

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Bulletin

Volume 46 Number 8

APRIL 2009 £1.20

Post Boxes issue • Results of
2008 poll • Tudor Monarchs



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Henry VII, the first of the Tudor Monarchs. His son and successor, Henry VIII, is featured on a new Royal Mail/Royal Mint Prestige Medal cover, the second issue in the Monarchs series – see page 232.

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

Issue 17p, 22p, 62p, 90p definitives, 56p and 90p country stamps for England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland. Pack containing four new definitives, pack containing eight new country stamps. (The 54p definitive, rust colour, will go back on general sale at Post Office branches from 31 March; it has remained on philatelic sale since March 2007.)

31 March

Issue 1st and 2nd class definitives with security features: business sheets (standard and Large Letter); books of 6 x 1st, 12 x 1st, 12 x 2nd standard, and 4 x 1st and 4 x 2nd Large Letter

31 March

Issue Post & Go stamps pack

31 March

Withdrawal Country stamps 48p & 78p for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and pack containing these stamps

21 April

Issue Monarchs – House of Tudor stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards, coin cover and commemorative cover

21 April

Issue Stamp book: 4 x 1st definitives, 2 x 1st Mini (Classic Design) stamps • Kings & Queens Prestige Medal Collection No 2

23 April

Issue Castles Generic Sheet No 2 – England

28 April

Issue Silver stamp collection No 3 – 50p Gloucester Cathedral stamp

30 April

Withdrawal Territorial Army Medal Cover

30 April

Issue Smilers for Kids (four packs and theme sheets)

12 May

Withdrawal Cathedrals stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards • Beside the Seaside stamp book

19 May

Issue Plants stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards, maxicards (min sheet stamps) and miniature sheet press sheet • Kew coin cover

21 May

Issue Stamp book: 4 x 1st definitives, 2 x Flowers, commemorating 50th anniversary of NAFAS

Contents



The Last We Forget Poppy, voted the favourite stamp of 2008

Bulletin readers decide

With all votes now counted, we announce the results of our annual poll: the special stamps and *Bulletin* authors you chose as your favourites of last year **242**

The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HC • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.20 each from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group Ltd, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any articles should be sent to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail Letters, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HC • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Westerham Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203 registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

Issues and withdrawals 226

Stamp scene GPO films DVD; New Cartor website; Scottish Philatelic Congress; Thematica Scotland; NE Philatelic weekend; Publications; Dublin Postal Museum and Archive **228**



Royal Mail news New postal rates; new issues and products; 2009 first day postmarks; BPMA exhibitions; Smilers on Facebook **231**

Prize draw Win Castles Generic sheets **234**

Hidden dates Richard West has a close look at the issues of 2007 and 2008 **235**



Post Boxes Royal Mail celebrates 200 years of post boxes, in a special issue on 18 August **240**



British Monarchs The second set in the series: the Tudors, by Karen Foy **244**

Online philately Glenn Morgan on the website of the Letterbox Study Group **248**

Concorde at 40 A look at more material from the collection of Brian Asquith **249**

Mainly Machins Report by Douglas Myall **250**

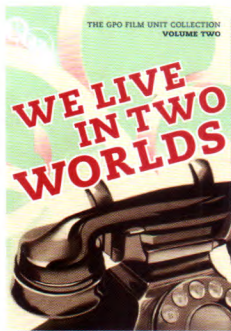
Commemorative covers A review of some of the new covers on offer **252**

Competitions Enter to win David Gentleman's book *Artwork* **254**

Events **254**

Late news **255**

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



Price £24.99. Available from the BPMA at: Product Sales, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London, WC1X 0DL; telephone 020 7239 5125; or at <http://shop.postalheritage.org.uk>

Catalogue number BFIVD759 / E UK / 1936-1938. In black-and-white and colour, with optional subtitles for hearing-impaired. 257 minutes. Ratio 1.33:1.

For further information about the GPO Film Unit project see www.bfi.org.uk/gpo

GPO films on DVD The second of three deluxe double-disc box sets presenting all the key films of the GPO Film Unit on DVD for the first time was released on 23 February. Created in 1933 out of the ashes of the Empire Marketing Board Film Unit, the GPO Film Unit was one of the most remarkable creative institutions Britain has produced. A hotbed of creative energy and talent, it provided a springboard for many of the best-known and critically acclaimed figures in the British Documentary Movement, including John Grierson, Alberto Cavalcanti, Basil Wright and Harry Watt. Their work embraced public information films, drama-documentary, social reportage, animation, advertising and many points in between.

The British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA), in partnership with the British Film Institute National Archive, Royal Mail, and BT Heritage has curated and preserved the legendary output of short films produced by the GPO Film Unit. This second volume covers 1936-38 and represents the Unit at its creative height. It includes much-loved classics such as *Night Mail*, the experimental animations of Len Lye and Norman McLaren, and Harry Watts' first forays into drama-documentary with *The Saving of Bill Blewitt* and *North Sea* as well as other neglected works, many of which will be available for the first time since their original release.

This second DVD set is entitled *We Live in Two Worlds* and is not just important in cinematic terms, but provides a valuable and fascinating insight into 1930s Britain. The discs are presented in a deluxe box with a 100-page bound book containing introductory essays, film notes and selected biographies. Included on the two discs are the following films: *Rainbow Dance*, *The Saving of Bill Blewitt*, *Calendar of the Year*, *The Fairy of the Phone*, *Night Mail*, *Roadways*, *Trade Tattoo*, *Big Money*, *We Live in Two Worlds*, *N or NW*, *A Job in a Million*, *Book Bargain*, *What's on Today*, *Love on the Wing*, *The Horsey Mail*, *The HPO*, *News for the Navy*, *Mony a Pickle*, *North Sea*, *Penny Journey*, *The Tocher* and *God's Chillun*.

Volume one, *Addressing the Nation*, was released last September. Volume three, *If War Should Come*, will be released on 13 July 2009 •

ASPS www.scottishphilately.co.uk

Scottish Philatelic Congress This year's annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies (ASPS), at the Dewar's Centre, Glover Street, Perth on 17-18 April, is hosted by the Edinburgh Stamp Group and the Lothian Postcard Club. The Congress includes the Scottish national competitions, and about 50 dealers will be present on the Saturday. A special Congress cover, postcard, and postmark will be available (see Commemorative Covers, page 253). The Congress, first held at Dundee in 1924, is the major event in the Scottish philatelic calendar, and well worth a visit.

The theme of the 2009 Congress is, not surprisingly, Robert Burns, and the two host societies are celebrating the 250th anniversary of his birth. Congress includes the Tom Rielly Memorial Display, which this year fea-

tures his last remaining collection before it is sold. His collection of Burnside includes postcards, stamps, philatelic covers and items of ephemera – it will fill 10 exhibition frames. Peter Westwood, writer of the Royal Mail Burns presentation pack, and Editor of the *Burns Chronicle*, will give the introduction to the display. Tom Rielly (1932-2001) was associated with both host societies and was a major player in Scottish philately. For details of Peter Westwood's many Burns labels see the January *Bulletin* (page 143).

The ASPS publishes a newsletter, *Scottish Philately*, which gives details of all forthcoming meetings of the 41 member societies and other philatelic events north of the border. To subscribe, send a cheque/postal order for £3 payable to ASPS to: Alan Watson, 44 Rennie Street, Falkirk FK1 5AL •

New Cartor website The security printer Cartor has a new website up and running. Go to www.cartor.com to learn more about this supplier of postage stamps to Royal Mail and to many other post offices around the globe.

As the Walsall Security Printers website (www.wsp.co.uk) states – 'Cartor has gained a highly-prized reputation with the world's postal administrations as a specialist among specialists. They have developed, and continue to develop, a range of sophisticated printing techniques including finely detailed genuine 22-carat gold foil blocking and high-precision embossing solutions. They have been responsible for some unique issues such as holograms, thermography, flockage, perfumed stamps and even stamps that contain real seeds.'

This new Cartor website, and that of Walsall, will be of interest to anyone who enjoys the technical side of stamp production and the sophisticated output that can now be achieved by the use of techniques that would have been unthinkable even a short while ago •

Thematica Scotland As previously reported, the competitive elements of Thematica will form part of the Midpex exhibition being held in Coventry on 11 July this year. The good news is that its future has been secured for at least a further year, as it has recently been announced that Thematica 2010 will be held in Scotland for the first time, as part of the annual Scottish Philatelic Congress. Further details will be advised in due course •

North East Philatelic Weekend This regular annual event has a change of dates to those originally announced. The weekend will now be held at the Swallow Hotel, Gateshead between Friday 22 and Sunday 24 May. The following displays/talks will be given: Medicinal Plants (Jean Osborne), Zeppelins (Geoff Reynolds), Treaty Port System of China (Peter Pugh), Syria & Lebanon (Stephen Holder), and Fun in the Isle of Man (John Sussex). The cost of the weekend is £170. Any reader interested in attending should contact Valerie Beeken without delay – telephone 0191 3861931 •



This New Caledonia miniature sheet, produced by Cartor for Phillexfrance '99, employs five different printing techniques – a world first by Cartor.

