

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

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Bulletin

Loch Lomond's post offices •
Country stamps for England



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover A detail from the coat of arms of Edward IV, painted in the reign of Henry VIII. The three lions *passant guardant*, the arms of England carried by monarchs since Richard I, are featured on the 2nd class England country stamp.

Photograph by Geoff Dann, courtesy The College of Arms.

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

6 March	Issue Northern Ireland country stamps and presentation pack.
6 March	Issue Weather stamp cards (five cards showing four stamps and miniature sheet).
6 March	Withdrawal Millennium Water & Coast stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.
13 March	Issue Weather stamps, miniature sheet, and presentation pack.
20 March	Withdrawal Postman Pat label book.
3 April	Withdrawal Millennium Life & Earth stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards; Botanic Gardens label book and unfolded pane.
3 April	Issue Submarines stamp cards.
10 April	Issue Submarines stamps and presentation pack.
10 April	Withdrawal High value £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 printed by Enschedé.
16 April	Issue English country stamp cards.
17 April	Issue Submarines stamp book: 2 × 1st Submarines and 4 × 1st definitives, all self-adhesive.
23 April	Issue English country stamps and presentation pack.
24 April	Issue English country stamps ingot cover.

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Stamp scene Spring Stampex • GB *Journal* • Scottish Congress • Friends of the NPM

Stampex Spring Stampex will be held at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1, 28 February-4 March. It will include invited displays by the King George VI Study Group and the Banking & Insurance Philatelic Society as well as the new 'Nations Cup' – competitive displays between groups of countries, the winners of each group moving on to compete at Continental and World levels. The countries are UK, Belgium, Portugal and France. There will be the usual range of dealers catering for all kinds of collector, from beginner to specialist. Royal Mail will offer its full range of stamps and philatelic products. A special postmark will be applied to mail posted at the stand at the exhibition. Collectors unable to visit Stampex can send covers, bearing at least 1st class postage, to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB requesting Stampex postmark and stating date(s) required. Covers must be received by the date of cancellation wanted.

Astro 2001 exhibition Further information and entry forms from: John Hammonds, 31 Wheatsheaf Close, Horsham RH12 5TH.

Autumn Stampex, including the national philatelic competitions, will be held at the Business Design Centre, 19-23 September. This will include a thematic exhibition 'Astro 2001', organised by John Hammonds for the Astro Space Stamp Club. Entries may be in 10 classes plus literature and open. The thematic class is defined as 'Astro-related entries based on a theme or subject, developed according to a logical plan, and by the use of appropriate philatelic material.' For the traditional philately class the exhibit should encompass 'a specialised study of one stamp, group, set or series, featuring Rockets, etc as part of the design, actual or symbolic. Can include proofs, essays, etc.' •

GB Philatelic Society The January/February issue of the Society's GB *Journal* includes a feature on the Bradbury Wilkinson 286d Seahorses by Robert J Maushammer. This is sub-titled 'Using a New Tool for Reporting Research Results' and the accompanying illustrations were obtained from the Intel Play QX3 computer microscope. Vic Currie's article 'Measuring KGV Shades using a Colorimeter' in the last issue prompted replies from the Society's President Chris Harman, Nick Peacock, and Frank V Allan – all unconvinced that the equipment fulfils the requirements of collectors. F W Taylor reports a 1d red Plate 225 perforation variety and Peter Mollett comments on Taylor's earlier article regarding the discovery of a 1d 'stars' perf 14 with large crown watermark reversed. Alan Moorcroft reviews Graham Mark's book *British Censorship of Civil Mails during World War 1*.

The Society's January/February *Newsletter*, sent out with the *Journal*, is somewhat lighter reading with members' comments on competing in exhibitions, social philately, foxing and oxidation, philatelic research as well as short articles on censored mail from Scapa Flow (Orkney), Black Plate 8: Repairs to the 1841 1d red brown. The editor, Tony Walker, reprints his article on *£sd* Machins originally published in this *Bulletin* last year •

Scottish Philatelic Congress This year's Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies takes place at the Town Hall, Falkirk on 24-25 March. Kirkcudbright Philatelic Society will host Congress and present a 60-frame display of members' material. Entries for the National Exhibition (Competition) will also be on display. The doors open at 09.00 on 24 March when many of the country's major stamp and postcard dealers will be present. The Philatelic Bureau will be in attendance. The opening ceremony takes place at 11.00. Sunday 25 March will be Collectors' Day when there will be displays by local societies and meetings of specialist societies.

The Kirkcudbright Philatelic society was formed in 1966; members have varied collecting interests at all levels of the hobby with some members belonging to various specialist societies. The Society meets at 19.30 on the first Friday of each month, September to April •

New NPM Friends postcards The Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum has produced its fifth series of postcards, numbered 23-27. They feature the 1929 Postal Union Congress issue. Price £2 or £5 cancelled with first day of sale postmark (6 February). The cards will be available at the Friends' stand at Stampex at the Scottish Philatelic Congress in Falkirk, 24-25 March •

Scottish Philatelic Congress

Admission is free both days; ample free parking; refreshments available on Saturday; parties of schoolchildren welcome. For souvenir postcard and postmark see Commemorative Covers Review.

Visit www.scottishphilately.co.uk for the latest news on Scottish philately.

Kirkcudbright PS The annual subscription is £8. For further information contact the Secretary on 01556 610816. New members are always welcome.

Friends of the NPM Orders and enquiries to: Ray Pottle, Friends of the NPM, PO Box 40, Uckfield TN22 2SP.

Royal Mail news England country stamps

• Buses stamps preview • New stamp books



England country stamps Four new country stamps will be available at post offices in England, the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic outlets from 23 April. They feature symbols associated with the Kingdom: 2nd class (19p) Three Lions of England; 1st class (27p) Crowned Lion of England supporting the shield of St George; E (European rate, 36p) English Oak Tree; and 65p English Tudor Rose. The four stamps include the silhouette head of HM The Queen, as used on special stamps, printed in silver at top right. The service indicators/values, in white reversed out of the back-ground colour, are positioned lower right. The new stamps will be on sale at post offices in England. The national definitives will remain available on request.

According to Friar and Ferguson, in the Middle Ages, the lion was considered to be the embodiment of courage, strength and nobleness, the King of Beasts, and a fitting symbol of royalty. Bedingfeld and Gwynn-Jones

England country stamps The stamps shown left are proofs. They are designed by Sedley Place, using images sculpted by David Dathan and photographed by Chris Ridley.

Technical details

Printer De La Rue Security Print

Process Gravure (Jumelle Press)

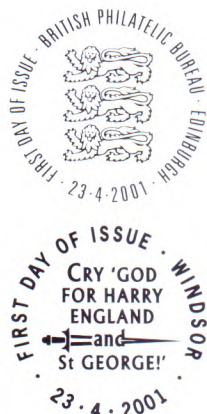
Size 20 × 24mm

Sheets 200

Perforation 15 × 14

Phosphor One band 2nd class, two bands others

Gum PVA



ENGLAND
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER
DEFINITIVE STAMPS



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorblair Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

write: 'Henry I's menagerie at Woodstock boasted the lion, and its presence probably influenced the choice of the lion for Geoffrey Plantagenet's shield, and later for the Royal Arms of England... (these) date back to about 1198. In that year, or perhaps a bit earlier, King Richard I *Coeur de Lion* had his second Great Seal made, showing three lions *passant guardant* in pale, and this device has been borne by English monarchs ever since.'

The Royal Arms featured on Queen Victoria and Edward VII 5d stamps, George VI 256d and 5s, and £1 high values, and the first stamp in the Queen's Beasts strip of 1998. The Lion of England also features on this stamp. The Lion is also a symbol of Scotland as featured on the country stamps of 1971, the current 1st class Scottish stamp and the final stamp in the Queen's Beasts series.

The oak is recognised as quintessentially English and features in many signs of pubs called the 'Royal Oak'. However, as Bedingfeld and Gwynn-Jones tell us, 'before 1700, trees rarely appear in English heraldry... Qualities of strength and endurance typified by the oak might, for example, have appealed, but clearly they did not'. In heraldry trees became more popular during the 18th century. The oak featured on the first of the proposed series of British Trees stamps, issued in 1973, and the 25p National Trust stamp of 1995. Oak leaves were included in the 153d General Letter Office stamp of 1660 – a reference perhaps to King Charles II's hiding in an oak tree after the Battle of Worcester in 1651.

