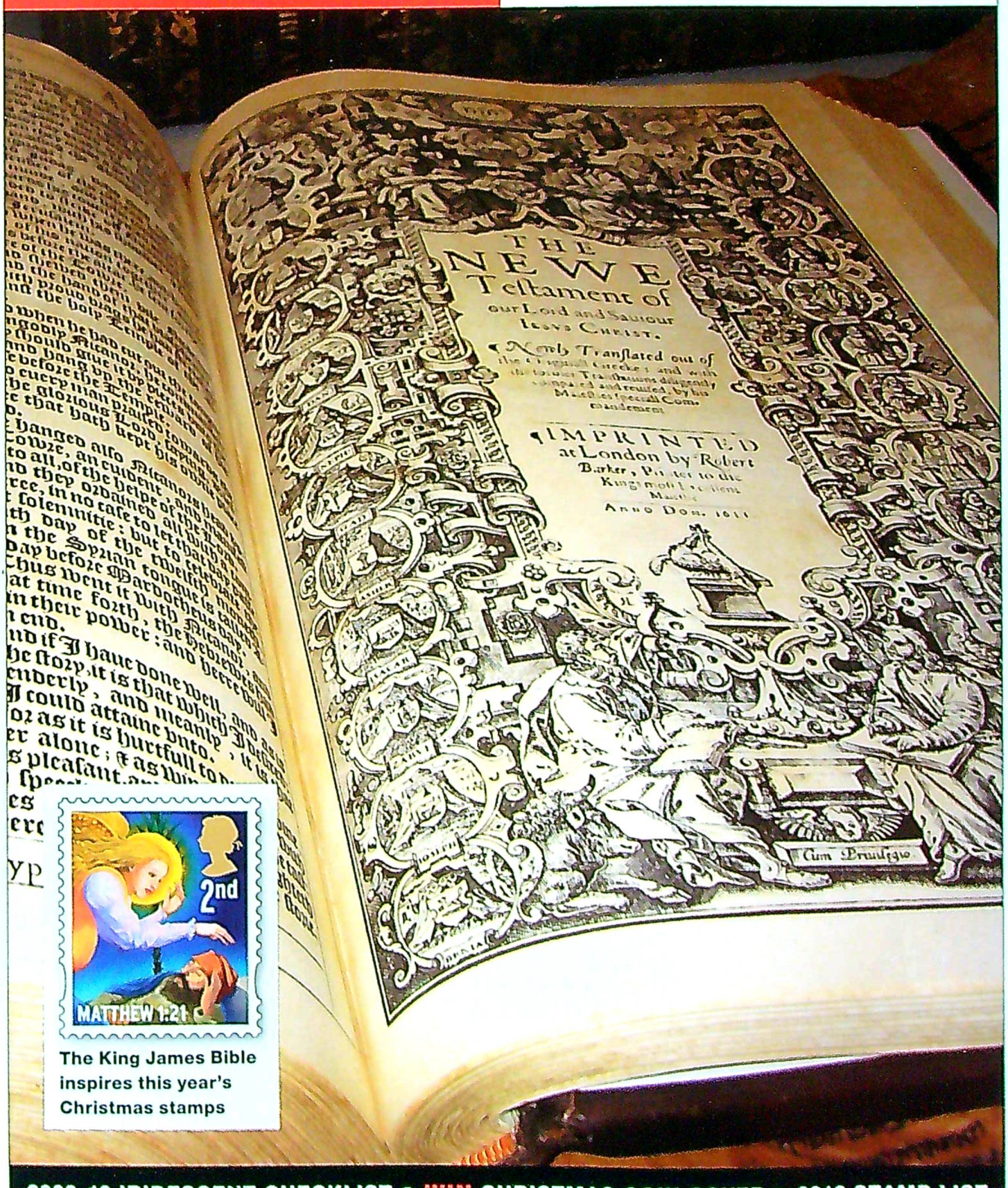
BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 49 Number 3 | NOVEMBER 2011 £1.20

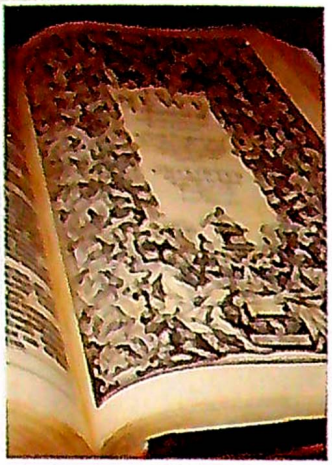
2012 definitives • Hanover Cachet Cover • PO History



The King James Bible inspires this year's Christmas stamps

2009-10 IRIDESCENT CHECKLIST • WIN CHRISTMAS COIN COVER • 2012 STAMP LIST

Issues and withdrawals



Cover A title page of the New Testament in the so-called King James Bible. This month's Christmas stamp issue celebrates the 400th anniversary of its first printing by Robert Barker in 1611

To order philatelic items, including those listed on the right, contact Royal Mail Tallents House at the address below. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on the Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/shop Selected items are available at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, London (Eastcheap and Trafalgar Square), Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southend on Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro, York and Newport, Isle of Wight.

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8 November	**Issue** Christmas 2011: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamps Cards, Stamp Books, Generic Sheet, Coin Cover, Smilers® **Issue** Annual Collection: 2011 Yearbooks, Yearpack, Year of Miniature Sheets and Year of Presentation Packs
30 November	**Issue** Olympic and Paralympic Sports Cover Collection: Canoeing Coin Cover, Archery Coin Cover **Issue** City of Edinburgh Coin Cover
2 December	**Issue** Harry Potter: Heroes and Villains Pack
31 December	**Withdrawal** Christmas 2010 Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Books, Generic Sheet **Withdrawal** 2009 Yearbook and Yearpack

2 2012 2012 2012 **2012** 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012

5 January	**Issue** The Olympic and Paralympic Games Definitive Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Books, Coin Cover
10 January	**Issue** Roald Dahl: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Prestige Stamp Book, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
10 January	**Withdrawal** FAB The Genius of Gerry Anderson: Stamps, Miniature Sheets, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamps Books
12 January	**Issue** Olympic and Paralympic Sports Cover Collection: Aquatics Coin Cover, Rowing Coin Cover
20 January	**Issue** Lunar Year of the Dragon Generic Sheet

Cover image by SusanLeDoux, Ecclesial at www.susanledoux.net

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The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ ● Editor: Melanie Williams ● Price £1.20 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets (see opposite) ● **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address opposite) ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail Tallents House ● Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps – available on annual subscription from Royal Mail Tallents House: £12.25 UK and Europe; £24.95 rest of the world
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● **Printed** in Great Britain by St Ives Westerham ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England & Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

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Postbox and inbox

First-class letter

A yearning in Hanover

I read with interest the recent letters from readers who had saved to buy the £1 Silver Wedding stamp of 1948, and was reminded of a business trip I made to Germany in the 1960s. I spent an evening wandering around the shops in Hanover and, lo and behold, there was a stamp shop. In the middle of the window was the Great Britain 1929 Postal Union Congress £1, priced at a very reasonable £28. I had wanted this stamp for years, but this was the time when travellers were allowed only £52 to spend while abroad. I stood there doing my mental arithmetic – there was no way I could pay my hotel bill and buy this stamp as well! So, sadly I had to return without it. I still do not possess a PUC £1 and now it is worth four figures.
William O Wittering

We know the feeling! The £1 Postal Union Congress stamp is the classic example of a high-value special stamp which many collectors couldn't afford. At £1, it cost 160 times the basic UK letter-rate of 1½d. Fewer than 70,000 were sold, compared to a staggering 751 million of the 1½d stamp. The £1 stamp is now catalogued at £1,100 unmounted mint and £550 used.



A bridge overtitled?

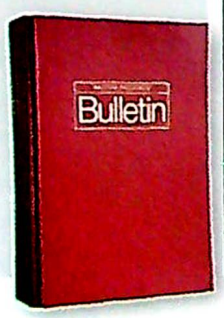
I enjoyed last month's article about the new UK A-Z issue, but note that your reference to one of the stamps differs from the wording on the stamp itself. I have searched many books to confirm the name of the big red bridge crossing the River Forth as 'Forth Bridge'. At least three air letters have been issued showing the Forth Bridge. Why change now?

Soon we will have another road crossing the River Forth at Queensferry – what should we call that? Maybe the Third Forth Bridge?
Robert W Catto, Edinburgh Philatelic Society

It was decided to add 'railway' to the Forth Bridge name because it gives a clearer definition. It is the term used in Encyclopaedia Britannica and at www.forthbridges.org.uk. As for the new bridge name, we like your suggestion! Any more, readers?

Keep the mail coming...

The Editor of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* welcomes your letters and the senders of those published will receive philatelic delights as a thank-you. The sender of the 'First Class letter' award will also receive the *Bulletin* binder. Please note that Royal Mail cannot reply to all correspondence and reserves the right to edit for length. Send your letters to: The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail Stamps & Collectibles, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. Remember you can drop us an email too, to bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com



Fly away Post & Go

Though a keen collector since the 1930s, and a *Bulletin* reader since the very first typescript issues, I can truthfully say that I have never seen a single one of any of the illustrated Post & Go Birds of Britain stamp labels, either in mint condition or used in a letter. Am I alone in this?
Anthony Neil, Petersfield

We have to admit that we are rather surprised that not one Bird of Britain has flown through your letterbox, Mr Neil. We understand that Robert Gillmor's beautiful artwork on this series has made them quite popular with collectors.

Philip Parker, of Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles, tells us: 'Hundreds of thousands of stamps from the Birds of Britain series of Post & Go have been sold. It may be that many of them are used for overseas postal rates.'