ATA For membership details write to The American Topical Association, PO Box 57, Arlington, TX 76004-0057, USA or see the website www.americantopicalassn.org

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

Publications received The latest issue of *Topical Time* (ISSN 0040-9332) sees the start of volume 60 – a major milestone for this American thematic magazine, which appears bi-monthly. Within its 100 pages can be found many items of interest to members, plus special features about Shakespeare & Co the bookstore, Women's Suffrage, Railways of India, the Argon System for tracking animals, and an extensive 2008 index – a good mix of subject matter. The main article of interest to me for this issue, however, has been written by Richard Wheeler, the Chairman of the UK's counterpart to the ATA, the British Thematic Association (BTA). Richard's article, which tells the story of the evolution of puppets, was first published in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* but has now gained a new audience across the pond. Almost 40 illustrations, including some on the colour cover, add to the interest of this article •

The December Newsletter of the British Royal Portraits Stamp Group includes features on recent issues depicting royalty (British and otherwise), including the Tudor Monarchs issue. Former Communist states are now honouring their past monarchs – Bulgaria has recently commemorated Tsar Ferdinand, and Russia Tsar Nicholas I. Brian Livingstone looks in detail at a portrait of George VI and Queen Elizabeth used on a stamp from Angola •



New Editor for Stamp Lover The Council of the National Philatelic Society has appointed Michael L. Goodman as the new Editor of its bi-monthly journal *Stamp Lover*. The appointment to the honorary post became effective in January, in time to see the February edition to press, and Mr Goodman is also joining the National's Council. He said: 'I am honoured to be following in the footsteps of our distinguished former editors and in particular that great philatelic writer Fred Melville, who founded *Stamp Lover* a century ago and whose articles on philately are written in a style that is still easy to read despite the passage of time.'

NPS enquiries Write to Hon Secretary, Peter Mellor, NPS, c/o British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL, phone 020 7239 2571, email nps@ukphilately.org.uk or visit www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps

Mr Goodman, 61, has been a member of the National for more than 20 years and attends its monthly Saturday meetings regularly. In recent years he has reviewed and reported for *Stamp Lover* on the diverse displays held at these meetings. His main collecting interests are the USA and GB from early to modern and he is a packet secretary of the American Stamp Club of Great Britain. He is honorary secretary of Twickenham and District, his local philatelic society, which this year celebrates its 60th birthday •

Stamp Lover index 2008 saw the centenary of *Stamp Lover*, the journal of the National Philatelic Society. The society website (www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps) now includes a fully searchable index for the first 100 years' worth of articles. If you wish to consult a particular volume or article, you may purchase a photocopy (copyright permitting) or purchase a copy of the back issue in question (subject to availability). Please email the Library as to your requirements at nps@ukphilately.org.uk or you may borrow (in person or by post) a bound volume containing the issue in question (subject to availability) if you are a member of the National Philatelic Society •

Dublin Postal Museum and Archive Although there is no definitive news on plans for a proposed museum at the GPO building in O'Connell Street, I am assured that background work is proceeding apace. The *Bulletin* will keep you informed when there are more firm details to report on. An Post (the Irish Post Office) is to be congratulated on having decided to place such an important emphasis on its postal heritage at a time when some countries, such as Belgium, in effect mothballed its postal museum some time ago with no signs that it will ever reopen.

Incidentally, work on moving our own British Postal Museum & Archive to the Churchward Village site at Swindon is progressing well behind the scenes; hopefully many readers will have learned of its progress at Spring Stampex and through the BPMA Newsletter. Visit www.postalheritage.org.uk regularly for all the latest information on this exciting development •



Royal Mail news New issues and products

New postal rates New postal rates come into effect on 6 April. Basic 1st and 2nd class inland rates (standard size to 100g) will increase to 39p and 30p, letters to Europe (up to 20g) 56p, and worldwide airmail (to 10g) 62p.

Four new definitives will go on sale on 31 March – 17p olive green, 22p stone, 62p red and 90p ultramarine; also new 56p and 90p country stamps in existing 50p and 81p designs. All these stamps are printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 200. Cylinder numbers for the new definitives are D1 (all values), also for the high values (£1.50, £2, £3 and £5) with security features (17 February).

The new rates affect the values of the Tudor Monarchs set to be issued on 21 April. The values will now be 1st, 62p and 81p and prices: mint set £3.64; miniature sheet £2.58; FDC stamps £4.65 UK, £4.05 overseas; FDC miniature sheet £3.43 UK, £2.99 overseas.

The prices for the Endangered Species/Plants issue (19 May) will now be: set of stamps £3.90; miniature sheet £2.58; pack £7; FDC £4.95 UK, £4.31 overseas; FDC miniature sheet £3.43 UK, £2.99 overseas •

Special stamps The plate numbers and colours of the Plants stamps (19 May) are: c1 grey c1 yellow c1 magenta c1 cyan (blue) c1 black c1 phosphor. The Mythical Creatures stamps (16 June, previewed here in February) will have additional pictorial markings in the sheet margins. These take the form of the eyes of the creatures shown on the stamps, in the top and bottom sheet margins and in the left and right sheet margins between the panes of 25 in the sheets of 50 stamps. Similar pictorial devices will be shown on sheets of selected special issues. The pictorial first day of issue postmarks for the Mythical Creatures stamps are shown opposite; there will also be a non-pictorial Dragonby postmark.

Details of this month's special stamps – Monarchs: House of Tudor – were given here in December. This month we preview the Post Box miniature sheet, to be issued in August •





This page: cachet cover and Prestige Medal Cover for the House of Tudor stamps, both on sale from 21 April.

Opposite page: Gloucester Cathedral, third in the Silver Stamp Cathedrals Collection (28 April); Castles of England, the second in the new series of Generic sheets (23 April); and the second of the Design Classics stamp books (21 April).

Cachet cover Shown above is the cachet cover for the second Monarchs issue, available from 21 April. It bears the six Tudor stamps, a Hampton Court cachet and a 'timeline' handstamp. The first Monarchs cachet cover, for the Houses of Lancaster & York stamps, was shown here in May 2008 (p268). Cachet covers, available from Tallents House, cost £9.99 each •

Prestige Medal Collections The first issue in a new Kings & Queens series, featuring the Houses of Lancaster and York, is now available. The cover, a joint Royal Mail and Royal Mint production, bears the six House of Lancaster & York stamps (issued February 2008) cancelled by a special Westminster, London SW1 handstamp dated 21 March 2009. Encapsulated in the cover is a reproduction King Edward IV silver coin. On the reverse of the cover is the famous 'St Crispin's Day' speech from Shakespeare's *Henry V* and a reproduction of the seal of King Richard III. The second in the series, bearing the new Tudor Monarchs stamps, goes on sale on 21 April. Price £44.95 each, available only from Tallents House •

Silver stamps The third in our new Silver Stamp Collection, reproducing the 50p Gloucester Cathedral stamp of May 2008, will be available from 28 April. Silver stamps, manufactured in 999 sterling silver by processes pioneered and patented by the Royal Dutch Mint, are supplied in a sealed blister to protect the high-quality finish and help prevent tarnishing. Silver stamps are not valid for postage. The collection includes a card with two views of the cathedral and bearing the 50p Cathedral stamp cancelled by a special Gloucester postmark for 28 April. Available from Tallents House, price £24.42. Limited edition of 3000. The next in the series, available from 21 July, reproduces the 56p St David's Cathedral stamp. Collectors placing a regular order for the collection will receive a booklet about Cathedral stamps and a collection box •



