

Bulletin

Results of annual stamp poll
• Jeffery Matthews, designer

JEFFERY MATTHEWS' first stamp designs were issued by the Post Office in 1965. Since then he has designed many special issues and denominations of the Machin stamp, establishing his reputation for craft and precision of the highest order. This month, Glenn Morgan concludes his look at the designer's long career, and the fine balance of creativity and meticulous care embodied in his intricate works of postal art.



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Just a few of the many stamps designed by Jeffery Matthews during his lengthy career. Glenn Morgan brings his story up to the present on page 241. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

Availability All items available from Royal Mail Tallents House (address below). Selected items are available at Post Office branches and Post Office philatelic outlets at the main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, Lichfield, London (Eastcheap & Trafalgar Sq), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Princes Risborough, Southampton (High St and Hedge End), Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro and York.

Royal Mail Tallents House 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK. Telephone order line (08.30-17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641; from overseas +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/shop

31 March	Withdrawal British Journey series (Scotland, N Ireland, Wales, South West England, England) stamps, presentation packs and stamp cards
31 March	Withdrawal 50p definitive, sand colour, issued 1 April 1997
31 March	Withdrawal Welsh airletter – single and discount pack, issued January 2005
1 April	Issue Machin definitives: 15p, 56p, 81p, plus 9p reintroduced at Post Office branches; 50p and 81p country stamps for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; definitive presentation pack (15p, 56p, 81p); Country pack (50p & 81p each country)
1 April	Issue Centenary of the Territorial Army commemorative sheet and medal cover
15 April	Issue Insects stamps, pack and stamp cards
13 May	Issue Cathedrals stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards, press sheet, St Paul's medal cover
13 May	Issue 'Ice Cream' stamp book: 4 × 1st gold definitives, 2 × Beside the Seaside 1st class
14 May	Withdrawal Beside the Seaside stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards
16 May	Withdrawal Wembley Stadium miniature sheet and Memories of Wembley generic sheet
22 May	Withdrawal Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, England definitive coin covers (issued November 2004-April 2007). Please note that the Country Definitive Coin Cover Collection remains on sale.

Contents



Bulletin readers decide With all the votes now counted, we announce the special stamps and authors you chose as your favourites (and least-favoured) of last year **238**

Issues and withdrawals for March to May 226

Stamp scene News and events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted 228



Royal Mail news Postal rate changes; 2008 and 2009 issues; Centenary of the TA; Medal covers and ingots; PIP stamps; BPMA news 232



Prize draw Win one of six mystery prizes 236

Thematics Addresses and events for thematic collectors 237

Philately online Ron Negus revisits a site for collectors of ships 240



Mainly Machins Report for specialist collectors, by Douglas Myall 246



Guernsey's Yearbook This year's look behind the scenes of Guernsey Post's special issues 250

An essential library A recommended reference list by Richard West 251

Competitions A chance to win a Yearbook 254

Events 254

Late news 255

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Stamp scene News and upcoming events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted



Glenn Morgan

An Post The Irish Post Office has followed the 'preferences and comments made by our loyal collector-base' and will be restricting its stamp issuing programme to around 40 stamps per year. They are also actively working on reducing this number in future years.

It will also be positively addressing what it refers to as the 'thorny issue of the availability of commemoratives at all Post Offices'. To achieve its objectives, it may be necessary to limit the availability of less high-profile issues to a smaller number of offices. It goes on to state that 'the simple reality is that stamp sales at most Post Offices do not warrant the availability at these offices of over 40 stamps in any year'.

The above information was in the 01/08 issue of *Irish Stamps: Collectors News*. I consider that An Post is to be congratulated on its transparent coverage of these matters of such importance to many postal administrations and collectors of modern stamps.

The postage stamp is rapidly becoming no more than just another collectible, fighting for sales among a sea of other options. Clearly 'one-off' rather than 'one of everything' sales will be of increasing importance to many administrations – and if they can ideally all be sold from a central facility rather than locally, then so much the better. How sad ●

Organ donors At a time when Gordon Brown is considering making organ donation 'opt-out' instead of the current 'opt in' arrangement, Australia Post has issued a stamp that recognises organ and tissue donor week. The stamp was designed by Sydney-based designer Nigel Buchanan. He uses colour in the design to illustrate the interface between life and death. The heart held out on the figure's palm represents the extraordinary act of giving. Apparently, Australia currently has one of the lowest organ donation rates in the developed world, but one of the highest transplant success rates. Stamps are clearly still seen as a major communications and awareness tool by Australia Post ●

French Polynesian Postal Museum As many postal administrations are cutting back on non-essential expenditure, it is good to see that the French Polynesian Post Office (OPT) is hoping to open a postal museum this year. La Poste in France is understood to be a partner and contracts have already been signed. It seems that all records held in Paris relating to Polynesia may be either lent or sold to them in the near future to add to an already impressive stock of material held securely in safes by OPT ●

Concorde Study Circle Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ; email brianasquith@talktalk.net

Concorde Study Circle Interest in this great plane continues unabated, in spite of its premature demise. The latest 32 page A5 newsletter contains details of many new Concorde postcards, telephone cards, medallions and, of course, stamps. Contact Brian Asquith (left) for membership details ●

RAF 90th anniversary sheet The Isle of Man Post Office has celebrated the 90th anniversary of the Royal Air Force with a first for the island. It has issued a most attractive limited edition (just 500 numbered copies) Business Customised Sheet including all six postage stamps in their RAF series, together with labels and marginal design by Adrian Bradbury.

Being limited to only 500, the sheets cost £30 each, which includes postage and packing to anywhere in the world. Cheques should be payable to A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3RA, or visit www.bfdc.co.uk typing 26820 in the Quick Search Box ●

Events Britain's National Thematic Stamp Exhibition, Thematica, is to be held at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on Saturday and Sunday, 28-29 June. Seymour Street is off Edgware Road, close to Marble Arch. Admission to Thematica is free, and the exhibition is open from 10.30 to 17.30 on Saturday, and from 10.30 to 17.00 on Sunday. As usual there will be a wide range of dealers, from many parts of the world, offering an unrivalled array of thematic material. Younger visitors are always welcome, with special activities and a 'goody' bag for all. Once more there will be a souvenir sheet designed by Jeffery Matthews, given free to every visitor. In addition to the dealers, competition entries will be on display. The competitions are: John Fosbery Thematic Trophy (for those who have not won a medal in the thematic class at a national or international exhibition, 16 sheets, no entry fee, judged by the visitors to Thematica); British Thematic Association Trophy (32 sheets, judged to national competition standards, £15 entry fee); Inter-Federation Thematic (Federations are invited to submit an entry of 16 sheets); Barclays Cup (for young collectors, with the focus on originality of a theme or presentation, three age groups: up to and including 8 (4 sheets), 9-12 (8 sheets) and 13-18 (16 sheets)). Entry forms for all competitions are available from Brian Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher, Surrey KT10 0QG and must be returned by 10 May ●

The 2008 Picture Postcard Show will be held at the Royal Horticultural Society's Lawrence Hall, London SW1, 28-30 August. The show includes major displays relating to the centenary of the Franco-British Exhibition (by Bill Tonkin and Don Knight) and the London Olympics of 1908 (Bob Wilcocks). The Olympic Collectors Society has recently published Mr Wilcocks's book *1908 Olympic Games – the Great Stadium and The Marathon*. An article, by Bob Wilcocks, on the 1908 Games was published in the *Bulletin* in October 1988 ●



NPS Membership details are available from Peter Mellor, Honorary Secretary, National Philatelic Society, c/o British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Telephone 020 7239 2571, or email nps@ukphilately.org.uk

Stamp Lover Congratulations to the National Philatelic Society on its magazine *Stamp Lover* having reached its centenary year of publication. The Society was established in 1899 by the journalist Fred J Melville, who was then aged just 17 years. The magazine has appeared regularly without a break since 1908, even through two world wars.

Currently it is ably edited by David Alford, and is issued six times per year in February, April, June, August, October and December. The magazine is sent free to NPS members as part of their annual subscription and members may submit a free classified advertisement for their wants and sales in each issue (circulation around 1000 copies). Each issue contains a selection of articles on various aspects of the hobby, news about the Society's activities, reports on recent philatelic auctions and details about forthcoming philatelic exhibitions at home and abroad.