The Tudor rose (65p) is a well-known symbol. According to Stephen Friar & John Ferguson: 'Historically, the red rose has come to represent the concept of parliamentary sanction by which Henry VII acceded to the English throne. But in order that his descendants should enjoy an inalienable right of succession, he married Elizabeth of York – the heiress of the white rose... the rival roses were combined in the beautiful Tudor rose that was to become the universal symbol of the Tudor dynasty and of the new administration.' The rose featured on the 5d and 6d stamps of Victoria's 'Jubilee' issue, also the 5d Edward VII stamp, and, with other floral emblems, on the George VI low value definitives and 10s and £1 high values, and Elizabeth II Wilding definitives.

Sources

Stephen Friar and John Ferguson: *Basic Heraldry*, 1993

Henry Bedingfeld and Peter Gwynn-Jones: *Heraldry*, 1993

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices in England and philatelic outlets about a week before 23 April, price 25p. It features Upper Whitelea Green, near Park-end, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Windsor must reach the Bureau by the day of issue. Price £2.15 UK, £1.83 overseas.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (Windsor postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO103 DEF' (Bureau), or 'FDO104 DEF' (Windsor). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices in England or at offices with philatelic outlets in the rest of the UK for the Windsor pictorial cancel. The *British Postmark Bulletin* will publish details of other postmarks.

PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A presentation pack (£1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available as usual. An ingot cover bearing the four English country stamps cancelled by a special St George & the Dragon, London EC1 postmark, will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau from 24 April, price £39.95. Encapsulated in the cover is an ingot showing St George and the Dragon •

Northern Ireland stamps Plate numbers and colours are: 2nd w1 black w1 new blue w1 bright magenta w1 greenish yellow; 1st w1 black w1 new blue w1 greenish yellow; E w1 black w1 new blue w1 pale orange; 65p w1 black w1 bright magenta w1 greenish yellow. Phosphor number w1 on all values •

Royal Mail stamp album The continuation pages for the 2000 issues are now available from the British Philatelic Bureau, price £9.99 •

Going off sale Readers are reminded that the Millennium Water & Coast and Life & Earth stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards will be withdrawn on 6 March and 3 April respectively. The Postman Pat label book will be withdrawn on 20 March, the National Botanic Garden of Wales label book and unfolded pane on 3 April, and the high value £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 printed by Enschedé on 10 April •



Buses stamps Five stamps featuring British buses will be issued on 15 May. Three are shown above; the issue will be previewed in full next month •

'We've invested £500 million on overseas acquisitions and we now own nearly 20 international companies based in Europe and North America, some with links to the Far East. We are already doing much more than the words "The Post Office" suggest. We also provide services such as e-commerce fulfilment, billing and customer management, as well as logistics and warehousing. The new name will reflect this widening scope of our services as people change the way they run their businesses and their lives.' NEVILLE BAIN, CHAIRMAN

'Everyone relies on some part of our operation every day. We're not changing the look of those services or who delivers them – all our vehicles, our employees' uniforms and our shop fronts will stay as they are.' JOHN ROBERTS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

New name for The Post Office On 9 January The Post Office announced that it is to change its corporate name to Consignia PLC from 26 March, to underline its determination to be a major player in the global distribution market. Chief Executive John Roberts emphasised that the familiar brands of Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide, and the network of Post Office branches remains unaffected by the change of corporate name. The new name becomes effective from 26 March, at the same time as The Post Office is established as a government-owned plc, with greater control over commercial decisions and more freedom to borrow and invest in services.

King Charles I opened his Royal post service to the public in 1635 and a General Letter Office, under the Postmaster General, was established

in 1660. It remained a government department until 1969 when The Post Office, a public corporation headed by a Chairman appointed by the government, came into being. The corporation was divided into three main businesses covering letters (Royal Mail), parcels (Parcelforce) and post offices (Post Office Counters) in the mid-1980s. The change to PLC status results from lengthy discussions between The Post Office and successive governments and the passing last year of the Postal Services Act ●

Weather stamps children's pack A new children's pack, known as 'Postbag' will be available from 13 March containing the Weather miniature sheet, price £5.99. In addition the postbag will include stickers, a glider, door hangers, make-it-yourself barometer and postcards with interesting and unusual facts. Further postbags will be produced for the Buses (15 May), Pondlife (10 July), and Nobel Prizes (2 October) issues ●

Prize winners The winners of the Stamp Show 2000 video in the special drawn in the December *Bulletin* were: B Bates of USA, P Morris of Newcastle upon Tyne, D Bagley of Co Dublin, Madame R Jacquet of France, P Ricketts of Bedford, K Kheng of Singapore, C-L Wee of London, L Saunders of Essex, I Whitehead of Lancashire, and Mme L Loutz of France. The winners of the Bulletin Back Issues draw, also in December, were G Hayter of Essex and P Bell of London ●

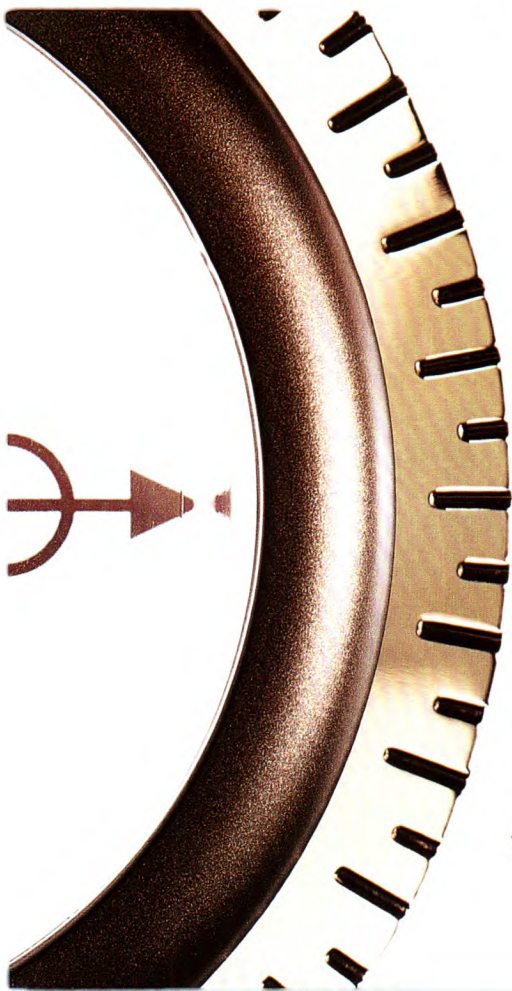
New Year Honours Floella Benjamin was awarded the OBE for her services to broadcasting. Ms Benjamin is a member of the Royal Mail Stamp Advisory Committee ●

Philatelic offices The Post Office at Lombard Street, London EC3 closed on 11 January 2001. A new office at Eastcheap, EC3 opened on 19 February, providing philatelic services ●

2002 special stamp programme Subjects next year will be: Just So – Kipling, Golden Jubilee of the Queen's Accession, Coastlines, Circus (Europa subject), Aircraft, World Cup (dependent on a home nation qualifying), Commonwealth Games, London Landmarks, Post Boxes, and Christmas. The dates of issue will be given later this year •

Special draw Win a special issues Yearpack

WE HAVE 10 Yearpacks containing all the special issues of 2000 for this month's draw. Simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Yearpack Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ to arrive by 30 March •



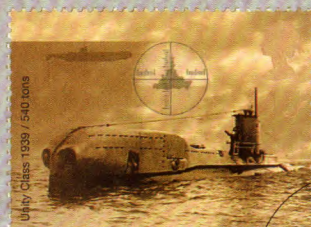
People travel to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge waves of the seas, at the long course of rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars, and yet they pass by themselves without wondering.



Royal Mail
Millennium Stamps
Yearpack 2000



Submarines Four new stamps celebrate the

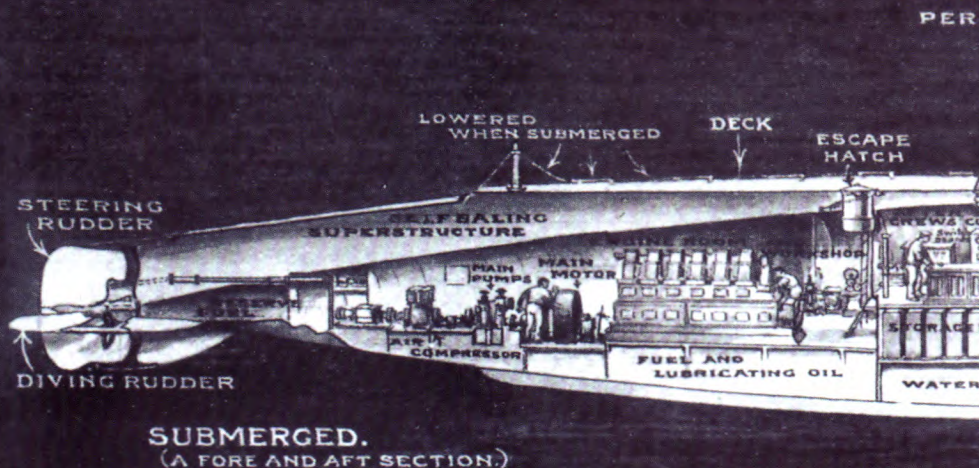


The stamps were designed by Dick Davis, whose 1998 Light-houses stamps were voted the most popular set of that year by *Bulletin* readers. The Royal Navy Submarine Museum at Gosport was extensively consulted in development of this issue and the images are from their archive. The Museum is restoring the oldest surviving British submarine, the *Holland*, for public display – part of the celebrations for the centenary of the Submarine Service.

