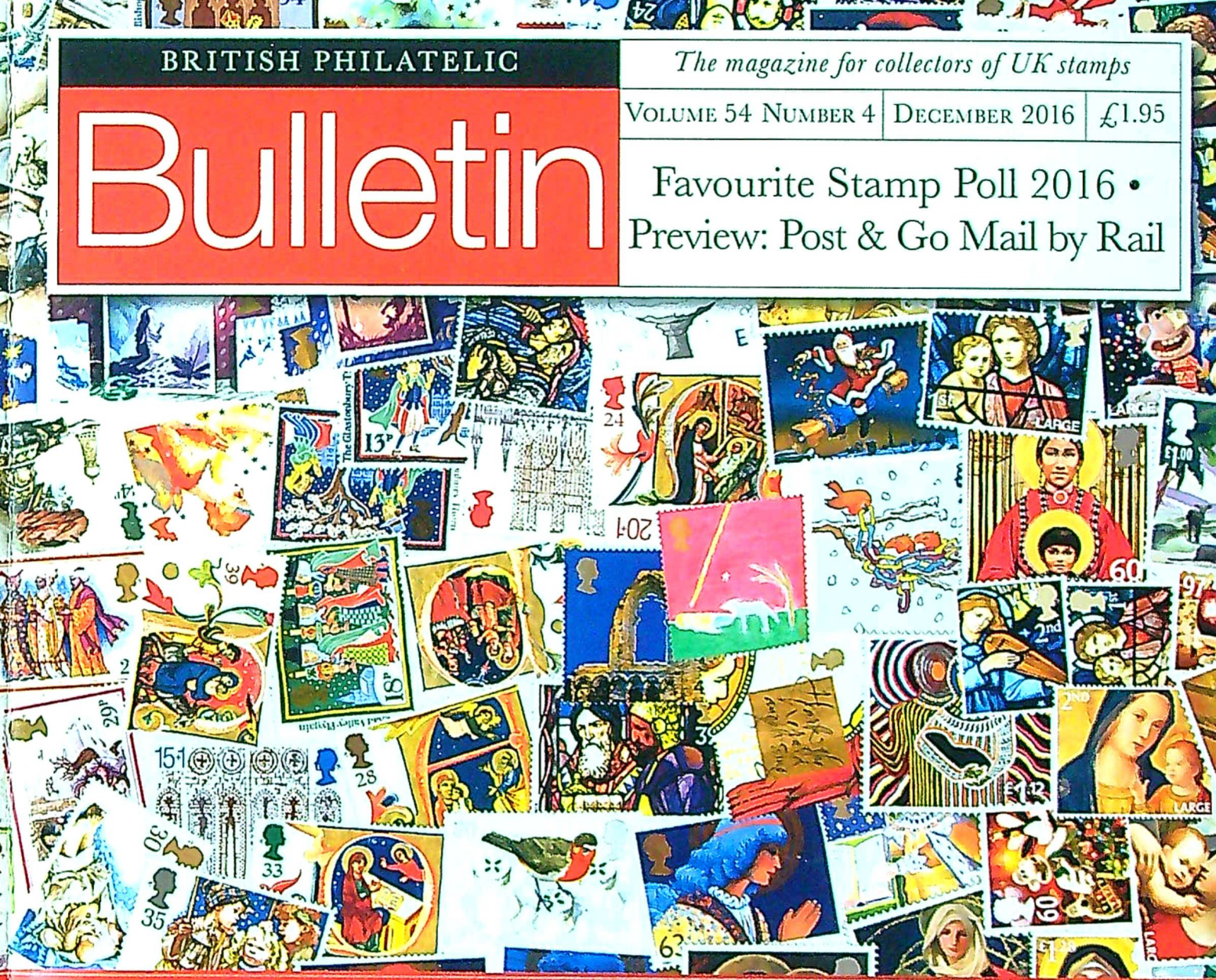
BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

VOLUME 54 NUMBER 4 | DECEMBER 2016 | £1.95

Favourite Stamp Poll 2016 •
Preview: Post & Go Mail by Rail



50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS





Keeping you posted A personal message to readers from *Bulletin* Royal Mail Editor William Doherty

By the time you read this you will, I hope, be looking forward to your Christmas and New Year celebrations. I am too, but I am also looking back over this last year with some pleasure at the fantastic stamp issues that have been released.

I am sure you have your favourites, so we would really appreciate it if you were able to give a few minutes of your time to vote for your best stamps in the 2016 Favourite Stamp Poll enclosed with this edition of *Bulletin*. Voting is simple: you can use the voting form on the leaflet to choose your first, second and third choices, or cast your vote online (see page vi of the leaflet for details). Do share your views with friends and family and encourage them to vote – we very much welcome your opinions and look forward to reading the poll results in a springtime edition of *Bulletin*. By the way, John Holman takes us through the history of the poll on page 119 – a thought-provoking read.

Throughout this edition we celebrate 50 years of Royal Mail Christmas issues. A timeline that runs across the foot of the pages showcases Christmas stamps of the past and there is a special feature on Christmas sets beginning on page 112. We hope that browsing these classics will bring back many happy festive – and philatelic! – memories for you. Two of my personal favourites are Through the Eyes of a Child of 1981 – my first year at Royal Mail – and the 2008 Pantomime stamps. This year's stamps have also caught my attention, and I look forward to seeing them adorn the post that my colleagues and I will be pushing through letterboxes as part of the Stamps and Collectibles team's annual effort to support our delivery offices.

Another highlight of this edition, on page 100, is our preview of a special Post & Go issue in the Royal Mail 500 series that pays tribute to the Mail Rail underground postal transport network. A timely release, given that the Mail Rail attraction is due to open in 2017, along with The Postal Museum.

Also watch out for Colin Baker's A-Z and a family Christmas quiz with the chance to win the 2016 Royal Mail Year Book featuring all the stamps from the last 12 months. That about wraps it up for this year, so may I wish you a very happy Christmas from everyone on the *Bulletin* team •

W Doherty

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1966



Children's Competition
King Wenceslas: Tasveer Shemza
Snowman: James Berry

1967



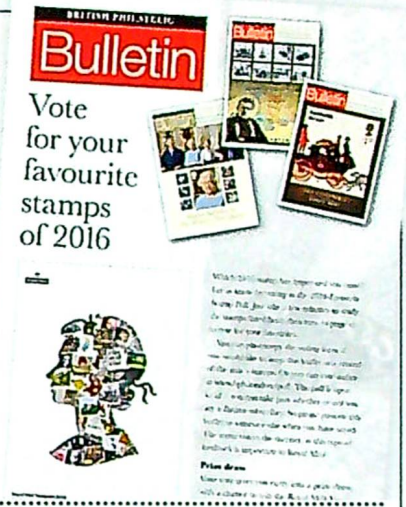
The Adoration of the Shepherds – School of Seville



Madonna and Child – Murillo

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2016 Favourite Stamp Poll Remember to vote for your top three Special Stamps of the year. For details see the leaflet enclosed with this edition



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Royal Mail Editor William Doherty, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● **Publishing Editor** Kate Shaw, 26 Throgmorton Street, London EC2N 2AN ● Price £1.95 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **Annual subscription** £18.95 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of world. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address above) ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95, available by post from Royal Mail Tallents House ● Royal Mail publishes online the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps ● Stamp images © Royal Mail. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of the Editors ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ





The Adoration of the Shepherds – Louis Le Nain

1968







Design: Rosalind Dease

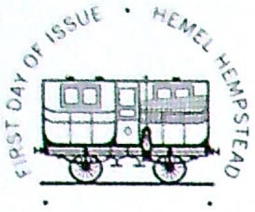
1969





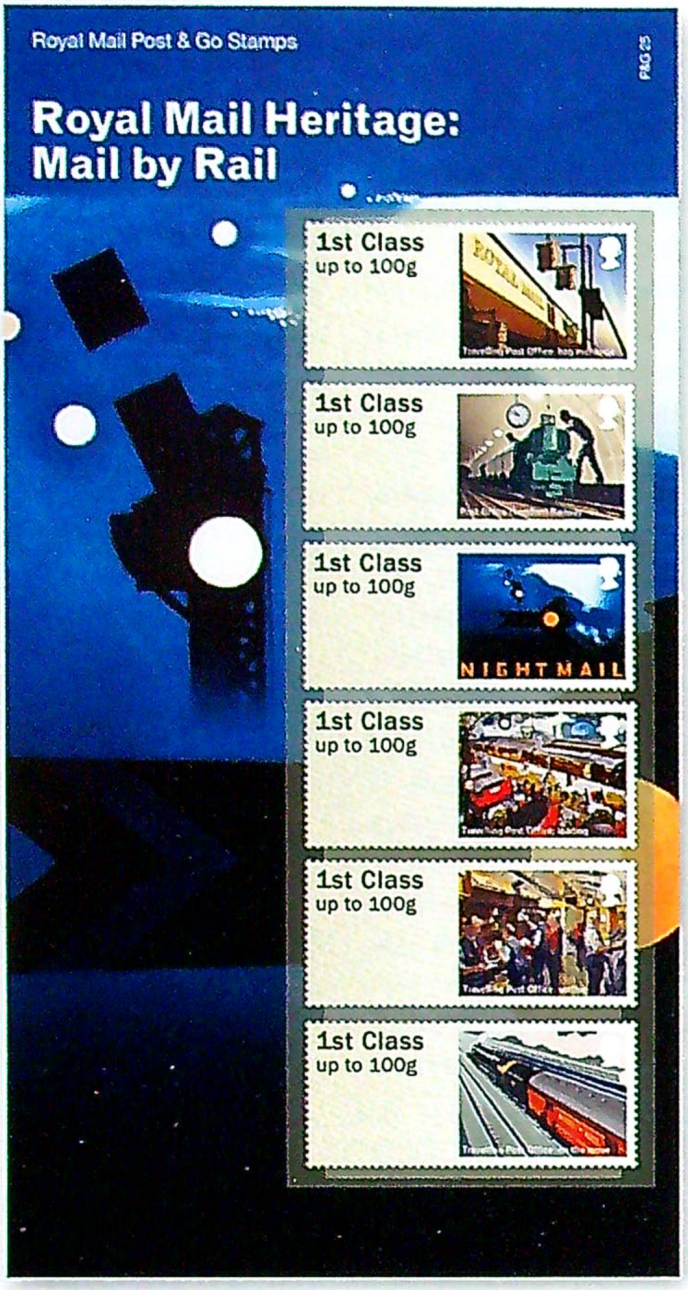


Design: Fritz Wegner



The rail deal A glorious new Post & Go issue reveals the moving story of our mail train service

Mail by Rail celebrates the important role that the UK's railway system has played in moving the nation's post for almost 200 years. This six-stamp Post & Go set features paintings and posters telling the story of mail trains from the first service on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway on 11 November 1830 to the night of 9 January 2004 when the last Travelling Post Office rail services ran.