A recent issue included features on: The Post Office at War, based on Christine Earle's fascinating display at the October 2007 meeting; some musings from 'Old Codger' as he encounters a small cache of letters; New Issues Spotlight; H E Quinton reflecting on pre-Stampex days; and Derek Diamond looking at different approaches to selling stamps. Jeremy Martin provides a Checklist for Philatelic Speakers, Programme Secretaries (and Listeners); David Hunter's 'From Sugar Cane to Cane Sugar' explains all with the assistance of the stamp album; and Peter Mellor looks at the 1920s stamps of the Leeward Islands. Other useful features include a Checklist of Articles in the British Philatelic Press, January to June 2007, and a Stamp Fairs Diary to help plan your visits.

So, as you can see, there is a wide range of interesting features, and the June issue is expected to be a bumper souvenir edition worthy of a place on every true collector's bookshelves – of which more in a forthcoming edition of the *Bulletin* •

ABPS enquiries For further details about the show visit www.harrogate2008.org.uk

Information on the Harrogate International Centre, places to stay in Harrogate, and travelling to Harrogate, can be found at HIC's website www.harrogateinternationalcentre.co.uk

ABPS Harrogate 2008 This is your final reminder about this show, which promises to be a fine successor to the previous events, from Newcastle in 1996 to Croydon last November (see January *Bulletin*). Harrogate 2008 will be held on 2-3 May at the Harrogate International Centre (HIC). The HIC is one of the world's leading venues for conferences, exhibitions, banquets and entertainments – centrally located within the cosmopolitan North Yorkshire town of Harrogate. Around 40 dealers will be in attendance. At the time of going to press, the following events and displays were planned.

SPONSORED DISPLAYS (in the foyer): HM The Queen – Modern Commonwealth; GB Penny Blacks and Line Engraved (Alan Holyoak); Portugal (John Dahl); and South America (John West).

SOCIETY STANDS (in the main hall): Channel Islands Specialist Society; Falkland Islands Philatelic Study Group; Faroe Islands Study Circle; Scandinavia Philatelic Society; South African Collectors' Society; British Thematic Association; and TPO and Seapost Society.

SOCIETY MEETINGS (in the Kings Suite, adjacent to Hall Q): National Philatelic Society (2 May); Great Britain Philatelic Society and Postal History Society (3 May).

RECEPTION AND AWARDS DINNER To be held on Friday 2 May at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Kings Road, Harrogate at 19.00 for 19.30. Dress: dinner jacket or dark lounge suit. Four-course meal with coffee, price £30 each.

A Judging Critique will be held on Saturday 3 May, 10.30. It is now too late to consider entering this show competitively, but there will be plenty to see, for I suspect there will be a large number of entrants at this event, which represents the last opportunity for British exhibitors to qualify for the London 2010 Festival of Stamps.

Try to attend if at all possible, as a great deal of effort goes into putting on these events, and I understand that Harrogate is an especially pleasing destination ●

Planete Timbre 'Planet Stamp' is going to be held at Parc Floral on the outskirts of Paris, from 14-22 June this year. There will be a website at www.salondutimbre.fr which at the time of compiling this Stamp Scene was shown as still being under construction.

However, I understand that there will be stamp dealers, Post Offices including La Poste, international competitive displays (in 800 frames) and activities for children such as acrobats, storytellers and magicians.

It is the third such show, held every other year, at the French equivalent of the British Kew Gardens, so it is in a lovely setting. It has a new name this time, but will still include the Mail Art, calligraphy and workshop features that were so popular in 2006. The floor space covers a total of 22,000 square metres, giving plenty of room for the large numbers of visitors expected. Another good excuse to visit Paris, although last time my retina detached during the show, so I have mixed memories! ●



Europa The theme of this year's Europa stamps is the Letter, and the EUROPA logo features on the 1st class Working Dogs stamp issued in February, which shows a dog carrying a letter. Jersey Post has issued four stamps featuring letters – 35p Thank You Letter, 39p Love Letter, 43p Letter to Santa Claus, and 76p Family news letter. The EUROPA logo is included on the 39p and 43p values. The stamps were designed by Jennifer Toombs and printed by Enschedé. The set costs £1.93, or £2.83 in a presentation pack, plus postage £1.65 UK, £1.85 Europe, £2.65 rest of world, from Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey JE1 1AB; telephone 01534 516320 ●



Auctions Spink will hold an auction of GB stamps and postal history on 15 May, followed by stamps and covers of the world on 5 June. Enquiries to Spink, telephone 020 7563 4008, or see website www.spink.com ●

Machin Forum A visit to <http://stamp-collector.co.uk/MachinForum> (note lack of the usual www. prefix) will reveal a site dedicated to anyone interested in writing about the Machin definitive – and not just the British ones! At the time of viewing there were 40 registered users who had already submitted 169 entries. As usual with these types of forums, much of it is of minimal value, but there is always the odd gem within, so it is probably worth looking at the site every so often •

For details of the BRPSG write to the Treasurer, Allan Rendle, 23 More Close, St Paul's Court, London W14 9BN, telephone 020 8741 8857, or e-mail allanrendle@hotmail.com

Royalty on stamps The December Newsletter of the British Royal Portraits Stamp Group includes a review of recent stamps featuring The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, Princess Diana, Queen Margrethe of Denmark and King Bhumibol of Thailand, as well as past monarchs of England and the Netherlands. There is also the result of research into portraits used on George VI Coronation stamps •

Stamp Preview I am trying to complete my collection of this Royal Mail publication and am missing the following: 1, 10-13, 35-36, 42-43, 62, 75, 78, 86, 89, 98, 113 and 160. If anyone has spares of these issues, they would be appreciated. Postage will be reimbursed. Please send to me c/o British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ •

Royal Mail news Postal rates • New issues and products • Special issue programmes

New postal rates New rates will come into effect on 7 April. Basic 1st and 2nd class inland rates (standard size to 100g) will increase to 36p and 27p, letters to Europe (up to 20g) 50p, and worldwide airmail (to 10g) 56p.

Three new definitives will go on sale on 1 April – 15p shocking pink, 56p lime green and 81p sea green; also new 50p and 81p country stamps in existing 48p and 78p designs. The 9p definitive (orange) will be reintroduced at Post Office branches. The 9p stamp is not a new issue, and will not be cancelled with the first day postmark. All of these stamps are printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 200.

A new definitive pack will be available containing the 15p, 56p, and 81p values, price £2.05. A country pack will be issued containing all the new 50p and 81p stamps, price £5.80, not £5.75 as stated last month.

The 14p, 46p, 54p, and 78p definitives, and 48p and 78p country stamps, will be withdrawn from sale at Post Office branches on 5 April (6 April if open on Sunday) prior to the postal rate increases from 7 April.

The 12p, 42p, 44p, 72p, and £1 (mauve) definitives will go off sale at Talents House and philatelic outlets on 4 June, as will the 2nd class stamp in sheets of 200, printed by Walsall and issued in 1997, and the 6 × 1st book with Machin panel issued June 2007. The 2006 44p and 72p country stamps for England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and the pack containing these stamps, will also be withdrawn on 4 June.

**Definitive range from 7 April**

1p, 2p, 5p, 9p

10p, 15p, 16p, 20p

2nd (27p), 1st (36p), 2nd
Large Letter (42p), 48p50p, 1st Large Letter (52p),
56p, 81p

£1, £1.50, £2, £3

£5, European letters to 40g
(72p), worldwide postcards
(56p), and worldwide letters
to 40g (£1.22)

The definitive range from 7 April is shown above. Availability at PO branches may vary according to local demand. The £1.50-£5 values are available from Royal Mail Direct (for business customers) and from Tallents House (philatelic customers). NVI (non value indicator) stamps are sold in books •

2008 issues The special issues are listed below, with the alternative First Day of Issue postmarks. Miniature sheet is abbreviated 'ms' ●

15.04 **Insects** Crawley, West Sussex

13.05 **Cathedrals** London EC4

10.06 **Carry On and Hammer Films** Bray, Maidenhead, Berks

17.07 **Air Displays** Farnborough, Hants

26.08 **Olympics Handover** to be announced

18.09 **RAF Uniforms** London NW4

29.09 **Country Definitives anniversary** (MS) to be announced

14.10 **Women of Distinction** Aldeburgh, Suffolk

04.11 **Christmas** Bethlehem, Llandello

06.11 **Lest We Forget** (MS) London SW1

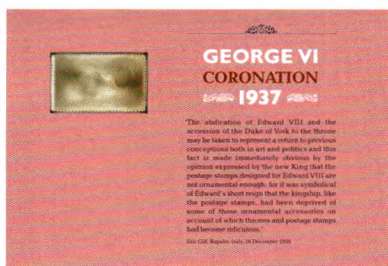


Territorial Army centenary A new philatelic product, known as a Commemorative Sheet, will be available from 1 April, to mark the centenary of the Territorial Army. It will comprise ten 1st class Union Flag stamps with appropriate labels attached. Five labels give facts about the TA, the other five feature TA soldiers in action. The sheet is supplied in a pack with details of TA involvement in various theatres of war, including the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq. The sheet and the pack were designed by True North design agency and the sheet was printed by Cartor in litho. Price £13.50. A further 'Olympic' commemorative sheet will be issued in June.