Below, a later development of the original *Holland* Class, an illustration published in 1915.

To COMMEMORATE the centenary of the Royal Navy Submarine Service, four stamps featuring submarines will go on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic outlets on 10 April. They depict four different classes of submarine: 2nd class (19p) Vanguard, a modern nuclear-armed vessel; 1st class (27p) Swiftsure, of the Cold War era; 45p Unity, of the Second World War period; and 65p Holland, the earliest RN sub.

The technical details of each class are given in the presentation pack. In summary, the Holland Class measures 18.9m (63ft), had a displacement of 122 tons, and a complement of eight men and three white mice to indicate the build-up of dangerous gases. Propulsion was by means of petrol-electric drive. The Navy's first submarine, *Holland 1*, launched on 2 October 1901, fired a single torpedo with a range of less than 300m. The Unity Class was 57.3m (191ft), with a displacement of 540 tons and a complement of 31. Vessels were diesel-electric driven.



history of the Royal Navy Submarine Service



Left, the insignia of the Royal Navy Submarine Service.



The Swiftsure and Vanguard Classes are propelled by nuclear power/steam turbine drive. Swiftsure subs are 81.6m (272ft) long with a displacement of 4900 tons and a complement of 116. Vanguard vessels are 147.3m (492ft) long, displace 15,900 tons and have a complement of 135 (two crews). Life on board a submarine is far from cosy – details of the conditions on HMS *Splendid*, based on the Clyde, are given in the presentation pack.

They are the first British stamps featuring submarines, although a Polaris sub shown on the River Clyde featured on a Scottish aerogramme issued in April 1982. A number of special handstamps have, in recent years, featured submarines. A postmark commemorating the centenary of the Royal Navy Submarine Service is in use throughout 2001 – announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, 5 January 2001. Covers to receive this postmark should be sent to Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA requesting handstamp number 7199.

Technical details

Printer House of Questa

Process Gravure

Size 41 x 30mm

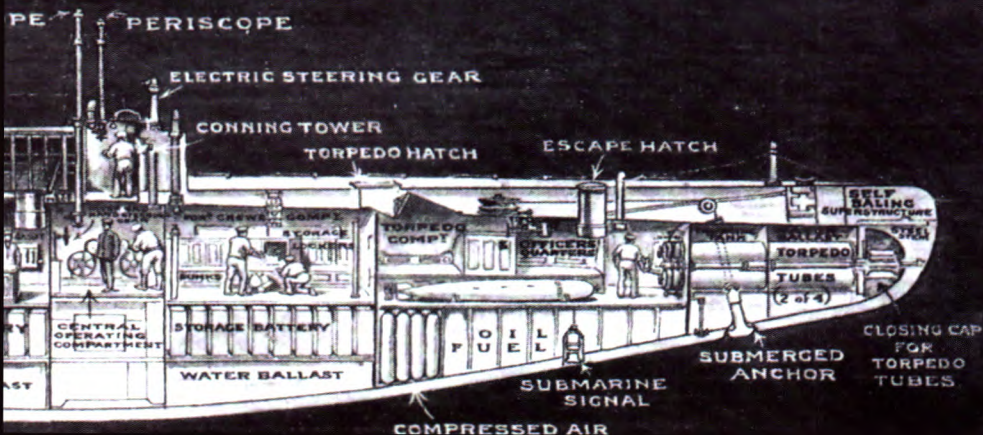
Sheets 100

Perforation 15 x 14

Phosphor One band 2nd class, two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical





Presentation packs containing single stamps (right, £1.95) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available at main post offices and philatelic outlets.

Other handstamps for 10 April will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, available on subscription from Royal Mail, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (£1UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

For a sample copy write to: The Editor, *British Postmark Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 10 April, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the four stamps or cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Portsmouth must reach Royal Mail (address below) by the day of issue. Price £2.25 UK (including VAT) or £1.92 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Bureau postmark), or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (Portsmouth postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO109' (Bureau), or 'FDO110' (Portsmouth). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Portsmouth postmark.

SUBMARINE STAMPS IN BOOKS A book containing four 1st class definitives and two 1st class Submarine stamps will be available from philatelic outlets from 17 April, price £1.62. Printed by Questa, all stamps will be self-adhesive. A prestige stamp book entitled *Unseen & Unheard*, commemorating the Submarine Service centenary, will be issued on 22 October.

PHILATELIC PRODUCTS The presentation pack, designed by Dick Davis, includes an article by Alexandra Henderson and illustrations by Matthew Cook on life on HMS *Splendid*. Alexandra and Matthew spent a day on the nuclear-powered sub, and the pack contains their reflections on life on board the vessel. Matthew Cook designed the Summertime stamps of 1994. A Submarine coin cover, with medal marking the Submarine Service centenary, will be issued on 17 May, price £12.95 •

Cylinders and colours

2nd Q1 black • Q1 brownish black • Q1 dull purple • Q1 gold

1st Q1 black • Q1 azure • Q1 slate-blue • Q1 gold

45p & 65p Q1 magenta • Q1 chrome yellow • Q1 new blue • Q1 black • Q1 gold

The phosphor cylinder 1 was used for each value.

Submarines and stamps The first navigable submarine was invented by the Dutch scientist Cornelius Drebbel in the early 17th century, but the first really practical vessels were the Holland class ordered by the British Admiralty in 1899. US submarines developed from the Holland class and were used during the First World War. Not surprisingly perhaps, submarines have featured on a number of US and Soviet stamps.



The earliest US sub, *Holland I*, features on the 60c stamp in a set of five (SG 4742-7) issued in 2000 for the centenary of the US Navy Submarine Service. These subs ran on electric batteries recharged by a petrol engine when surfaced.



The Gato class submarine, on the \$3.20 in this set, played a key role for the US Navy in the Pacific during World War II.

The 29c in the US Participation in the Second World War set of 1994 (SG 2910) shows a view inside a Pacific submarine.



By the mid 1970s the US Navy had 102 ballistic missile and patrol subs, and 27 more under construction. The USSR then had 115 subs, some of which featured on stamps.

Leninsky Komsomol features on a stamp of 1970 (SG 3847), and C-56 appears on a 1982 stamp (SG 5270), left.



Submarine *Bars*, left, from a 1993 Russian Naval set, which also includes the submarine *Dekabrist* (SG 6437-8).



Submarines are linked to many events of human misery. In May 1915 the British liner *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine off the Irish coast with the loss of 1198 lives. The stricken ship was remembered on a number of contemporary memorial labels such as this.

Philately on-line Ron Negus reports on a CD produced by the Society of Olympic Collectors



Olympics CD Each page on the disc, including this opening one, has a link by subject headings, allowing navigation to be made like a website. Further information, including overseas prices, and copies of both book and CD-ROM are available from Bob Wilcock, 24 Hamilton Crescent, Brentwood, Essex CM14 5ES. E-mail: bob@towlard.freemove.co.uk.

COLLECTORS WHO HAVE access to a computer, but are not connected to the internet, will find many CD-ROMs available with philatelic content. Publishers around the world produce the majority of these to catalogue the stamps of specific countries. Some philatelic handbooks have also been issued in this format, and a British philatelic study group, the Society of Olympic Collectors, has published one recently. They claim that this is the first time this publishing medium has been used by a British specialist society.

The subject of their particular CD-ROM is the postal history, postmarks, covers, postcards and other collectibles relating to Manchester's unsuccessful bids to host the Summer Olympic Games for 1996 and 2000, and its success in being chosen to host the Commonwealth Games of 2002. The same content has also been published by the Society as a conventional 56-page A4 book, but all illustrations in this are printed in black and white.

The CD-ROM version, on the other hand, is in full colour, and this enhances the many pictures of philatelic items which are included. An additional bonus on the disc is the inclusion of some articles from the Society's quarterly bulletin, called *Torch Bearer*, giving details of Australian Olympic philately and the Sydney Olympics. A further incentive offered to encourage sales of the CD-ROM is its price is only £3 compared to the £4 cover price for the book – both amounts include postage to UK addresses. Any of the indi-

vidual pages, or the whole book, can be printed out from the CD-ROM and instructions on how to do this are included.