The new set follows on from the Royal Mail Heritage: Transport stamp issue, released earlier this year, which is part of the Royal Mail 500 celebrations. The Mail by Rail stamps come out on 15 February 2017 (pre-order from 31 January), and throughout next year a series of Post & Go issues will explore the transportation of mail in greater detail. The Collectors Pack contains a concise history of the network and the Travelling Post Offices (TPOs).

One of the stamps pays tribute to the Post Office (London) Railway, known as Mail Rail, which transported post across the capital via an

Post & Go Mail by Rail – Prices	
Stamp Set	£3.84
First Day Cover	£5.03
First Day Envelope	30p

Post & Go Mail by Rail – Specifications	
Date of issue	15 February
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Osborne Ross
Stamp illustration	Andrew Davidson
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	56mm x 25mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Die-cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1970

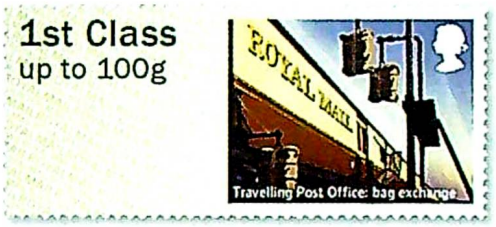


Design: Sally Stiff

1971



Design: Clarke/Clements/Hughes



a



b



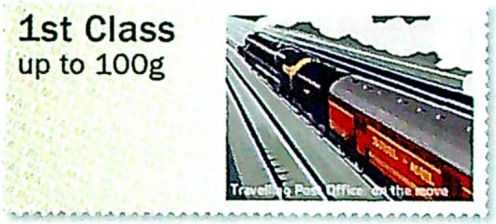
c



d



e



f

a) A specially designed apparatus enabled leather pouches containing mail bags to be exchanged with a moving Travelling Post Office (TPO).

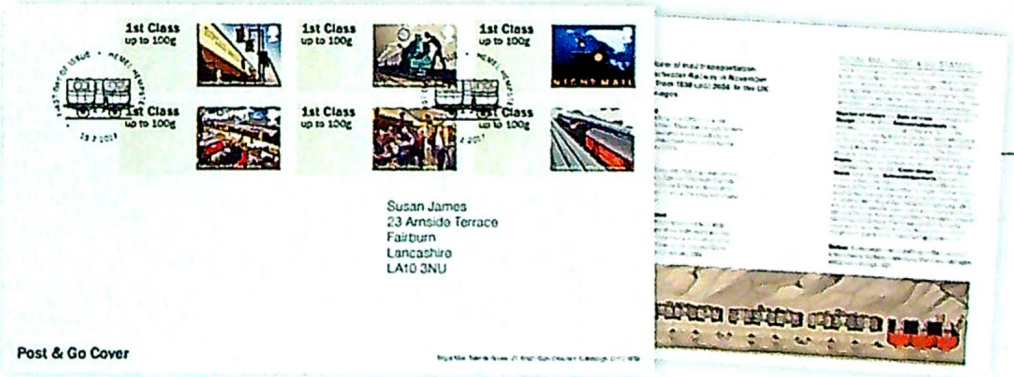
b) The Post Office (London) Railway was a subterranean line that connected sorting offices with London railway termini. It operated between 1927 and 2003 and was renamed Mail Rail in 1987.

c) In 1939, three years after the GPO Film Unit's *Night Mail* film was released, graphic artist Pat Keely produced this iconic TPO poster.

d) This 1948 poster by artist Grace Golden shows a TPO train being loaded at Euston Station in London.

e) A key feature of Travelling Post Offices was that mail was sorted on the move.

f) By the 1930s there were 130 TPOs operating by day and night. The last services ran on 9 January 2004.



underground network. Next year the Mail Rail ride attraction opens, on a stretch of the original line, along with the new Postal Museum.

First Day Covers (shown above) with the Tallents House or alternative pictorial handstamps (shown right and opposite) can be ordered by mail from Tallents House. All first day of issue postmarking offices will be supplied with the alternative pictorial first day of issue postmark, so all first day covers posted at a Post Office will be cancelled with the same postmark regardless of where they are posted. The alternative handstamps have the location Hemel Hampstead, where the first trackside mailbag exchange with a moving Travelling Post Office train took place in 1838 •



FD1703-NP



FD1703-TH

1972



Design and illustration: Sally Stiff

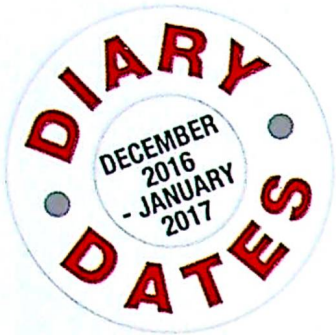
1973



Design: David Gentleman



Stamp Scene John Holman keeps you posted on events and activities in the philatelic world



3 December National Philatelic Society Christmas meeting – Members' Displays, Welsh Centre, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE. Displays 2.45pm, preceded by Members' Auction at 12.50pm. Enquiries: Peter Mellor 01582 762284, email npsmemsec@ukphilately.org.uk.

7 December GB Philatelic Society Evening Reception at Stanley Gibbons, 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX, 6pm onwards, with Members' Displays. Enquiries: Peter Tanner 01753 887755.

9 December Strand Stamp Fair, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1H 0DG, 9am to 4pm. Admission free. Enquiries: Kate Puleston 020 8946 4489.

13 January Strand Stamp Fair: see 9 December entry for details.

14 January National Philatelic Society meeting, Beyond the Back of the Book by Chris Tennant. For venue, time and enquiries, see 3 December entry.

20-21 January York Racecourse Stamp & Coin Fair, The Grandstand, York Racecourse YO23 1EX, Friday 11am to 6pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. Admission free, bar/buffet. See www.stampshows.net. Enquiries: 01793 513431.

21 January North West Kent Postcard Club Postcard Fair, St George's Church Hall, Gravesend DA11 0TB, 9.30am to 3.30pm. Dealers, displays, local books. Car parking nearby, refreshments. Enquiries: 01474 325507.

28 January East Malling Stamp Fair, East Malling Village Hall, New Road, East Malling ME19 6DD, 9.30am to 3.30pm. Stamps, postal history, postcards, stamp displays. Free car park, refreshments. Visit: www.mallingstampfairs.weebly.com. Enquiries: 01474 325507.

28 January GB Philatelic Society meeting at Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1. Things I Like by Ray Barton (11am), Society Competitions (2.15pm). Enquiries: Peter Tanner, 01753 887755 •

2017 events

Spring and Autumn Stampex will be held in London from 15 to 18 February and from 13 to 16 September 2017. Spring Stampex will be a full national exhibition with all classes and countries, but focusing on the former Ottoman Empire. The Scottish Philatelic Congress takes place at the Dewar's Centre, Perth on 21 and 22 April, and Stampa (the Irish national stamp exhibition) from 6 to 8 October in Dublin.

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1974



Design: The Peter Hatch Partnership
Photography: Nicholas Servian

1975

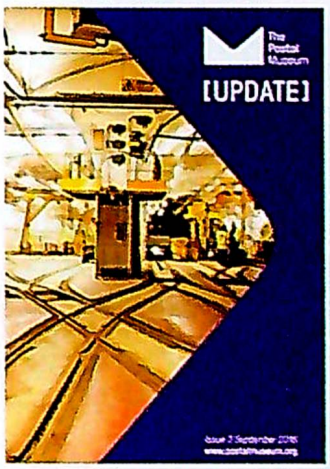


Design: Richard Downer

Midpex, the specialist society exhibition, will be held at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, Leamington Spa on 8 July, and the 99th Philatelic Congress of GB in Cardiff, from 27 to 30 July.

Major international exhibitions will be staged in 2017 in Melbourne, Australia (30 March to 2 April), Tampere, Finland (24 to 28 May), Bandung, Indonesia (3 to 7 August), and Brasilia, Brazil (24 to 29 October). The Tampere exhibition marks the centenary of independence of the Republic of Finland – see www.finlandia2017.fi for further information •

The Postal Museum



The Postal Museum (formerly the British Postal Museum & Archive), at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1, is now closed to the public in preparation for its relocation to new premises nearby in 2017 (date to be announced). Meanwhile staff will continue to deal with telephone and email enquiries, but will not be able to undertake detailed research for enquirers. For more about the new Museum see the interview with its Director Adrian Steel in the February 2016 issue of the *Bulletin* (pages 179 to 181).

The Museum's Post Office in the Community exhibition continues at the Blists Hill Victorian Town, Leggs Way, Telford (see the *Bulletin* May 2012, visit www.ironbridge.org.uk, or call 01952 884391). Online exhibitions, on The Postal Museum website – www.postalmuseum.org – include Christmas post, the Post Office in the First World War, and unusual mail delivery methods.

Issue 3 (September 2016) of The Postal Museum's new newsletter *Update* gives further information on the construction of the new museum and the Mail Rail experience. We are told that two steel trains will each comprise two driver end units with electric motors, allowing the train to be driven from either end. Three carriages with visitor seating will have over-arching glass canopy doors, allowing passengers to look up into the tunnels. Details are also given of some of the attractions in the new museum galleries – in Zone 3, entitled The Post Office in Conflict, which explores the pivotal role the Post Office played in wartime.