A joint Royal Mail Royal Mint Territorial Army centenary medal cover (above) will also be available from 1 April, price £14.95. The cover features a soldier in action and bears the three 1st class Army Uniforms stamps (September 2007) cancelled by a special Wilton Salisbury handstamp. Erskine Barracks, Wilton is the Headquarters of the Army's Land Command. The cover contains an interesting and well illustrated filler card with a history of the TA and medal specification. Limited edition of 15,000 covers ●



Toodles pip... The 1st and 2nd class standard-size definitives in the PIP (Pricing in Proportion) design of 2006 are to be withdrawn from philatelic sale on 4 June. This comprises the stamps issued in coils, business sheets (self-adhesive) and standard sheets of 200 (gummed), also the 6 × 1st, 12 × 1st and 12 × 2nd stamp books issued 12 September 2006. The 'Large' PIP 1st and 2nd class stamps remain on sale ●



The King's coronation towards the end of the 1930s. The King and Queen in coronation robes. The King's coronation was a major event, and the stamps were not taken up. The Post Office had put its months to select the postage and print the new definitives and the George VI Coronation cover. Without the King's approval, it had no longer a halfway of an honour either spot.

Medal Covers and Ingots A medal cover marking the 300th anniversary of St Paul's Cathedral will be available from 13 May.

A Machin 'coin medal' cover will be available from 5 June, commemorating the 40th anniversary of the introduction of the first decimal coins, designed by Arnold Machin. A 40th anniversary Machin stamp cover was issued last June – see the May 2007 *Bulletin* for illustrations of the 2007 Machin product range.

Royal Mail regrets that the ingot featuring the 1948 Olympic Games 1s stamp, which was scheduled to go on sale on 29 April, has now been cancelled. Instead, an ingot reproducing the 5s White Cliffs of Dover stamp (1951) will be available later in the year – date to be announced. Shown above is the 1937 Coronation ingot; others in the series feature the Edward VIII 1d and George VI 1d and 5s (1939) definitives. These ingots are still available, priced £27.95 each •

British Postal Museum & Archive Readers are reminded that there is still time to see the exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the introduction of the Machin stamp at the BPMA in London. This remains on show until 18 April. Another BPMA Machin exhibition is now on display at the Wedgwood Visitor Centre, Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent – see the Events listing on page 254 for further details.

A new exhibition, entitled 'Lions, Leopards, Unicorns & Dragons: The First "Regional" Stamps', opens at the BPMA on 6 May – this commemorates 50 years of the Regional (Country) Stamps. The BPMA, located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL (near Mount Pleasant), contains the collections of the former National Postal Museum and Post Office Archives. For further information contact the BPMA on 020 7239 2570 or see website www.postalheritage.org.uk •

BPMA For more information telephone the BPMA on 020 7239 2570 or see website www.postalheritage.org.uk

Coming off sale The Beside the Seaside stamps, pack, and stamp cards will be withdrawn from sale on 14 May, and the Machin miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards, generic sheet and prestige and retail books on 4 June •

Insects stamps Please note that following the postal rate increase (7 April), the Insects stamps (15 April) will now cost £3.60 a set, presentation pack £4.10, and serviced FDCs £4.71 UK, £4.01 overseas •

2009 issues The issues for 2009 are shown below. Prestige books will be issued for the Design Classics, Darwin and Navy Uniforms sets, and a Treasures of the Archive book will go on sale in May. Exact dates of issue, stamp values, and other information will be published nearer the time of issue. Miniature sheet is abbreviated 'MS' •

January	Design Classics (10 stamps)	June	Mythical Creatures (6 stamps)
January	Robert Burns (MS)	July	Olympic Disciplines (10 stamps)
February	Charles Darwin (6 stamps and MS)	August	Postboxes (MS)
March	Celebrating Wales (MS)	September	Fire Brigade (6 stamps)
March	Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution (8 stamps)	September	Navy Uniforms (6 stamps)
April	Kings & Queens Part 2 (6 stamps and MS)	October	Best of British (10 stamps)
May	Action for Species Part 3 – Plants (10 and MS)	November	Christmas (7 stamps and MS)



Storing the Bulletin Binders and box files are available for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*. The sturdy box files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin* are available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £9.95 each. Order codes PB349 (Philatelic), PB350 (Postmark). The files will store 30 copies of the Philatelic and about 50 of the Postmark Bulletins. The traditional binders for the Philatelic (BB001) and Postmark (PB322) Bulletins cost £8.50 each •

Airletter text alteration The sender's name and address text on the back of the standard airletter is being repositioned. It will be moved slightly to the right so that it isn't covered by the sealing flap. This change is to be found on discount (starred) airletters with the MSE342/07 printing reference on the flap. The change will be made to other versions of the airletter when next reprinted •

Bulletin back issues D Davis offers a run of the *Bulletin*, from August 1985 to December 1992 in four binders. Contact him at Hideaway, Falkland Drive, Newbury RG14 6JQ.

Mr B Williams offers a run of the *Bulletin*, volumes 3-22 (1965-85), all with indices, free to anyone who can collect from Ferndown, Dorset. Contact him on 01202 871651 •

Special draw Win one of six Mystery Prizes

FOR THIS MONTH'S DRAW we again offer six interesting mystery prizes. For a chance to win one, simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Mystery Prize Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ to arrive by 30 April. Five runners up will win packs of the Insects stamps •

Thematics Useful addresses and upcoming events for thematic collectors

IN FEBRUARY we reported on a successful Euro-thema exhibition held in London last November. As promised we now include this list of thematic clubs and societies affiliated to the British Thematic Association (BTA). These organisations publish useful journals and newsletters, and provide worthwhile services for their members.

Thematic events The Glasgow Thematic Society will celebrate its 60th anniversary on Penny Black Day, 6 May 2008. This Society was the first club of its kind in Britain. Although there are numerous thematic societies catering for collectors of individual themes, there are even now only two other localised general groups like this and they are both based south of the border. The founder and first President was Captain Philippe Durand, a well-known figure at the Philatelic Congresses, who consistently promoted this branch of philately. When he began, such activity was considered childish. However, his various themes, including 'The History of Canada', 'Women and Children', 'Sport and Recreation' and 'Fire', made it clear just how much thought and research went into his presentations.

The celebrations will include two exhibitions – one at The Mitchell Library, Glasgow from 6–31 May, and one in the form of 'Railing Art' in the Winter Gardens at The People's Palace Museum in Glasgow (25 April–30 May). The connection with The People's Palace is particularly appropriate as Captain Durand was for many years the Curator. On 5 May there will be a dinner at which Brian Sole, the President of the British Thematic Association, and his wife Anne, will be guests of honour.

The BTA AGM will be held on Sunday 29 June 2008 at Carrisbrooke Hall, 63 Seymour Street, London W2. It will be held in conjunction with Thematica (28–29 June). After the AGM, Barry Stagg will give a display on parachutes. A further meeting, to be held on Saturday 26 July, at the Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, will feature thematic displays in the morning, followed by an informative thematic workshop in the afternoon.

For details of the BTA contact P Denly, 9 Oaklands Park, Bishops Stortford CM23 2BY or see www.brit-thematic-assoc.com •

Alba Stamp Group (Scottish stamps) S Brown, 14 Buchan Drive, Perth PH1 1NQ; telephone 01698 2622364

Bicycle Stamps Club B J Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG; telephone 01372 467652; e-mail brian.sole@btinternet.com

Bird Stamp Society Mrs R Bradley, 31 Park View, Crossway Green, Chepstow NP16 5NA; telephone 01291 625412

Captain Cook Society I Boreham, 21 Marlborough Road, Ipswich IP4 5AT; telephone 01473 713774

Concorde Study Circle B Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ; telephone 020 8643 3926

Glasgow Thematic Society M Lyth, 26 Gardenside Street, Uddington, Glasgow G71 7BY; telephone 01698 812536

Guild of St Gabriel Rev D C Hague, 15 Northcote Road, Croydon CR0 2HX; telephone 020 8755 2867

Masonic Philatelic Club M H Beazley, 216 West Dyke Road, Redcar TS10 4JS; telephone 0642 472123; e-mail mandmb@ntlworld.com

Medical Philately Study Group T Wilson, 24 Cheriton Court Road, Folkestone CT20 3JP; telephone 01303 239116

NE England Thematic Group D Graham, 6 Autumn Close, Washington Village NE38 7JZ; telephone 0191 417 5351

Scout & Guide Stamp Club T Reed, 10 Falconwood Close, Fordingbridge SP6 1TB

Ship Stamp Society T Broadley, 10 Heyes Drive, Lymm WA13 0PB; telephone 01925 758435

Thematic Association of New Zealand Dr G Russell, 33 Palm Avenue, Hokowhitu, Palmerston North 4410, New Zealand

W England Thematic Society Mrs M Claydon, Hazelhurst, Tiverton Road, Bampton EX16 9LJ; telephone 01398 331731

The Cambridge Philatelic Society and Worcester & District Philatelic and Postcard Society are also BTA affiliates.