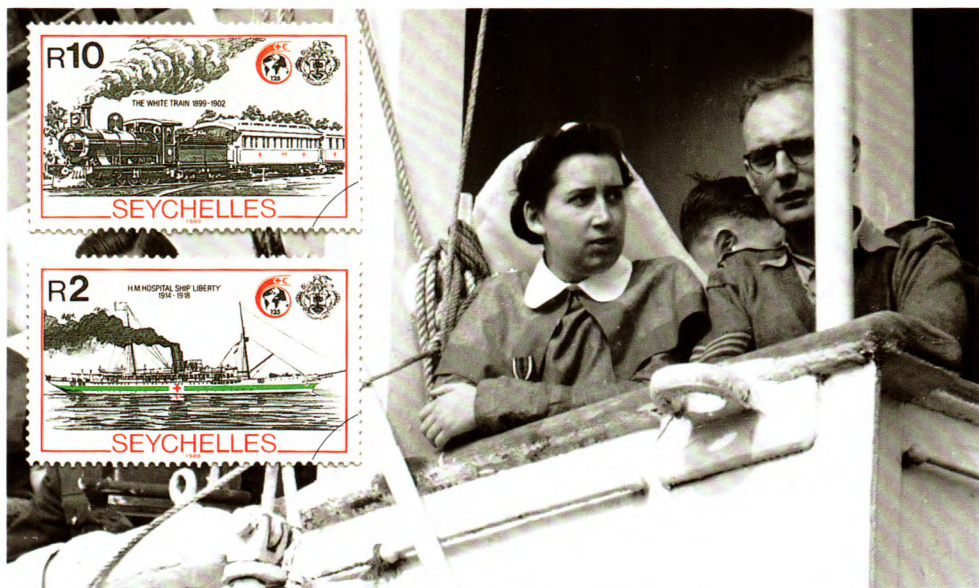
For each of the two unsuccessful bids made by Manchester for the Summer Olympic Games the publication gives a great deal of background information plus examples of the many publicity items that were issued in support. Vignettes, slogan postmarks, handstamps, meter markings, covers, postcards and ephemera are all fully illustrated. A collector's checklist is also included with boxes that can be ticked to show items that have been added to the collection. Manchester was eventually successful when chosen as host city for the 17th Commonwealth Games in 2002. A limited amount of philatelic material has already been issued for this event and this is shown.

A useful section includes the addresses of websites that should be of interest to collectors of Olympic items. Another aid for collectors is the inclusion of advertisements from dealers, at home and overseas, who specialise in this type of material.

The Society of Olympic Collectors was founded in 1984. This CD-ROM, their first attempt at electronic publishing, is an excellent effort at a very modest price. Two comment forms are incorporated – one for the book and one for the CD-ROM. It is hoped that all purchasers will complete the appropriate one of these to provide the soc committee with feedback on their admirable initiative in embracing the new technology. ●

A wounded soldier's journey home

A theme by E J Weeks



I HAVE BEEN A COLLECTOR of stamps and postal history for some 40 years and have been entering Society and Federation competitions for 25 of these. But it was not until about 10 years ago that I started to compete at society level in thematics when I was showing 'The Development of the Aeroplane'. However this was basically an exhibit of aeroplanes on stamps, a display style which was somewhat outmoded if one wished to succeed in competitions judged by experienced thematic judges. My immediate reaction was to carry on in my own way and to ignore the judge's comments, as thematics was really a sideline to my other collections which included hospital ships, air crash mail, GB line engraved and TPOs.

However some five years ago Francesca Rapkin gave my local society an excellent thematic display of the 1936 Olympics and I was surprised to find that it contained many more covers than stamps. This set me thinking, as I had a large collection of hospital ship covers and material related to military hospitals and ambulance trains, but very few stamps. For the following year's society competition I produced nine sheets built around the theme which I called 'A Wounded Soldier's Journey Home'. This was judged by Brian Sole and much to my amazement he awarded me the Cup! I then set about rewriting the exhibit and enlarging it to 16 sheets. Over the following years I entered it in inter-Society and Federation Competitions and on most occasions it was very well received by the judges. Later I was persuaded to enter it for the John Fosbery Trophy and again I was surprised to find that I was the winner. The fact that this competition was judged by the collectors attending Thematica was very gratifying as I realised that I had produced an exhibit which pleased the general thematic collector.

Above and following pages: British troops and nurses on a hospital ship bringing veterans of the battle of El Alamein back to England, 1943.

I am often asked if I began to collect hospital ship cachets because I had a medical background; the answer is a definite 'no'. It was the chance purchase of a postcard in the Jubilee Market off the Strand on which there was a cachet from a South African First World War hospital ship which started off this particular avenue of my collection. Twenty years later and I am still searching for material but apart from displaying to societies I have never entered a competitive exhibit from my hospital ship collection as it does not easily fall into the Postal History category.

When bidding in auction for a hospital ship cover the lot often contains related material, eg hospital cachets, medical forms and Red Cross items. As I am a collector who rarely disposes of surplus material I did not have far to look for initial material once I had decided on my 'Wounded Soldier' theme. However I have made subsequently several special purchases, the most interesting being a letter from a nurse serving on an ambulance barge in France. One item still eludes me – a cachet of a British Ambulance Train. I have such items from other European countries, but only have a manuscript note on a British postcard 'off Ambulance Train'. However, that is the thrill of the hunt; if we all had everything, collecting would be boring!



CARTE POSTALE

25 JUL 15

Indian Hospital Ship

RESPONDANCE

ADRESSE

"CLENGORM CASTLE"

Service Militaire
CARTE POSTALE

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITAL
20e Région
PLACE DE TROYES
Hôpital Auxiliaire Bénévole N° 301
CHANTELOUP
ADMINISTRATEUR

CORRESPONDANCE

July 8

for letter, but

Miss H Up

Having adapted part of my hospital ship collection to a thematic entry I am now looking at my Travelling Post Office collection to assess the practicability of an entry on the Great Western Railway. I have already hit a snag in that many of the stamps depicting GWR locomotives were issued by St Vincent or the Grenadines thereof, and I imagine these stamps would not be looked upon too favourably by thematic judges although I do have some used on cover!

As you can see I have found a new outlet for my many collecting interests and I find it stimulating to produce these short thematic entries based on what is basically a postmark or postal history collection.

Thematic topics can now be developed further with the introduction of a fresh concept of collection known as Social Philately. In this collectors can include all types of non-philatelic material and ephemera. I will now have to delve into my boxes and folders to find any relevant material to expand my exhibit, eg entertainment programmes from hospital ships and photographs or postcards of events. Stamp collecting is not a static hobby; there are always alternative avenues to explore. This is what makes the hobby such a challenge to me •



Take the high road James Mackay visits the



FAMED in song, story and television soap series, Loch Lomond is the largest body of fresh water in Britain. It is 24 miles (39km) in length, from Ardlui in the north to Balloch in the south. For most of its extent it is relatively narrow, but towards the southern end it broadens to form a triangle in which are contained most of its thirty heavily wooded islands and islets. Several of these are still inhabited. Inchmurrin, the largest, has the remains of the ancient castle of the Lennox family while Inchcaillach contains the ruins of a nunnery and the traditional burial ground of Clan Gregor.

By far the oldest post office on its shores is Luss, a pretty little village on the west bank. This has long been a major tourist trap, made doubly attractive in recent years as the location for the long-running television soap *Take the High Road*. It was established as a post town in 1801 but demoted to sub office status in 1832. It became a telegraph office (code LTI) in 1878 and was granted money order facilities in 1884. An independent sub office, it was reduced in August 1915 and made dependent on Glasgow, but was

post offices of Loch Lomond



Within easy reach of Glasgow, Loch Lomond has long been a popular attraction. At the turn of the century there were nine post offices on its shores, and their postmarks are commonly encountered in picture postcards of the Edwardian period. Sadly, all but three offices are now closed.

transferred to the control of Alexandria in 1926. Quite a collection of postmarks could be formed, from the undated straight-line mark of 1801 and the mileage marks of 1808-28 showing its distance from London as 432 or 425 miles from London via Glasgow. In the 1844 series it was allocated the obliterating number 239 which also appeared in a circular datestamp between 1887 and 1905. In more recent years it has had various double circle datestamps but now only single stamps for counter work are in use.