A feature describes the work of The Postal Museum's digital team, including developing a new website, producing interactive gallery exhibits, building a state-of-the-art digitisation studio, and running the social media channels. Another feature on the rocket mail post from the Outer Hebridean island of Scarp in 1934 shows one of the charred letters recovered after the rocket exploded. (An article on this rocket mail was published in the *Bulletin*, July 2014.) Suzannah Musson explains the important role of volunteers in helping prepare for the new museum and the Mail Rail experience. ▸



English Medieval Embroidery
Design: Enid Marx



The Twelve Days of Christmas
Design: David Gentleman

Contact The Postal Museum for future issues of *Update*: phone 020 7239 2570 or email info@postalmuseum.org. The Friends of The Postal Museum organise visits, publish *Cross Post*, and raise money to pay for specific projects for the Museum and Mail Rail Experience. For details see www.postalmuseum.org/friends or write to: Friends of The Postal Museum, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL •

Stamp-related exhibitions



Stamps marking First World War centenaries went on sale on 21 June. An exhibition, Real to Reel: A Century of War Movies marking the centenary of the iconic film *The Battle of the Somme*, is on view at the Imperial War Museum in London until 8 January 2017. Relevant to Special Stamps issued on 2 September commemorating the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London, the 'Fire! Fire!' exhibition can be seen at the Museum of London until April 2017. Visit www.museumoflondon.org for further information •

In the news



In September 2006 Royal Mail issued six stamps marking the 150th anniversary of the Victoria Cross. One of the two first-class stamps featured Boy Seaman Jack Cornwell, a 16-year-old killed at the Battle of Jutland. He has also recently been honoured by the Royal Mint on one of its commemorative coins. However, in a newspaper article in September, his great-nephew Alex Saradis, the first member of the family to join the Royal Navy since Cornwell, reveals that the image on the stamp and other items is not in fact Cornwell. Indeed, no photographs of Jack are believed to exist and the iconic image, as used on recruitment posters, was in fact his younger brother George, Mr Saradis's great-great-grandfather •

Forthcoming auctions

The December sale of Cavendish Philatelic Auctions will include GB Queen Victoria stamps and 19th and 20th century postal history. For details see www.cavendish-auctions.com or phone 001332 250970.

Spink's auction on 24 January will include the David Pitts Collection of British Caribbean and British Post offices in Central and South America. Enquiries: 020 7563 4000 •

Society news

The September 2016 issue of *Eastern Angle*, journal of the East Anglia Postal History Society, includes the usual extensive round-up of changes to postal services and post office provision from local media reports – this time amounting to ten pages, including photographs of the offices involved. There are, in addition, features on the post offices at Thorney, Wivenhoe and Dersingham. The opening of the new office in The Rose & Crown pub

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1978



Carol Singing
Design: Faith Jaques

1979



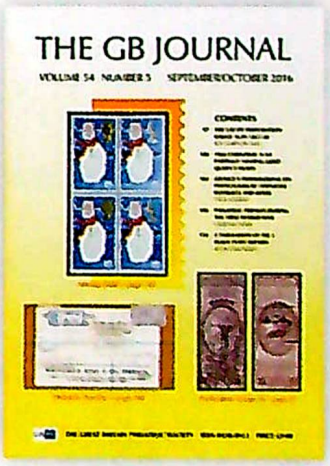
Design:
Fritz Wegner

in Thorney was covered live on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire. An extract from a local newspaper gives details of the workings of the Sudbury post office in 1886. Bob Ricketts continues his series on the postal history of St Neots, with illustrations of covers, parcel post labels and listings of postmark types and dates of use. The journal concludes with photos of 'seven of Norfolk's quirkiest post offices' – in a record shop, pub, tearoom, farm shop, village hall, pharmacy and toy store. These premises keep the service going as a vital local amenity.



The East Anglia Postal History Society covers Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The next AGM will be held in Stowmarket on 1 April 2017. For enquiries write to: John Copeland, 20 The Vale, Brentwood CM15 4UP, phone 01277 218128 or visit www.eaphsc.webs.com.

The September/October 2016 issue of the GB Philatelic Society's *The GB Journal* includes a relatively rare article on Elizabeth II stamps, covering partially missing gold Queen's heads on the 1s 6d stamp of the first Christmas issue of 1966 – timely as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Christmas issues. The article gives details of the process used in applying the gold head. Other articles, of value to collectors of Victorian and George V and VI stamps, are: 'The Use of Perforation Gauge 16 in 1857-58', 'George V Perforations on Photogravure Definitive Booklets and Rolls', and 'A Tabulation of Die 1 Black Plate Repairs'. Graham Mark's 'Philatelic Permits During the First World War' will appeal to postal historians of the period.



The GBPS Newsletter, sent out with the *Journal*, is mostly filled by well-illustrated reports on society displays, including The First Low Value Surface Printed Postage Stamps and The Castle Issues of GB 1952-1999 by Bob Galland and Peter Shaw in May and June, and members' displays at the AGM in June. As always the comments by Editor Paul Ramsay and GBPS President Howard Hughes make very insightful contributions to the content of the *Newsletter*. For GBPS details contact Peter Tanner on 01753 887755, email membership@gbps.org.uk or see www.gbps.org.uk.



The Scarborough Philatelic Society, now approaching its 80th anniversary, welcomes new members. Future meetings include a Christmas Social and Quiz Night (6 December), Members' Night (3 January) and Chairman's/President's Night' (7 February). On 7 March the speaker, the Rev. Walden, offers 'Wacky-Wacky' – an evening of fun and frivolity. Contact Chris Phillips on 01723 368475 or email chris@philatelic.org.uk for further information •



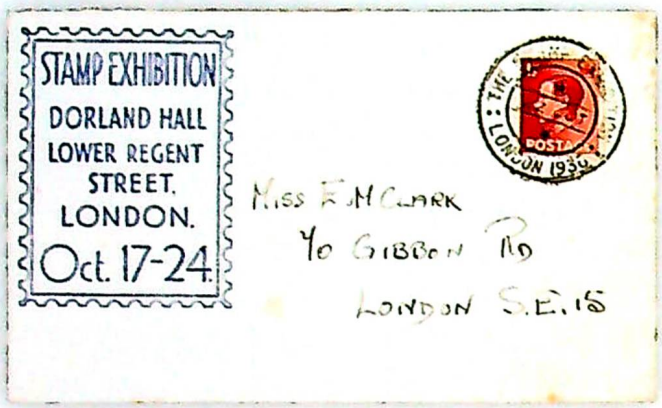
PART TWO

Collecting The King

In the second of our two part feature John Holman explores the fascinating philatelic story behind the accession and abdication of King Edward VIII

At the beginning of King Edward VIII's brief reign there was a flurry of philatelic activity as the nation prepared for Edward's Coronation and the General Post Office (GPO) considered stamps that would mark the occasion. A variety of designs and suitable subjects for the Coronation stamps were debated and developed but ideas for a Coronation issue were ultimately overtaken by the extraordinary events of 1936...

Coronation stamps By the end of January 1936 the GPO was considering a Coronation issue, thought to have been suggested by former Postmaster General W Ormsby Gore. In March the Postmaster General Major George Tryon told The King of plans for the Accession, Coronation and definitive stamps. Edward agreed that the Coronation stamps feature royal castles and could be issued without his portrait if better designs would result. Later it was proposed that the low values show The King in military uniforms, with castles on the higher values.



Above: cover for a stamp exhibition at Dorland Hall, London, October 1936

Harrisons produced designs, using two different heads of The King with Tower Bridge, Windsor Castle, Nelson's Column, the Houses of Parliament, Windsor Castle, the Palace of Holyroodhouse and Balmoral Castle, as well as essays of a ½d stamp showing the portrait of Edward in Welsh Guards uniform (set within five different frames) and Seaforth Highlanders uniform. The GPO showed the designs to the Royal Fine Arts Commission, which was not impressed by any of them.

The GPO prepared further designs, this time with an engraved head of The King by Humphrey Paget, as used for official medals. The King asked to see the designs, and agreed to sit for new photographs if the designs were unsatisfactory. A pictorial design showing St James's Palace, with the Cecil head of Edward, was found unsatisfactory and Harrisons worked on designs showing Windsor

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1982



Christmas Carols
Design: Barbara Brown

1983



Design and illustration:
Tony Meeuwissen

Castle, Tower Bridge and the Tower of London. Eric Gill was invited to prepare amended essays featuring the Paget head and these, with essays for the larger pictorial stamps, were shown to the Royal Fine Arts Commission in late November. The Commission liked the crowned head stamps, but were less keen on the pictorial designs.

Time was pressing as the Coronation had been scheduled for 12 May 1937, and questions in Parliament about Coronation stamps were met with the response 'under consideration'.

Further crowned head essays were submitted to the GPO on 8 December and the next day Harrisons received photographs of Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace from which to produce essays. They were never made. On 10 December Edward VIII signed the Instrument of Abdication, and the following day his reign came to an end when the necessary Act was rushed through Parliament. The Coronation went ahead on 12 May 1937, when the crown was placed on his brother's head. A 1½d Coronation stamp, showing King George and Queen Elizabeth, went on sale the next day. Three days earlier the first George VI definitives had been issued.







Above: unadopted stamp designs by Harrisons

Some of the essay designs for Edward VIII stamps were reproduced on a set of four postcards published by the National Postal Museum (now The Postal Museum) in November 1982. They include the proposed Coronation stamps showing St James's Palace, Windsor Castle, the Tower of London and Tower Bridge. A publicity card, showing the St James's Palace essay, was produced by the British Postal Museum & Archive in 2009, predecessor of The Postal Museum, to promote the 2010 Festival of Stamps.

Postage dues The four Accession stamps were, in fact, not the only British stamps for King Edward VIII. The postage due stamps, first issued in 1914, were reprinted with an 'E 8 R' watermark. The 5d stamp went into use during November 1936, then the 4d and 1s in December. The other values – ½d, 1d, 2d, 3d and 2s 6d – followed between March and June 1937. The Accession stamps are catalogued at just £1.25 mint and £1.75 used, whereas the postage dues command £450/£100.

Other Edward VIII stamps Edward featured on a number of Empire stamps before his Accession, beginning with pictures of him as a baby and as a naval cadet on Newfoundland stamps of 1897 and 1911. He also featured on other Newfoundland stamps, and on Canadian stamps for the 1932 Ottawa Conference and 1935 Silver Jubilee. No Empire stamps featuring him were ▸



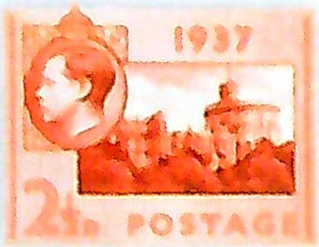
Design and illustration: Yvonne Gilbert



Pantomime Design: Adrian George

issued during his reign (other than GB overprints for Tangier and Morocco Agencies), although designs were prepared. Edward wanted all colonial stamps to be in a universal simple design, but virtually all colonies rejected this in favour of pictorial designs.

