministers. Both 'Royal Wedding' stamps will be affixed to the cover, cancelled by a pictorial handstamp. The cost is £2.65 including postage and packing.

Orders with remittances should be sent to: Hawkwood Stamps, 60 Hawkwood Crescent, Chingford, LONDON, E4 7PJ.

The Salvation Army

A special cover is being produced by The Salvation Army to commemorate the centenary of the 'Young Soldier' publication on 27 August, 1981. The paper is published weekly by The Salvation Army and is directed mainly towards young people. A special handstamp will be used to cancel the cover which will bear a 14p 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award' stamp. The cost is 80p which includes postage and packing.

Orders should be sent, to Major K Daws, 75 Park Lane, HARROW, Middlesex HA2 8NW accompanied by a remittance made payable to 'K Daws'.

The profits realised from this venture will support the Army's missionary endeavours in many parts of the world.

The Rotary Club of Turton, Bolton

A commemorative cover will be available from 29 August 1981, sponsored by The Rotary Club of Turton, Bolton, commemorating a marathon run from John O'Groats to Lands End between 20-29 August. The run will be attempted by Ken Heathcote who expects to achieve a new world record for the distance without mechanical aid.

The cover will bear both 'Royal Wedding' stamps cancelled with a pictorial handstamp, price £1.25. A limited number will be signed by Ken Heathcote available only by special application.

Orders with remittances made payable to, 'The Turton Rotary Club', should be sent to Mr A J Tetlow, 9 Haydock Lane, Bromley Cross, BOLTON, BL7 9AZ.

Proceeds from sales will be donated to Research into Leukaemia in Children Appeal.

Wakefield Philatelic Society and PO Sports and Social Club

To commemorate the Official Opening of Wakefield's new Head Post Office building on the 12 August 1981 by Mr D V Davey, Chairman North Eastern Postal Board, the Wakefield Post Office Sports and Social Club and the Wakefield Philatelic Society will jointly sponsor the production of a special cover. It will be illustrated with an artist's impression of the new building, and below the picture the words, 'Royal Mail House Wakefield WF1 1AA' which are printed in red using the Royal Mail style lettering.

Covers will be available at a cost of 30p and £1. The 30p cover will bear a 14p 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award' stamp, and the £1 cover the full set of the special stamps.

Orders with remittances should be sent to Mr D Harris, Wakefield Sports and Social Club, Royal Mail House, 2 Denby Dale Road, WAKEFIELD, West Yorkshire, WF1 1AA. A pictorial handstamp will be used to cancel the stamps.

Philatelic Bulletin

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