What's new? House of Hanover Cachet Cover

The House of Hanover Cachet Cover The stirring of dutiful horses at the soft thwack of the postbag hitting the floor of the mail coach, the buffed leather interior... all quiet until, at the murmured encouragement of the coachman and a flick of the reins, comes the clip-clop of the coach horses making their steady way through London traffic.

Such was the fitting journey made by the Hanover Cachet Cover, issued on 15 September and designed to commemorate the centuries-old journey of mail from St James's Palace to Buckingham Palace.

The House of Hanover Cachet Cover is the fifth of six limited edition covers to accompany each stamp set in the Kings and Queens series. It carries a special cachet, as shown below, to signify that it has been posted at the Royal Palace. Inside the cover is a card with information about each of the featured Hanoverian Kings and Queens and a timeline showing significant moments in the history of St James's Palace • ▸

Above: the carriage – a brougham – that carried the House of Hanover Cachet Cover from St James's Palace to Buckingham Palace





Above: the 2011 Yearpack holds all the special stamps of the year in an attractive folder

Year Collections The 2011 Year Book and Year Pack are now available and will remain on sale until the end of 2013. Both contain all the special stamps of this year. The lavishly illustrated Year Book also includes contributions by experts relating to the Special Stamp issues, which this year include the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and an exclusive interview with Seb Coe. Available from 8 November, price £95. A limited-edition leatherbound version of the Year Book is also available, price £135.

The 2011 Year Pack contains the year's special stamps in a beautifully designed folder and costs £85.

The first Year Book was issued in 1964, but the first ever Royal Mail collections of this type were the 1960 Wildings and Regional Packs, now known as the Forerunner Packs •

Heroes and villains To mark the conclusion of the Harry Potter series of films, Royal Mail has created a unique souvenir. Five Dumbledore stamps and five Voldemort stamps (issued in the Magical Realms set from March) are featured in a new illustrated pack that explores the cast of Heroes and Villains from the films. An exclusive double-sided colour poster is also included. This is a must for all Harry Potter fans and would make an ideal stocking filler. Price £6.95 •



Sporting Coin Covers Released on 30 November are the latest in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Sports Cover Collection of coin covers. They feature the Canoeing and Archery stamps and 50p commemorative coins from the Royal Mint, carrying Canoeing and Archery designs. The backs of the covers carry information on the respective sports and the all-important LOCOG hologram, which confirms them as official licensed products.

Sports-themed philatelic gifts have a broad appeal. Framed sets of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic stamp sets from 2009, 2010 and 2011 are available and make attractive and topical gifts, as do the stamp canvases of the Equestrian, Rowing and Track Athletics stamps. For details of frame and canvas sizes, visit www.royalmail.com or contact the address on page 66.

2012 Special Stamp Programme

We hope you find the following checklist of stamp issues useful in the new year ahead

5 January	London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Definitives
10 January	Roald Dahl
2 February	The House of Windsor
6 February	The Diamond Jubilee Definitives
23 February	Britons of Distinction
8 March	Classic Locomotives of Scotland
20 March	Comics
10 April	UK A–Z Part 2
15 May	Great British Fashion
31 May	The Diamond Jubilee
19 June	Charles Dickens
27 July	Welcome to the London 2012 Olympic Games
29 August	Welcome to the London 2012 Paralympic Games
27 Sept	Memories of London 2012
16 October	Dinosaurs
30 October	Space Science

Please note, the above list may be subject to change.

2012 ahoy! The programme of special stamp issues for 2012 is almost confirmed (see list above). Next year sees two major historic events in the UK – the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, both of which are celebrated with special stamps. The Classic Locomotives and UK A-Z series continue and new illustrated Post & Go stamps feature British Farm Animals •

The gift of a good read For those who might be thinking of giving a *Bulletin* subscription as a Christmas gift, it's a good time to take advantage of existing rates. Please see page 96 for details •

Long live Wallace and Gromit The Christmas stamps released in November 2010 will not be taken off sale until 31 December, which means that Wallace and Gromit fans can still buy the Stamps, Miniature Sheet (right), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Books and Generic Sheet over the Christmas period. The 2009 Year Books and Year Pack are removed from sale on the same date •













Clockwise from above: the new stamps; First Day Cover; Stamp Book with Seb Coe quote

A definitive year for sport First look at commemorative definitives for release in January

Heralding the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, four distinctive new definitives are available from 5 January. They bear the official Emblems of the Games of the XXX Olympiad and the XIV Paralympic Games, in values of 1st class and Worldwide up to 20g.

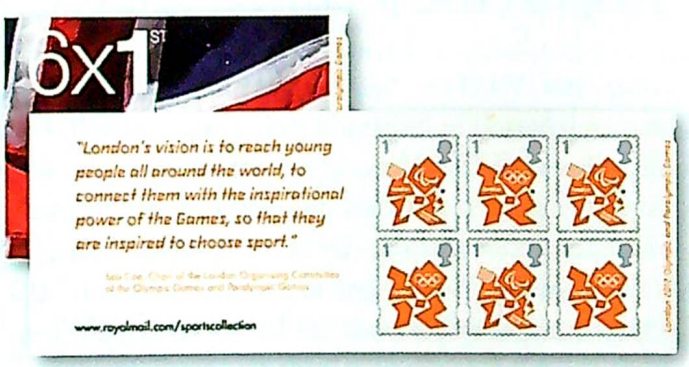
Ever since 1924, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has encouraged host countries to use their own official emblem alongside the iconic Olympic Rings. Continuing this tradition, the Emblem shown on the new definitives was first revealed in 2007 by Seb Coe, Chair of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG). The four elements of the Emblem (outlines of the numerals of 2012) are designed to accommodate different colours and imagery. A new typeface – 2012 Headline – was created specifically for the marque and also appears on all LOCOG's key communication documents.

The London 2012 Paralympic Games Emblem is composed of the same elements as the one for the Olympic Games, but features three crescent shapes ('agitos') instead of the Olympic Rings, and the words 'Paralympic Games' at the bottom right •

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Definitives – Specifications

Date of issue	5 January 2012
Number of stamps	Four
Design	Royal Mail Group Ltd
Stamp Format	Portrait
Stamp Size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	De la Rue Security Print
Print Process	Gravure
Number per Sheet	50 1st class; 25 Worldwide 20g
Perforations	Die-cut simulated perforations
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive

Sheet formats: 1st Class sheet of 50, mixed designs. Worldwide 20g sheets of 25, mixed designs in two versions – 13 Paralympic/12 Olympic and 13 Olympic/12 Paralympic





Clockwise from left: Presentation Pack; Stamp Book with key dates for London 2012; special postmarks with Athens-to-London signpost and London skyline; Coin Cover

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Definitives – Prices

Stamp Set	£3.12
Presentation Pack	£3.65
First Day Envelope	30p
First Day Cover, Stamps	£4.22
Stamp Cards (4 in set)	£1.80
6 x 1st Class Stamp Book with Seb Coe quote inside	£2.76
6 x 1st Class Stamp Book with key dates inside	£2.76
Coin Cover	£17.50









Stamp Scene from John Holman

London International 2015 London is to host a European stamp exhibition from 13-16 May 2015. The venue will be the Business Design Centre in London N1, where the successful London 2010 international stamp exhibition was held. 'London 2015 Europhilex' will be open to all philatelic associations that are members of FEPA, the European Federation of Philatelic Associations. There will be a wide range of stand-holders, plus about 1,200 frames of competitive exhibits. A Steering Committee, chaired by Bill Hedley, includes Frank Walton as Vice-Chairman, and Brian Trotter who was Chairman of the 2010 exhibition. The event has the support of the British Philatelic Trust •



Above: mixed value stamp pane from the Prestige Stamp Book, marking the hundredth anniversary of the first aerial post in the UK

Aerial Post centenary A reception was held at the British Postal Museum on 8 September to launch the Aerial Post display within the 'Treasures of the Archive' exhibition. Peter Lister, expert on the 1911 Coronation Post and author of the recent Prestige Stamp Book, spoke about the trials and tribulations of the pioneer air flights, often disrupted by poor weather.

The 1911 flight was no exception – in the end young Gustav Hamel agreed to brave the weather, although he had not been the first choice of pilot to make the inaugural flight. One of the other pilots broke his legs when his plane came down, but there was more concern over the fate of the mail. The souvenir cards and covers sold out so quickly that further supplies had to be hurriedly arranged.

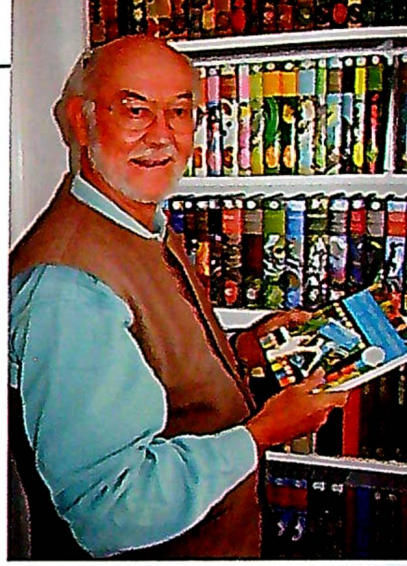
On 9 September BBC One television's 'The One Show' marked the anniversary with a piece filmed at the RAF Museum at Hendon, where the first flight set off. Examples of the 1911 cards were shown and it was emphasised that their cost of 6d each was quite a sum in 1911 – some 12 times the cost of postage on the card. The BBC programme also featured Royal Mail's World Distribution Centre near Heathrow where airmail is now handled. The size of six football pitches, it dispatches a million items a day to 269 countries.