THE HOUSE OF TUDOR

THE KINGS & QUEENS PRESTIGE MEDAL COLLECTION

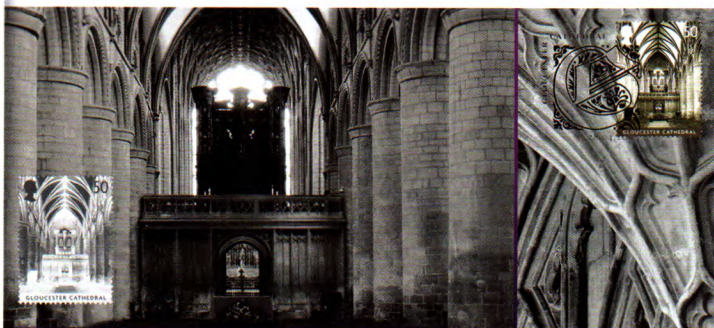
0001

The Royal Mint, Llantrisant, Pontypridd CF72 8YT

Generic sheets The first in a new series of generic sheets, featuring castles of the UK, went on sale on 17 March. The second Castles sheet, featuring English castles, goes on sale on 23 April. It contains 20 of the England 1st class St George flag stamp (from the 2007 Celebrating England miniature sheet). The castles shown on the labels are Warwick, Orford, Bolsover, Dover, Framlingham, Carlisle, Windsor, Bamburgh, Kenilworth, and Bodiam. The sheets are printed in litho by Cartor, on self-adhesive paper, so this is the first self-adhesive version of the St George flag stamp. Price £7.74 each (£8.35 from 6 April) ●

New stamp book series Three books are being issued containing Design Classics stamps as well as 1st class definitives (with security features). The first, containing four 1st class definitives and the Telephone kiosk and Routemaster bus stamps, went on sale on 10 March, priced £2.16 (£2.34 from 6 April). The second, on sale from 21 April contains two Mini stamps (£2.34). A third book, with Spitfire and Concorde stamps, will be issued next year. All self-adhesive, printed by Walsall ●

Post & Go stamps A Post & Go machine was installed at the new Paddington Quays Post Office, London W2 in mid-February. The Post & Go stamps pack (31 March) costs £2.75 until 5 April, thereafter £3.08. A Post & Go stamp was shown in the March *Bulletin* (page 204) ●



THE CATHEDRALS SILVER STAMP COLLECTION

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL



21.04 Monarchs – House of Tudor: London SE10
 19.05 Endangered Species – Plants: Kew, Richmond, Surrey
 16.06 Mythical Creatures: Dragonby, Scunthorpe
 18.08 Post Boxes: Wakefield
 18.08 Treasures of the Archives prestige book: London EC1



Two pairs of stamps and labels from the Jeremy Fisher sheet in the new Smilers for Kids series (shown here overlapped – the circular labels do not cover the adjacent definitives).

BPMA Freeling House,
 Phoenix Place, London WC1X
 0DL (near Mount Pleasant).
 For further details telephone
 020 7239 2570, or see [www.
 postalheritage.org.uk](http://www.postalheritage.org.uk)

British Postal Museum & Archive There is still time to visit the special exhibition marking the 50th anniversary of country (regional) stamps – it will be on show until 26 April. A new exhibition, featuring the work of eminent stamp designer David Gentleman, opens on 6 May. David Gentleman has designed more than 100 issued stamps for Royal Mail since 1962. The exhibition will feature artwork for many of these, and some designs which have not been seen in public before. It will also focus on the ‘Gentleman Album’ of 1966, which had so much influence on British stamp design – see Douglas Muir’s article ‘Off With Her Head!’ in the June 2007 *Bulletin* •

Brilliant Britain This collection does not include a United Kingdom miniature sheet as stated here in March. We apologise for any confusion •

Smilers on Facebook The new Royal Mail Smile Calendar application was launched on Facebook in February. This allows users to record important dates in their lives, like birthdays, weddings and family gatherings. It also allows for the attachment of photographs to the events, which you can then print out as stamps from the Royal Mail Smilers site. Links to the Smilers Application on the Royal Mail website are given on our Smile Calendar •

Bulletin back issues Gerald Wingfield offers complete Volumes 15-43 to anyone able to collect from the Croydon area. Telephone 01883 622726 •

Prize draw

FOR THIS MONTH’S draw we offer four pairs of the new Northern Ireland and England Castles generic sheets. For a chance to win the two sheets, simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Castles Prize Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ, to arrive by 30 April •

Hidden dates

A closer look at the issues of 2007 and 2008, by Richard West

FROM THE END OF 2005 Royal Mail has incorporated within most special issues a 'hidden date' identifying the year in which the stamps were issued. Exceptions have been when a design includes a caption stating the year of issue, or when an earlier design (first issued prior to 2005) has been re-used. The date can be found within the design (with litho printed stamps) or on the phosphor bands (with gravure printed stamps). Where a design appears in different forms, ie, sheet stamps, or in miniature sheets, stamp booklets or Smilers sheets, the date is in the same position on each version.

The following checklist indicates where the dates can be found on the stamp issues of 2007 and 2008. The hidden dates continue – see if you can spot them on the 2009 issues.

The Beatles The date appears vertically at the bottom corner of the phosphor band opposite to where the value is on each of the sheet stamps. On the miniature sheet the date reads horizontally at the bottom of the phosphor bands in the centre of the sheet, ie, below the denomination '1st' in each case.

Sea Life On all values in this set the dates can be found in the border below the stamp design, just below the caption on each stamp, reading horizontally.

The Sky at Night The date appears at the bottom of the right-hand phosphor band on each stamp, reading horizontally.

World of Invention The date appears at the bottom of the left-hand phosphor bands, reading vertically.

Abolition of Slavery On the two 1st class values, the date appears near the back of the collar just below the hair of the portraits. On the 50p values the date appears just above the lower part of the back of the collar on the 'Sharp' design, and by the back of the neck below the hair on the 'Clarkson' design. On the 72p values, the date appears just above the collar to the right of the portrait on the 'Hannah More' design, and by the rear of the neck, just below the hair on the 'Sancho' design.

Celebrating England Only a miniature sheet was issued: no date appears on the 1st class stamp that has the same design as the standard definitive. On the other three stamps the date reads vertically within a phosphor band towards the bottom of the stamp. On the 1st class Flag of England, the date is within the left-hand band; on the two 78p stamps the date appears in the right band. ▶



Beside the Seaside On all values, the date is positioned vertically at the bottom of the right-hand phosphor band. The same applies to the 1st class value as issued in stamp booklets in 2008.

Machin 40th anniversary The date appears on the two specially designed stamps only (not on the £1 definitives). On these stamps the phosphor takes the form of a frame, enclosing the 4d Machin or the portrait of Arnold Machin; in other words, the same as the grey frame of the designs. The date reads horizontally in the phosphor, centred just below the 4d Machin or the portrait.

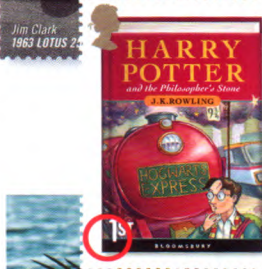
Grand Prix The date appears within the designs as follows: 1st class Vanwall, by the driver's left hand • 1st class BRM, on the lower part of the driver's right sleeve • 54p Tyrrell, on the driver's right arm • 54p Lotus, on the yellow stripe towards the rear of the car • 78p McLaren, on the white of the car, just underneath the red band below the driver's right upper arm • 78p Williams, by the final 'a' of lower 'calma'.

Harry Potter Easier to spot on this issue, as the date appears vertically at the bottom left of each book cover on the sheet stamps, and in the bottom right of each design on the miniature sheet.

Endangered Species: Birds The date is found in the following positions (from left to right). Top row: near the tip of the Eagle's tail • at right-hand end of branch on which Bearded Tit is perched • at bottom right of bird's right wing • below branch on which bird is perched, just below the bird's tail • just below, and at the rear of, the left-hand wing of Marsh Harrier. Bottom row: at back of neck of Avocet • at top of right leg of the Bittern • below leaf of flower on which the Warbler is perched, a little to the left of the tail • on foot of Corncrake • just behind tail of Peregrine.

Army Uniforms The dates appear within the designs, reading from left to right for each of the se-tenant strips. 1st class: near Military Policeman's right elbow; just by the Tank Commander's left hand, by his belt; and by the Observer's left armpit • 78p: by Rifleman's pouch; by the Grenadier's left arm, just below the belt; and just under the Trooper's left thumb.

The Queen's Diamond Wedding The date is found as follows (left to right for each pair): 1st, at the back of the Queen's neck and on the front of Prince Philip's epaulette • 54p, to the left of the date '1980' and on Prince Philip's shirt to the right of his tie • 78p, on Prince Philip's shirt just below his tie and at the back and base of the Queen's neck. On the miniature sheet the date reads vertically at the bottom of the left-hand phosphor band on each stamp.



Christmas On the 'Angel' designs the date appears horizontally at the bottom of a phosphor band: in the case of the 2nd class values it can be found at the bottom of the single band; for all other values, it is at the bottom of the left-hand band. As the 'Madonna and Child' designs are continuing in use, no date was included on these two values.

Lest We Forget The date appears on the 'Poppy' design at the bottom of the left-hand phosphor band, reading vertically.