An essay for a standard Colonial design exists in the Royal Philatelic Collection, along with designs for Fiji and St Lucia. Australia prepared a 2d Edward VIII stamp – printing began in September and ceased on the Abdication. The Canadian Post Office wished to go ahead with Edward stamps after the Abdication when stocks of George V stamps were running low, but Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King ordered that 'every vestige of the now abhorred Edward's image was to be destroyed'.



The first depiction of Edward after his abdication was on a ½d stamp of New Zealand in 1940 for the centenary of British sovereignty, on which he is shown on a coin-like image. Since 1977 Edward has featured on stamps from, among others, the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Isle of Man, Nauru, New Zealand, St Helena, St Vincent and Tristan da Cunha. To mark the 70th anniversary of the 'Year of Three Kings, 1936, Royal Mail issued a miniature sheet in December 2006, bearing a £3 Machin definitive and reproductions of the 1d stamps of George V, Edward VIII and George VI. A fine portrait of Edward appears on the 76p stamp in the House of Windsor set of the Kings and Queens series, issued in 2012.



Top: proposed Edward VIII Coronation stamp featuring Windsor Castle

Above: proposed Coronation stamp showing St James's Palace reproduced on a BPMA postcard that promoted the London Festival of Stamps in 2010

Philatelic mementoes There is much that can be included in a collection devoted to Edward VIII. Collectors and dealers posted covers on 10 and 11 December to mark the Abdication, and more were posted from May 1937 bearing his stamps along with those of his father and brother. (An interesting Abdication cover from the USA was shown in the December 2006 *Bulletin*, page 125.) Commemorative covers were produced in France to mark Edward's marriage to Wallis Simpson in June 1937, and in June 1972 to mark his funeral at Windsor. Popular with collectors are souvenir covers and labels for a major stamp exhibition at London's Dorland Hall in October 1936, and commemorative covers for the maiden voyage of RMS Queen Mary in May 1936. About 130 Edward VIII letter boxes survive, and one in Blackpool featured on a North Western Postal Board postcard of November 1981. The King's cipher featured on the special postmark for the issue of the card.

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1986



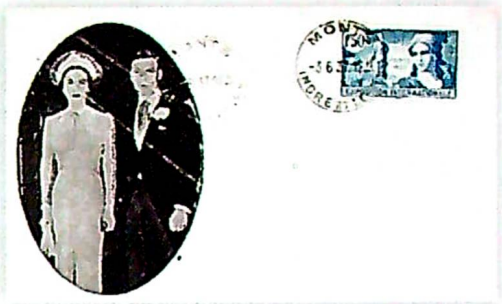
Christmas Customs
Design and illustration: Lynda Gray

1987



It's Magic
Design and illustration: Michael Foreman





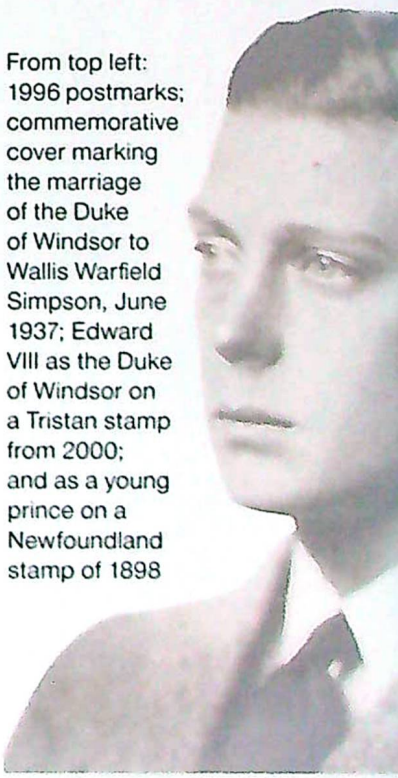




Special handstamps were sponsored for use in December 1986, 1996, 2006 and 2011 to mark the 50th, 60th, 70th and 75th anniversaries of the abdication, January 1996 for the Year of Three Kings, and June 1997 for the 25th anniversary of Edward's funeral. Others were used when the Royal Mail miniature sheet was issued in 2006. To mark the 80th anniversary of his reign, The Postal Museum issued Post & Go stamps showing Edward's royal cipher certifying handstamp used on mail from the Royal Household. These were available from the Post & Go machine at The Postal Museum from 14 September to 11 November 2016.

Edward the stamp collector It has been said that Edward VIII was not interested in stamps and might have sold the Royal Philatelic Collection, so cherished by his father. However, Nicholas Courtney's book on the Royal Philatelic Collection, The Queen's Stamps, suggests otherwise. As a schoolboy stamp collector, Edward displayed stamps of France and Colonies at the International Philatelic Exhibition in London in 1906. Stamp collecting was one of the few interests shared by George V and his son. After he became Prince of Wales in 1910, Edward 'was often seen scouring the stamp shops of the Strand'; he was made an honorary President of the Royal Philatelic Society in 1919, and Patron shortly after his Accession. When King, he ensured adequate finance for the Royal Philatelic Collection, purchasing Oxford and Cambridge college stamps and a fine GB Queen Victoria 10s in cobalt blue. One of the TV dramas about Edward shows him bored by a presentation of designs for new stamps, but it is clear he did take an interest in the preparation of stamps bearing his image •

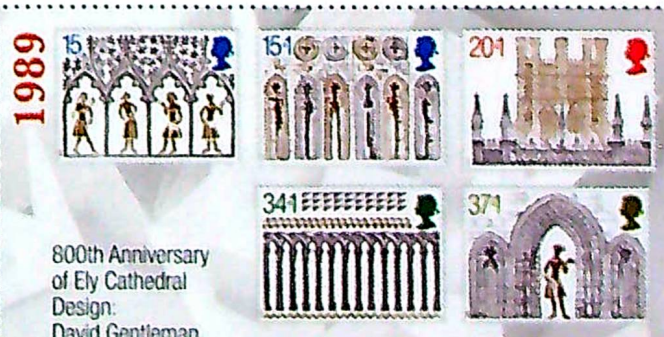
Further reading Much useful information on Edward VIII stamps is found in Allan Griffiths' *Special Stamp History: 1936 Proposed Edward VIII Coronation Issue* (National Postal Museum, 1998), and Douglas Muir's *George V and the G.P.O.: Stamps, Conflict & Creativity* (British Postal Museum & Archive, 2010). Articles by Douglas Muir appeared in *Stamp Magazine*, January-December 1987, and *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, October 2016. For more on Edward on non-British stamps and philatelic souvenirs see articles in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* in January and February 2011. Articles on Edward VIII stamps were published in the *Bulletin* in December 1968, December 1971, January 1972 and February 1994.



From top left: 1996 postmarks; commemorative cover marking the marriage of the Duke of Windsor to Wallis Warfield Simpson, June 1937; Edward VIII as the Duke of Windsor on a Tristan stamp from 2000; and as a young prince on a Newfoundland stamp of 1898



Design: Trickett & Webb Ltd
Illustration: Andrew Davidson
Photography: Lucinda Lambton



800th Anniversary of Ely Cathedral
Design: David Gentleman

We issue all a very Merry Christmas

We are proud to present this dazzling display of festive stamps from Royal Mail, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man – have a happy Christmas and philatelically fantastic New Year



Royal Mail – Christmas 2016

Issue date: 8 November • Standard 24mm x 28mm /Large 34mm x 28mm • Illustrator: Helen Musselwhite • Design: The Chase • Printer: De La Rue • Mint set: £9.05

This handsome set is an engaging gallery of much-loved festive scenes, illustrated by crisp cut-out images: a snowman on the second-class value, robin on the first-class, Christmas tree on the £1.05, a bright lantern for the £1.33, a stocking packed with toys for the £1.52, and a Christmas pudding on the £2.25 stamp. Orders: www.royalmail.com/christmas2016, by phone on 03457 641 641 or from 8,000 Post Offices across the UK. A full Preview of the set appears on page 39 of your October *Bulletin*.

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1990



Christmas Scenes
Design: John Gorham
Illustration: Andrew Davidson

1991



Design: David Driver

Alderney – traditional Christmas beauty

Issue date: 8 November • Size: 36mm x 30mm • Design: Mark Totty
Printer: Joh Enschedé • Mint set: £4.08

Alderney offers a pretty little set of seven stamps featuring traditional Christmas icons drawn in silver and blue: a sprig of holly with berries, glittering Christmas tree, a stack of presents, Father Christmas with a bell, a reindeer sporting baubles on its antlers, a snowman and a cluster of gleaming stars. Orders: www.guernseystamps.com.



Guernsey – season of gold will

Issue date: 8 November • Size: 43mm x 37mm • Design: Mark Totty
Printer: Joh Enschedé • Mint set: £4.08

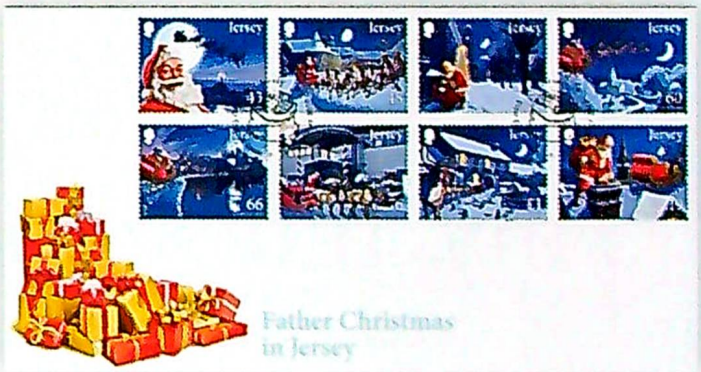
Like Alderney, Guernsey's set shows a gallery of playful Christmas symbols, but finished in gold and green: a beautifully adorned tree, shiny present, happy-looking Santa, leaping reindeer, snowman with a broom and stars. Orders: www.guernseystamps.com or call 01481 716486.