The Aerial Post centenary and stamps were widely reported in the national and regional press and online. A permanent display relating to the 1911 flights can be seen at Windsor Museum including the wooden box for posting the flight cards and covers. This historic box was loaned to the BPMA for display in the George V exhibition at the Guildhall in London in 2010 •

Norfolk and Norwich Philatelic Society enjoyed a week-long celebration of their Centenary at The Forum in Norwich last month, from 22-29 October. The famous 1.25 ton N205 Norfolk Royal Mail Coach, believed to be

more than 140 years old, was on show as part of the main exhibiton highlighting Norfolk's rich heritage of postal history.

Also on display were over 500 pages from different philatelic collections and the painting of Dersingham by HRH Prince of Wales, which was shown on the 35p value of the 1994 issue that marked the 25th anniversary of his Investiture. Exhibits of graphics from Norfolk-based stamp designers included the work of wildlife artist Robert Gillmor, whose work features in the recent Birds of Britain Post & Go series and in a new pictorial series planned for 2012 •



Above: acclaimed wildlife artist Robert Gillmor, whose Birds of Britain prints are on show at the Museum of Reading

Gillmor retrospective Original prints for the Post & Go Birds of Britain will be also be on show at the first major retrospective exhibition of the work of Robert Gillmor, at the John Madejski Art Gallery in the Museum of Reading (Blagrave Street) until 29 April 2012.

Gillmor is an ornithologist, artist and writer, particularly known for his stunning linocuts of birds. He has contributed artwork to hundreds of books, posters and cards, is a founder member of the Society of Wildlife artists and was awarded the RSPB medal in 2003 •

Mary Queen of Scots on exhibition Readers whose interest in history has been revived by the Kings and Queens stamp series may like to know of an exhibition at the British Library about Mary Queen of Scots, who featured on an 81p stamp in the House of Stewart set of March 2010, and on a Scottish aerogramme issued in 1987 to mark the 400th anniversary of her execution. The exhibition, in the Sir John Ritblat Gallery, is on display until 15 January 2012. It focuses on Mary's last years as a prisoner in England, drawing on unique manuscripts from the Library's archives and a collection of recently discovered letters relating to her captivity. For further information see www.bl.uk/whatson or phone 020 7412 7332 •

Ideal Home for the NPS The National Philatelic Society will take a stand at the Ideal Home Show Christmas 2011 at Earl's Court, 16-20 November. With the organisers expecting 60,000 visitors, the NPS aims to project philately in a way that will appeal to the public at large. The Society's theme for the show is 'Rediscover stamps – because every stamp tells a story', aiming at revitalising lapsed collectors as well as recruiting new ones. A major aspect of the campaign is to demonstrate that stamp collecting is both a worthwhile pastime in itself while also stimulating curiosity into many other areas of life, including history, geography, economics, art, culture, design and print production.

A special first day cover will be available, produced by Terry Barnett of the Association of GB First Day Cover Collectors, featuring the show's logo and bearing the Christmas miniature sheet. Produced in a limited edition of 150, price £15. To order contact Mr Barnett via www.gbfdc.co.uk For more information on the NPS and its presence at the Ideal Home ▸

Below: limited-edition cover marking the National Philatelic Society's presence at the Ideal Home Show at Earls Court



Show contact Ken Moorhouse on 07973 723304 or David Bailey on 07949 744816, or write to NPS, c/o British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL •



Above: one of the hand-drawn covers at auction in Derby this month

Auction News Corbitts next auction will be held at the Swallow Hotel, Gateshead on 10 November. For details contact Corbitts on 0191 232 7268 or visit www.corbitts.com.

Grosvenor's next specialised GB auction on 16 November will include material from the Wheldon family collection, specialised line-engraved items, the Ronnie Shiers collection of the 1929 Postal Union Congress issue, and the Kurt Freyner collection of Machin booklets and cylinder blocks. For further information contact Grosvenor on 020 7379 8789 or visit www.grosvenorauctions.com

Cavendish's auction in Derby on 16 November includes the collection of hand-painted and hand-drawn covers of the world, 1840-1918, as assembled by Neville Clifford-Jones. The sale also includes the Falconer collection of British and British Commonwealth stamps. Catalogues are now available at www.cavendish-auctions.com Enquiries to Cavendish on 01332 250970 •



Above: new stamps from Jersey celebrate the history and architecture of mills

Island mills On 11 October Jersey Post issued six architecture stamps showing 19th and 20th-century mills on the island. The designs are based on paintings by Nick Shewring and were printed in Austria in sheets of ten.

Mills are recorded in Jersey from the 12th century, used to grind wheat, barley and corn and to break up sugar cones. Some of the island's mills are privately owned, others have been restored by the National Trust for Jersey and are open to the public. The six stamps cost £3.16 or £4.21 in a presentation pack; postage £1.85 UK, £2 Europe, £3 rest of world. Orders and enquiries to: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey, Channel Islands, JE1 1AB, e-mail stamps@jerseypost.com •

Forthcoming exhibitions and fairs The next Strand Stamp Fair at the Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London WC1 will be on 16 November and 7 December with 25 to 30 dealers attending this long-established and popular fair. Enquiries 020 8946 4480 or see www.stampshows.net.

The next Philatex stamp fair, with 100 dealers, will take place at the Lawrence Hall of the Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, London SW1 (Victoria and St James Park Underground) on 3-5 November. Opening hours are: Thursday 11am-7pm, Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, admission free. Enquiries as for Strand Stamp Fair, see above.

The popular Stafford Stamp Fair takes place at the Staffordshire County



Showground, Weston Road, Stafford ST18 0BD on 11-12 November. Over 50 dealers attend, admission and car parking free. For further information contact John Rice on 01785 259350.

The Leeds Philatelic Society holds its Annual Stamp Fair at Pudsey Civic Centre, Leeds LS28 5TA on 18-19 November •

Exhibitions further afield Habria 11, a bilateral UK-Germany national exhibition takes place in Hanover, 18 -20 November. And the MonacoPhil 2011 exhibition in Monte Carlo (pictured above) on 2-4 December will include over 75 frames of material from the collections of the Royal Philatelic Society London – the largest exhibition of the Society's material ever shown together in one place. In addition there will be 40 exhibits from RPSL members, mostly of material of UK and former colonies. Other displays will be of items from the collections of HM The Queen, Prince Albert of Monaco, and members of the Club de Monte-Carlo •



Pioneers in 'University Challenge' On the BBC 'University Challenge' programme on 8 August, the team from ChristChurch, Oxford had to identify the persons on four of the Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution stamps of 2009 – Wedgwood, Arkwright, Brindley and Stephenson. They got two right, wrongly identifying Arkwright as Newcomen and Brindley as Stephenson. Nevertheless, ChristChurch beat the University of Bath by 270 to 105 points. Questions on Royal Mail stamps quite often feature on the programme •

Obituary Jean Wood, who died in August, age 67, will be best remembered for promoting youth philately. She had recently received the Bill Hart Award for her outstanding contribution to encouraging young collectors. A collector from the age of ten, she entered the Melville Memorial Competition (now the British Youth Stamp Championships) when only 12, achieving first place in her age group. Jean's passion for stamps was inherited from her father, Fred Myers, who took her to the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain when she was 12. She ▸

Diary dates

November

Until 4th Northern Ireland Philatelic Societies Exhibition, Bangor Museum, Castle Park, BT20 4BT. Admission free. Contact J Proctor, tel 028 38 334964.

2 British Postal Museum and Archive tour of the Museum Store at Debden, Essex, 1-3pm.

3-5 Philatex, Greycoat Street, London W1

6 A talk by Auden scholar and author David Collard to celebrate the popular 1936 film *Night Mail* – 6.30-8.30pm at the Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. * For the BPMA's Events listing, phone 020 7239 2570 or email info@postalheritage.

11-12 Stafford Stamp Fair (see above left)

16 Strand Stamp Fair,

16-20 The National Philatelic Society has a stand at the Ideal Home Show, Earl's Court, London

18-20 Leeds Philatelic Society Stamp Fair

18-20 Habria 11 Exhibition, Hanover.

December

8-9 MonacoPhil 2011, Monte Carlo.

Photo © Dan Breckwoldt /Dreamstime.com

attended on no fewer than 45 occasions, and was Chairman of the Congress held in Scarborough in 1998. For nearly 15 years she was Secretary for both the Youth Championships and the Stamp Active Competition. Jean served philately in the North-East with distinction as President and/or Secretary at Leeds, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tynemouth and Blyth, was President of the North East of England Philatelic Association, and was involved with the first Association of British Philatelic Societies national exhibition in Newcastle in 1996.

Jean still found time to collect, principally Canada and Malta, but also Barbados, Bermuda, Leeward Islands and Southern Rhodesia, plus collections on Owls and of Congress and exhibition souvenirs. When not involved with stamps, she was just as active in her local church, or enjoying cross-stitching, or collecting small glass ornaments. Condolences go to her husband David, sister Susan, and her many family members and close friends •

This month in history Christmas stamps

The Christmas stamps of 1986 – 25 years ago this month – are amongst the most interesting of all Royal Mail's festive issues. Five stamps featuring Christmas Folk Customs went on sale on 18 November. They depicted: Glastonbury Thorn (13p), Tanad Valley Plygain (18p), Hebrides Tribute (22p), Dewsbury Church Knell (31p), and Hereford Boy Bishop (34p), designed by Lynda Gray who also designed the 1992 Gilbert & Sullivan issue.