James Bond On each of the stamps the date is hidden on the third book cover from the left. The positioning is as follows: 1st Casino Royale, by foot of right-hand character • 1st Doctor No, by right-hand foot of James Bond • 54p Goldfinger, beneath the left-hand character's right shoe • 54p Diamonds are Forever, beneath the right-hand character's right foot • 78p For Your Eyes Only, by James Bond's right leg below flag • 78p From Russia With Love, between James Bond's legs.

Working Dogs The dates are found in the following positions: 1st, at left of stamp, at the base of the dog's coat • 46p, by the top of the dog's left front leg • 48p, just under the clip for the dog's lead • 54p, just below the harness on the dog, on the white fur at the top of its leg • 69p, at the top of the dog's right rear leg, on the white fur • 78p, at the top of the dog's harness.

British Monarchs: The Houses of Lancaster and York This is another easy one to find, as the date is in the border of the stamp design, at the bottom left, on the stamps in both normal sheets and in the miniature sheet.

Celebrating Northern Ireland The dates are found as follows (reading from left to right, and from top to bottom): 1st, at the top of the castle wall at right of stamp • 78p, below the table on which is placed a glass of wine • 78p, by the lamp standard at centre of the bridge • 1st, in the sea by the rocks, in the centre of the left-hand edge of the design.

Rescue at Sea 1st, by the wave in the middle of the left-hand edge of the design • 46p, by an upright support on the lifeboat at the centre of the stamp • 48p, near the corner of the stern of the boat • 54p, in the sea at the bottom left of the stamp design • 69p, just below the first orange stripe from the front of the helicopter, above the float • 78p, on top of vertical grille at right of stamp.

Insects The date is found vertically in the lower part of the 1 of 1st on all values. ►



Cathedrals Dates are in the following positions: 1st, just above the lower part of the screen at the left of the stamp • 48p, by leg of table in the bottom left part of the design • 50p, just to the left of the pulpit • 56p, at the bottom right of the main image, just above the caption panel • 72p, vertically on stonework on the right, about 1cm above the caption panel • 81p, at top of second column from the right of the stamp design.

On the miniature sheet (left to right, top to bottom): 1st, about 1cm below the 'r' of 1st • 1st, on the church wall, in the centre of the design • 81p, at base of stonework towards the bottom left of the design • 81p, by plinth of statue at bottom right of design.



Carry On Hammer Films The dates are found as follows: 1st, just above the bottom black panel at right of stamp • 48p, in Christopher Lee's right ear • 50p, just under the 'o' of CLEO • 56p, in the 'x' of CERT X • 72p, to the left of the cauldron at the bottom of the design • 81p, in the '!' of ALL NEW! on the red panel.



Air Displays The date is found reading horizontally at the bottom of the left-hand phosphor band on all values.

Olympic Flag Handover The date will be found within each of the four designs (reading left to right, top to bottom) as follows: just to the right of the National Stadium at base of design • just below the right-hand gondola • by the tower at the centre of the stamp • to the left of the corner tower at the base of the stamp design.



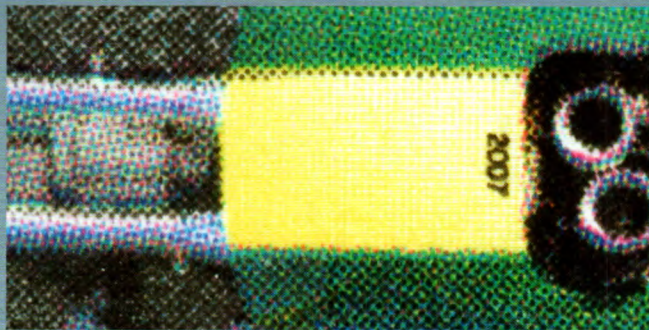
RAF Uniforms The dates are found as follows (reading from left to right for each se-tenant strip): 1st, below uniform at bottom left of stamp design • below the winchman's right thigh • below the fingers of the pilot's left hand • 81p, by belt just below gunner's left armpit • towards end of pointer below plotter's right hand • by pilot's right elbow.

Women of Distinction The date reads vertically at the top of the left-hand phosphor band on all values.

Christmas The date reads horizontally, at the bottom of the single phosphor band on the 2nd class stamps, or at the bottom of the left-hand band on all other values.

Lest We Forget The date is positioned vertically at the bottom of the left-hand phosphor band. In addition, the three Poppy designs of 2006, 2007 and 2008 issued se-tenant in sheets include dates at the bottom of the left-hand phosphor band on all three stamps (even though the date had not appeared on the miniature sheet when issued in 2006) •





Hidden dates on three special stamps of 2007 and three of 2008, from top left: Grand Prix, Sea Life, Handover of the Olympic Flag, the Abolition of Slavery, Rescue at Sea and Working Dogs.

Post Boxes An issue to celebrate 200 years

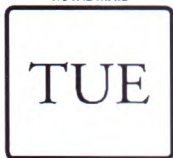
POST BOXES

The earliest known surviving posting slot was placed in the wall of Wakefield Post Office in 1809. Britain's first roadside pillar boxes appeared in the early 1850s but, in more remote and less populated areas, a cheaper and more practical alternative was needed, resulting in the development of smaller post boxes. Initially, they were installed in walls, buildings or brick pillars; later designs were also attached to lamp posts.

EARLY POSTING SLOT
WAKEFIELD



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE
ROYAL MAIL



TALLENTS HOUSE
EDINBURGH 18.8.2009

FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



WAKEFIELD, W. YORKSHIRE
18.8.2009

A MINIATURE SHEET featuring posting boxes will go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 18 August. The stamps feature: George V Type B wall box at Cookham Rise, 1st class; Edward VII Ludlow box at Bodiam PO, 56p; Victorian lamp box at Burmarsh Road, Hythe, Kent, 81p; and Elizabeth II type A box at Slaithwaite Postmans Sorting Office, 90p. In the top right corner of the sheet is an image of an early posting slot (dated 1809), formerly at the Wakefield Post Office in Wood Street. This iron box is believed to have been designed and fitted by the Postmaster's Clerk, Jonas Ward. When the building was demolished in 1964, the box was transferred to the Wakefield Museum; it is the earliest known surviving posting slot.

The stamps and sheet were designed by Elmwood design group of Leeds using photographs of the boxes by Peter Marlow. The consultant on the project was *Bulletin* contributor Martin Robinson, the author of *Old Letter Boxes*, published by Shire Publications. Martin will be writing about wall and lamp boxes in the August *Bulletin*. The sheet is printed by Cartor in lithography, and measures 146 x 74mm. The stamps are 27 x 37mm, perforation gauge 14, with 'all-over' phosphor.

For sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres, see the *British Postmark Bulletin*. For a free sample, write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. See p227 for subscription rates.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (for Tallents House postmark), or to their nearest Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centres (Wakefield postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FD0919' or 'FD0920'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Wakefield postmark.



Royal Mail First Day Cover POST BOXES



Royal Mail Talents House 21 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9RT

The generic sheet, above, includes labels featuring 20 different posting boxes. The FDC envelope, left, features a George V wall box in a dry-stone wall near Monsal Head in Derbyshire.

GENERIC SHEET The sheet contains 20 of the 1st class stamp from the miniature sheet, with labels featuring some attractive and unusual post boxes, historic images, and royal ciphers from boxes. The sheet is printed in litho by Cartor on gummed paper, and designed by Elmwood using images supplied by Martin Robinson. Price £8.35.

PRESENTATION PACK The pack, written by Martin Robinson, includes a post box 'timeline', from the Wakefield Box of 1809 to the Pedestal Box of 1995, a history of post boxes, and images of boxes in current use and from archive photographs. Production of wall boxes ceased in 1980, and in 1995 new pedestal boxes were introduced. Today there are some 100,000 post boxes in use in the UK. Readers interested in studying letter boxes are recommended to join the Letter Box Study Group – see www.lbsg.org for details, and Glenn Morgan's article on page 248 of this *Bulletin* •

Post Boxes prices

Miniature sheet	£ 2.66
Presentation pack	£ 3.20
Press sheet	£55.32
Generic sheet	£ 8.35
FDC envelope	£ 0.30
Serviced FDC (UK customers)	£ 3.53
Serviced FDC (overseas)	£ 3.07
Stamp cards (set of five)	£ 1.95

Results of 2008 Bulletin readers poll

Last December you were invited to vote for your favourite 2008 set of special stamps, favourite individual stamp, FDC design and presentation pack of 2008, also your favourite *Bulletin* contributor. This was our 23rd annual poll, and a good response was received from over 1000 readers worldwide. Our thanks to all who voted. Some added comments (short, lengthy and a few very lengthy) about the stamp designs and about special stamp issues in general. All the comments are 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 enables us to get a clear picture of the relative popularity of each issue. The results are shown opposite. The Cathedrals issue was a clear winner, with nearly 200 points more than the second favourite set, Insects. Rescue at Sea came third.