The second post office on Loch Lomond was opened in January 1808 and named Arrochar, which was a bit of a misnomer as it was actually about two miles east of the village of that name, which lies on the shores of Loch Long. Although originally classed as a post town, it was of minor importance and was reduced to the status of a receiving house in 1850. A second office, named Arrochar Village, was opened in the village in 1848. In February 1882 Arrochar was renamed Tarbet while Arrochar Village dropped the epithet. Both offices continue to this day.

Post offices of Loch Lomond
(left to right): Luss, Arrochar,
Tarbet and Gartocharn.



The original office had an undated circular mark inscribed **ARROCHER** in two lines, followed by two different mileage marks (437-G), a straight-line name stamp in the 1830s and the first datestamp in 1844 when it was allocated the number 20. Following the switch of names, the 'village' office was given a duplex with the number 430, which was recorded as late as 1909. Tarbet likewise had a duplex with numerals 376 and a dater inscribed **TARBET LOCH LOMOND**, followed in April 1900 by a combined stamp similarly inscribed. These were the only postmarks ever to include the name of the loch; this was solely to avoid confusion with Tarbert on Loch Fyne (whose handstamps also included the loch name for the same reason).

The combined stamp found on Edwardian postcards was of a large diameter and distinctive appearance, with twin thick arcs at the sides separating the two parts of the inscription. Oddly enough, this handstamp was already something of an anachronism by the time it was issued, for the postal address had been changed in 1896 from Tarbet Loch Lomond to Tarbet Dumbartonshire. Like Luss, it was reduced to a sub office under Glasgow in 1915 and then transferred to the control of Alexandria in 1932, a change reflected in the inscription of its datestamps since then.

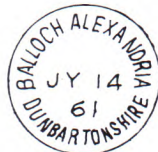
The earliest post offices on Loch Lomond were stages on the post road from Glasgow to the West Highlands. All the other offices around the loch came into being in the closing years of the 19th century, due to the development of late Victorian tourism. The first post office on the Stirlingshire or east side of the loch opened at Inversnaid in 1882. From the outset, the post and telegraph office was located in the hotel above the pier, whence loch steamers went to Tarbet or north to Ardlui. Inversnaid was connected by road to Stronachlachar on Loch Katrine and these hamlets developed as twin resorts in the Trossachs. Inversnaid had a thimble datestamp and a numeral obliterator (356) which has been recorded on Penny Lilacs up to 1890, but it also briefly had a duplex handstamp. Inversnaid was originally classed as an independent sub office, but was placed under the control of Glasgow in 1903 and transferred to Stirling in 1927. It had skeleton datestamps on several occasions but latterly used a combined stamp with thick side arcs. It was a casualty of the Second World War; when tourism was abruptly terminated the post office closed down on 28 October 1939.



The next office to open was Balloch at the southern end of the loch on 29 January 1893. It was the terminus of the railway from Dumbarton and Glasgow and had the main pier whence the loch steamers set out. It was an independent sub office with telegraph (QOJ) and money order facilities but it became a town sub office of Alexandria in March 1916 as that town expanded northwards. It had a combined stamp with the number 647, introduced in 1893 and recorded on cards up to 1911. Later combined stamps were inscribed 'Balloch/Dumbartonshire' but in more recent years it has used a single stamp inscribed 'Balloch Alexandria/Dumbartonshire'. Note the change in the spelling of the county name.

The second office on the east side of the loch was established at Rowardennan on 10 August 1887. It, too, was located in a hotel of the same name. Intriguingly, it may have been briefly open at an earlier date, as a brass mailbag seal thus inscribed was issued on 15 September 1870, but it was not until July 1887 that a numeral combined stamp (493) was supplied. It is known on postcards until 1913 at least. In later years, however, this office had a rather clumsy combined stamp inscribed 'Rowardennan/Glasgow' but this gave way to a much neater stamp with thin arcs in the late 1950s. This office closed on 24 March 1972, although Rowardennan is still a very busy resort all year round.

Gartocharn, opened on 20 September 1891, is not actually on the loch-side but a hamlet situated nearby, on the road between Balloch and Drymen. At least the post office is located in a building prominently inscribed 'Lomondview'. Nearer the loch is Kilmarnock parish church, the parish school and Ross Priory but nothing amounting to a village as such. Gartocharn was ranked as a sub office of Balloch but was transferred to Alexandria in 1916 when the parent office was reduced to a town sub office. It became a money order and savings bank office in 1892 and a telegraph office (GRQ) two years later. For many years it had only a thimble date-stamp before graduating to a combined stamp containing 34 letters of inscription – barely room for the merest smidgeon of spacing bars at the sides. In the 1960s this gave way to a single datestamp similarly inscribed. Today, both Gartocharn and Balloch use self-inking datestamps bearing their name followed by ALEXANDRIA.



The loch mailboat *Lady Jean*

**BY LOCH LOMOND
MAILBOAT
"Marion"**

Ardlui, opened on 10 July 1895 at the northern tip of the loch, owed its existence to the fact that it was served by the railway line from Helensburgh and Garelochhead going north to Crianlarich Junction. At the same time, telegraphic facilities were provided at the North British railway station and for this purpose an undated oval brass stamp was issued. Originally graded as a sub office, Ardlui was raised to the status of a railway sub office in March 1903 but was downgraded to a sub office under Glasgow in August 1915. Subsequently it was a sub office of Tarbet, becoming a sub office of Arrochar in June 1932. It had the curious distinction of starting off with a numeral combined stamp (676) which continued in use until 1932 when it was replaced by a Climax rubber datestamp – at a time when such handstamps were going out of use in even the least important offices. In 1934 this was superseded by a steel combined stamp inscribed 'Ardlui/Arrochar'. It closed on 2 October 1947 but re-opened on 10 July 1954, again as a sub office of Arrochar, but closed for good on 31 May 1972.

A post office was opened on 1 April 1898 at Arden on the southwest shore of the loch, midway between Balloch and Luss, at the junction of the road from Helensburgh. It ranked as a sub office of Alexandria but became a telegraph office (ADF) in 1899 and an independent sub office on 13 February 1900, before reverting to a sub office under Alexandria in March 1916. Unlike Gartocharn, it never rose above a succession of single datestamps, beginning with a large thimble type simply inscribed ARDEN and progressing to a modern type showing the parent office and county names as well. It closed on 18 June 1969.

The last of the Loch Lomond offices was opened at Balmaha on 1 July 1899. It was the least significant of all the lochside post offices, ranking as a postal order sub office (eg empowered to sell and encash postal orders but not cancel outgoing mail). For that reason it was equipped with a Climax rubber datestamp inscribed BALMAHA/GLASGOW, although this is sometimes found cancelling adhesives on Edwardian postcards. It was still using a rubber stamp of this type as late as 1934 when it received a steel single stamp similarly inscribed. It closed on 10 August 1973.

Since 1948 the inhabited islands of the loch have been served by a motor launch from Balmaha which brings the mail under Post Office contract. Various cachets have been recorded for the service in the form of a two-line unframed inscription BY LOCH LOMOND MAILBOAT, sometimes incorporating the name of the boat below in lower-case lettering. Outgoing mail goes from Balmaha to Drymen and thence to Glasgow for sorting and stamping ●

Decimal stamp books 55 Specialist report by D G A Myall



Self-adhesives On 29 January, two major changes occurred in the content and format of the five books of NVIs sold by retailers. First, they contain either six or 12 stamps instead of four or 10. Second, the stamps are self-adhesives. The first change is said by Royal Mail to have resulted from surveys which showed that the public prefer it. The second is part of what is likely to become a general switch to self-adhesives for all definitives and some special issues, whether sold in books or some other form. The five books are: six 2nd class printed by Walsall from cylinders w1/w1 (the slash separates the colour number on the left from the phosphor number on the right); six 1st class by Walsall from cylinders w2/w1; 12 2nd class printed by Questa from cylinders Q1/Q1; 12 1st class by Questa from cylinders Q1/Q1 and 12 1st class by Walsall from cylinders w1/w1. Both firms number their cylinders from scratch for each different layout. The appearance of phosphor numbers in the Walsall books is a first for them.

On the same day, books of 10 self-adhesives of each class, printed by Questa, were issued for the slot machines which formerly vended books of 10 conventionally gummed NVIs. (These machines should not be confused with those which vend books sold for £1 and £2, which also contain NVIs at present. The stamps in these will not be self-adhesives for the present). These books of 10 are the same as the books of 12 except that the leftmost two stamps are omitted. The reason for

these books, I understand, is that the machines, which presently give change in 10p units, could not be adapted to give change in 1p, 2p or 5p coins.