Results of 2007 Bulletin readers poll

Last December you were invited to vote for your favourite 2007 set of special stamps, favourite individual stamp, FDC design and presentation pack of 2007, also your favourite Bulletin contributor. This was our 22nd annual stamp poll and a good response was received from over 1000 readers worldwide. Our thanks to all who voted. Some of you added comments (short, lengthy and in a few cases very lengthy) about the stamp designs and about special stamp issues in general. All these comments are being circulated to senior staff in Royal Mail's Stamps & Philatelic section so they are aware of readers' views.

Favourite set As always, points were allocated for each vote for the set: three points for first choice, two for second, and one for third. This gives us a clear view of the relative popularity of each issue. The voting was as shown opposite. The Birds set was the clear winner – over 750 points more than the second favourite set, Sea Life.

Past winners were: 1987 Flowers; 1988 Linnean Society; 1989 Birds; 1990 Queen Mother; 1991 Maps; 1992 Wintertime; 1993 Autumn; 1994 Age of Steam; 1995 Christmas; 1996 Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; 1997 The Great Tudor (Henry VIII); 1998 Lighthouses; 1999 Scientists' Tale; 2000 Tree and Leaf; 2001 Weather; 2002 London Bridges; 2003 Extreme Endeavours; 2004 Woodland Animals; 2005 Trafalgar; and 2006 Brunel.

Favourite stamps For the second year running the poppy stamp from the Lest we Forget miniature sheet was your favourite individual stamp with 150 votes (compared to 358 votes for its 2006 predecessor) – exactly twice the number of votes for the second favourite stamp, the Houses of Parliament 78p from the Celebrating England miniature sheet. The Avocet stamp from the Birds issue was shortly behind in third place, with 72 votes.

For the record, the previous favourite individual stamps were: 1996 Wildfowl and Wetlands 19p; 1997 The Great Tudor (Henry VIII) 26p; 1998 Endangered Species 20p; 1999 Scientists' Tale 64p; 2000 Above and Beyond 19p; 2001 Flags – Union

Jack; 2002 London Bridges 1st Class; 2003 Coronation 1st (Cecil Beaton's Coronation portrait of The Queen); 2004 Woodland Animals 1st class Red squirrel; 2005 Trooping the Colour 1st class; and 2006 Lest We Forget Poppy stamp.

Favourite FDC envelope and presentation pack

This was the second year that a poll included your favourite Royal Mail FDC envelope and presentation pack designs. The four favourites for each were: FDC – Harry Potter (53 votes), Birds (36) and Beatles and Scouts (34 each); presentation pack – Harry Potter (40 votes), Army Uniforms and Diamond Wedding (39 each) and Birds (38).

Favourite Bulletin authors

This was the 12th year that we asked you to vote for your favourite *Bulletin* author. Douglas Myall was yet again your favourite for his respected 'Mainly Machins' articles, with the late James Mackay in second place, just ahead of Ron Negus and Dorothy Martin. As usual there were some kind comments on individual authors and articles, in particular James Mackay. The *Bulletin* is indeed fortunate in having a good team of freelance writers.

Draw winners All voting forms went into a prize draw, and 2007 Yearbooks have been sent to: N Archiapatti, Italy; Mrs Schindler, Tyne & Wear; D McLellan, Oxfordshire; B Needoff, London; and J Wong, Essex.

Online poll For the first time, the stamp poll was also conducted online for collectors to vote for their favourite set of stamps. As with the traditional poll, 3 points were awarded for 1st choice, 2 points for second, and 1 point for third. The totalled votes are shown opposite.

It is interesting to see the different results of the postal and online voting. Only the Birds issue was in the top three on both counts.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *My thanks go to my colleague Sarah Jones for totaling up the voting figures and extracting the voting forms bearing your comments •*

Poll results The number following each value is as shown in the December *Bulletin*. Stamp numbers 5, 6, 8, 15, 19, 33, 34, 36, 38, 49, 50, 55, 57-66, 68, 70, 83, 85, 88, 100 and 104 received no votes.

**FAVOURITE STAMPS**

Lest We Forget 1st 107	150
Celebrating England 78p 40	75
Birds 1st 78	72
Birds 1st 73	57
Celebrating England 78p 39	43
Christmas 2nd 105	39
Diamond Wedding 1st 98	33
Seaside 78p 46	31
Diamond Wedding 1st 89	24
Seaside 1st 41	18
Diamond Wedding 1st 95	18
Birds 1st 75	17
Seaside 54p 44	14
Sea Life 1st 2	13
World of Invention 1st 28	13
Birds 1st 74	13
Diamond Wedding 1st 9	12
Machin Anniversary 1st 48	11
Scouts 1st 67	11
Diamond Wedding 1st 97	11
Birds 1st 82	8
Diamond Wedding 54p 91	8
Seaside 46p 42	7
Birds 1st 77	7
Army Uniforms 78p 86	7
Sea Life 1st 11	6
Sea Life 1st 12	6
Sea Life 1st 13	6
Army Uniforms 78p 87	6
Sea Life 1st 18	5
World of Invention 72p 31	5
Seaside 48p 43	5
Grand Prix 64p 51	5
Beatles 1st 1	4

Beatles 1st 2	4
World of Invention 1st 27	4
World of Invention 64p 29	4
Birds 1st 76	4
Birds 1st 79	4
Diamond Wedding 78p 94	4
Beatles 1st 10	3
Sky at Night 50p 23	3
Sky at Night 50p 24	3
Seaside 69p 45	3
Grand Prix 72p 54	3
Scouts 48p 69	3
Birds 1st 80	3
Diamond Wedding 54p 92	3
Diamond Wedding 69p 96	3
Christmas 2nd 99	3
Christmas 1st 101	3
Beatles 64p 3	2
Beatles 64p 4	2
Sealife 1st 14	2
Sealife 1st 16	2
Sky at Night 1st 22	2
Sky at Night 72p 26	2
Machin Anniversary 1st 47	2
Scouts 78p 72	2
Army Uniforms 1st 84	2
Diamond Wedding 78p 93	2
Christmas 1st 102	2
Christmas 78p 103	2
Christmas 1st 106	2
Beatles 1st 7	1
Beatles 1st 9	1
Sealife 1st 17	1
Sky at Night 1st 21	1
Sky at Night 72p 25	1
World of Invention 64p 30	1
World of Invention 72p 32	1
Slave Trade 50p 35	1
Slave Trade 72p 37	1
Grand Prix 64p 52	1
Grand Prix 72p 53	1
Harry Potter 1st 56	1
Scouts 69p 71	1
Birds 1st 81	1

FAVOURITE SETS: BULLETIN POLL

Birds	1326
Sea Life	562
Beside the Seaside	471
Diamond Wedding	466
Army Uniforms	313
Beatles	285
Sky at Night	263
Slave Trade	250
Lest We Forget	238
Christmas	235
World of Invention	172
Scouts	171
Celebrating England	156
Harry Potter	112
Machin Anniversary	102
Grand Prix	91

FAVOURITE SETS: ONLINE POLL

Beatles	1587
Harry Potter	1379
Birds	1033
Sky at Night	934
Sea Life	885
Lest We Forget	860
Beside the Seaside	728
Diamond Wedding	702
Celebrating England	539
Grand Prix	533
Christmas	512
World of Invention	401
Slave Trade	396
Army Uniforms	383
Scouts	338
Machin Anniversary	280



Right: Douglas Myall



Philately online Ron Negus revisits another thematics site



Ships on Stamps Unit

America on Topic at Association
American Philatelic Society



Home (13542097)
Watercraft Philately
(13522047)

Japan Watercraft Philately
(13720498)

Local Activities
(11769200)

New Ship Stamp
(13522047)

Ship Topic Pages
(13522047)

Publications
(13692072)

Dedicated to the study of philatelic material pertaining to watercraft on stamps; to sharing knowledge; to encouraging the growth of the hobby and to supporting the preservation of our maritime heritage.