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; 1997 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; 2006 Brunel; 2007 Birds.

Favourite stamps For the third year running, the poppy stamp from the Lest We Forget miniature sheet was your favourite individual stamp with 273 votes (compared to 358 and 150 votes for its 2006 and 2007 predecessors), over three times the number of votes for your second favourite stamp, the Adonis Blue butterfly stamp from the Insects set. The 81p stamp showing the pulpit from the St Paul's miniature sheet was in third place.

The previous favourite individual stamps were: 1996 Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust 19p; 1997 The Great Tudor (Henry VIII) 26p; 1998 Endangered Species 20p; 1999 The 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 and 2007 Lest We Forget Poppy stamps.

Favourite FDC envelope and presentation pack

This was the third year that a poll included your favourite FDC and pack designs. The four favourites of each are: FDC – Rescue at Sea and Cathedrals (with 62 votes each), Lest We Forget (37) and Monarchs (36); presentation pack – Cathedrals (62 votes), Lest We Forget (43), and Insects (38).

Favourite Bulletin authors This was the 13th 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 Ron Negus in second place, just ahead of Dorothy Martin and Richard West. As usual, there were some kind comments on individual authors and articles, in particular for Ron Negus. The *Bulletin* is indeed fortunate in having a good team of freelance writers.

Draw winners All voting forms went into a draw, and 2008 Yearbooks went to: M Plows, Bristol; M Abrahamsen, Denmark; K Koch, Canada; R Walker, Isle of Wight; and H Novis, Sussex.

Online poll For the second time, the poll was also conducted online, for collectors to vote for their favourite set of stamps. As in the traditional poll, 3 points were awarded for 1st choice, 2 points for second, and 1 point for third. It is interesting to see the different outcomes of the postal and online voting. The Cathedrals, most popular with *Bulletin* readers, was eighth in the online poll, and James Bond, first online, was 10th with *Bulletin* readers. Christmas was the least favourite set with *Bulletin* readers, but came in third online.

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

Poll results The number following each value in the Favourite Stamps section below refers to the illustrations in the December *Bulletin* (pages 114-115). Stamp numbers 2-6, 14, 17, 21, 37, 39, 52, 62, 73, 75-77, 79, 80 and 82 received no votes.



FAVOURITE STAMPS

Lest We Forget 85	273
Insects: Adonis Blue 31	80
Cathedrals 81p St Paul's 50	57
Air Displays 1st 57	51
Northern Ireland 78p Bridge 24	39
Working Dogs 48p 9	28
Olympics Handover 1st 60	23
Working Dogs 69p 11	22
Insects: Stag Beetle 35	21
Rescue at Sea 1st 25	16
Working Dogs 1st 7	14
Rescue at Sea 54p 28	14
Cathedrals 81p 46	14
Cathedrals 1st 41	12
Cathedrals 1st St Paul's 48	12
Working Dogs 78p 12	11
Northern Ireland 78p St Patrick 23	11
Christmas 1st 81	11
Rescue at Sea 69p 29	10
Olympics Handover 1st 65	9
Cathedrals 50p 43	8
Monarchs 69p Richard II 18	7
Uniforms 1st 69	6
Working Dogs 54p 10	5
Insects: Pot Beetle 36	5
Cathedrals 72p 45	5
Carry On Hammer 56p 54	5
Carry On Hammer 81p 56	5
Uniforms 81p 70	5
Women of Distinction 81p 78	5
Working Dogs 46p 8	4

Rescue at Sea 48p 27	4
Insects: Skipper 38	4
Cathedrals 1st St Paul's 47	4
Air Displays 48p 58	4
Air Displays 72p 61	4
Olympics: London Eye 64	4
Monarchs: Henry VI 15	3
Monarchs: Owain Glyn Dwr 19	3
Rescue at Sea 78p 30	3
Insects: Damselfly 32	3
Cathedrals 81p St Paul's 49	3
Carry On Hammer 72p 55	3
Olympics: National Stadium 63	3
Uniforms 1st 67	3
Uniforms 1st 68	3
Uniforms 81p 72	3
Monarchs: Henry IV 13	2
Monarchs: Agincourt 20	2
Insects: Noble Chafer 40	2
Cathedrals 56p 44	2
Carry On Hammer 1st 51	2
Carry On Hammer 50p 53	2
Olympics: Forbidden City 66	2
James Bond 1st 1	1
Monarchs: Edward IV 16	1
Monarchs: Caxton 22	1
Rescue at Sea 46p 26	1
Insects: Barbed Ant 33	1
Insects: Carpet Moth 34	1
Cathedrals 48p 42	1
Air Displays 50p 59	1
Uniforms 81p 71	1
Women of Distinction 48p 74	1
Christmas 50p 83	1
Christmas 81p 84	1

FAVOURITE SETS: BULLETIN POLL

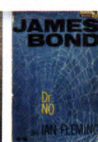
Cathedrals	1252
Insects	1056
Rescue at Sea	779
Working Dogs	642
Monarchs	468
Lest We Forget	449
Air Displays	412
RAF uniforms	255
Olympic Handover	154
James Bond	146
Carry On Hammer	130
Women of Distinction	78
Celebrating Northern Ireland	68
Christmas	61

FAVOURITE SETS: ONLINE POLL

James Bond	752
Working Dogs	598
Christmas	480
Lest We Forget	422
Rescue at Sea	341
Insects	331
Women of Distinction	329
Cathedrals	314
Air Displays	230
Carry On Hammer	223
Monarchs: Lancaster & York	204
Olympic Flag Handover	175
RAF Uniforms	149
Celebrating Northern Ireland	84



Douglas Myall, voted favourite author, and two stamps from the Bulletin and on-line polls of your favourite sets.



British monarchs Karen Foy on the Tudors



One year after the first set was released, April sees the issue of the second Great British Monarchs set, this time featuring the Tudors. In six stamps and a miniature sheet, a gallery of portraits depicts some of the most notable sovereigns in our history.

RULING ENGLAND from 1485 until 1603, Tudor monarchs restored peace to their country after many years of conflict. The end of the War of the Roses saw the Lancastrian Henry Tudor (Henry VII) defeat Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth

and later marry Elizabeth, the niece of the leader of the York family. This united the symbolic red and white opposing 'roses' to create a new heraldic emblem in the form of the Tudor rose.

Designed by Atelier Works, and comprising two 1st class, two 62p and two 81p stamps, the issue features Henry VII in a prominent position as the first stamp in the set. It's believed that the death of his wife and eldest son brought about his own sad demise, so that by the time of his death in 1509 at the age of 52, his second son Henry (VIII) became the next in line to the throne.

An independent force Depicted alongside his father on the second 1st class value, Henry VIII's image is taken from the portrait by Hans Holbein the Younger. Henry is one of the most colourful and controversial characters of the Tudor Dynasty. Upon becoming King, he initially married his brother's widow, Catherine of Aragon, but soon divorced her when she was unable to produce a male heir. When the Pope refused to give his consent to a separation, Henry established the Church of England, proclaiming himself Supreme Head in an attempt to end the governing rule of Catholicism and allow the divorce to proceed.

Severing the Anglican Church from the Roman hierarchy led to the Dissolution of the Monasteries, with the monastic communities across Britain disbanded, and their property confiscated. This period, known as the English Reformation, resulted in the huge loss of many cultural aspects of our history with buildings, libraries and precious collections destroyed. The removal of these religious institutions, where the people could seek help, guidance, hospitalisation and even free food and alms for the poor, completely changed the social face of Britain. Henry had inherited a rich and prosperous kingdom, but by the late Tudor period the streets were paved with beggars who had previously turned to the monasteries for help which, in future generations, led to the establishment of the Poor Laws to help those in need of support.

In his early years, Henry had been a handsome athlete who enjoyed jousting, tennis and hunting. He was good at maths and astronomy and was a fine musician with a large collection of trumpets, trombones, flutes and bagpipes. With auburn hair, pale skin and fine silk robes covered in jewels, he was a magnificent and dominant sight in his youth. Sadly, he developed a serious weight problem and in later years, his excessive love of wine, beer and copious amounts of food resulted in dietary problems, ulcers and gout.

With a succession of five more wives, two of whom – Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard – were executed for treason, Henry died whilst married to his sixth wife, Katherine Parr, in 1547.

Clashes, conflict and controversy The first 62p stamp depicts the young King Edward VI. At the tender age of nine, he came to the throne and was aided by 16 trusted men. Unfortunately, his uncle – Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset – governed as Regent, consigning Edward to a purely ceremonial role, but encouraging him to make huge changes to the church whilst in power. These changes included introducing a new prayer book, abolishing Mass and replacing it with Holy Communion, and generally favouring Protestantism rather than Catholicism. Sadly, Edward had very little time to make his own mark on the sovereignty due to his premature death in 1553 at the age of 15.