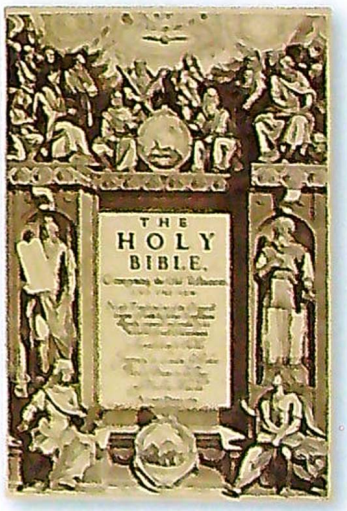
The 13p stamp covered the then 2nd class UK letter rate. However that was not the end of the story. Royal Mail announced a 1p discount for Christmas cards posted between 2 and 24 December and the stamp was reissued with a 12p value on 2 December. Customers at post offices were limited to just ten stamps, or could buy a folder containing 36 of the 13p stamps sold at a discount price of £4.30, a saving of 38p. Some 4 million of these folders were produced.

Alternatively a book of ten 13p definitive stamps was on offer at a discount price of £1.20. The cover of this book, showing the making of Shetland Yule cakes, was also by Lynda Gray. The 13p stamps in the folder and book bear a star underprint on the reverse, intended to prevent the stamps being removed and sold at face value. The 12p stamp differs from the 13p in having the caption and value (as well as The Queen's head) in gold rather than in blue printing. Sales of the 12p stamp were over 100 million compared to 164.7 million of the 13p and 148.5 million of the 1st class 18p value. Sales of the other three values, for overseas mail, ranged from 12.5 to 16.6 million. Sales of the Christmas stamp book amounted to just over five million •



King James I and his best-seller

As this year's Christmas stamps celebrate the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible, K Pennington explores the years of work that led to its publication



Top: King James I of England. Above: the frontispiece of the first edition of the King James Bible of 1611

Bridgeman Art Library. Frontispiece: British Library

THIS YEAR marks the 400th anniversary of the first printing of the King James authorized version of the Bible in 1611. Since then it has been published by the billion. Its origins lie in a royal attempt to heal religious differences. In 1603 King James VI of Scotland became James I of England – an event known as the Union of Crowns. Having inherited the English throne from Elizabeth I, he encountered an established Protestant church that was seriously divided: those led by the Bishops valued hierarchy and ceremony, while the Puritans eschewed self-aggrandisement and saw the Bible as the prime authority. The division was exacerbated by the fact that seven different English translations of the Bible were in use at the time.

This lack of unity irked the King and was a threat to his power. He had been involved in theological debate from an early age and as a schoolboy he could translate any verse from the Bible from Latin into both English and ▸







Above, clockwise from top left: John Rainolds, believed to have inspired James I; Richard Bancroft, the manager; and the Tyndale Bible, designated as one of the official source for the translators

French. So, when a debate was suggested by an aggravated Puritan, he gladly agreed to call a two-day conference at Hampton Court in January 1604. James I was keen to examine and advance his own understanding of the difference in religious doctrines, and it was at this conference, though it had not been planned, that he decided to oversee the production of what is arguably the most influential book in the English language – the King James Version of The Bible.

The suggestion for a new Bible is believed to have been first put forward by John Rainolds, the Master of Corpus Christi, Oxford and leader of the Puritan delegation to the conference. Although James I had taken some pleasure in humiliating the Puritans in theological discourse on previous occasions, he immediately liked the idea. As must have been obvious to all present, such a commission as this was not without its own politics. James I's desire was for a Bible which could be read by or read to every single one of his subjects and which, in carefully marrying together previous versions, might herald the development of a spiritual and political unity during his reign.

While the Bishops of the established church were initially horrified at the idea, it was the Bishop of London, the renowned anti-Puritan Richard Bancroft, who was given the onerous task of managing this royal commission.

A clear commission

By the end of 1604 Bancroft had become Archbishop of Canterbury and he proved an industrious organiser in steering the remarkable plan of translating and editing a new Bible by committee – and in accordance with the King's rigorous demands. The first stage was the recruitment of around 50 scholars (54 were approved; 47 completed the work), an impressive body of the country's finest and most ambitious intellects. All were members of the Church of England and the only one not in holy orders was Sir Henry Savile (formerly Elizabeth I's Greek tutor).

The scholars were supplied with a meticulously detailed set of criteria that involved 15 'Rules to be observed in translation', purportedly issued at the King's direction. Many of the requirements were intended to ensure that the new translation would sound familiar to its audience. This was not to be a completely new translation, but was to use the best work of preceding English-language translations, notably the Bishops' Bible of 1568. If there were any disagreements about the translation or interpretation of the text of Bishops' Bible, the team of scholars was instructed to consult other translations from an approved list. It is clear from studies of the scholars'

Bridgeman Art Library

sources that the translations of William Tyndale (in which the Bishops' Bible is rooted) were used as a basis for more than two-thirds of the King James Version. Tyndale's is believed to be the first English translation of the Bible to work directly from original texts in both Hebrew and Greek. He published his New Testament version in 1534 but his work on the Old Testament was brought to a cruelly early finish two years later, when he was strangled and burned at the stake in Belgium after being found guilty of heresy.

Tyndale's translation was used in Matthew's Version of the Bible, also on the list recommended by James I in 1604. Compiled by John Rogers under a pseudonym, Matthew's Bible was the combined work of three people – William Tyndale, Myles Coverdale and John Rogers himself – working from many different sources in at least five different languages. Rogers died at Smithfields in London, where he was 'tested by fire' on 4 February 1555, while Miles Coverdale was hired by Cromwell to work on the Great Bible of 1539.

These 16th-century translators had been obliged to work secretly in exile. A generation later, the translators hired by James I are likely to have been well aware of this sacrifice, as well as the skill and dedication of their predecessors. On the flyleaf of the King James Version is a clear acknowledgment of reference to earlier English versions. It notes that the text has been 'translated out of the original tongues, and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, by His Majesty's special command.'

Network of scholars

Bancroft organised the translators into six groups known as 'companies', each with its own editor in chief: two companies in Cambridge, two in Oxford and two in Westminster. The Bible was divided into its constituent Books and Gospels and distributed across the six companies. Each translator was to work at home or in his regular workplace, on the same text as other members of his company. When all had finished working on the same piece of text, they met ▸



Left: Stationers Hall, as it survives today – one of the rooms where the final proofs were read



Above: Hampton Court, where it all began

collectively to compare and consider what they had written, with each passage being read out loud. This probably contributed a great deal to the aural power of the language of this version.

When the work on their allocated section of the Bible was finished, each company was to send a copy to all the other companies for scrutiny and amendments incorporated, according to James I's Rule 9: 'As any one Company hath dispatched any one Book in this Manner they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously, for His Majesty is very careful in this Point.' This stage took about four years to complete, from 1604 to 1608.

Final proofs in Stationers Hall

The final and again amazingly lengthy committee stage was a series of editorial meetings, held at the Stationers Hall in London between 1609 and 1610. Each of the translated Books were to be read aloud, considered separately and any revisions agreed by representatives of all the companies, who were paid 30 shillings a week by the Company of Stationers

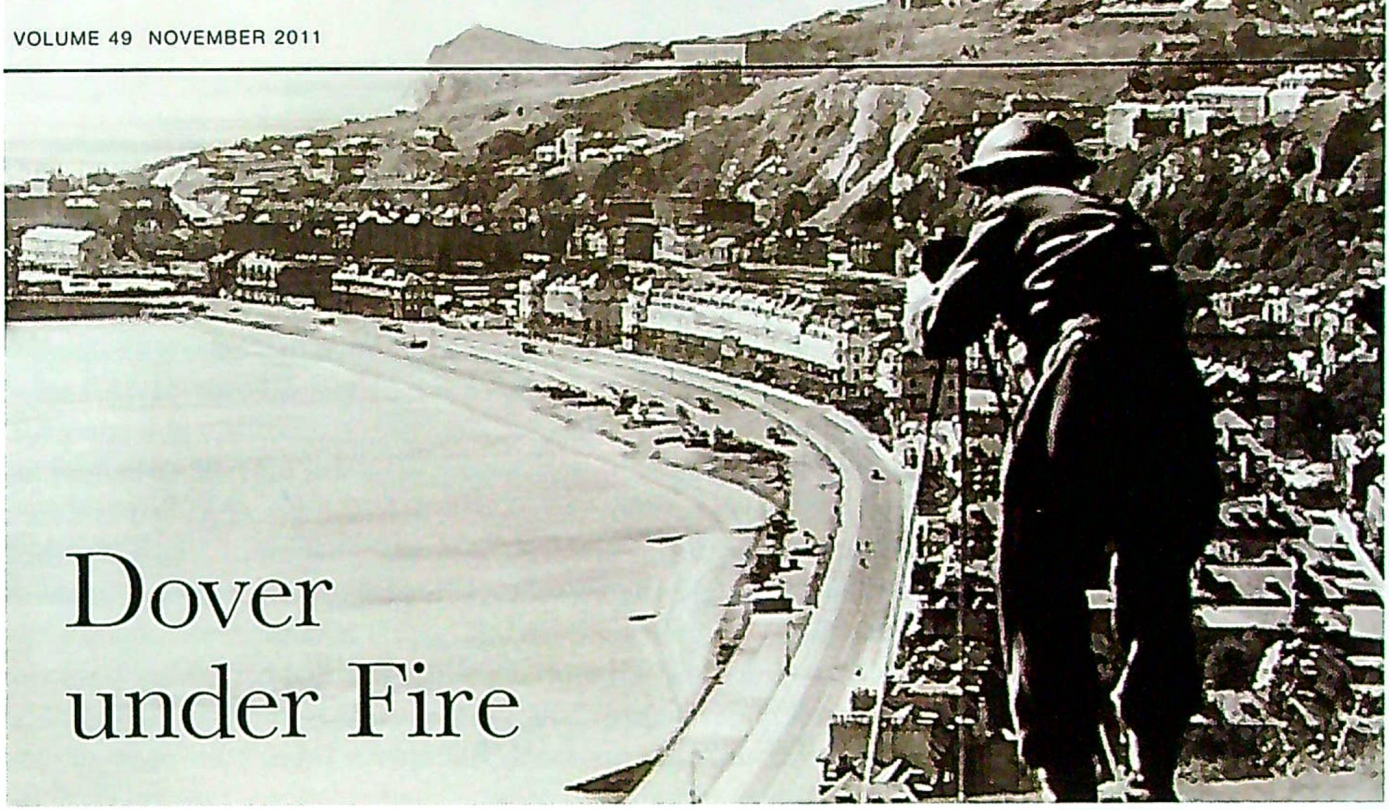
Two more scholars, who had not been involved in translations, were handed the finished text to prepare for press. One of these was Thomas Bilson, Bishop of Winchester. At the Hampton Court conference he had vociferously opposed the Puritans, yet was now given the job of writing the preliminary pages of the new Bible. His words in the dedication confirm him as the perfect choice for chief fawner: '...Great and manifold were the blessings, most dread Sovereign, which Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, bestowed upon us the people of England, when first he sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule and reign over us...' continuing for two pages.