Collecting ships on stamps is an enjoyable way to vicariously travel the Seven Seas on the smallest lake without leaving the coast of a boat. The Ships on Stamps Unit of the American Topical Association would like to share (via the many ways that you too can enjoy the most enjoyable of hobbies. This page will tell you something about ourselves and how to begin making the seas a command of your own fleet. Welcome aboard!

Merry Christmas to all with these ships shown on Christmas stamps of the world

www.shipsonstamps.org The page headed 'Links' on this site provides details of other websites of interest to collectors of ship stamps. There are also non-philatelic links to maritime sites, such as naval museums, and useful reference sites about books that could be used for research.

years, in date order. This is an excellent aid for users who wish to check quickly if anything in which they are particularly interested has been added or amended recently.

Even for collectors who do not include ships amongst their interests, the part of this site that is entitled 'Ship Topic Pages' will be found worthy of some attention. This section now contains 83 subject headings, an increase of 30 from my previous visit to the site. Clicking on any of these will reveal a set of web pages giving a thematic overview, with coloured images of stamp designs and accompanying text about the selected subject. These mini displays cover maritime history, types of ships, discovery and exploration stories, and more.

An example of the type of displays to be found here is one which explains the different types of storms encountered at sea, and the ways in which different techniques of seamanship are needed to counter them.

Another small display features the numerous stamps which have been issued covering various aspects of the *Titanic* disaster. The use of ships during the D-Day landings forms the subject of another small display. In the discovery section, there is a display about the Pilgrim Fathers' voyages with the *Mayflower*, others about the three journeys made by sea in the Pacific by Captain Cook, and yet another which talks about Vasco da Gama's explorations to India.

For the specialist collector, a couple of articles on maritime postmarks, and on paquebot cancels, can be found here. The Cinderella collector is also catered for, with a piece that describes the Great Bitter Lake Locals. These non-postal items were employed by the sailors who were stranded on fourteen ships that were held up by the closure of the Suez Canal in June 1967, during the Israel-Egypt war •

IN LAST MONTH'S COLUMN, I looked at a site that provided information for those who collect Birds on Stamps. This subject was considered to be one of the most popular, according to Stanley Gibbons Ltd. Another topic that attracts a wide circle of enthusiasts is Ships on Stamps. It was the focus for a Gibbons' thematic catalogue, whose latest updated edition appeared in 2001, and the subject also has a website devoted to it.

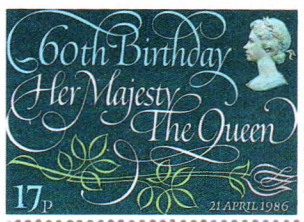
This excellent website is managed by the Ships on Stamps Unit of the American Topical Association (address given above). I reviewed it in the *Bulletin* in April 2004, and it has been maintained regularly since that time, with some small changes to layout and content. Amongst the new features is a notice of the release of an updated publication called *Watercraft on Stamps 11* in the American Topical Association handbook series, plus an announcement about a CD-ROM. This latter format has been chosen to reproduce all the pages of the first 52 volumes of *Watercraft Philately*, the bi-monthly magazine of the Unit, which has been published since 1953. Indexes have been created, and the resulting disc is a major source of information about individual ships and maritime philately generally.

Details of new ship stamps which have been issued over the previous four years are given on the site, and are listed by the month of issue. The Unit also produces separate publications about the topic, and full details are provided. Ordering information accompanies the reference for each title. A helpful addition to the site is a listing of all the changes made to its content in the last few

Jeffery Matthews: designer Part two, by Glenn H Morgan FRPSL

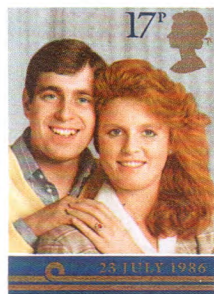
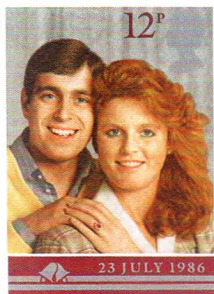
Definitive colour changes 1984 It has always been Jeffery's desire to reaffirm and strengthen Arnold Machin's original concepts for the Machin definitives, namely a light head appearing against a dark background. For many reasons, this concept had been violated on many occasions and so in 1984 work began on creating what soon became known as the 'Matthews Palette'. Originally, 30 colours were submitted to Royal Mail (in two separate tranches of 15 colours), with three additional colours supplied around 1997/98. The 2007 Ruby-coloured £1 stamp is also Jeffery's work, but, instead of using coloured pigments as previously, coloured films were utilised to get the desired shade.

College of Arms Quincentenary 1984 This set had lots to include within the design – the Queen's head, explanatory text, face value and a complicated design. Jeffery therefore asked Royal Mail whether it would be possible to introduce a new format for British stamps. Trials undertaken at Harrisons revealed that this was feasible and the now familiar square shape was born. Originally, gold and silver metallic inks were going to be included on the heraldic elements, but with the high number of colours already needed for each stamp design, yellow and white/grey was substituted. This is deemed to be perfectly acceptable in heraldic terms.



60th Birthday of HM The Queen 1986 Initially favouring a calligraphic approach for this set, the idea emerged that one monochrome image from each of the six decades of The Queen's life would be an interesting treatment. Clearly, six images on a single stamp would not have worked, so Jeffery obtained permission from Royal Mail to produce two se-tenant stamps with three images on each, along with his hand-drawn text.

Jeffery had a friend who worked at a repro-house, so he discussed the possibilities of using a computer to create the designs. He set about selecting the black-and-white photographs, made his layouts, drew the titling and then handed these component parts to his friend, who manipulated them on-screen, enabling Jeffery to instantly make alterations to the position of the heads, size and colour. This is quite possibly the first time that CAD (Computer Aided Design) techniques had ever been used to produce a British commemorative stamp. ►



Jeffery chose the computer route because he had been concerned that if visuals were produced by hand in his normal manner, the portraits would not be true likenesses and the Stamp Advisory Committee would be distracted by this. He therefore chose to produce as near-perfect finished designs as was possible, which the committee clearly appreciated because he later learned that he had received a round of applause from them. Following approval of the designs, the data file containing final artwork was made available to Harrison, but it soon became apparent that the equipment was incompatible. It was therefore necessary to revert to the creation of traditional artwork after all!

Royal Wedding 1986 Jeffery favoured a black-and-white photographic approach with monochrome colour tinting, in a horizontal format. Various roughs had been produced, which had found favour with Royal Mail and so development work was undertaken in readiness for creation of final artwork. However, late in the day Prince Andrew offered an attractive colour photograph of the couple that he 'suggested' could be used. This meant a total rethink because the image was not only in colour, but was portrait in format. Jeffery devised an insignia and a coloured band across the foot of each stamp to differentiate the values, resulting in a pleasing pair of stamps.

Flower Photography 1987 Jeffery was responsible for the composition of this set of stamps to show the photographs of Alfred Lammer to best effect.

Tercentenary of the Revival of the Order of the Thistle 1987 The style was the same as had been used for the highly successful English Heraldry set. Interestingly, and perhaps surprisingly, the 34p crest incorporates a strand of DNA within its design. Whilst heraldry is deemed to be an ancient art, it is fascinating to see how it can symbolise a modern discovery like DNA.

150th Anniversary of the Penny Black 1990 Many different treatments were made for the adaptation of the Machin stamp for this important anniversary, including use of elements from the original 1840 stamp. Eventually the simple approach worked best, stripping out all unnecessary embellishments and leaving just the two Monarch's heads. Achieving the correct composition was apparently far harder than the end result might imply.

Stamp World Exhibition miniature sheet 1990 Jeffery's 'double head' anniversary 20p stamp was used, but he did not design the sheet margins.



Self-adhesive definitives 1993 See New Definitive Stamps (last month), for details about the work that resulted in this redesign, which first appeared in stamp booklets and afterwards in coil boxes.