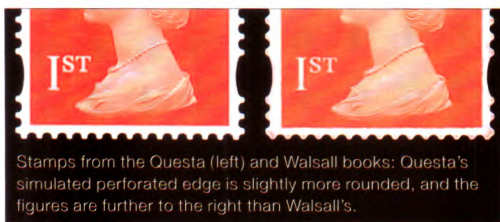
Another book issued on 29 January was the latest in the large label books. This one marks the centenary of the death of Queen Victoria which occurred on 22 January 1901. It contains six 1st class self-adhesive stamps at the right of a large label showing a bust of Victoria and the memorial to her consort, Prince Albert. This is also self-adhesive, the first of the set to be so. The label is captioned QUEEN VICTORIA 1819-1901.

The book was printed by Walsall in gravure. The cylinder numbers alongside the first stamp in the bottom row are: w1 flame w1 phosphor w1 gold w1 grey w1 black.

All these books are the same size. They are much larger than previous books measuring 148mm x 57.5mm compared with 145mm x 50mm for previous retail books. The increased size was not caused by the additional stamps. Rather, it was because, being self-adhesive, they are not conjoined. Instead each stamp has its own (simulated) perforations and is separated from its neighbours by gaps of 2mm horizontally and vertically. These perforations are complete with ellipses and gauge 15 x 14 as normal. The Questa tips are slightly more rounded than Walsall's.

There are easier ways to tell individual stamps from the two printers apart. The easiest, as far as the 2nd class stamps are concerned is that the Questa bands are 5mm wide while those from





Stamps from the Questa (left) and Walsall books: Questa's simulated perforated edge is slightly more rounded, and the figures are further to the right than Walsall's.

Walsall are 4.5mm. Another difference is that Questa's figures etc of the indicator are much thicker than those from Walsall. A third, although this is more difficult to detect, is that the direction of printing of the Questa issues is upright but is sideways to the left on Walsall's, another first for them. The 1st class stamps have the same directions of printing as the 2nd class ones. The indicators are also thin on Walsall's and thick on Questa's. Another difference, which is very easy to see, is that the figure '1' is placed much closer to the left frame on the Walsall stamps than it is on Questa's.

There are other differences between the former covers and the new ones apart from their size and revised statements of content. The new covers are folded in the centre whereas the former were folded off-centre to expose a yellow vertical strip which was printed on the inside back cover. The red and yellow brand image is retained but the yellow strip is now printed on the outside front cover. The new content of the books of six and 12 means new barcodes; they are still printed in blue. The name of the printer is shown above the barcode instead of just the firm's initial below it. There are other textual changes which you can see for yourself. One surprise is that the inside front covers on the books of six are completely blank. I am sure this will not last long; it is too tempting a vehicle for advertising, whether official or otherwise. It seems possible, therefore, that booklet collectors can look forward to cover changes without changes in the stamp content.

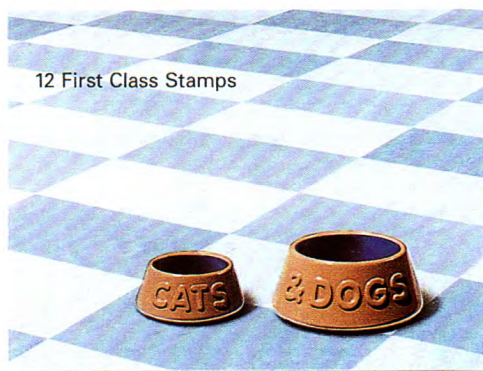
Collector reaction to the new books has been mixed. Some have decided to call it a day and will cease collecting. Others view it as a new beginning. One concern I have heard expressed is with the archival qualities of self-adhesives. I do not think there is anything to worry about. The

Chancellor paper used for this country's self-adhesives is produced by Tullis Russell Coatings Ltd of Bollington. They say it has been designed with the philatelic requirements of postal authorities and collectors in mind and has the best possible archival properties. A question posed on the internet in the newsgroup *rec.collecting.stamps*, discuss elicited replies that show that experience with other countries' issues have not thrown up any problems with hardening of the gum or seepage. Some GB self-adhesives privately produced in 1973 appear unaffected by time. Collectors of used stamps certainly have no cause to worry. The Chancellor paper has a sandwich construction; there is a water-soluble barrier between the OBA-free Kraft paper used as a base and the pressure sensitive adhesive. This makes it easy to soak off the stamps from envelopes, leaving no gum residue. Personally I am prepared to keep used stamps on paper as I believe that soaking in water adversely affects some phosphor inks used in their production.

For those who have not hitherto collected the long-running Machins, self-adhesives offer the opportunity to start doing so. Although Britain's first official self-adhesive stamps were issued more than seven years ago, there are very few forerunners and none of them is expensive. They comprise: a book of 20 1st class in horizontal (landscape) format printed by Walsall and issued 19 October 1993; rolls of 100 of each class (also in landscape format) printed by Enschedé and issued 18 March 1997; rolls of 200 of each class in upright (portrait) format also printed by Enschedé and issued 6 April 1998; sheets of 100 of each class in portrait format printed by Walsall and issued 25 June 1998; a pane of four large format white/grey 1st class *nv1s* printed by Walsall by embossing and issued 16 February 1999 in the *Profile on Print* prestige book; sheets of 100 of each class printed by Questa and issued 4 September 2000. Some of these were experimental and on sale in limited areas but all are still easy to come by.

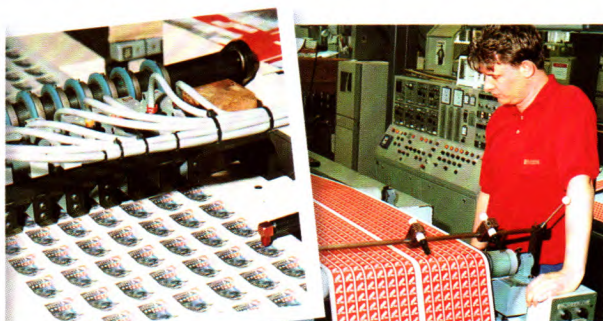
Looking at these various forms of issue it can be seen that the traditional dividing line between books and sheets has become blurred. The 1993 issue was referred to as a book by Royal Mail and

by collectors. This was folded into three panels, two of which had nine stamps and the third had two stamps. The 1998 and 1999 sheets were also folded; each had five panels, four of which contained 24 stamps while the fifth had four. The new books of 12 may also be viewed as folded units comprising two panels of six stamps. In February, a set of ten self-adhesive Cats and Dogs special issue was issued in unfolded form in what Royal Mail call a sheetlet. The same set plus two self-adhesive 1st class NVIs has been issued folded and this is called a book. I understand that the books of four overseas rate stamps may be issued as self-adhesives and that all definitives may one day be produced in this form. Maybe the time has come to stop writing about books and turn one's attention to the Machins in general? •



Front cover of the Cats and Dogs book. The 1st class definitive in this book has a 12.5mm gap between the phosphor bands, as opposed to 11.5mm in other self-adhesive books.

Aiming to be the best Richard West writes from Enschedé



FOUNDED IN 1703, Joh Enschedé Stamps is still privately-owned with, until recently, an Enschedé family member on the board. Security stamp printing is one of the company's six divisions.

Much of the basics of stamp printing understandably differs little from printer to printer: the key these days is to remain one step ahead. At Enschedé only the latest technology is used to create the designs and translate these to printing plate and thence to printed image. But there is more: the customer is ever demanding innovation, and the printer must anticipate such needs.

The aim of Enschedé is to be the best stamp printer in the world. To this end it offers an unri-

valled range of services. All the familiar printing techniques, such as gravure, offset-litho, intaglio, letterpress or inkjet, silk screen, hot-stamping foil and die-cutting, are undertaken.

In addition new techniques are being offered. These include: microprint, involving extremely fine lettering; latent image, by which what is printed can only be seen at certain angles; fine line patterns, security lines often found on items such as banknotes; stochastic screen, on which the screen is variable depending on the image to be printed; and ovd, or optically variable devices, such as ink which changes colour depending on the angle at which it is viewed.

Paper is changing, from recognised gummed and self-adhesive, to linerless and double-sided self-adhesives (where self-adhesive stamps are printed back-to-back on the same backing paper).

The products on offer include the familiar standard size sheets, plus smaller sheets, booklets and rolls, and more recently sheetlets which can be dispensed by automatic teller machines (as used by banks currently to dispense money).

Many of the new techniques are being developed as a way of increasing security; while logically one would think that forgers would mainly target the high value stamps, in fact forgeries of stamps used for everyday postage are far more dangerous.