Bilson's dedication appeared in most editions of the King James Bible, but the 12,000 word Translators' Preface has been rather overlooked and rarely published. This is an excellent essay on the art and craft of translation. Although it must have had Bilson's approval, it is the work of Dr Miles Smith, who was made Bishop of Gloucester in 1612. Smith's writing is of such quality that there has been speculation about his having help from Shakespeare.

Scriptures and the common sense

The new Bible was printed by Robert Barker, printer to the King, in 1611. Since then it has carried the English language to every corner of the world as a source of common understanding, perhaps far exceeding the vision of James I – but not that of William Tyndale. In expressing a fervent desire to enable the ploughboy to know more of the scripture than the priest, Tyndale echoed Erasmus' preface to his 1516 first printed edition of the Greek New Testament: 'I wish the farm worker might sing parts of them at the plough and the weaver might hum them at the shuttle, and the traveller might beguile the weariness of the way by reciting them.' In 1611 those wishes were firmly on the way to worldwide fruition with the publication the King James Bible, which remains in print 400 years on •

Bridgeman Art Library



Dover under Fire

In her second article on the Post Office in the Blitz years, Vyki Sparkes examines AWB Mowbray's typewritten account of his life as postmaster in 'Hell's Corner' – the unwelcome wartime nickname for Dover

WHILE THE FULL FORCE of the Blitz focused on London in 1940 and 1941, British ports, industrial towns and cities and other key strategic locations were also in the firing line. Throughout the war one of the major targets was Dover, as witnessed by its Head Postmaster Arthur William Bradshaw Mowbray, whose typewritten records are in the care of The British Postal Museum and Archive. Entitled 'Dover Post Office and its Staff in War-Time', the Mowbray's account begins in June 1940, shortly after its author had been promoted to Head Postmaster. Dover had always been proud of its role as a town linking Britain and France. In the 1940s, though, Mowbray wrote: 'Later we wished the Straits were not so narrow'.



Top: an engineer surveys Dover's seafront
Above: Vyki Sparkes, Assistant Curator at The BPMA

Post offices under attack

At the start of the Battle of Britain, Dover became the front line. There were almost daily air battles and frequent bombing of ships in the harbour. Streams of machine gun bullets and shrapnel from anti-aircraft guns made the streets unsafe. When the Post Office counter had to be closed because it was impossible for the public to visit in safety, extended opening hours were arranged instead.

As well as aerial bombardments, Dover was subject to long-range shelling, with over 1,700 incendiary shells falling on the town between June to December 1940. By the end of 1941, the siren had sounded 1,599 times in the town since Mowbray started his account. He is clearly proud of his employees when he notes that in 1941 the 24-hour telephone exchange was abandoned only four times.

Mowbray's account also pinpoints the day in November 1941 – just ▸

70 years ago this month – when the Sub Post Office in Council House Street was partly demolished by shell fire: 'I visited the site a few hours later and found the office open – very open! From what had once been the kitchen a voice greeted me with "Just a minute". The Sub Postmaster then emerged dishevelled, covered with lime dust and cobwebs, triumphant and happy, with his cat still trembling and clinging round his neck. She had been buried under the debris for some hours and he had experienced much difficulty in extricating her. He is well past the prime of life and his wife is evacuated, but it was plain to see that he would not be likely to leave his front line post unless he and his companion were forced to do so. A tour of the house, accompanied by much purring, confirmed that it was unnecessary to close the office. Upstairs a shell splinter had passed through the houses on either side so that one could stand in the Sub-Postmaster's bedroom and see through both houses.'



Above: children watch a dogfight between German Luftwaffe planes and RAF Spitfires over Dover in 1940

The following year a large bomb exploded just 20 yards away from the same Sub Post Office. The Sub Postmaster still opened his office door punctually the next morning, as usual. But after a third, even more serious raid with delayed-action bombs, he was persuaded to leave the district along with all the other local residents.

After another of these terrible bombardments, Mowbray reports: 'One Town Sub Post Office near the Docks was badly damaged ...The central Dover Post Office also suffered considerable damage.' In May 1941 its Garage and Mail entrance was shelled and the adjoining Sorting Office had its numerous gaps in the roof 'ingeniously blocked' [Mowbray does not disclose with what], so that work could resume and all collections and dispatches kept on schedule. In other raids, broken water pipes flooded this Sorting Office and an incendiary became perilously lodged in the roof slates.

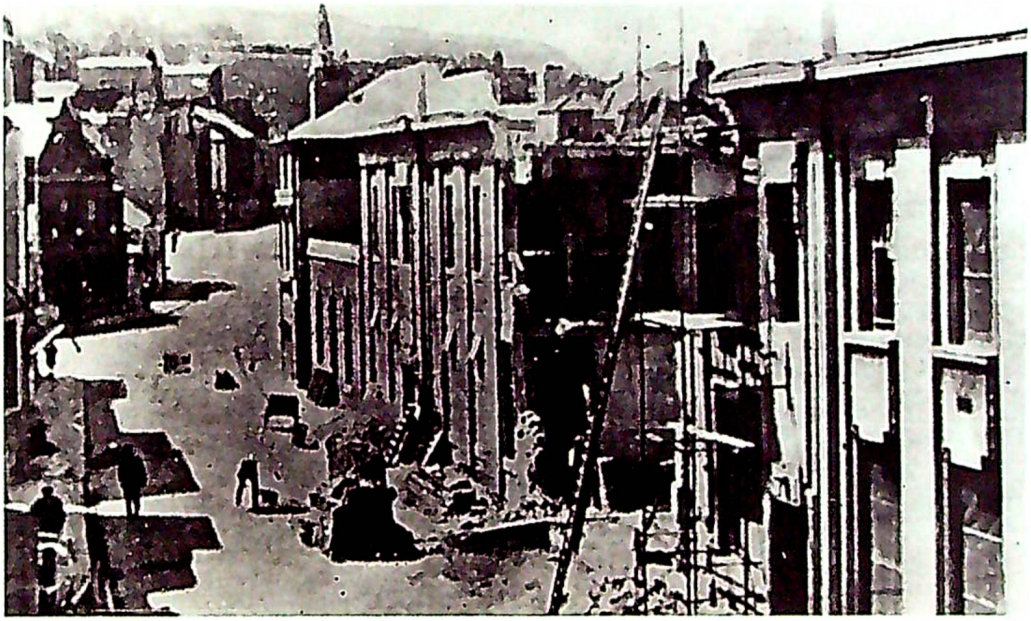
Hellish times over the White Cliffs

In the first few years of the war Post Office buildings and staff escaped relatively unscathed by the many attacks and Mowbray expressed his gratitude for '....our good fortune in escaping wholesale destruction or injury [which] does not detract from my admiration of the high morale of the Staff which enabled them to carry on under continuous hazards at a time when the majority of our Island people were still only reading of the war in the newspapers.' Sadly that luck was to run out, as later in the war a number of GPO staff in Dover became casualties.

Working and living conditions were arduous for the people of Dover, as Mowbray noted: '...the demands made on the Staff were many, and the inconveniences suffered legion, but the response was excellent at all times, especially when one bears in mind the nuisance raids – lone raiders swooping on the town and harbour from high altitudes with engines cut out – the first intimation of their presence being the whistle of bombs; four or five visits a day sometimes for lengthy periods, was not conducive to the maintenance of a high standard of morale, but the Dover staff showed no weakness; Postal services were invariably completed, sometimes a little late when streets or roads were unsafe.'