Jersey – Santa is coming to town

Issue date: 21 November • Size: 30mm x 40mm
Design: Andrew Farley • Printer: Cartor Security Printing • Mint set: £5.95

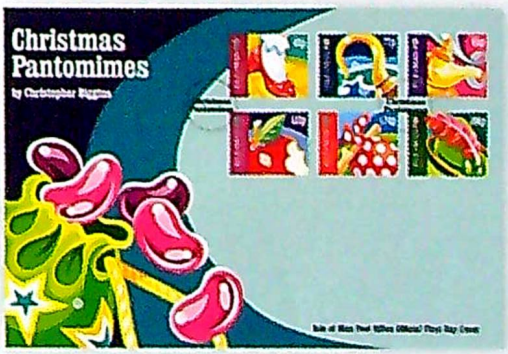
This eight-stamp festive special shows a jolly Father Christmas bringing lots of cheer to various locations on Jersey, including Corbière Lighthouse, Elizabeth Castle and Jersey Post Headquarters where he collects presents for delivery on the island. Orders: www.jerseystamps.com or call 01534 516320.



Isle of Man – pantomime time

Issue date: 20 October • Size: 32mm x 26mm
Design: Fresh • Printer: Lowe-Martin • Mint set: £6.40

The Christmas Pantomimes by Christopher Biggins issue 'stars' the great panto dame himself, who tells the history of this ever-popular British Christmas tradition. The issue features everyone's favourite panto stories, with six richly coloured stamps showing productions that have been staged in the Isle of Man and elsewhere over the years: The Wizard of Oz, Peter Pan, Aladdin, Snow White, Dick Whittington and Robin Hood. Orders: www.iomstamps.com or call 01624 698430.



1992



Stained Glass Windows
Design: Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell Ltd

1993



A Christmas Carol
Design and illustration: Quentin Blake

Tiny, timeless glad tidings...

Christmas stamps are a traditional highlight of the festive season for collectors and non-collectors alike. Here we celebrate 50 years of festive philately

They are as traditional as tinsel, as eagerly awaited as the Downton Abbey Christmas special. Pictorial Christmas stamps have been creating a stir since they were introduced in 1966. And in this special edition of *Bulletin* we hope to conjure stamp memories of happy Christmases past with a timeline showcasing every single design of festive UK stamps to date.

Over five decades some of the world's finest stamp designers and artists have been commissioned to create this coveted annual set. Uber-designer David Gentlemen produced three issues – 1973's Good King Wenceslas, The Twelve Days of Christmas in 1977, and the 800th Anniversary of Ely

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1994



Children's Nativity Plays
Design and illustration: Yvonne Gilbert

1995



Christmas Robins
Design: Ken Lilly

17 billion

The estimated number of Christmas stamps printed since they were first introduced in Britain in 1966.

£20,000

The first Christmas card – sent by Sir Henry Cole to his grandmother in 1843 – was auctioned for £20,000 in 2001.

2 billion

The number of greetings cards and Christmas parcels Royal Mail handles every festive season.

75 per cent

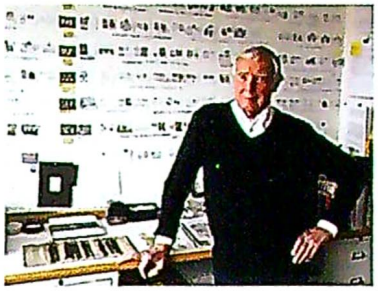
According to recent estimates, 75 per cent of Britons prefer to receive a traditional posted Christmas card rather than an 'e-card' or social media greeting.

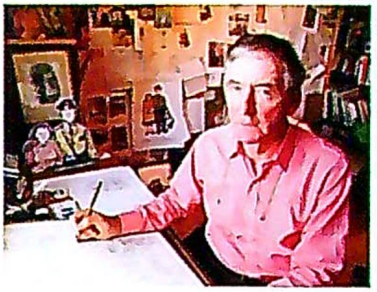
240,000

The number of entries received by Royal Mail in the children's competition to design a stamp for Christmas 2013.

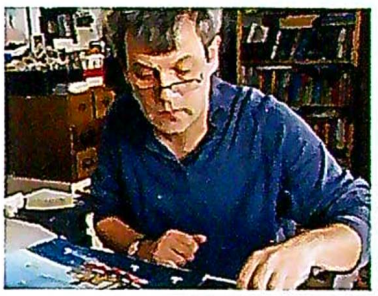


Above: Prince Charles with stamp designers Rosie Hargreaves and Molly Robson

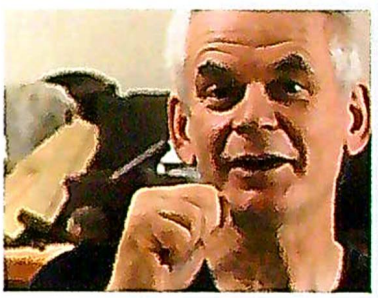














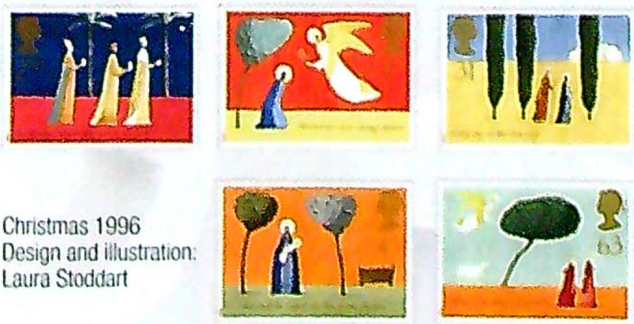
Leading Christmas stamp designers and artists, clockwise from top left: – David Gentleman, Raymond Briggs, Axel Scheffler, Andy Goldsworthy, Fritz Wegner, Nick Park and Quentin Blake

Photographs: Eamonn McCabe, Independent, The Telegraph, Tateshots, Rex Features

Cathedral 12 years later. Jeffery Matthews designed the 1980 set with a Christmas decorations theme. Fritz Wegner produced two Nativity stamp issues, in 1969 and 1979. Leading sculptor Andy Goldsworthy created and photographed ice sculptures for the 2003 set. Animators Aardman designed a Wallace and Gromit issue for 2010.

Appropriately for a celebration so devoted to little ones, Christmas has been articulated on stamps by major children's book illustrators. Quentin Blake ▸

1996



Christmas 1996
Design and illustration: Laura Stoddart

1997



150th Anniversary of the Christmas Cracker
Design: John Gorham
Illustration: Mark Thomas

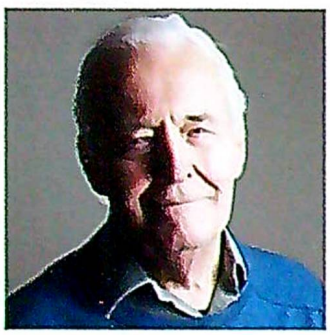


illustrated the Christmas Carol set in 1993. Raymond 'The Snowman' Briggs made Father Christmas the star of the 2004 issue he designed. Axel Scheffler, much-loved artist of the Gruffalo book series, created the pictures for the 2012 stamps.

Yet the first Christmas stamps were designed by two children following a competition organised by the then Postmaster General Tony Benn. The winning designs became what are now arguably the most easily recognised GB Christmas stamps.

The 3d stamp featured a picture of King Wenceslas by Tasveer Shemza, aged six, from Stafford. The 1s 6d value showed a snowman by James Berry, also six, from Beckenham. Tasveer Shemza was a judge in the children's competition for the 2013 Christmas stamps – the third time children's artwork has been used on a festive set.

The Christmas stamp issue has established some traditions of its own. Now the custom is that Royal Mail alternates between a secular and non-secular design theme. (In 2008, however, both types of stamp issue were released, one on pantomimes and the other on Madonna and child.) The religious issues have been as striking as those showing secular festive icons, with classic paintings and stained glass windows portraying Madonna and child and the Nativity scene.



Above: Postmaster General Tony Benn helped to organise the first stamp design contest and Tasveer Shemza's picture (top) was one of the winners

The designs change, the themes may alternate, but one thing has been constant throughout the story of the Christmas stamp. On the first day covers of that first issue in 1966 the postmarks showed the location Bethlehem, a tiny Welsh hamlet in Llandeilo. And even now, every year the Christmas first day cover postmark bears that special name. Several thousand visitors from around the UK and the world have queued at the village post office to receive the Bethlehem counter handstamp, featuring the magical location 'Bethlehem' and the star of the Nativity. Up to 30,000 Christmas card envelopes are stamped there before going to the Royal Mail handstamp centre in Cardiff for the Royal Mail 'Bethlehem, Llandeilo' postmark. 'The atmosphere at the post office is wonderful. Everyone's happy and jolly and in a festive mood,' says Bethlehem and Llandeilo Sub-

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

1998



Angels
Design: Irene von Treskow

1999



Millennium Series:
The Christians' Tale
Design: various



Error Christmas to you

We all dream of the perfect Christmas but finding the imperfect Christmas stamp could be worth a fortune.

An extreme example is a strip of 3½p Christmas stamps from 1974, priced by Stanley Gibbons at a whopping £45,000 because of missing artwork. The 3½p shows a 14th century roof boss from York Minster but the background shading of the stone carving is missing on two of the three stamps in the strip. This is a true rarity – with only three such errors recorded – hence the hefty asking price.

On a five-stamp strip of David Gentleman's 1973 Good King Wenceslas set, an absent rosy-mauve colour from the page's hat and tunic gives this Stanley Gibbons item a value of £17,000.

Another rarity, a block of 12 1s 6d values from the 1967 issue, is worth £34,000, thanks to the missing Queen's head and value from two of the stamps.

Colour shifts, imperfs, missing elements, and absent values and Queen's head can add value to stamps, from as little as £25 to many thousands. Not all errors will make your fortune, but the fun can lie in the finding.

Missing blocks of blue on the Good King Wenceslas 3½p stamp makes it look like the page's right leg has dropped off and the king's robe has been snipped off at the bottom. The error fetches £300, so would be a handy festive bonus.

Christmas errors for sale at the time of writing include: 1966 3d double Queen's head error; 1969 5d with missing green; 1971 3p missing Queen's head; and 1988 wrong value. The list goes on and it is highly likely that, among 50 years of Christmas issues, each with a very large print run, there are imperfections yet to be discovered. So keep your philatelic eye on the Christmas post •





Collectors develop a keen eye for detail. Can you spot the errors on the stamps shown here compared with those on the timeline? All are mentioned in the text above

Postmaster Geraint Price. 'It's great that we can provide this little bit of magic, and people can receive a specially stamped card from Bethlehem.'