User friendly In addition, ways are sought to make the postage stamp more 'user friendly'. This largely involves the development of self-adhesives, a rapidly growing market. Enschedé is justifiably proud of the machinery it has developed to produce self-adhesive rolls as complete with the 'surrounds' to each stamp, the reels already being self-adhesive with remaining 'surrounding' paper being discarded. At the same time the reel of paper is divided into separate strips which will go to form the individual rolls. The number of

stamps for each roll is automatically counted. The completed roll is brought into contact with the box in which it will be supplied. The box is initially flat; the machinery automatically forms the box shape, bringing box and roll of stamps together. Self-adhesive stamps can be expensive to produce, but cost improvements are being made with the development of printing self-adhesive stamps 'back to back' thereby sharing the same backing paper.

Other advancements have seen the use of iridescent ink (as used on the current £1 definitive) which cannot be effectively photocopied, and of holograms. Fine line screens are being developed to enable very fine detail to be more effectively incorporated into stamp designs. 'Scratch-off' stamps are a further development, while the Netherlands has provided the opportunity for purchasers to 'create' their own stamp by adding suitable messages.

Collectors are often sceptical, regarding some of the changes as gimmicks. For postal administrations, such developments are a way of ensuring the postage stamp remains an attractive option for users. In all these areas Enschedé plans to be at the forefront of development ●

Brian Asquith Richard West talks with the Chairman of the Association of British Philatelic Societies

Two aspects of Brian Asquith's formative years proved influential. Like most of his fellow schoolboys, he collected stamps, while from an early age he showed an interest in aviation. Indeed one of his first memories is of a Tiger Moth landing near his home. Not surprisingly, National Service was spent in the RAF.

Working toward his chosen career, Brian spent several years studying during evenings to qualify in banking and as a chartered secretary. Once his exams were behind him, there was a gap in his life – filled when he revisited his schoolboy stamp collection. He took to the hobby with immense enthusiasm, joining his local Gateshead philatelic

society, and starting to collect British Commonwealth new issues, albeit for only a short time.

Aviation proved too enticing. At the time, back in 1968, two significant events occurred. The Post Office announced it would issue stamps for the Maiden Flight of *Concorde*, and a series of covers was launched to fund the building of an RAF Museum. Thus began a fascination with *Concorde* that remains today, with Brian still very much the inspiration for the study circle he founded some 22 years ago, and which continues to hold regular meetings during Stampex. He remains enthusiastic for *Concorde* material, while appreciating that the majority is philatelically inspired.

In addition to the RAF Museum covers, Brian also began collecting Scottish Airmails. But he wanted more. The leading aerophilatelic dealer at that time, Francis Field, offered two suggestions: Brazil or China. Brian chose China, and today still maintains one of the world's leading collections of Chinese Airmails. By 1976 he was already giving displays of this material.

By this time Brian had married Anne (they met while both were working for Midland Bank) and had moved to London to be Assistant Secretary of the bank.

He joined the Aerophilatelic Club, London, and was soon encouraged to be on its Committee. He quickly ferreted out his local society, based in Wallington in Surrey. Once more he accepted the invitation to be involved with its organisation.

Brian is very much a collector, always keen to explore new avenues. He can testify to the therapeutic advantages of the hobby: 15 years ago, stamps helped him through a period of illness. He spent the time sorting through a job lot of Turkey, developing an interest for the Turkish Aviation Fund stamps (of which only a few are recorded in the Stanley Gibbons catalogue). Further interests have been developed for Latvia and Trieste, naturally focusing on aerophilately.

In the late 1980s Brian left the bank. Within days he had been approached by David Boyd, then Head of the Stamp Department at Phillips, and starting working part time for the auctioneers. There he has built up an expertise in postcards, cigarette cards, bonds and banknotes.

It was at this time that calls were made upon Brian to help with the organisational side of British Philately. While attending, with Anne, the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain in Liverpool in 1988, he was asked to become involved with the British Philatelic Federation. The days of the BPF were in fact numbered, but Brian participated in discussions that led to the formation of the Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS), and he was invited to be its Chairman.

He joined the London and Provincial Stamp Club, and has been its President. He has been Treasurer of the Friends of Thematica. He is a Trustee of the British Philatelic Trust.

Over the years he has been much involved with the organisation of the occasional aerophilatelic exhibition, called Apex, and was Chairman of the 1993 event held in conjunction with Stampex that year. His achievements were recognised in 2000 when he was awarded the Congress Medal.

Brian has confidence in the future of the hobby, believing that the Internet will play an important part.

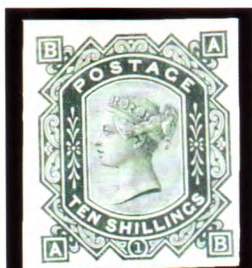
He feels that the ABPS has made its mark on the hobby, most notably with the exhibitions at Newcastle in 1996, Brighton and Hove in 1998, and Glasgow in 2000, not forgetting Midpex, the important specialist society event, held every two years. He believes we all need to develop, to expand our horizons, and feels that this can only happen with the support of a national body. He urges all societies to become members of the Association for the future of the hobby.

It is said that behind every successful man there is a woman. Brian certainly feels he would not have achieved as much without the encouragement and support of his wife Anne. She joins Brian at most philatelic events, and, although not a collector herself, plays a vital part by being Treasurer of the National Youth Stamp Group.

In Brian is found a rare mix: a true enthusiast, and one who is prepared to put back into the hobby, in a quiet, yet determined, way •



The Queen sells her duplicates Historic auction at Spink



Two key sale items: a Queen Victoria 10s watermark anchor, blued paper imprimatur (SG Specialised Catalogue J125) and the famous Edward VII 2d Tyrian Plum, the issue of which was halted after the death of the King. Estimates are £5000-6000 and £9000-10,000 respectively.

HM THE QUEEN has given her assent to auction selected material from the Royal Philatelic Collection at Spink in London on 17 May. Charles Goodwyn, Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection, recommended the sale of certain duplicate and surplus items from the Collection in order to fund a programme of enhancement which has already begun with the purchase of a first day cover bearing ten 1840 Penny Blacks (see December *Bulletin*, page 127). The cover, discovered in the office of a Scottish solicitor in 1968, was on show in the Special Exhibits Section of Stamp '96 at Wembley in April 1996.

Richard Watkins, the Director of the Stamp Department at Spink, commented, 'We feel honoured to have been selected by the Palace to undertake a professional assessment of the Collection and offer our advice on which items might be sold without detriment to the Collection. To our knowledge, this sale is unprecedented in terms of the nature of the material to be offered and its extraordinary provenance. For collectors, the opportunity to bid for items from the Royal Philatelic Collection will mark 17 May 2001 as a philatelically historical date.' The sale will take place at 10.30 in the new auction premises at Spink, 69 Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, London WC1.

It is envisaged that the sale will comprise 150-200 lots and that the catalogue for the sale will be highly sought after, with many collectors wishing to acquire this unique reference as a permanent record of the sale.

The Queen's stamps The Royal Philatelic Collection – the most comprehensive collection of British and Commonwealth stamps – is a private collection, originally founded by King George V, and inherited by The Queen. It is not part of the Royal Collection of rare paintings, china, antique furniture, and other works of art, which The Queen holds as Sovereign, in effect in trust for the nation. Material from the Royal Philatelic Collection has been shown at a number of exhibitions in recent times, including Stamp Show 2000 and Glasgow 2000. Each September a selection from the Collection is shown at the first meeting of the new season at the Royal Philatelic Society London.

Spink Founded in 1666, Spink is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Christie's International plc, the fine art auction house. Regular auctions of stamps, coins, banknotes, and medals are held in London, New York, Hong Kong, and Singapore. The Stamp Department has its origins in the famous philatelic business of Robson Lowe purchased by Christie's in 1980 and subsequently integrated into Spink in 1997. A feature on the Spink Stamp Department was published here in December 1999.

Enquiries Catalogue: Kate Chiari, telephone +44 (0)20 7563 4080, fax (0)20 7563 4085. Specialist enquiries about the items in the sale: Richard Watkins or David Parsons +44 (0)20 7563 4070 or fax +44 (0)20 7563 4085 •

Postbag Letters to the Editor

Stamp design I was most interested in M S Ford's letter (December) for two reasons. It dealt with design and it also referred to a letter by Gerald Davis published in the May 1975 *Bulletin* on the design of the 1974 Christmas Church Roof Bosses issue to which I had responded in defence of the clever photography used at that time. I have some sympathy with Mr Ford who is relieved that the Millennium series is coming to an end. While not critical of some of the superb photography used in the Millennium series, I am very critical of the supposed relationship between photographs and the reason for their issue. One example is the 1st class Sunflower in the Tree & Leaf issue of August that is supposed to represent a 'world class landmark project at St Austell to study biodiversity in specially created bio-domes sixty metres tall. The structures are to contain various climates including deserts.' Why not illustrate the bio-domes if that is what the stamp is about? How could anyone looking at this sunflower even guess what it represented? Photographs can rarely do the work of properly considered designs. Further, if a stamp needs a whole paragraph to explain it, how can it be considered a successful design?