When the destruction of his neighbour's house brought the danger uncomfortably close to home, Mowbray slept in a public shelter for five weeks while awaiting safer accommodation. A corridor in the shelter was reserved

Previous page, top: courtesy of the Dover Society. This page: courtesy of Magnum Photos. Opposite: courtesy of Dover Museum



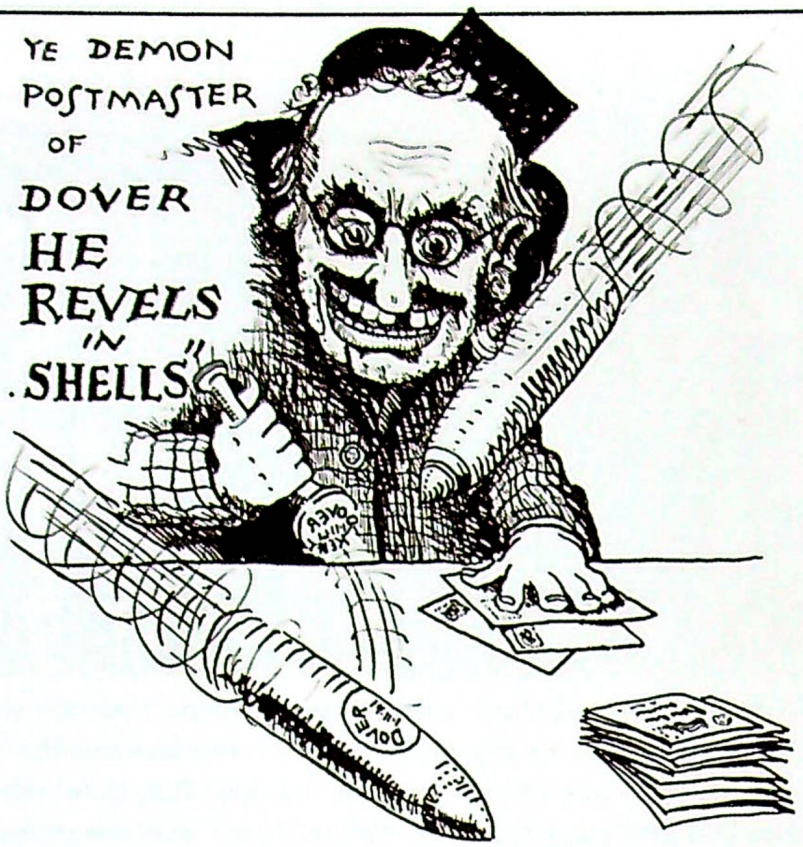
Left: contemporary photograph showing the devastation to numbers 12 to 20 Woolcomber Street, including M Tester & Co, greengrocers, the International Stores, the Post Office and the Burlington Cafe

for his family. He commented drily: 'This mode of retiring was not exactly what I had visualised as being proper for a Head Postmaster.' However, Mowbray found it a useful experience because it helped him to understand what other staff and townspeople had to endure: 'Apart from the numerous disturbances by policemen, wardens, gunfire and bombs, this shelter sleeping was not without its entertainment. Owing to the continuous strain under which we lived, people talked frequently in their sleep – of their fancies in ladies, beer or pictures, of the merits of this Dictator or that – I only trust I gave away no official secrets myself. The comradeship was most striking. It seems strange that it should take wars to settle national differences, yet in a public shelter, no matter whether the folk be rich or poor, clean or grimy, a tin of sweets works wonders with frayed tempers and jaded nerves.'

On some occasions, Mowbray reports that he and the evening staff had to spend all night at the office because it was unsafe to travel home. The streets of Dover became synonymous with horror – so much so that an American philatelist wrote to Mowbray at the time, keen to obtain letters date-stamped 'Hell's Corner', as the German pilots had nicknamed Dover. A polite reply was sent, reading '...although this is a veritable "Hell's Corner" to the Germans, we are proud of it. Our town and harbour have been bombed, shelled and mined, but there is not a finer lot of men, women and children anywhere. It is business as usual. I am sorry we have no date stamp "Hell's Corner", but our lads have stamped "Hell's Corner" on Jerry's mind plain enough.'

Women's work

When a member of his staff, Miss W N Scanlan, was awarded the British Empire Medal in October 1941, Mowbray reported with pride the announcement in the *London Gazette*, alongside a notice that the same award was awarded to two other female supervisors in charge of Post Office telephone exchanges. Little more is recorded of these women's acts of bravery, aside from what is written in the newspaper: 'These three Supervisors of Women Telephone Operators have, by their courage and devotion to duty, set a fine example to their staffs. Throughout the air raids in the areas where they work, they have maintained ▸



Right: a comic portrait of Head Postmaster Mowbray, published in *War Time Dover Its Post Office and Staff*.
Below: Miss Scanlan's British Empire Medal for services to the Post Office



an efficient telephone service during periods of constant danger'. According to the GPO press release, eight other female supervisors and telephonists had previously received awards and commendations.

Over 100,000 women were employed by the GPO by November 1941 – more than one-third of the total staff. Due to the shortage of manpower, women worked a range of duties including many previously considered 'male' occupations – such as telephone engineers and motorised van drivers. Mowbray describes how, in Christmas 1941, '...the kaleidoscopic effect of the multi-coloured jumpers and overalls of the women temporary sorters who fluttered about like so many butterflies was unmarred even by 2½ hours of shelling in one evening... they came to do a job and they did it regardless of the large quantity of roof glass.'

A total of 27 Post Office staff died on duty in the UK in 1941. By the end of that year, over 100 men and women had received commendations and awards from the King for their work in civil defence or on Post Office duty, including 38 British Empire Medals and eight George Medals. In the same year 117 staff were also commended by the Postmaster General for their work on the Home Front. Mowbray himself was included in the New Years Honours list in 1942 and made a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

Below: one of the Royal Mail's *Lest We Forget* poppy stamp triptych, redistributed this month to mark Remembrance Day, this year 11/11/11, when the nation pauses for the traditional two minutes' silence at 11am on the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 2011



For every Post Office worker who won an award, there were countless others behind them who received no official recognition – though Miss Scanlan announced the award to her staff by flourishing the letter and saying 'Girls *we've* got the British Empire Medal'.

As Mowbray readily acknowledges in his notebook, it was the cooperation of the police, fire, transport and military services, and the cheeriness of the population that helped his staff cope with the strain of war: '...the Dover people and Dover Post Office staff do their utmost to make the best of decidedly unpleasant circumstances' •

You can listen to Vyki Sparkes on a podcast at www.postalheritage.org.uk/page/podcast

This page: cartoon and medal image courtesy of the BPMA

2009-2010 Definitives with iridescent print





On 17 February 2009 Royal Mail introduced a new style of definitive stamp which featured an iridescent pattern printed over the Queen's head and background (see February 2009 *Bulletin*, page 169). At that time, only Source Codes were required to identify the format the stamp originated from. Subsequently Date Codes were added to the iridescent print.

As interest in these codes has grown, and *Bulletin* readers have requested checklist of all the different combinations used in 2009 and 2010. Please note, 2009 definitives do not have a date code. The printers' names in the lists below are abbreviated as follows: DLR stands for De La Rue and WSP for Walsall Security Printers •

2009 definitives

Gravure, self-adhesive gum unless specified:

Type	Source Code	Stamp	Printer
Definitive sheet	None	1st	DLR
		2nd	DLR
		1st Large	DLR
		2nd Large	DLR
		50p	DLR
		£1	DLR
		£1.50	DLR
		£2	DLR
		£3	DLR
		£5	DLR
		1st RSF	DLR
		1st Large RSF	DLR
Business sheets	B	1st	DLR
		2nd	DLR
		1st Large	DLR
		2nd Large	DLR
Special stamp books	C	1st	WSP
Book of 4 stamps	F	1st Large	WSP
		2nd Large	WSP
Stamp rolls	R	1st	DLR
		2nd	DLR
Book of 6 stamps (excl special stamp books)	S	1st	WSP
Book of 12 stamps	T	1st	WSP
		2nd	WSP

2010 definitives

Gravure, date code MA10, self-adhesive gum unless specified

Type	Source Code	Stamp	Printer
Definitive sheet	None	1st	DLR
		2nd	DLR
		1st Large	DLR
		2nd Large	DLR
		1st RSF	DLR
		1st Large RSF	DLR
		SD 100g	DLR
		SD 500g	DLR
Business sheets	B	1st	DLR
		2nd	DLR
		1st Large	DLR
		2nd Large	DLR
Special stamp books	C	1st	WSP
Book of 4 stamps	F	1st Large	WSP
		2nd Large	WSP
Prestige stamp book	P	1st	WSP
		2nd	WSP
		50p	WSP
Stamp rolls	R	1st	DLR (PVA gummed)
		2nd	DLR (PVA gummed)
Book of 6 stamps (excl special stamp books)	S	1st	WSP
Book of 12 stamps	T	1st	WSP
		2nd	WSP

All 2011 definitive details will be included in the checklist published in 'Bulletin' January 2012.

Later Victorian wall boxes

Martin Robinson explains the development of wall boxes from the 1860s onwards

IN 1861 NEW WALL BOXES were made incorporating further suggestions from District Surveyors – the door was lower to obviate the danger of letters lying unseen at the bottom of the box, the keyhole fitted with a protective covering, and a doorpull added. These exist in two sizes, of 32 x 13in and 30in x 10in,and a good many of both can still be found, as they were supplied by Smith & Hawkes for the next ten years (1).

In 1871 there were more changes: a larger size box was manufactured, designated the 'A' size, with the two smaller sizes becoming 'B' and 'C' (2), and these categories applied until the end of George's V's reign. The largest box was nearly four feet high and 20 inches wide, and had a greater capacity than even the largest pillar box. It was less than half the cost of a pillar box, so was thought suitable for town sites if accommodating walls were available.



1

Above:1861 wall box small, at Stockton in Warwickshire

These boxes featured some important changes. For example, the inward-opening flap and downshoot were abandoned in favour of an upshoot, which was thought to be more effective in protecting post from rainwater and thieves, and the collection plate was repositioned in a recess in the door. The boxes looked similar to their predecessor, except, oddly, the largest sized ones did not bear a crown and cipher – the words POST OFFICE are shown above the aperture as well as on the hood. These are much rarer than the two smaller sizes, only half a dozen are known to be still in existence (3).

Developments at the Eagle Foundry of Smith & Hawkes saw the business being taken over by Bernard P Walker in 1873. He went bankrupt just five years later and then George G Brodie became the new owner. Consequently there are several varieties of the maker's name shown at the bottom of the box. The original boxes had SMITH & HAWKES BIRMINGHAM, then this was overlaid with a metal strip reading BERND P WALKER/EAGLE FOUNDRY BIRMINGHAM. Later the cast inscription was B.P. WALKER/EAGLE FOUNDRY BIRMM, then two different versions of EAGLE RANGE & FOUNDRY CO/BIRMINGHAM. So there is plenty to occupy the specialist here!