The Queen's Beasts 1998 This issue saw Jeffery interpreting the shapes and angles of the shields, and moving the angle of the animals to bring some life and movement to the designs. ►





The Stamp Show 'Matthews Palette' miniature sheet 2000 Jeffery and Royal Mail's design director of the day, Barry Robinson, were walking to Trafalgar Square one day following a luncheon at St James's Palace discussing the forthcoming stamp show and what Royal Mail intended producing to mark the event. Barry mentioned use of the JM logo, Jeffery's artists' palette, that there would be eight current definitive stamps together with a couple of labels in a souvenir sheet format, using colours chosen from the palette by the designers of the Royal Mail exhibition stand. By the time Jeffery got home, it had become obvious that Barry had been commissioning him to produce something, despite his somewhat laid-back approach. The next day he rang Barry, who confirmed his intentions, and so Jeffery set about designing a sheet. When the item came out it was apparent to him that he had, in effect, designed something commemorating himself, for it was marketed as a commemoration of Jeffery's contribution to British stamp design. This was a rare honour for a living person, and is probably without equal anywhere else in the world.

End of the Second World War miniature sheet 2005 This commission required Jeffery to include the 25p 'Searchlights Over St Paul's' stamp from the 1995 Peace and Freedom set (re-valued as 1st class), together with five gold 1st class Machins, which he set in a v (for Victory) shape. These were placed on a background of British troops and locals celebrating the end of the war, the image of which had been used on the 2nd class stamp of the same series. He expressed his pleasure at being involved with such an issue.

40th Anniversary of Machin Definitive Stamps miniature sheet 2007 We are now up to date with Jeffery's latest issue for Royal Mail. It is so appropriate that a person who has been such a major influence on the appearance of our definitive range of stamps through his work on the typeface, heraldic devices, colours and layout for more than three decades should have been so involved. He worked in conjunction with Katja Thielen, a Director of Together Design, to create the composition for the Miniature Sheet on-

THE MACHIN DEFINITIVES



FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

screen, as had been done with the Queen's Birthday issue of 1986. The embossing idea for the central imagery of Arnold Machin and for the 4d stamp was by Katja. Jeffery expressed both surprise and disappointment that the Smilers sheet omitted this subtle but enhancing feature.

With time fast running out, there was little opportunity for questions but Jeffery said that he had no future work planned for Royal Mail at this point and that, 'yes', he had produced designs that were not proceeded with down the years. Asked how he manages to balance the 'aesthetic with the operational', he confirmed that this is always difficult, but essential to overcome and often involves compromises, long discussions and printing trials.

He finished by stating that he hopes there is no need for further colours in the 'Matthews Palette', as he feels he has run-out of 'paint'! This is partly because there are parts of the colour spectrum that are simply unsuitable for use on stamps, such as light yellow, where there is insufficient tone.

A few days later I was able to ask if he has ever designed stamps for other countries – a question that I had often wondered about. It transpires that he had produced for Harrisons a piece of artwork depicting a building for use in a Trinidad and Tobago stamp design in the early days of his career.

In 1990 he produced artwork to mark the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black. This issue comprised six stamps and a miniature sheet in a stamp book for the Marshall Islands on behalf of Uncover Corporation, the stamp agent for this US Trust Territory. A large block of Penny Blacks was selected as the background for the sheet and it was purely good luck that the stamps scaled-down exactly to fill the space available on the sheet.

Despite being as busy as ever, Jeffery is really in retirement. Notwithstanding, I hope that he will be commissioned by Royal Mail to produce additional new stamp issues to grace our albums – especially if they were to feature Welsh and Irish heraldry, which have yet to be covered by the Special Stamps programme.

On behalf of *Bulletin* readers, and the many philatelic admirers of his work, I wish Jeffery a 'Happy 80th Birthday' ●

Mainly Machins Douglas Myall's specialist



Visit www.royalmail.com/lovesmilers
upload a photo and start sending yours.



Valentine book I begin this month's article where I finished the February one with some more comments on this year's Valentine book issued on 15 January. This has four gold Machin 1st class NV1s and two Love Smiler stamps, each with a label attached. Yes, attached is the right word despite there being die-cut separations between label and stamp. These are incomplete at top, bottom and centre. The result is that lifting the stamp brings the label with it although they are easily detached. If you received a Valentine with only the stamp you may not know who sent it, but you can tell where they got the stamp by the appearance of these short imperforate sections at the left. The definitives in last year's Valentine book were the PIP design; this year they reverted to the pre-PIP Machin design. Another difference is that although the pattern of hearts on the strip at the right of the booklet, which can be seen even when the books are closed, is the same, it was printed in red and pink last year but is light and dark gold this year.

In my February article I said that Royal Mail regards these Smiler stamps as special issues. This is wrong; they are officially treated as definitives and routinely sent to customers who have a standing order for definitives. The line between definitives and special issues has been further blurred with the issue of the Northern Ireland miniature sheet on 11 March.

Celebrating Northern Ireland This new sheet was issued a few days before St Patrick's Day, giving the public time to use the stamps on the right day. Unlike the sheets for England and Scotland, it was printed in lithography instead of gravure. The make-up pattern has also been altered: the two long special issues depicting the country's patron saint and a view of the capital city or other significant landscape are still there, but the nature of the two small stamps has changed. In the Scotland and England sheets, these were the normal country pictorial 1st-class NV1 definitive and a new NV1 depicting the country's flag. In the latest sheet, these show two more landmarks with new images, neither of them used hitherto for definitives. This raises in acute form the question: Are they definitives or special issues?

There is no universally accepted definition of a definitive. The most important difference between a definitive and a special issue (some of which commemorate events or people) is that the latter are on sale for relatively short periods while the former are usually on permanent sale, as far as that

collector's report



can be said to apply to postage stamps. It is not just a matter of size. The first small GB stamp that was undoubtedly a commemorative (as they used to be known) was the 4d stamp issued on 12 September 1957 to mark the 46th Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference. The most recent were last year's Christmas stamps. So if a large Greetings stamp is not a definitive it does not become one just because it is re-issued in small format. How were Greetings and similar stamps described when they were first issued?

Greetings, Smilers and Occasions stamps The first Greetings stamps were issued on 31 January 1989 in books of 10; the five images depicted Cupid, a rose, a yacht, a bowl of fruit and a teddy bear. Their purpose was to 'promote the sending of postcards and greetings cards' and to complement a card or letter. The December 1988 *Bulletin* stated that they would be on long-term sale and that 'collectors will have to make their own decisions about how, where and whether they fit into their GB collections.'

The second book of Greetings stamps was issued on 6 February 1990. This time 10 images depicted smiles, including the Cheshire cat and the Mona Lisa. Even the book cover had a smile-shaped cut-out. Other Greetings stamps followed with different subjects, one of the longest-running featuring flowers. The last were issued on 3 August 1998. Whoever thought of smiles as a subject could not have known what he was starting.

The first stamps officially named as Smilers were launched at the London Stamp Show 2000. These used the 1990 Smiles stamp images attached to private labels or the show logo. In the *Bulletin* of April 2000 they were described as 'Greetings stamps', possibly because of their origin.

The first Occasions stamps were issued in sheets on 6 February 2001. The five NV1s featured 'hallmarks' on the themes of Love, Thanks, ABC, Welcome and Cheers. They were intended for 'use on social mail in the manner of Greetings stamps'. Others followed in subsequent years with themes such as New baby, Hello and Love.

In a sense, therefore, all three types are Greetings stamps, but in their small format they are now all officially Smilers. In fact, the words 'Smiler' and 'Smilers' are trade marks registered at the UK Intellectual Property Office since 29 October 2001 for a wide range of goods and services, including, of course, postage stamps. ►

The Smiler stamps were reduced to definitive size (with correspondingly larger labels) 'in response to suggestions by customers' in September 2005 and a book of six self-adhesive 1st class NV1s was issued on 4 October 2005. The six definitive-size designs used for this were: the Teddy bear greeting stamp of 1990, the 19p Christmas robin of 1996, one of the 1997 Flower greeting stamps, the 'Union Jack' flag stamp of 2001 and the Love and Hello occasions stamps of 2002. These six stamps were described in the *Bulletin* of August 2005 as 'pictorial definitives', thus providing, for the first time, the official answer to the question posed above. A similar book of six was issued on 28 February; this time it was announced as 'a book of six of Smilers stamps'. Maybe we need a new term for this third kind of stamp. As stated when the first Greetings stamps appeared, it is for each collector to determine if and where they fit into his collection, but they need a name for them, avoiding both 'definitive' and 'special' because of their ambiguity. They could use Smilers despite its registration as a trade mark, but I favour 'social stamps' myself or maybe 'occasional stamps' to include those on the Northern Ireland sheet. You might be able to suggest a better term.

Glorious Northern Ireland The fourth in this series of generic sheets was issued on 11 March. Like its predecessors the stamps and labels were printed in lithography by Cartor. The stamps are the country's 1st class pictorial definitive but differ from the sheet stamps by being self-adhesives (this country's first) and in having no simulated ellipses.