The natural progression of the Tudor monarchy was undoubtedly a complicated one. Henry VIII's eldest daughter Mary should have followed Edward as next in line of succession, but as she and her sister Elizabeth were considered illegitimate, it was decided by Sir John Dudley that Lady Jane Grey would take on the role. To maintain his own position and influence, Jane was swiftly married off to Dudley's son Guildford.

When Jane was pronounced Queen of England, Mary fought against the decision and, with the support of the public, she won her claim to the throne. Jane had ruled for only nine days when she was imprisoned in the Tower of London along with her husband and her scheming father in law. Mary took up her rightful position, and agreed to marry Phillip II of Spain. Many opposed the union, calling for the reinstatement of Jane Grey, and Mary was forced to execute the former Queen and her allies to prevent the outbreak of rebellion. Jane's portrait appears on the second 62p stamp alongside her opponent Mary on the 81p stamp.

Completing the set is the iconic image of Elizabeth I. During her reign, Mary had fought to restore Catholicism to England, forcing her subjects to convert to the faith. Upon Mary's death in 1558, Elizabeth, the fifth and last monarch of the Tudor dynasty, set about establishing an English Protestant Church.

Her 45-year reign saw periods of economic depression, wars and huge debt, but she also had astute political judgement, and encouraged brave voyages and expeditions of discovery, preparing England for a period of colonisation and trade development. Known as 'Good Queen Bess', she died at Richmond Palace on 24 March 1603. Such was her legacy, that the day of her accession became a national holiday for nearly 200 years. ►

The miniature sheet issued on 21 April includes a timeline of some of the milestones of the Tudor period.



Tudor timeline The miniature sheet incorporates some of the most important aspects of the Tudor Age. Set against a plain background, with a horizontal timeline of notable events across the top of the sheet, four additional stamps sum up the successes of the period. One of the two 1st class values depicts *The Mary Rose*, Henry VIII's magnificent warship which was loaded with 78 guns, 200 sailors, 185 soldiers and 30 gunners. Despite being the pride of the fleet and one of the earliest purpose-built warships, she sank in the Solent in 1545. In 1982 the surviving section of the ship was raised again and now takes pride of place in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard.

This stamp is followed by another 1st class value, bearing a scene depicting the Field of Cloth of Gold – a Royal conference which took place in 1520 when Henry VIII met the King of France to increase a bond of friendship between the two nations. Both powers met near Calais and set up pavilions made with real gold filaments sewn into silken fabrics, and organised lavish banquets in an effort to impress and display their wealth.

The first of the two 90p stamps shows a monotone image of the Royal Exchange. This was officially opened in 1571 by Elizabeth I, as a meeting place for London's merchants where business deals could be arranged and goods traded. It was the first 'shopping centre' of its kind, with space for over 100 shops under one roof, but sadly it was destroyed in 1666 when the Great Fire of London swept through the city.

The final stamp on the sheet is a portrait of the great explorer and Navy Captain, Francis Drake. Funded by the Monarchy to discover new lands and riches for England, he circumnavigated the world in 1580 and returned with a cargo of spices and Spanish treasures. Seven months later, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I aboard his ship, *The Golden Hind*.

Previous issues Fascinated by the Tudors? Well, why not look out for other material relating to these Monarchs? In 1997 Royal Mail produced a set of seven stamps featuring Henry VIII and his six wives. The presentation pack provides a display case for the stamps, as well as information on the King and his long-suffering partners. Track down the accompanying PHQ cards which enable you to see the fine robes of the period in even greater detail.



Henry and *The Mary Rose* appeared on the 15½p value of the 1982 Maritime Heritage issue, whilst cachets of the King and handstamps of the Tudor Rose have appeared on many related postal items. The Tudor Rose is also displayed as the emblem on the English definitive.

2008 marked the 450th anniversary of the accession of Elizabeth I. A business customised sheet of 10 English definitives was produced accompanied by 10 labels featuring a portrait of 'Good Queen Bess'. The background shows a copy of her signature and a quote from one of her most famous speeches – 'I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a King, and a King of England too'.

Further afield, the Isle of Man issued six stamps in 2003 for the 400th anniversary of the end of the Tudor era, and the Virgin Islands portrayed Elizabeth I in a 1997 issue alongside her famous explorer, Sir Francis Drake.

All the Tudor monarchs appear in the Kings and Queens sets of Barbuda and St Vincent. Henry VII also features on stamps from the British Virgin Islands, Gambia and Newfoundland; Henry VIII from the Cayman Islands and Dominica; Edward VI from Angola and St Helena; Lady Jane Grey from Angola and St Vincent; Mary from Bhutan, the Cayman Islands and Grenada; and Elizabeth from the British Virgin Islands, the Falkland Islands, Newfoundland, St Helena, Sierra Leone and the Solomon Islands.

Numerous stamp issues have featured the Tudors and their era, including these from the UK, Isle of Man, St Helena, the Solomon Islands and the Cayman Islands.



A Tudor legacy A collection could be extended to include the events and activities of Tudor times. Tennis became popular during this period, with the Tudors inventing a racquet developed from a kitchen sieve. The Tudors loved their newly imported sugar so much that they invented a course which they called the Banquet Course, the equivalent of our dessert or pudding. The fashion for wearing huge ruffs and collars was made popular at this time with the discovery of starch which would stiffen the fabric. There is certainly plenty to research and collect ●



The world of online philately by Glenn H Morgan FRPSL



THE Letter Box Study Group (LBSG) is actively devoted to the study of letter boxes. From modest beginnings over three decades ago, it has now grown to become the recognised authority on the subject – all through the efforts of over 800 members worldwide. The main aims of the group are to encourage research, preservation, restoration and awareness of letter boxes and to produce the definitive description and documentation of their types and locations.

There are many reasons why people join: as a spin-off from philately; from a general interest in street furniture or social history; from an interest in Britain's industrial heritage, etc. This range of interests is fostered through an excellent quarterly magazine – hopefully soon to be in colour – regular provincial and London meetings and an extensive publishing programme ensuring that research findings are preserved and, more importantly, disseminated.

The LBSG's website (at www.lbsg.org) uses 'Post Office' red and black for its colour scheme. What immediately strikes you is the amount of imagery displayed on every page, due to automatic changing every few seconds. As these pictures are not captioned, they cannot be used to identify a particular type of box, but they provide an instant realisation of how Britain has produced many interesting and varied designs down the years, be they pillar, wall or lamp box types.

Each web page has been produced by using a template, ensuring commonality across all pages,

with three logical toolbars which aid navigation. There is a good use of white space, giving a fresh and distinguished look, rather than the 'cram it all in' appearance so common on many sites.

Under the first of these toolbars can be found all the details about the LBSG that you could ever wish for, such as who they are, what they do, their aims, their membership details (£17 in year one, including a starter pack, £12 pa thereafter), an application form and downloadable brochures. It is good to see that they also have clear contact details, including those for the press and media. In fact, members frequently act as great ambassadors for their Group when being interviewed, with their passion for the subject always coming across so strongly.

The second toolbar is entitled 'Letter Boxes', and it is from here that you will be able to choose from elements such as box types, ciphers, colours, shapes and materials, all of which go towards determining the look and functionality of British boxes. Foreign receptacles are not ignored and a page records details of the group's photo archives, which include many slides and photographs, with examples of boxes from most countries now held. There appears to be a growing interest in overseas letter boxes among members, possibly because our own types have been studied so intensely down the years that it is time to branch out beyond these shores.

A page is devoted to miniatures of the real post boxes, where we find that they date back to early tin can money boxes. Philately and the letter box is not overlooked, in fact it was this aspect that encouraged me to join the Group nearly 30 years ago. There are hundreds of relevant items to collect on this postal-related theme, ranging from stamps to booklets, and postal history to cinderellas. Printed literature and a photo gallery of boxes complete this section, while the final toolbar is headed-up 'Links' and provides details of other sites of relevance in the museum, corporate and organisation sectors.