Further design modifications were agreed and tenders were invited for new wall boxes in September 1880. The contract went to Messrs WT Allen & Co of London EC, although the foundry itself was in Mansfield,


2



3



4



5

Above, left to right: 1871 small wall box at Trebarwith, Cornwall; 1871 large wall box large in Broadway, Worcestershire; 1881 small Allen wall box at Cruckmeole, Shrewsbury; wall box with modified aperture, at Glossop in Derbyshire

Nottinghamshire. Sample boxes were approved in January 1881 and Allen supplied boxes for the rest of Queen Victoria's reign (which ended in 1901). In fact they continued to make some wall boxes right through until 1965. In Allen's boxes the royal cipher and crown always appear at the top with the words POST OFFICE on the hood. The collection plate is fixed on the door surrounded by a beading rather than in a recess and there is a NEXT COLLECTION tablet in the top right-hand corner. They were made in the usual three sizes, but the small 'C' size was made in two versions – 23 x13in and 23 x10in (4).

Some small wall boxes from the reigns of Queen Victoria, Edward VII and George V can also be found with enlarged apertures. In 1949, a survey established that 100,000 letter boxes still had apertures smaller than eight inches wide, which the public found increasingly inconvenient to use. By 1956 there were still 30,000 such boxes, mostly in rural areas, and it was then agreed to provide one box with a wider aperture in each village. A contractor was engaged to modify remaining narrow aperture boxes *in situ* by cutting out the aperture and fitting a new casting over the top (5). This was executed between 1959 and 1965. Fortunately the modification is not displeasing to the eye and examples of unmodified boxes still exist for the delectation of the student of letter boxes •

Prize photograph I am grateful to those readers who continue to send in photos. This month I have picked one submitted by Mr D Bradshaw of Pershore, Worcs. It shows a small 1871 wall box installed in what looks like a wayside shrine in the village of Radford, near Evesham. In the nearby village of Rous Lench is another similar structure, this time with an 1861 box. Both were erected at the instigation of the local parson, Rev WKW Chafy, in 1871.
Please send your photographs to The Editor at the address on page 67.
We regret that we cannot promise to return photographs.
For more information Contact the Letter Box Study Group at 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES or via www.lbsg.org.



Into the modern age

Julia Lee continues her voyage through the history of the mail, as seen on UK stamps



1



2



3



4

Three 1961 stamps mark the Centenary of the formation of the Post Office Savings Bank issue. Right: the 1963 Paris Conference Centenary stamp

THE POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK was established in 1861, to give ordinary people somewhere to save or, as its first director George Chetwynd put it, in a somewhat patriarchal tone: 'to encourage the working classes in provident habits'. The 1961 stamp issue (1, 2 and 3) marked the Bank's centenary with images related to the principles of savings and wise spending – thrift plants, a squirrel in a money tree, acorns and a wise owl.

Worldwide uniformity In 1863 the Post Office took part in the Paris Conference which was convened by American Postmaster General Montgomery Blair. At that time a huge and confusing network of bilateral agreements was in force, and Blair was justified in describing the international mail system as 'extremely loose and defective'. The aim of the Paris Conference was to consider ways of improving international postage and it set out some important objectives, such as cheaper and uniform postal rates, an end to transit fees for mail moving through one country on its way to a destination in another, and uniform rules for the exchange of correspondence between countries. These ideas were not put in place immediately, but the Conference achieved a huge step towards the Universal Postal Union (UPU), which was established in Berne in 1874. The centenary of the Paris Conference was marked by a special stamp in 1963 (4).

The UPU's 75th anniversary in 1949 was celebrated with a commemorative set which showed symbols of the organisation and its aims: the 2½d (5) shows two hemispheres, the 3d (6) bears the UPU monument that still sits outside its Berne Headquarters, the goddess *Concordia* – symbolic of the agreement between the different countries brought together in the Union – is on the 6d (7), and a posthorn surrounds a globe on the 1s stamp.

Below: the 1949 issue to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the UPU



5



6



7



8

On the high seas The earliest packet ships began transporting mail and freight during Tudor times, but the ships we are more familiar with are those governed by the Admiralty from 1823. Brunel's *SS Great Western*, shown in the Ocean Liners set of 2004 (9), had carried transatlantic mail in 1838, and it wasn't until 1850 that the Post Office took over and contracted mail on to scheduled ships. Sitting alongside the *SS Great Western* in 2004 were three Royal Mail Ships spanning the century: the 1907 *RMS Mauretania* (10, and also on the 1969 British Ships set), the *RMS Queen Mary* (11) of 1936 and the *RMS Queen Mary 2* (12) in 2004.



9



10

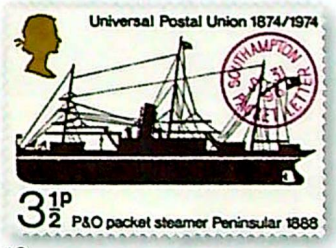


11

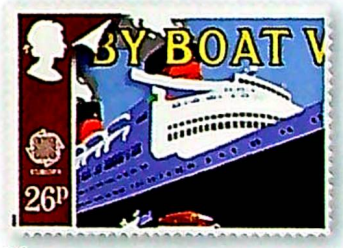


12

The issue for the UPU's centenary in 1974 looked at the development of postal services since the organisation's foundation. The 3½p value (13) shows the steamer *Peninsular*, a P&O ship that was launched in 1888 and carried mail to the Far East. A Southampton Packet Letter mark also features on the stamp, alongside the ship.



13



14

The Transport and Mail Services set of 1988 showed 1930s transport, including the *Queen Elizabeth* being loaded with transatlantic mail on the 26p value (14).

Above: Ocean Liners issue of 2004 (9, 10, 11 and 12); 1974 stamp featuring a packet ship (13); and a 1988 stamp showing mail being loaded onto the *Queen Elizabeth*

Taking to the air The next major development in mail transport after the age of the steamships was – of course – airmail. The UK, the US and India all lay claims to having instigated airmail, and all in 1911. But the first scheduled airmail service, running from 9 to 15 September of that year, was to mark King George V's coronation with a flight from Hendon to Windsor, commemorated in the 1974 UPU set (15) and this year's Aerial Post issue (16).

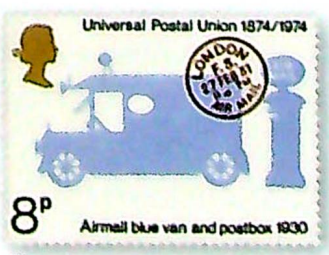
Two airmail innovations complete the 1974 UPU set of four stamps. The 8p stamp shows a blue Air Mail box (17) of the type introduced in 1930 to keep airmail separate from regular mail. This service ran successfully until it was suspended at the outbreak of war in 1939. When airmail re-commenced after the War, the postboxes and vehicles were no longer distinguished by the colour blue, as airmail items could now be sorted at a later stage. The 10p stamp of the 1974 UPU set (18) shows *Maia*, an Imperial Airways flying boat which was part of The Empire Air Mail Scheme of ▸



16



15



17



18



19



20



23



21



24



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25



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Above: the British Philatelic Bureau's Edinburgh home on the 1990 stamp



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1937, which aimed to open up transatlantic airmail. The flying boats despatched letters across the Empire for 1½d per half ounce. The smaller flying boat *Mercury* sat on top of *Maia* and was launched from there, thereby saving fuel. *Mercury* made the first commercial non-stop transatlantic crossing in 1938. The top value (34p) in the 1988 Transport and Mail 30s-style set also shows an Imperial Airways plane, *Horatius* (19), and one of the special blue Air Mail vans.

The rise of Europe The Conference of European Postal & Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) was formed in 1959, as the European counterpart to the UPU. Its first anniversary was saluted in 1960 (20 and 21) with stamps that use the common 'Europa' design of a spoked wheel in place of the letter 'O'. This design, by Finn Pentti Rahikainen, harked back to perhaps the very first mail movement in this country, as the wheels resemble those of a Roman mail chariot. In 1961, the CEPT conference was in Torquay, and the Post Office issued a set of stamps for the organisation. They bear the CEPT posthorn logo (23) and the shape of a dove made from other smaller doves (24 and 25), designed by Theo Kurpershoek. In the late 1960s, by which time anniversary sets were highly popular, the tenth anniversary of CEPT (22) was marked in a set that also commemorated the first non-stop Atlantic flight and first Australia to England flight, NATO and the International Labour Organisation. Its central design – a temple surrounded with the words 'Europa' and 'Cept' by Italians Luigi Gasbarra and Georgio Belli – owed little to the history of the post.

The Philatelic Bureau was set up in 1963 in London and appears on one of the stamps in another Europa set, of 1990 (also known as the Europa and Glasgow 1990 European City of Culture). The stamp shows the building in Brandon Street, Edinburgh, which was the Bureau's 'home' from 1981 to 2000 (26). A 25th anniversary Europa set, of 1984, includes a pair showing a viaduct, symbolic of CEPT's communications links (27 and 28), with the Europa inscription above it. The letter 'O' is replaced by CEPT's four post horns symbol. These stamps were issued alongside two featuring the Abduction of Europa, – a bizarre choice for a symbol of pan-Europeanism – in celebration of the second election of members to the European Parliament.

Technological innovation In 1969 the Post Office Technology issue focused on telecommunications developments, including the National Giro bank (29). (Whereas the Post Office Savings Bank was concerned only with providing savings accounts for customers, the National Giro Bank had provided a full banking service since 1968). Alongside the National Giro logo in the 1969 set were three other stamps with illustrations representing

the Post Office International Subscriber Dialling (30); Pulse Code Modulation (31); and automatic mail sorting (32).