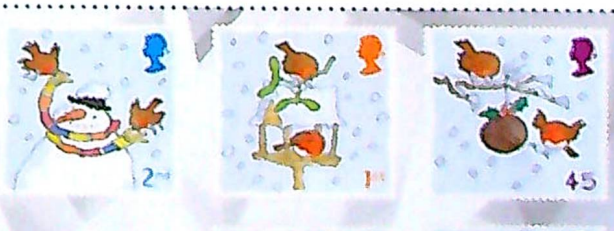
So the Christmas issue is now a much-loved tradition. The arrival of festive stamps on envelopes through the door is as much a part of the British Christmas as the arrival of turkey with all the trimmings on the nation's tables •

2000



Millennium Series: Spirit and Faith
Design: various

2001



Design and illustration: Arthur Robins
Typography: Howard Brown

Christmas quiz

Charge your glasses for a philatelic frolic through 50 years of festive stamps. All the answer are quite close to your nose – and you could win every Special Stamp of 2016 in a Royal Mail Year Book

1960s

1 Britain's first Christmas stamps were illustrated by the winners of an art competition, run on which television show?



a) Blue Peter
b) Dick Emery
c) Hancock's Half Hour

2 This painting appeared on the 1967 issue's 4d value. Who painted it?
a) Bartolomé Esteban Murillo **b)** Leonardo da Vinci **c)** Sandro Botticelli



1970s

3 Design guru David Gentleman featured a legendary king on his 1973 festive specials. Who was he?
a) King Kong
b) King Crimson
c) King Wenceslas



4 What craft is celebrated in this stamp from the Christmas issue of 1976?
a) 16th century Scottish knitting
b) Georgian Welsh baking **c)** Medieval English embroidery



1980s

5 Which holy tree appears in this 1986 Christmas stamp?



a) The Glastonbury Thorn **b)** The Canterbury Oak
c) The Blackpool Birch

6 The 1989 Christmas issue celebrated the 800th anniversary of which historic cathedral?



a) York Minster
b) Westminster
c) Ely

1990s

7 Britain's favourite festive feathered friend appeared in 1995's Christmas Robins set. In Victorian times, what kind of people were nicknamed 'robin redbreasts'?
a) Robbers **b)** Postmen
c) Beefeaters



8 The 1997 issue marked the 150th anniversary of a Christmas tradition. What was it?
a) Mistletoe
b) The family row
c) The cracker





WIN! A Royal Mail Year Book

The lavishly illustrated Year Book contains all the Royal Mail Special Stamps of 2016



2000s

9 For the 2003 stamps artist Andy Goldsworthy created a series of sculptures made from what material?
a) Glass **b)** Mashed potato **c)** Ice



10 Which polymath created the stained glass window in the second-class value from the 2009 issue?
a) William Morris
b) William Hogarth
c) will.i.am



2010s

11 Which chapter and verse of which gospel of the Bible is represented by this Christmas stamp from 2011?
a) Matthew 1:21
b) Luke 2:10
c) Matthew 1:23



12 Who drew the 2012 Christmas set?
a) Axl Rose
b) Axel Scheffler
c) Axel Grease



HOW TO ENTER Send your answers, along with your contact address or phone number, marked 'Bulletin Xmas Quiz', to Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB.
CLOSING DATE 16 January 2017.

PRIZES The sender of the first correct entry drawn at random wins the 2016 Royal Mail Year Book. Ten runners-up receive a Royal Mail Presentation Pack.

SEPTEMBER WRITERS QUIZ SOLUTION: 1c 2c 3b 4c 5b 6b 7c 8a 9a 10b 11a 12a. Winner: Chow Way Lee.Runners-up P Almond, E Bowater, P Bowater, J Constantine, J Edgeway, E Emery, A Fagg, E Gilbert, D Kenward, B Messer.

Rules and regulations 1 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 2 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. 3 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 stated. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question, 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 The Editor.

2004



Father Christmas
Design and illustration:
Raymond Briggs

2005



Madonna and
Child Paintings
Design: Irene von Treskow



Crisis card An informative stamp card marks the 80th anniversary of the abdication crisis

Above: the abdication commemorative card, released on 10 December, costs £19.75. Order online at www.bfdc.co.uk/cards or send a cheque payable to: BFDC Ltd, 3 Link Road, Leicester LE2 3RA

One of the most extraordinary crises in British history – Edward VIII's 1936 abdication – is remembered by this commemorative card from BFDC. The card reminds us that 1936 was dubbed the 'Year of Three Kings', as King George V was succeeded by Edward, who was replaced by his brother Albert (as King George VI) after he refused to renounce Wallis Simpson. Stamp production therefore took account of the changes of monarch: on the card is a first-class Union Flag stamp and label showing an Edward Coronation stamp essay that features Fort Belvedere, where Edward signed his abdication on 10 December, as well as illustrations of other Coronation essays, and definitive stamps for all three kings. The card also carries a commentary on the abdication and tells the story of other 1936 events of national significance, including the Jarrow march, the launch of the *Queen Mary* and the Crystal Palace fire ●

50 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS STAMPS

2006



Design: CDT Design
Illustration: Tatsuro Kluchi

2007



Angels stamps design: Rose Design
Illustration: Marco Ventura
Paintings of the Madonna and Child stamp design: Peter Willberg

The vital postal vote

John Holman looks back to the first Favourite Stamp Poll in 1986 and remembers some pithy comments from *Bulletin* readers


1986 Special Stamps Poll

THIRTY YEARS AGO, in the November 1986 *Bulletin*, the then Editor Douglas Muir inaugurated the *Bulletin* readers' Favourite Stamp Poll, which has continued ever since. Readers were asked to vote for the best (first, second and third) sets of special stamps issued that year. The favourite set, announced in the April 1987 *Bulletin*, was Species at Risk featuring Barn Owl, Pine Marten, Wild Cat and Natterjack Toad stamps. The RAF and Halley's Comet issues were in second and third place. The winners in subsequent years are as follows:

1987: Flowers; 1988: Linnean Society; 1989: Birds; 1990: Queen Mother; 1991: Maps; 1992: Wintertime; 1993: Autumn; 1994: Age of Steam; 1995: Christmas; 1996: Wildfowl & Wetlands; 1997: Great Tudor (Henry VIII); 1998: Lighthouses; 1999: Scientists' Tale; 2000: Tree & Leaf; 2001: Weather; 2002: London Bridges; 2003: Extreme Endeavours; 2004: Woodland Animals; 2005: Trafalgar; 2006: Brunel; 2007: Birds; 2008: Cathedrals; 2009: Design Classics; 2010: Great British Railways; 2011: UK A to Z Part 1; 2012: UK A to Z Part 2; 2013: Butterflies; 2014: First World War; and 2015: Bees.

Bulletin readers were requested to vote on ten stamp issues in 1986, which comprised 39 stamps in total. The number of stamps now totals over 100 each year. 2012 was a peak year with 204 stamps, which included the Olympic and Paralympic gold medal winners, and definitive issues. Post & Gos were included in the Poll from 2011.

Favourite individual stamps From 1996, readers also voted for their favourite individual special stamp of the year, as well as their chosen set. (Now they vote just for their favourite individual stamps, rather than sets.) The first winner in this new category was the 19p value of the Wildfowl & Wetlands issue, which was the top set of the year. Subsequent favourite individual stamps are: 1997: Great Tudor (Henry VIII) 26p; 1998: Endangered Species 20p; 1999: Scientists' Tale 64p; 2000: Above & Beyond 19p; 2001: Flags and Ensigns – Union Jack; 2002: London Bridges 1st; 2003: Coronation 1st ▸

2008



Pantomime
Design: So Design Consultants

2009



Stained Glass Windows
Design: Osborne Ross

(Cecil Beaton Coronation portrait); 2004: Woodland Animals – Red Squirrel 1st; 2005: Trooping the Colour 1st; 2006, 2007 and 2008: Lest We Forget Poppy stamp; 2009: British Design Classics – Concorde; 2010: Mammals – Dormouse; 2011: Royal Wedding 1st; 2012: Lest We Forget – Poppy; 2013: Royal Portraits – Pietro Annigoni; 2014: First World War – Poppy; and 2015: Bees – Great Yellow Bumblebee.

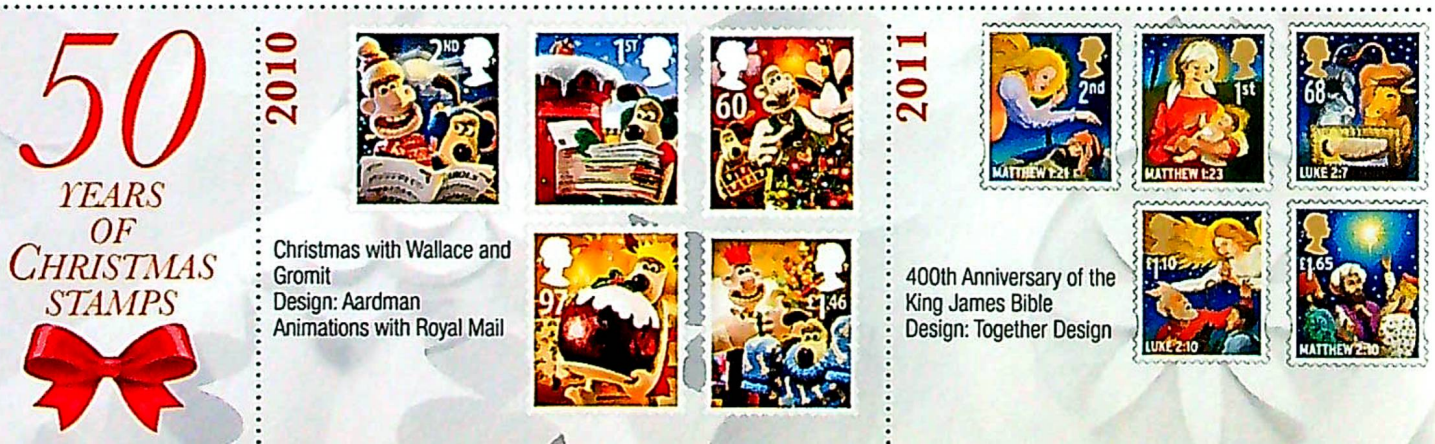
Readers' views When I became *Bulletin* Editor in 1988 it was suggested to me by the Head of Royal Mail Stamps that we make more of the Poll and invite readers' comments. We would publish a selection of comments, good and bad, to stimulate debate on stamp design. The invitation was issued with the 1989 poll and readers did not hold back. Some comments were pithy, some verbose, others were well-reasoned artistic criticism. I read all the comments on the voting forms, between 1,800 and 2,300 each year, and a selection of comments were published annually for the Polls of 1989 to 1994. I looked at some comments recently and found them interesting and in some cases amusing. One reader voted for the 1991 Dinosaurs stamps as they reminded him of his mother-in-law! My favourite (if unpublished) comment came from a lady who waxed lyrical over a Christmas issue (if my memory is correct), saying that every time she looked at the stamps, she noticed something new in the design, possibly with a hidden meaning. She found the stamps fascinating, though her husband 'didn't see it, but then he's a daft old sod!'.