The four new Machins and eight new country pictorial stamps issued on 1 April. The 9p converts a 2nd class letter to 1st class; the 15p will uprate a 2nd class letter to Large Letter; 56p is the 10g 'rest of world' (outside Europe) letter rate; and 81p is the new 20g rest of the world rate.

Twelve new definitives Most of the tariff changes effective from 7 April will be accommodated by the five existing NVIs but new definitive stamps issued on 1 April 2008 are required for other duties. Four are Machins, and eight are country pictorial definitives in existing designs but with new values. The Machin values are 9p orange, 15p shocking pink, 56p lime green and 81p sea green. The two values for the four countries are 50p and 81p. All were printed in sheets in gravure by De La Rue. At the time of writing I do not know the cylinder numbers, but by the time you read this they will have been published on the Late News page of the March *Bulletin*.

The 9p reprint serves to convert a second class letter to a first class one. It is from a new colour cylinder; the value is set lower in the frame compared with that of the previous orange stamp. Up-rating a 1st class letter to a large letter now costs 16p so the existing stamp of that value will continue in place of the 14p. Up-rating a 2nd class letter to a large letter now costs 15p, hence the new stamp.

Since the abolition of the £ stamp there has always been a single value stamp for letters to Europe. This is now 50p and the existing light grey stamp will meet this new duty. However, new 50p stamps were required for the country pictorial series. Airmail zones 1 and 2 have been merged into a single Rest of the World (ROW) zone. There is an existing NVI for postcards but since it has that word printed on it, it will not do for the 10g letter rate; hence the need for a 56p stamp. There is also an existing NVI for letters up to 40g; it now costs 2p less than before. The 20g rate has increased from 78p to 81p and five new stamps of this value have been issued, one a Machin and the others as country pictorials.

Six of the eight new country sheet stamps were printed in pairs from double pane cylinders, but with unusual layouts. The left panel, normally with no dot cylinders, printed one value and the right panel, normally with dot cylinders, printed a different value. Moreover, values for different countries were printed in tandem in this way. The three arrangements were: Scotland 50p + Wales 81p; Wales 50p + N Ireland 50p and Scotland 81p + N Ireland 81p. As a consequence, 'dot' cylinder blocks of these six stamps do not exist ●

ONCE AGAIN Guernsey Post is to be congratulated on an interesting and well produced yearbook containing their 2007 stamp issues. The book, entitled *Bailiwick of Guernsey Stamps: The Complete 2007 Collection*, opens with a brief introduction from the Guernsey Post Chairman, Mr Dudley R Jehan, who states that 'our collectors deserve nothing but the best'. The book gives the background story to eight stamp issues: Battle for the Falklands, 125th anniversary of La Societe Guernesiaise, Europa – Centenary of Scouting, British F1 World Championships, Endangered Species – Mountain gorilla, Royal Diamond wedding anniversary, Sea Guernsey, and Christmas plus four issues from Alderney – Ramsar wetlands, Passerines (birds), Corals and Anemones, and Rudyard stories are well-told and the technical details are clear, perforation, etc), and the first day of issue postmark that La Societe Guernesiaise exists to study the topography, and geology of the Bailiwick of Guernsey – instigator in conservation and preservation on Alderney uses 50 separate areas of land, and the attractive Alderney feature wildlife, a church, coastal scenery and a United Nations officially recognised Alderney's 100 Islands as wetlands of worldwide importance, and of extensive research by a volunteer team of local ornithologists and ornithologists. The subtle designs of the stamps (in a miniature sheet) feature a cushion starfish, a grey seal, golden samphire, and little egret. The book

at the background to Guernsey Post's issues

includes stamp-sized portraits and brief biographical details of the 12 stamp designers. The 76 stamps and four miniature sheets are supplied in packets for insertion in the mounts on the relevant pages. Only when the stamps are in situ can the book be fully appreciated.

The book is, in my view, an ideal size, easy to handle and store, hard-bound with a dust jacket showing coastal scenery on front and back. Two suggestions for making future editions even better – firstly, print the name of the book on a title page, not just on the dust jacket. Secondly, we are given two pages about the attractions of Guernsey, and perhaps we could also have a page or two about the Guernsey postal service and philatelic activity on the island.

The 2007 Guernsey Yearbook is now available from Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Envoy House, La Vrangue, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 1AB; telephone 01481 716486. Price £47.32 plus £1.40 postage and packing. The Yearbooks for 2004, 2005, and 2006 are also still available •

An essential library

Some titles for the GB collector, recommended by Richard West



It is well known that most stamp collectors, while happy to spend on new material, are loathe to buy any literature that might, in fact, help them put together the collection, or to buy wisely based on knowledge. The expense of buying books is often given as an excuse, but this is not really justified given the advantages that using someone else's researches can have on your own collection. Added to which, if you really do not want to buy for yourself, many philatelic societies have libraries – not least those of the Royal Philatelic Society London and the National Philatelic Society. The latter is now housed within the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA), which itself has a library specifically relating to Great Britain. ►



However, whatever your decision, it really is foolhardy not to have a recent catalogue permanently at hand. Stanley Gibbons provides a selection of catalogues specifically aimed at Great Britain collectors, from the basic *Collect British Stamps* to the five volumes of the specialised stamp catalogue (the volumes cover the stamps of Queen Victoria, the four Kings, Queen Elizabeth II pre-decimal, QEII decimal definitives, and QEII decimal special issues). The catalogue editors keep up-to-date with the latest research, so everything that is pertinent will be included within the listings. For many, however, the ideal solution falls somewhere between, with the *Great Britain Concise Stamp Catalogue*. Its listings have a level of detail sufficient for most collectors, aided by thorough illustrations and clear presentation. *British Stamp Market Values*, by the publishers of *Stamp Magazine*, is a similar work.

Your particular interest might mean you need a more specialised work. For example, many focus on the Machin definitives. An excellent two-volume catalogue is *Queen Elizabeth II Specialised Definitives Stamp Catalogue*, which, although published by the Machin Collectors Club, also covers the Wilding issues. This work is not only very detailed, but again the illustrations have been chosen to be of greatest benefit. Always useful has been *The Connoisseur Catalogue of Machin Stamps*, published by B Alan Ltd: sadly it has been some time since a completely new edition was published, but an updated version is expected to be available online very soon – see Stamp Scene in the February *Bulletin*.

The most popular column in this *Bulletin* is Mainly Machins, by Douglas Myall. Douglas is the author of the highly acclaimed *Complete Deegam Machin Handbook* and a range of other ‘Deegam’ publications.

If you collect first day covers, then you will need *Collecting British First Day Covers*, produced by Adrian Bradbury. This details and prices the various cancellations that were available on each first day of issue, and not just for special issues. A similar catalogue – *Collect GB First Day Covers* – is published by Jeffrey Booth. Both these FDC catalogues were reviewed by Glenn Morgan in his Stamp Scene feature in last month’s *Bulletin*.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the Smilers sheets, both generic, as offered by Royal Mail, and the various customised versions. A useful listing will be found in *Customised Stamp Sheets of Great Britain*, published by Ridgewood Publishing.

Many aspects of GB philately are covered by specialised works, such as plating the line-engraved penny stamps of the reign of Queen Victoria, or the excellent *Discovering Seahorses* (namely the King George V high values) by Bryan Kearsley. However, while much has been published relating to stamps of Queen Victoria, sadly the reigns of the four Kings, King Edward VII to King George VI, are generally less well covered in terms of books. Nevertheless, there are other books that provide a fascinating read and the useful background knowledge essential for every collector, and not necessarily just of GB. One example is *Postal Reform and The Penny Black*, written by Douglas Muir, which provides a definitive insight into the reforms of the 1830s leading to the world’s first adhesive postage stamps. A companion title is *May Dates* by Mike Jackson, in which he records all the covers post-



ed in May 1840 bearing the Penny Black, Twopenny Blue, or of Mulready stationery and its caricatures. Further insight into early GB issues can be gleaned from *The British Postage Stamp of the Nineteenth Century* by Robson Lowe, who based this work on the collection of Reginald M Phillips, now housed within the BPMA and which can be accessed online.

While, of course, Royal Mail is constantly changing, a book published in 1985 that provides a useful background to the institution is *Royal Mail: The Post Office Since 1840*, by M J Daunt. If you wish to turn the clock back, however, then *England's Mail: Two Millennia of Letter Writing* by Philip Beale traces developments up to the 17th century and the establishment of the General Letter Office.