I defy any visitor to this site not to fall under the spell of the beguiling letter box ●

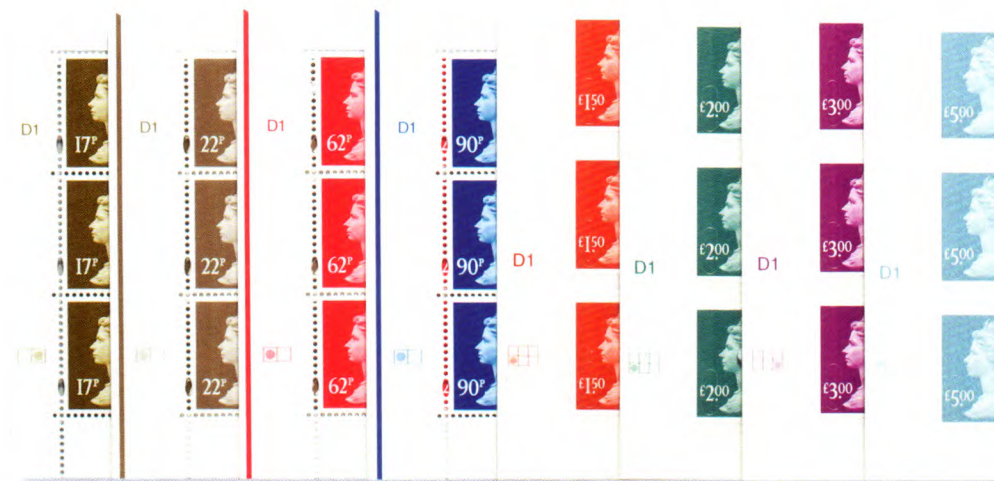
The first flight was from Filton to Concorde's future flight test base at Fairford. A special handstamp was used at Filton, and two different versions can be identified, as shown below ●



Concorde Study Circle For details contact Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ.

249

Mainly Machins Douglas Myall's report on new issues, the Burns miniature sheet and Prince of Wales commemorative



Security stamps in sheets The first 10 self-adhesive stamps with the new security features went on general sale on 17 February. These were all sheet issues, printed in gravure by De La Rue. Previous DLR definitive printings have been in printer's sheets of 400 divided into two counter sheets of 200, the right-hand one being distinguished by a dot after the cylinder number. Printer's sheets of the new standard-size self-adhesives consist of 300 stamps, divided into six counter sheets of 50, each of which is divided into two panels of 25, separated by a horizontal gutter, much like last year's Christmas stamps. The position of each counter sheet on the original printer's sheet is indicated by a grid of six boxes in two rows of three, the relevant box containing a large dot in the colour of the stamp. The grids are in the bottom left margin, below the cylinder numbers. The large letter stamps are printed in sheets of 200 divided into four counter sheets of 50; the position grid has four boxes.

To enable individual stamps to be removed for sale, they are rouletted 8, with 1.5mm slits and 1mm hinges. The roulettes go through the margins, enabling cylinder blocks (bottom left), date

blocks (bottom right) and colour name blocks (top left) to be collected. Cylinder numbers are on part of the margin which is not stripped away with the rest of the matrix, similar to the feature we have become familiar with on booklets. There are three cylinder numbers for each stamp printed underneath each other. All are numbered D1, indicating a new layout. In descending order from the top they are: phosphor, iridescent, colour.

The words ROYAL MAIL are printed in a wave pattern over the background. It is in the colour of the stamp which indicates that it was printed by the colour cylinders. However, where the iridescent ink passes over The Queen's head, the Royal Mail wording changes to a 'morphed' text which appears as irregular-sized lettering. I am reliably informed that all the text is printed from one cylinder.

Security stamps in books and business sheets

Walsall's security self-adhesives were postponed to 31 March. At time of writing I have seen three books (6 × 1st, 12 × 1st and 12 × 2nd standard-size stamps). The covers look much the same as previous issues, complete with 'disability' notches.

ROBERT BURNS 250TH ANNIVERSARY



Opposite page: the four new definitives for the change in tariffs, issued 31 March, and the four high-value security Machins of 17 February. Left: four of the 10 pairs of stamps and labels from the commemorative sheet issued on 14 November to celebrate the Prince of Wales' 60th birthday. Above: the Robert Burns miniature sheet issued 22 January.

The matrix is stripped away so that the stamps stand proud of the backing; they are not rouletted. I have not yet seen any cylinder numbers but I expect them to appear in their usual place on the white strip at the right.

De La Rue has printed business sheets of 100 standard 1st and 2nd, and sheets of 50 large 1st and second. I wonder whether there will be much demand for these as the stamps are now also available in sheets of 50 (also from De La Rue). It would be as well to obtain your requirements early in case they have a short life.

No coils are being issued. Coil stamps were not intended to be self-adhesive and, without a backing paper or a release liner, the security die-cuts would have made it difficult to use them without damage. We had self-adhesive coil stamps before. Rolls of 100 in 1997 and 200 in 1998, printed in gravure by Enschedé, were issued in a specially made dispenser box. Perhaps we shall see something similar again.

Collecting used stamps Following my article in February, readers asked me for advice on how best to collect the new stamps in used condition.

There is a product called 'StampLift', which I have tried on the 2008 Christmas stamps with mixed results. The addition of the new die-cuts is likely to make it even more difficult to achieve success although with great care it should be possible to get sufficient satisfactory examples for one's collection. I have never been a great fan of soaking off as the process can affect some of the phosphor inks used and I would advocate keeping the stamps on piece. Others have asked why the security problem cannot be tackled by ensuring that all stamped mail is franked at the collection end. One has to remember that the sheer volume of stamped mail, even in these days of Horizon labels, FastStamps (also difficult to remove in good used condition), SmartStamps, etc, means that, although the sorting and cancelling machines operate at peak efficiency in percentage terms, the number of 'skips' is still very large in absolute terms. Due to the illicit trade in these skips, Royal Mail has been compelled to protect its revenue. If there were no sellers, and just as important, no buyers of the skips, there would have been no need to take any special action to suppress the trade. ►

April tariff changes The annual rise in domestic and overseas tariffs comes into effect on 6 April. Most of the changes will be met by existing NVIS and do not require that new stamps be printed. However, four new Machins were issued on 31 March in anticipation of specific needs. Basic letter and large letter rates are increased to 30p and 47p 2nd class, and to 39p and 61p for 1st class. To convert standard to large, a 17p olive green and a 22p stone have been issued. Of these, the 17p is interesting, as the value has been set much further to the right than on previous issues. The 10g worldwide airmail letter rate is increased to 62p, while the 20g rate is 90p, requiring new 62p red and 90p ultramarine stamps. The rate for surface postcards has risen from 48p to 54p, and the 54p rust, still on sale at Tallents House, has been re-issued to post offices. These four new Machins are conventionally gummed, and were printed in gravure by DLR in the usual counter sheets of 200. Eight new country pictorial definitives – 56p and 90p for each country – replace existing 50p and 81p values in the same designs.

Other issues On 14 November last an A4 sheet was issued to celebrate the Prince of Wales' 60th birthday. This contained 10 Wales 1st class country pictorial definitives, accompanied by labels depicting scenes from the Prince's life. Printed in

lithography by Cartor with simulated ellipses, the stamp is the same as the one on the Glorious UK sheet issued last September.

Two of this year's four prestige books have already been issued. They are the British Design Classics book of 13 January printed by Cartor, and the Darwin birth centenary book of 12 February printed by De La Rue. Each has the usual pane of mixed Machins around a central label. Both were printed in lithography, which makes all of the stamps new. The Cartor pane has four 16p stamps alternating with four 50p. Counting the label as a unit, there are eight se-tenant pairs, four horizontal and four vertical. The DLR pane is more complex and has two each of the 5p, 10p, 48p and 1st NVI, yielding 12 pairs: six horizontal and six vertical.

The Robert Burns miniature sheet, celebrating the 250th anniversary of his birth, was issued on 22 January. As well as two special stamps, there is a block of four Scotland country pictorials – 2nd, 1st, 50p and 81p. The sheet is printed in gravure by Enschedé, so all four definitives are new. The only previous Enschedé Scotland stamp was the 1st NVI in the Army Uniforms prestige book but that was printed in lithography.