A reminder: the voting form for the 2016 Bulletin Favourite Stamp Poll is included with this edition of the magazine. The closing date for voting is 31 January 2017

On occasion readers were inspired to verse – on the 1989 Birds and 1992 Tennyson sets, and 1993's Autumn and Sherlock Holmes issues (published in June 1990, April 1993 and May 1994). There were unflattering comments on some issues, notably the 1991 Europe in Space and 1992 Single Market stamps, and some Millennium sets: readers liked the concept of Millennium issues, but were not happy with many of the designs. In 1996 we asked readers to suggest famous people they would like to see on British stamps. Some 1,700 names were put forward, with Brunel topping the list, followed by Lord Montgomery of Alamein, Edward Elgar, Charles Dickens, Alexander Fleming and the Duke of Wellington. The top woman nominated was Jane Austen in tenth place.

The results of the poll were always eagerly awaited by Royal Mail's Stamp Design team and by the Stamp Advisory Committee, to see how collectors regarded their choices. From 2009 readers were able, most years, to vote online as well as by traditional post. Interestingly Design Classics and Celebrating Wales came first and last with both sets of readers. Now I look forward to the results of the 2016 poll, and seeing how my own favourite sets and stamps fare •



S... is for stamp dealers

Colin Baker reveals how stamp dealers used envelopes to promote their products and even boast about the size of their business premises

We have already seen how the stamp dealer Whitfield King tried to give his customers a greater variety of stamps when sending out orders, lists and so on. He was not alone, but neither was he the most prolific of dealers, operating at the end of the 19th and into the 20th century, trying to please their clients in this way. That honour probably goes to Alfred Smith of



Fig 1



Fig 2

Fig 1 Alfred Smith envelope showing his business premises in Bath
Fig 2 Alfred Smith envelope following the dealer's move to London in 1896

Bath. Smith set up a stamp dealing business in the city in the second half of the 19th century. At the time, only definitive stamps were available for postage, and in the early 1880s he started to use stamp to order envelopes with his contact details printed on the front. About ten years later Smith included an engraving of the building that he worked from. In his enthusiasm to show how successful he was, Smith exaggerated the size of his business, suggesting the whole block was occupied by him and that it even had his name in huge letters projecting from the roof. The reality was ▸

2012



Design: Webb & Webb Design Ltd

2013



Art competition stamps
Illustrations: Molly Robson (1st Class) and Rosie Hargreaves (2nd Class)
Madonna and Child Paintings
Design: Robert Maude and Sarah Davies

much less exciting. He probably occupied one small part of the building, perhaps a shop front, and certainly the building did not carry his name. If you ever go to Bath you can still see the building where he operated. It stands directly opposite the Roman Baths. The building is indeed huge, the size of a large department store. No Victorian stamp dealer was ever that big.

Another stamp dealer who used envelopes showing his business premises was Hugo Griebert, who sold stamps from his shop in Bishopsgate, London. He decided to have just one value of stamp embossed on his envelopes, 6d, and it is not clear today why he chose this value. It was not a normal postage rate for either inland or for overseas destinations, and Griebert would either have had to add adhesive stamps or paid too much when using his envelopes.

William Brown had a stamp shop in Salisbury and he also used envelopes illustrated with an engraving of his price list. H L'Estrange Ewen, who at one time had a shop in Swanage, Dorset, and the French stamp company Winch Frères, which had premises in Colchester, also used envelopes to advertise their range of products.

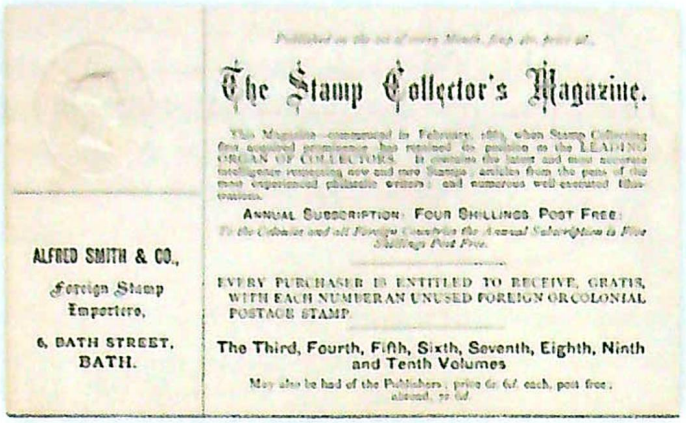


Fig 3

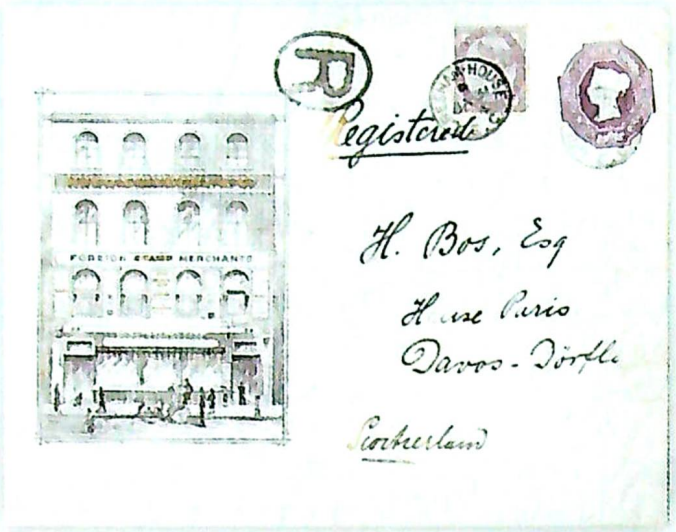


Fig 4

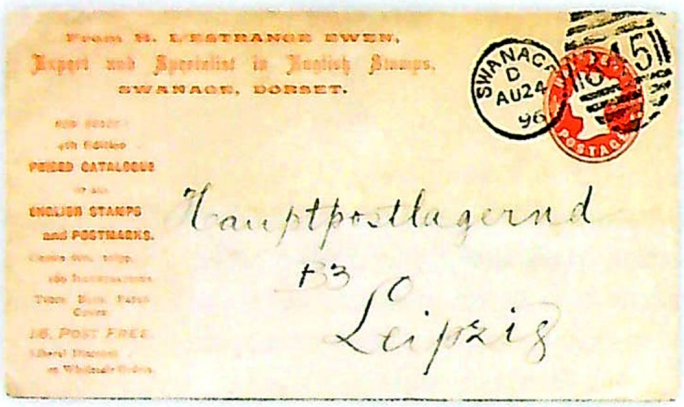


Fig 5



Fig 6



But other stamp dealers were not so generous to their clients and they used cheap cut-outs, stamps cut from postal stationery that could be bought at their face value. These included some postcards, especially those produced for foreign destinations, newspaper wrappers and telegraph forms. Although cut-outs had been banned in 1870, they were allowed again from 1905, which gave these dealers the chance to give their clients something special. One prolific user of cut-outs was Oswald Marsh who operated from Norwood in south London. Marsh also had parcel labels stamped for his use, and used an illustrated envelope showing a fashion model, envelopes that he no doubt picked up cheaply, which he believed would make his letters more appealing.

The story of stamp dealers and postal stationery is not quite finished, for there was another man who took cut-outs to a new level. But we shall have to wait until we come to the letter W in the A-Z series before we meet him ●

Fig 3 Alfred Smith ½d pink postcard advertising his philatelic magazine
Fig 4 The Hugo Griebert envelope with a picture of his shop in Bishopsgate, London
Fig 5 Envelope from H L'Estrange Ewen who had premises in Swanage
Fig 6 A parcel post label for H L'Estrange Ewen. 6d was the rate for a registered parcel weighing up to 2lbs, so it probably paid for a stamp album
Fig 7 A 2d envelope uprated to the foreign letter rate for Winch Frères



Fig 7



Fig 8

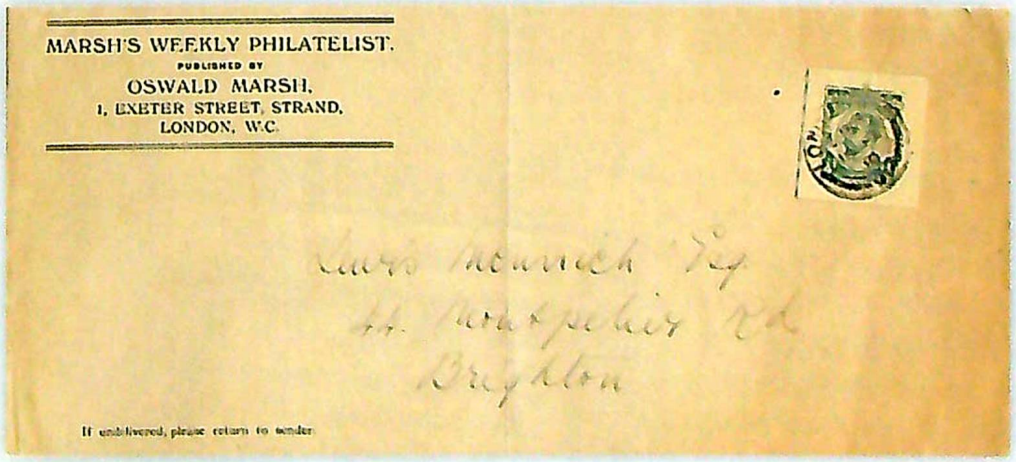
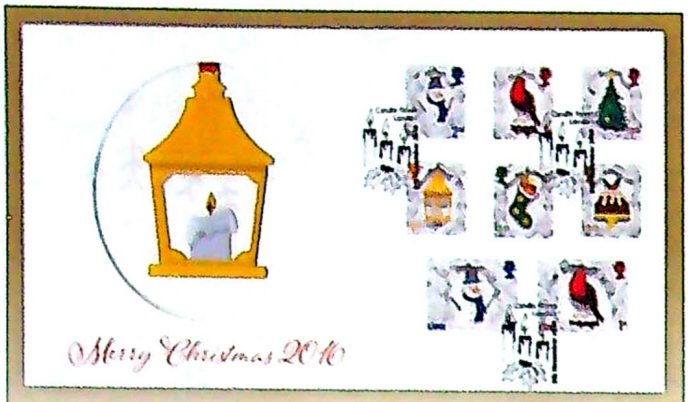