If your interest lies with stamp design, then you will enjoy reading Stuart Rose's *Royal Mail Stamps: a Survey of British Stamp Design*. Stuart was Design Director of Royal Mail, and while this account ends over 25 years ago, it covers the period when British stamp policy was undergoing vast changes. In similar vein, the views of David Gentleman are worth reflection, and are recounted in his book *Artwork*. More recently David has contributed a chapter in Douglas Muir's latest work, *A Timeless Classic: the Evolution of Machin's Icon*, in which Douglas reveals the development of the Arnold Machin definitive design.

Of course, for many the interest goes beyond just the stamps. For excellent general works on the postal history of Great Britain, your first reference should be the works of Martin Willcocks, namely his *England's Postal History*, but more especially the series of *British County Catalogues of Postal History* that he compiled with Professor Barrie Jay. The recently published *Collect British Postal Stationery*, by Alan Huggins and Colin Baker, is a very detailed, and fully illustrated and priced catalogue of this collecting sphere that has for too long been without an authoritative book (this new work supplements *British Postal Stationery* by Alan Huggins, published in 1970).

There are several books on the subjects of carrying the mail by rail and travelling post offices, and railway letter stamps. However, an interesting read for everyone is *Mails Under London* by Len Stanway, telling the story of the Post Office systems which used to operate under the streets of London, but which sadly are longer in use. Royal Mail also used to operate Travelling Post Offices, the subject of No 10 in the Philatelic Bulletin Publications series, published in 2004 to mark the ending of the service. Three other Bulletin Publications are still in print – *Castle Definitives* (No 11, 2005), *British Stamp Printers* (No 12, 2006), and *40 Years of Machins – a Timeline* (No 13, 2007). Number 14, on the Regional (Country) stamps, is in preparation.

These few words can provide no more than an overview of what has been published of interest to GB enthusiasts. The message is very simply not to neglect the wealth of research and interest that is available •

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 EDITOR'S NOTE: Some of the titles described here are available from Royal Mail Tallents House – see the advertisement on the back cover of the March *Bulletin*. Tallents House also stocks the Bradbury FDC catalogue, *Customised Stamp Catalogue*, and four *Bulletin* publications.



Competitions Enter for a chance to win the 2007 Yearbook



January identify The detail was from the 63p Ballyronney Post Office stamp of 1997. The winner was M Phillips of Wiltshire.

January knowledge Answers: 1) A Davidson; 2) National Trust 1995 41p; 3) Austrian Philatelic Society. The winner was C de Haer, Australia.

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

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

- 1 In which year were Regional stamps first issued?
- 2 Which famous scientist featured on a 20p stamp in 1996?
- 3 Who was recently chosen by *Bulletin* readers as their favourite author of 2007?

Send your answer (addressed to either the April *Identify* competition or the April *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 9 May will receive the 2007 Yearbook. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs or stamp cards will also be awarded in each competition. The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until 18 April 'A Timeless Classic – The Evolution of Machin's Icon' exhibition at British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570

Until 24 December 'Timeless & Classic: Elizabeth II, Queen & Icon' BPMA exhibition. Wedgwood Visitor Centre, Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent, weekdays 09.00-17.00, weekends 10.00-17.00. **Enquiries** 01782 282 986 (Wedgwood), 020 7239 2570 (BPMA)

29 March Westbex, organised by Thatcham & District PS, at Kennet School, Thatcham. Stamp fair and displays. **Enquiries** Graeme Stewart 01635 866942

11 April Display 'Irish Postal History' by Des Quail to North of Ireland PS, at Hunterhouse College, Upper Lisburn Road, Finaghy, Belfast, 19.00. **Enquiries** Norman Scott, 028 90 795530.

11-13 April Railway Philatelic Group Convention at Premier Travel Inn, Glasgow. **Enquiries** F W Taylor, 01670 760 252.

12 April North of Ireland PS Exhibition and Fair at St Nicholas' Church Hall, Cadogan Park, Lisburn Road, Belfast, 10.00-16.30. Stamps, postal history, books, postcards, etc. **Enquiries** N Scott, 028 90 795530

15 April North of Ireland PS Auction (500 lots) at Hunterhouse College, Upper Lisburn Road, Finaghy, Belfast. Viewing from 17.30, auction starts 19.30. **Enquiries** Norman Scott, 028 90 795530

18-19 April Association of Scottish PSs Congress, hosted by Ayrshire PS, at Dewar's Centre, Glover Street, Perth. Dealers, displays, souvenir cover and handstamp (see March *Commemorative Covers Review*). **Enquiries** www.scottishphilately.co.uk

Late news



A young visitor meets the Rainbow Lorikeets in the new walk-through enclosure at Edinburgh Zoo.

Wildlife stamp event Edinburgh Zoo continues to attract visitors to its displays linking animals and stamps. An event in February consisted of an exhibition with crafts and activities for children involving lots of wildlife stamps. A stamp trail took visitors to animals from around the world. The event was supported by the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies, which also supports and helps with the Wildlife Stamp Club. A new format is being planned for the Wildlife Stamp Club starting in September. It will run on the first Saturday morning of each month except July and August. Details will appear soon on the website – www.edinburghzoo.org.uk •

People news We regret to record the death on 22 February (his 81st birthday) of James Negus, former Stanley Gibbons Catalogue Editor and doyen of philatelic literature studies, a noted indexer, bibliographer and author of the acclaimed *Philatelic Literature* (1995). Mr Negus was once a regular *Bulletin* contributor; his brother Ron writes our 'Philately Online'. Obituary next month.

Occasional *Bulletin* contributor Richard Beith has been invited to sign the Book of Scottish Philatelists, the highest honour of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies. A profile of Richard was published here in October 2006. Ian MacPherson has received the Alex McConnell Medal for his ASPS work and as Treasurer of Glasgow 2000, and Lide Whittle the ASPS Award of Merit for her local society and youth philately work •

Bath Postal Museum has launched 'Weighing in the Post', a comprehensive display of numerous postal balances, or scales. After the introduction of penny postage it was necessary to know the weight of letters, and postal balances were produced in a variety of designs, some very artistic and attractive. If you enjoyed the TV series *Lark Rise to Candleford*, then the display, and indeed the museum itself, will be like a 'peep behind the scenes'. A feature on the BPM was published here in 2007. Enquiries to: Bath Postal Museum, 27 Northgate Street, Bath BA1 1AJ. Telephone 01225 460333 or see www.bathpostalmuseum.org •

Exhibition seminars The Association of British Philatelic Societies will hold seminars on entering for international exhibitions at the Royal Philatelic Society, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1 on 15 April, at 11.00. Dr Alan Huggins and Francis Kiddle will respectively provide guidance and lead discussion on Postal Stationery and Literature Competition entries at International Level. Places are limited, so early booking is advisable. A sandwich lunch will be provided, for which a small charge will be made. Bookings/enquiries: Christopher Oliver, telephone 020 8940 9833 or e-mail olivers.of_ham@virgin.net •

NPS meets at Harrogate The National Philatelic Society, reviving the practice of occasional events outside London, will hold a meeting on Friday, 2 May as part of the ABPS 2008 National Philatelic Exhibition at Harrogate International Centre. The meeting, in the King's Suite (right of the entrance to Hall 'Q') is open to members and non-members. From 11.00 NPS members will mount short displays. The afternoon session, commencing at 14.45, will comprise a talk by Michael Sefi, Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection, about his work and some areas of the Collection •

Competition correction Please note that the 1995 National Trust 41p stamp depicts Little Moreton Hall – not Morton, as was stated in the January *Bulletin* •

Celebrate the centenary of the Territorial Army



TA Commemorative sheet Left: five of the labels attached to the 1st class Union Flag stamps give facts about the TA; the other five feature TA soldiers in action. Price £13.50, order code AV001.



TA Medal cover Above: three 1st class Army Uniforms stamps are cancelled with a Wilton, Salisbury handstamp. Erskine Barracks in Wilton is the Headquarters of the Army's Land Command. An illustrated filler card gives a history of the TA and the medal specification. Price £14.95, order code AM021.

The first in a new series of Royal Mail Commemorative Sheets, available from 1 April, marks the centenary of the Territorial Army. The sheet is supplied in a pack with information about TA involvement in various theatres of war including the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq.

A joint Royal Mail-Royal Mint Territorial Army centenary medal cover will also be available. This features soldiers in action, and bears the three 1st class Army Uniforms stamps cancelled with a special Wilton Salisbury handstamp. The cover contains a well-illustrated filler card detailing TA history. Limited edition of 15,000.

Handling charges: £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 elsewhere.



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