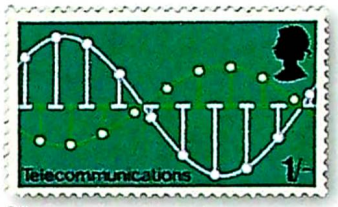
Automatic sorting had started with the Transorma machine in 1935 – postal items were presented one at a time for up to five operators to read the address, select a routing code which was typed onto the front of the letter, and then send it off to be automatically sorted according to the typed code into one of up to 300 chutes. More complex machines had been introduced in 1956, but it was in 1959 that the first 'coding' machines were trialled. Still 'told what to do' by an operator, they printed a phosphor code on the envelope, which was then automatically sorted.



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Above: the 1969 Post Office Technology issue

Royal Mail's last major snapshot of its own activities was a stamp issue in 1985 (33), to mark 350 years since Charles I opened up his mail to the public. On the 17p, a Datapost, which began in 1971 and promised next-day delivery, is depicted by a Datapost motorbike zipping through the City of London. A rural post bus features on the 22p, showing the service which began operating in 1967 and still exists in a scaled-back fashion, mostly in Scotland. The other two stamps show standard modern Royal Mail services: parcel delivery and delivery in towns.

The communications revolution Looking back over the history of UK mail on stamps, beginning in last month's *Bulletin* with the 17th Century General Letter Office, the collector might note a number of themes. The special stamps of each decade of the late 20th-century reflected the different axis of change and progress in communications in general and the postal service in particular. For example, in the 1960s special issues tended to celebrate large organisations, such as the UPU and CEPT. And only towards the end of the decade did the Post Office Technology issue hint at the life-changing potential of computers. Airmail has been covered well – as it makes the world seem a smaller place, it has a special appeal to stamp collectors.

> It is interesting to consider the role of the Post Office, in all its guises, in our changing world... and it's all there on the stamps

It is interesting to consider the role of the Post Office, in all its guises, in our changing world – adapting new technologies, inventing its own and facilitating local and global communcations. And it's all there on the stamps themselves ! •



33



34



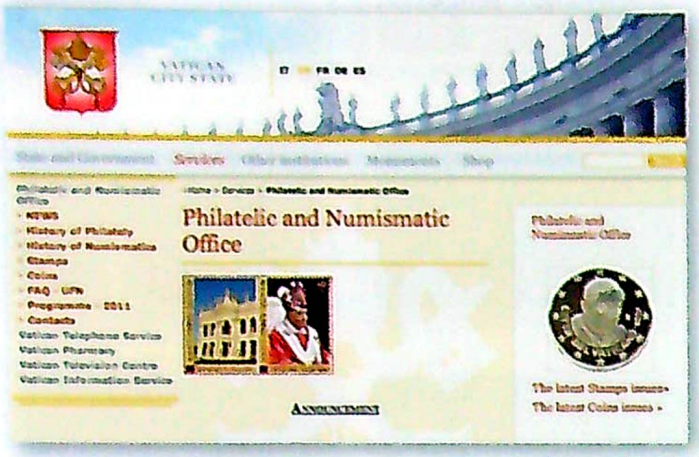
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Left: 1985 History of the Post office issue

The Vatican Philately Website:
Unbelievably interesting, Adrian Keppel discovers



The www.vaticanphiltely.org home page, for when you want to browse around old Rome

Who is the website for? The website www.vaticanphilately.org from the Vatican Philatelic Society (VPS) in the USA, is for those who are curious about Vatican philately and those interested in becoming a member of the VPS.

What is the site's heritage? The VPS was founded in 1953 and the website was started around the time of its golden jubilee in 2003, as a vehicle to attract new members and to interest the general stamp collecting public in Vatican philately – an achievable area, due to a conservative policy of issuing just a dozen new stamp series a year.

How is it organised? The website is very clear and uncluttered, making navigation simple. The navigation bar remains always in sight, so it is easy to choose a new subject to explore. Links within the main text refer either to notes at the bottom of the text or to images which pop up in a new window.

What are the best bits? The site has all you need to know about this niche area of collecting and also contains quite a lot of general philatelic information. For a novice in the field of Vatican philately, the features under the heading 'Introductions' are very interesting and comprehensive. Together with the specialised collections shown off in the Exhibit Hall, under the heading 'For Reference', there is enough information there to really get you inspired. The postal rate charts and various maps of the Vatican are also handy and the 'Issued on this day' feature is a nice touch, too.

What could be improved? Unfortunately, the website has not been updated for a while. Although this does not detract from the accuracy of the general information pages, it may make prospective new members wonder whether the Society is still proactive.

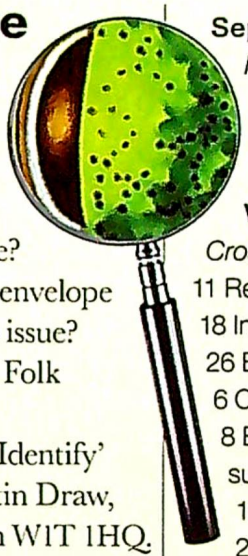


In conclusion Although the VPS's website seems to have lost its relevance in terms of enticing new members to the Society, it definitely still holds enough interesting information to recruit new collectors to the field of Vatican philately. A quick updating of the site would easily restore it to its former glory •

Prize draw rules and regulations 1 The closing date is 9 December, 2011. 2 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 3 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question or solve a crossword, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to Melanie Williams, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

Prize draws Collectors' conundrums and a cryptic crossword

Identify and **Knowledge**



1 *Identify* the stamp from the detail, right, with its name and year of issue.

2 Test your *Knowledge*:

a) Who was Postmaster General at the time of Royal Mail's first Christmas issue?

b) What is the value of the stamp on the envelope posted by Gromit in the 2010 Christmas issue?

c) Name the designer of the Christmas Folk Customs of 1986

Send your answers , marked 'November Identify' and/or 'November Knowledge', to Bulletin Draw, 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ.

Closing date: 9 December 2011. The first ten correct entries drawn from our postbag after the closing date win a selection of November special issue stamps •

September solutions and winners

Identify: Mitchell Supermarine Spitfire, 20p, Architects of the Air 1977.
Winner D Bowcock, Leeds

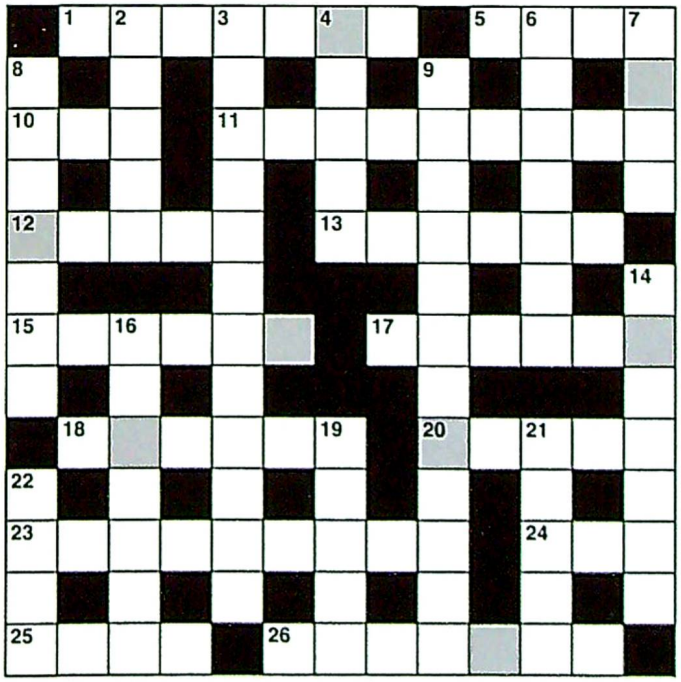
Knowledge: a) 1911. b) One. c) Skynet.
Winner P Kirsten, Morden.

Crossword: Across: 1 Outcome, 5 Aces, 10 Gnu, 11 Regularly, 12 Hippo, 13 Chains, 15 Arcade, 17 Adores, 18 Instep, 20 Utter, 23 Marinated, 24 Nab, 25 Gulp, 26 Babylon. Down: 2 Usurp, 3 Carbon dating, 4 Magic, 6 Coroner, 7 Skye, 8 Egghead, 9 All and sundry, 14 Ascribe, 16 Control, 19 Pitta, 21 Tango, 22 Smug.

Solution: cancellation
Winner T J Stothers, Carrickfergus



CROSSWORD Complete the puzzle below, then rearrange the letters in the grey squares to form a stamp-related word. Send that word, with your name and address and marked 'November Crossword', to the address above. The first three correct entries drawn after 9 December win a selection of special issues.



CLUES ACROSS

1 Royal Engineers said to go free (7)
5 Man of letters, say (4)
10 Women's group gets new victory (3)
11 Perilous hole is bad, should be done away with (9)
12 Hearing test (5)
13 Expect animal to lead injured emu (6)
15 Sweet stuff and nonsense (6)
17 Some of boot's mud gets to make blurred mark (6)
18 Attitude around north relating to race (6)
20 Remnant at the end of three months? (5)
23 Went on and on after spades and clubs mixed up(9)
24 Atmosphere in broadcast (3)
25 Mad idea for helper (4)
26 Infantile and shabby, I get removed (7)

CLUES DOWN

2 Even nuisances hide boredom (5)
3 Virtually blue man (Latin translation) (2,3,3,4)
4 Flower instrument (5)
6 Has made upset and embarrassed (7)
7 Objects to extremes (4)
8 Nervous tic before you start (7)
9 Adder must be captured by noon in late June (9,3)
14 Fears model slips (7)
16 Aged rum and date mix (7)
19 Alice transforms her! (5)
21 Puts up with animals (5)
22 Part of it includes Malaysia, Siam etc (4)



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