Fig 9

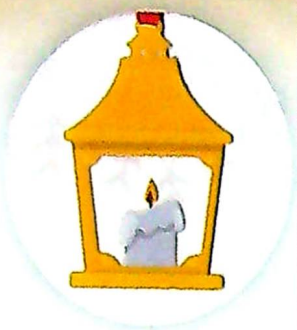
Fig 8 Oswald Marsh's odd illustrated envelope with a 1½d cut-out
Fig 9 An Oswald Marsh wrapper enclosing his price list. The ½d stamp has been cut from a postcard



Design: The Chase







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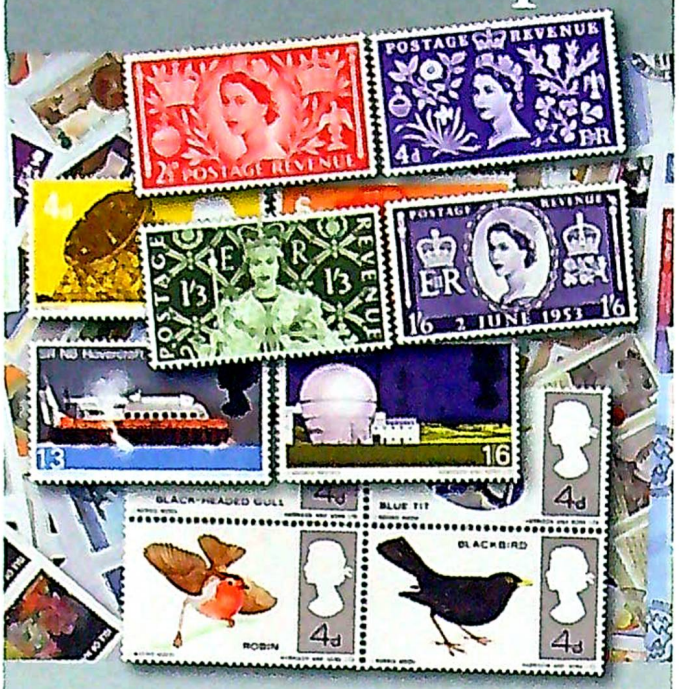
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Duplication consternation

Duplication of stamp issue topics is just not on but Royal Mail does not seem to object. Agatha Christie and Beatrix Potter are repeat topics, and so is Pink Floyd, only covered in 2010. I now hear the Music Greats Special Stamp series, which began with Pink Floyd in July, is to be continued. If so, could Royal Mail cover classical as well as rock and pop? Instruments would also make fascinating stamp subjects. And what about BBC Young Musician of the Year? This year's winner was cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason. How does a cello-shaped stamp sound?

The mind boggles at the possibilities. But no more Pink Floyd please!

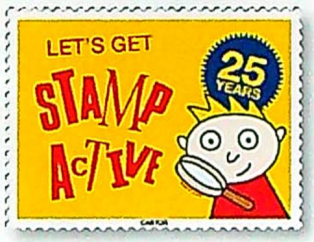
Colin Peachey, Hertfordshire



While Royal Mail tries to ensure that new issues are fresh, some topics are so popular that the Stamps and Collectibles team believe they are worth revisiting in detail, presenting different aspects of the subject.The 2010 Pink Floyd album cover stamp was one in a set of nine featuring other artists. This time, the stamps set focused solely on Pink Floyd album covers and the mini-sheet on Floyd gigs.

We encourage readers to suggest stamp subjects, as you have done with aplomb. And the Bulletin has also carried a voting sheet for shortlisted subjects.

Kate Shaw, Publishing Editor



Actively seeking...

At Autumn Stampex my nephew noticed labels on display which marked the 25th anniversary of Stamp Active. Are these still available?

A Drake, Wakefield

Absolutely. They come in sheets of ten, cost £1 each plus £1 p&p, and are available from: John Davies, Stamp Active, 3 Longfellow Rd, Banbury OX16 9LB. Please include a self-addressed envelope and cheque made payable to 'Stamp Active'.

Vintage archives

As a relatively new subscriber, I am always intrigued by references to *Bulletin* articles from many years ago. For example in Volume 51, May 2013 I found John Holman's article about the Kirkwall-Inverness/First Flight covers very interesting and he referred to articles on this subject by Richard Beith and James Mackay in the *Bulletin* of May 1994. I may have to start hunting for these older editions on eBay, but it would be great if there was an online 'e-version' archive. Does such a service exist?

David Holbrook, by email

Never fear, Mr Holbrook, such a service is in the making. Go to www.bpb.london/0594, for example, and you will find the May 1994 article that you are looking for. Enjoy the read...

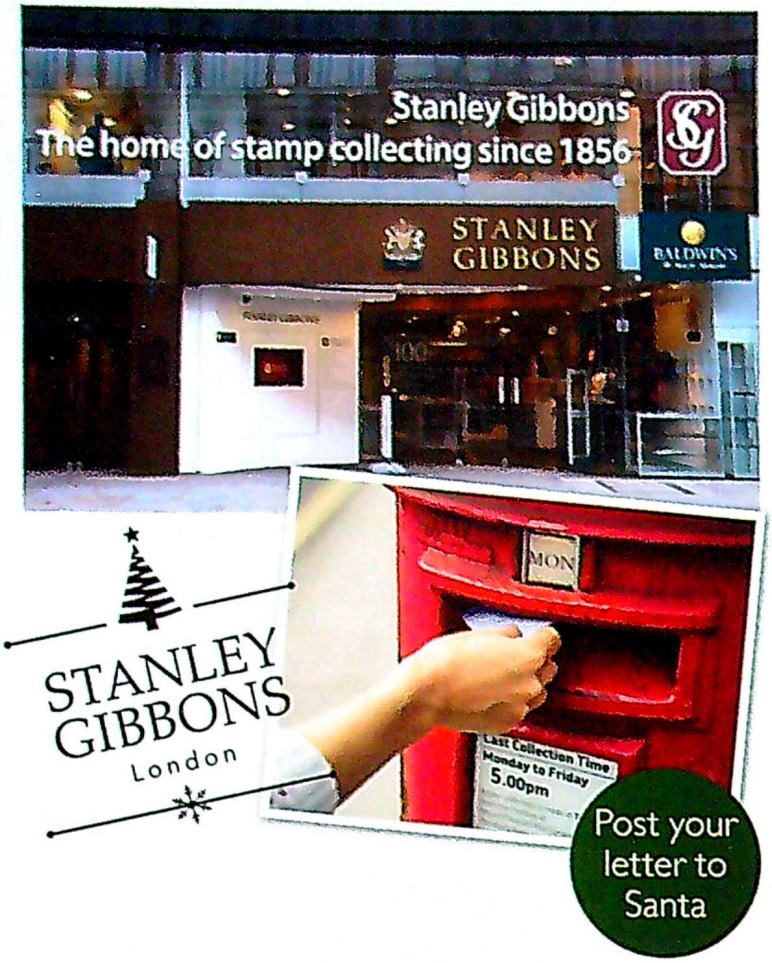
Your vote counts...

Make your voice heard and vote in the 2016 *Bulletin* Favourite Stamp Poll, using the voting form enclosed with this edition. We are also trialling a mobile phone-friendly online voting form at www.bpb.london/poll



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Royal Mail stamp issues and withdrawals

31 December	**Withdrawal** 2015 Annual Collections.
7 January	**Withdrawal** Shackleton and the *Endurance* Expedition: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1, 2 x £1.33, 2 x £1.52, se-tenant pairs), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (8 in set).
17 January	**Issue** Ancient Britain: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.05, 2 x £1.33, 2 x £1.52, se-tenant pairs), Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir, Stamp Cards (8 in set). Preview on page 68 of November *Bulletin*.
17 January	**Issue** Smilers® Album Continuation Pages, Standard Album Continuation Pages.
6 February	**Issue** 65th Anniversary of the Accession of HM The Queen: £5 Large Sapphire Blue Machin Definitive, Presentation Pack, 3 x £5 Coin Covers (Brilliant Uncirculated, Silver Proof and Gold Proof).
15 February	**Issue** Post & Go Royal Mail Heritage – Mail by Rail: self-service stamps in six designs, Collectors Pack. Preview on page 100.
15 February	**Issue** Windsor Castle: Stamps (3 x 1st Class, 3 x £1.52), Limited Edition Exhibition Miniature Sheet only available at Stampex (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.33), Miniature Sheet (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.33), Press Sheet (16 Miniature Sheets), Presentation Pack, Stamp Book, Prestige Stamp Book, Stamp Souvenir, Stamp Sheet Souvenir, Stamp Cards (11 in set), Medal Cover. Stamp design feature in January *Bulletin*.
17 February	**Withdrawal** Royal Mail 500: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards.
17 February	**Withdrawal** 175th Anniversary of the Penny Red: Generic Sheet, Smilers® Sheet for Personalising, Prestige Stamp Book, Smilers®.

Order philatelic items, including all the stamp products listed above, at www.royalmail.com/stamps or from Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Telephone order line (08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday): 03457 641 641. From overseas: +44 131 316 7483. We would advise you to quote **17BUL9**, the *Bulletin* media code. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15.

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Information about Royal Mail products is the latest available at time of going to press. Issue dates shown in advance may be subject to change. Stamps are not shown to scale. Stamp sizes are listed on Royal Mail Preview pages.

Royal Mail

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COMING NEXT MONTH

The future is philately! In your New Year edition of *Bulletin*...

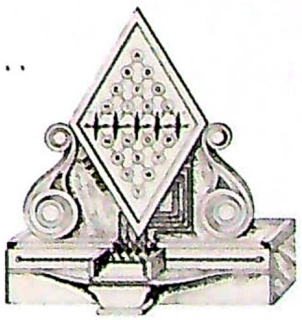
Hot dates: Royal Mail's 2017 stamp calendar and John Holman's events round-up



Special Stamp preview: Windsor Castle set revealed

January issue: the intriguing history behind the Ancient Britain stamps





Done to a T: Baker's A-Z tackles T for 'telegrams'


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