I am sure that there will be plenty to write about next time, once I have examined many of the new issues ●

Text © D G A Mvalli 2009

Commemorative covers New this month



Cambridge Stamp Centre FDC to honour the Royal Navy X-class midget submarines. These were first used in an attack on the *Tirpitz*, and in 1944 X24 sank the floating dock at Bergen. A 1st class definitive is cancelled by a 6 June 2009 WWII Operations handstamp. Signed by Sub Lt Gerald Lloyd Williams, who served in a midget sub. **Price** £24.95 plus postage ●



South Wales Philatelic Societies A souvenir postcard, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Swansea Philatelic Society, features postmarks of Swansea. **Price** 40p unserviced or £1 serviced with appropriate operational datestamp. Please enclose stiffened SAE measuring at least 7.5 X 5 ins. Remittances payable to South Wales Federation Convention ●



Cotswold Covers Engraved and die-stamped Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution FDC with a sponsored 10 March postmark for Saltaire, Yorkshire, which is synonymous with the textile industry. An alternative waterwheel design appears on the Stuart cover, with the same cancellation. **Price** £7.75 plus postage ●



Buckingham Covers Two Darwin covers: a stamps cover (a limited number are signed by HMS Beagle Trust Patron, Sir Robin Knox Johnson); and a miniature sheet cover (limited number signed by yachtswoman Dame Ellen MacArthur). **Prices** Stamp or miniature sheet FDC unsigned £10.95, signed £24.95 ●



Scottish Philatelic Congress A Burns cover, with the miniature sheet and Congress handstamp cancellation. Orders must be received before 17 April. **Prices** Covers £3.50 plus 60p postage UK (five or more covers £1 postage); Congress Burns postcard £1 plus postage ●



M Tanner Concorde Classic Design cover (35 numbered copies) featuring Concorde during manufacture and ground testing. Dual postmarks 13 and 21 January 2009, bearing both Concorde 1st class stamps. **Price** £16.99 plus £1.50 worldwide postage (includes postcard of the overall image; extra cards 60p plus postage if ordered separately). A similar maximum card/new stamp cancelled 13 January is £11 plus postage. Visa/Mastercard accepted ●



Royal Naval Philatelic Society FDC serviced 28 January for Portsmouth Flotilla's welcome to HMS *Daring*, bearing flag stamp cancelled by a special Forces PO handstamp. **Prices** Plain £10.90, Double signed £15.30, Special £17, extra special/triple signed £21, multi-signed £52. RNPS members 50% discount ●



GB Covers Official issue of 40 first day stamp covers and 33 miniature sheet covers feature a painting of HMS *Beagle* entering Sydney Harbour in 1838. Each signed and numbered. **Price** £15 plus £1.50 postage. Remittances payable to GB Covers ●

Orders and enquiries

Buckingham Covers Warren House, Shearway Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4BF Telephone 01303 278137. Fax 01303 279429. Website www.buckinghamcovers.com

Cambridge Stamp Centre 9 Sussex Street, Cambridge CB1 1PA. Telephone 01223 363980.

Cotswold and Stuart Covers PO Box 100, Great Ouseburn, York YO26 9SS. Telephone 08707 423962. e-mail em@postmark.co.uk

GB Covers 102 Regal Way, Kenton, Harrow HA3 0RY. e-mail derek@gbcovers.co.uk

Royal Naval Philatelic Society 19 College Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LJ. Telephone 023 92 815494.

Scottish Philatelic Congress Eric Mason, 19 Allan Park Drive, Edinburgh EH14 1LW

South Wales Philatelic Societies G N Prior, 20 Heol y Sheet, North Cornelly, Bridgend CF33 4EY

M Tanner 180 Whitehorse Road, West Croydon CR0 2LA. Fax/Answerphone 020 8684 9757 (credit card orders only)

Cover producers wishing to announce a recent or forthcoming cover should submit copy of up to 75 words in the style above. The text should briefly describe the cover, state the stamps and postmarks it will bear, and give retail prices and an address for orders and enquiries. Announcements are published on a first-come-first-served basis and may be modified or shortened at the Editor's discretion. Copy for consideration for the June *Bulletin* should be sent to The Editor (address on p227) by 8 April. Copy for July should arrive by 8 May. The Editor regrets he cannot enter into correspondence or telephone conversations concerning covers announced here.

Competitions Win a copy of *Artwork*, by David Gentleman



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 the first stamps designed by David Gentleman issued?
- 2 Which saints were featured on stamps in 1997?
- 3 What do the initials ABPS stand for?



January identify The detail is from the 30p Picture Postcard Centenary stamp of 1994. The winner was J Workman, of Cornwall.

January knowledge Answers: 1) C Birmingham; 2) 1986 Christmas; 3) Emily Bronte. The winner was D Winters, of Spain.

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

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 8 May will each receive a copy of the book *Artwork*. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. These competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until 19 April 'Stamp Lincs' exhibition, Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln. **Enquiries** P Wain, 01522 525984, Museum 01522 528448.

Until 26 April 'Lions, Leopards, Unicorns & Dragons' exhibition marking 50 years of regional stamps at the BPMA, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570.

28 March WestBex 2009 stamp fair, Kennet School, Stoney Lane, Thatcham, 10.00-16.00. Organised by Thatcham & District PS. 23 dealers. **Enquiries** G Stewart, 01635 866942 or see www.tdps.org.uk

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

10-16 April China 2009 FIP General World Stamp Exhibition at Luoyang City, China. **UK enquiries** Richard West, 39 Waverley Avenue, Sutton SM1 3JX.

11 April Maidstone & Mid-Kent PS Stamp Fair, Grove Green Community Centre, Maidstone, 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** J Stonestreet, 01622 675784.

17-18 April Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies Congress, Dewar's Centre, Glover Street, Perth. Dealers, displays, souvenir cover and hand-stamp. See www.scottishphilately.co.uk

2 May Federation of South Wales PS 40th Annual Convention at Princess Royal Theatre, Civic Centre, Port Talbot, 10.00-16.30. Admission 50p. 15 dealers, annual competition entries, Kids Activity Area, souvenir card. **Enquiries** G N Prior, 01656 740520 •

Late news



A warm reception for the Darwin stamps, at Edinburgh Zoo.

Royal Mail News Cylinder numbers for the new country stamps are: England 56p D1 oak green, D1 silver; 90p D1 purple, D1 silver • N Ireland 56p D1 olive-grey blue, D1 black; 90p D1 bright magenta, D1 greenish yellow, D1 black • Scotland 56p D1 bright lilac, D1 deep lilac, D1 silver; 90p D1 bright magenta, D1 greenish yellow, D1 new blue, D1 grey-black, D1 silver • Wales 56p D1 greenish blue, D1 deep greenish blue, D1 grey-black; 90p D1 violet, D1 gold, D1 silver, D1 black. Phosphor is D1 on all sheets. The England stamps are from double-pane printings, others single panes.

A set of four maxicards will be available from 19 May, bearing the stamps from the Royal Botanic Gardens miniature sheet. The card images relate to the stamp designs, but do not reproduce the stamp designs, as on our stamp cards. The stamps will be cancelled with a special Kew postmark. The pack will include a miniature sheet.

To mark the issue of the Darwin stamps, Royal Mail took at stand at Edinburgh Zoo on 12 February. Staff from Tallents House – Susan Richards (Business Customer Service Advisor), Stuart Reid (Mail Order Despatch Assistant), Tom Francis (Key Accounts Advisor) and Kimberley Golubovic (Retail Despatch Manager) – were on hand to answer any questions on our stamps. It was a great opportunity to show our stamps to a new range of customers, and a joy to see children take such an interest in the Darwin stamps. As seen from our photo, some of the Zoo's inhabitants also liked the new stamps •



Ron Dearing (left) with Arnold Machin at the NPM, 1987.

Obituary We are sorry to record the death in February of Lord Dearing who, as Ron Dearing, was Chairman of The Post Office 1981-87. He began his civil service career in the Ministry of Labour and, as PO Chairman, took a keen interest in stamp design and the National Postal Museum. He was a collector himself and last year, before he became ill, agreed to write an article for the *Bulletin*. After leaving The Post Office he chaired a government committee on higher education, and was created a life peer in 1998 •

Cover Collecting course The first-ever specialist course in collecting British FDCs is to launch this April. The online course takes students from the very basics of collecting covers, through to judging their condition, spotting errors, and building a collection for interest and even financial gain. 'I believe that collecting must be done for genuine enjoyment rather than purely as an investment', explains Tony Buckingham, world expert in his field and the man behind the course, 'but if people do hope to make money on their collection, knowledge is essential.' The 10-week course includes weekly assignments, marked by authority Brian Austin. Successful students will receive a Certificate of Completion from Buckingham Covers and become members of its Expert Collector Club. Address enquiries to Buckingham Covers, Warren House, Shearway Road, Folkestone CT19 4BF, telephone 01303 278137, or see www.buckinghamcovers.com •

The collectors' friend



Stamp Organiser 2009 Adrian Bradbury created this invaluable CD as a labour of love, to help fellow philatelists by bringing stamp collecting into the 21st century. The Stamp Organiser CD comes pre-loaded with details and images of all British stamp issues since the 1840 Penny Black up to the 2008 Lest We Forget Armistice. It includes presentation packs, stamp books, stamp cards, first day covers, Smilers and Customised sheets. The CD comes with over 23,500 images for easy identification, and annual updates will be available. With the Stamp Organiser, it is easy to record details of your own collection and to see if you have any gaps that need to be filled. The browse facility allows you to view the images whenever you want to, in the comfort of your own home in front of your PC.

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System requirements

Windows XP, Vista, 128mb RAM, 500mb of disk space, minimum screen resolution 1024 x 768.



Royal Mail

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