Much of the appeal of a stamp lies in well-considered and clever work by the artist or designer or photographer making a clear unambiguous statement illustrating the subject. There have been too few of these in the Millennium series. WILLIAM AUBREY WITHAM, NEWTON MEARS, GLASGOW •

Stamp design M S Ford's letter (December) and the sources quoted say it all: many recent issues have been nothing more than 'cut and paste' with little or no thought given to the lettering, value and Queen's head as part of the design. These components should be integral parts of the design, not appendages. All too often they have been stuck onto the picture in places where they aren't even visible, as if the designer sees them as superfluous and annoying detractors to his or her artwork. If the Queen's head is in fact the

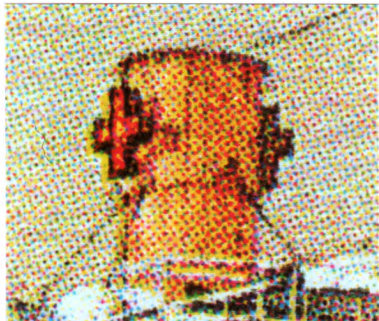
national identifier, isn't it deserving of portrayal in some recognisable form against a background where it can be seen? And if the value is of any importance, oughtn't we to be able to see it in numerals, with a denomination? Likewise, a few well-chosen words in a font that identifies and complements the subject matter of the stamp should be seen as an essential, not an option.

DAVID G MACDOUGALL, SASKATCHEWAN •

Commemorative stamps How encouraging it was to see two letters (December) confirming what I feel about commemorative stamps in general and the Millennium ones in particular – there are many too many of them! I agree with M S Ford that there is more to stamp design than any old picture – however daring – with the Queen's head added. The Millennium set tried to cover every aspect of British life from the last 1000 years, with no sense of co-ordinating the designs, and, as Mr Ford mentioned, little dignity. The point that struck me about Mrs Hullah's letter was that although she enjoys getting letters with more attractive stamps on, and encourages us all to use them, it has not been my experience that people notice the existence of most commemoratives. A survey of my mail shows under 40% of mailings have adhesive stamps at all, and of those four out of five are definitives. Bearing in mind that there are at least four new stamps issued by the PO every month, local post offices can be forgiven for only ordering a small number of these new issues, which they would otherwise be left with as soon as the next lot came along! I find that on average I don't get more than a couple of letters with a commemorative stamp on ever, except at Christmas. They are going to be the rare stamps of the next generation's collections – used, anyway – as the vast bulk of sales will only be to us loony collectors.

I'm afraid that I have seen the light and given up the collecting of UK commemoratives some time ago. It's a shame. J C TWOMEY, HATHERLEIGH, DEVON •

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



December identify The detail is from the 19p Christmas Robins set, 1995. The winner was E Swales of Derby.

December knowledge The answers: 1) Rosalind Dease; 2) Christians' Tale; 3) Gavin Fryer. The winner was James Willard of France.

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 March *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to March *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 Who designed the 1964 2s6d Shakespeare Festival stamp?
- 2 Which Millennium stamp set featured Saturn?
- 3 In which year did a Glasgow Tram appear on a stamp?

Send your answer (addressed to either the March *Identify* competition or March *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 13 April will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs or FDCs will be awarded in each competition.

The Competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until further notice Postal Memorabilia displays at Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln and Manchester Postal Museum, Wythenshaw Park, Manchester (open 10.00-16.00). **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorn Road, Stockport SK4 3DQ.

28 February-4 March Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, London N1. Displays by King George VI Collectors Society, FIP Nations Cup competition, dealers, etc. **Enquiries** 020 7490 1005.

1-3 March Philatex at Royal Horticultural Society New Hall, Greycourt Street, London SW1. **Enquiries** Trevor Davis, 020 8946 4489.

3 March GB Philatelic Society meeting at Stampex 14.30. Scottish Postal History display. **Enquiries** A Lajer, 0118 934 4151.

17 March GB Philatelic Society meeting at British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1, 11.00. Displays: Norfolk Postal History (P Pearson); Booklet Production & Distribution (I Harvey). Dealers. **Enquiries** A Lajer, 0118 934 4151.

24-25 March Scottish Philatelic Congress, at Town Hall, Falkirk. Sat 09.00-17.00; Sun 10.00-16.00. Hosted by Kirkcudbright Phil Soc. Dealers, national competitions, Philatelic Bureau, Scottish Handstamp Centre, etc. **Enquiries** T Woods 01698 283067.

27 March Rowland Hill Awards Ceremony at Dorchester Hotel, London. Admission by invitation only.

8 April GB Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle meeting at Langley, Birmingham. **Enquiries** Roger Knights 7 Old Farm Close, Needingworth, St Ives PE27 4SG •

Late news

Rowland Hill Award nominations The finalists for the 2000 Rowland Hill Awards (Royal Mail and British Philatelic Trust sections) are given below. The finalists for the Philatelic Traders' Society section were not available at time of going to press and will be published next month. The winners – to be announced at the Awards Ceremony on 27 March – will be published here in May. Please note that the Awards Ceremony is for invited guests only.

Royal Mail Innovation Awards

STAMP AND PRODUCT INNOVATION: The Chase Creative Consultants Ltd, Trickett & Webb Ltd, Walsall Security Printers Ltd

JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE BROADCAST MEDIA: John Crace, Simon Hoggart, Robert McNeil

JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE PHILATELIC WRITING: Dr Christopher Board, Ashley Lawrence, James Mackay, Alan Moorcroft

POST OFFICE EXCELLENCE: Bristol, Manchester and Glasgow Postshops

British Philatelic Trust

YOUTH WORK: John Davies, Gavin Fryer, Frank Soutar

YOUNG COLLECTOR: Melissa Hitchcock, Daniel Robinson, Woodbury Salterton School Stamp Club

AUTHORSHIP/RESEARCH: Clive Akerman, Harry Dagnall, Martin Evans

COMMUNITY/TEAMWORK: Bath Postal Museum, National Youth Stamp Group Committee, Ian Nutley

NEW HORIZONS: John Dahl and Ian Harvey, Roy Erskine, Ian MacPherson, Glenn Morgan ●

Thematica This exhibition, at the Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2, 23-24 June, will include a display provided by the French Association of Thematic Philately. Thémafrance will include a British thematic display and it is hoped that such an exchange of displays will become a regular feature of both British and French exhibitions ●

Stamp designer honoured Elizabeth Blackadder, designer of the 1995 Cats stamps, has been appointed as Her Majesty's Painter and Limmer in Scotland, the first woman to hold the 300-year-old position. Ms Blackadder was nominated for the post by the late Donald Dewar, Scotland's First Minister ●

£1 stamp book revision A new printing of the £1 book has been made: on the second label the website address for postcode enquiries has been amended from postcode to postcodes. The new printing will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 17 April ●

Camberley auction The Camberley & District Stamp Club's annual public auction will be held at the Morgan Centre, High Street, Crowthorne on 21 April. The 750 lots, with a combined reserve value of over £10,000, includes specialist material, postal history, cinderellas and collections in albums and boxes. Viewing from 10.30, bidding from 14.00. For a catalogue contact Dr John Pugh on 01276 63879 ●

Northeast Philatelic Weekend The 25th anniversary Weekend will be held at the Swallow Hotel, Gateshead, 18-20 May. As always, there will be a mixture of philatelic talks and displays and social events, catering for new and advanced collectors, and enjoyed by all participants. The speakers this year are: Dr Jean Alexander (Supermarket Philately), Pat Grimwood-Taylor (Social Philately), Michael Booker (Colditz – the Philatelic Story), Christine Earle (Aspects of Archery), and Jeffery Matthews (Jeffery Matthews Designs). A stamp fair will be held on the Sunday. A souvenir booklet produced to commemorate the event will contain a block of four of the Gateshead Millennium Bridge stamps (two gutter pairs), also a 1st class Boots label. For a booking form for the Weekend (to be returned by 15 March) send 6 × 9in SAE to: Mrs D Martin, 46 Briardene Crescent, Kenton Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4RY ●

SUNFLOWER PHONECARDS FROM ROYAL MAIL



The big, bold and beautiful sunflower that lit up letterboxes worldwide last summer blooms again on this pair of delightful phonecards. It was the star of the Eden Project stamp which was part of the Tree and Leaf issue in August 2000.

These highly collectable phonecards are available in £5 and £10 varieties.

If you would like to know more about these or any other Royal Mail products please phone the number below (quote ref 00 RNA) or contact Royal Mail at the address shown.

Royal Mail, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB
UK telephone order line 08457 641 641, overseas +44 131 336 7489



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