

Order of Presentation

2016 January	Brit themes: Music
2016 February	Brit themes: Explorers
2016 March	Brit themes: Birds
2016 April	Brit themes: Football
2016 May	Brit themes: Scientists
2016 June	Brit themes: Automobiles
2016 July	Brit themes: Becoming Europeans
2016 August	Brit themes: Bridges
2016 September	Brit themes: Social reformers
2016 October	Brit themes: Poets
2016 November	Brit themes: Prehistoric Animals
2016 December	Brit themes: Astronomy
2017 January	Brit themes: Dogs
2017 February	Brit themes: Cathedrals and Churches
2017 March	Brit themes: Cinema
2017 April	Brit themes: Landscapes
2017 May	Brit themes: Artistic portraiture
2017 June	Brit themes: Boats & Ships
2017 July	Brit themes: Folk Customs
2017 August	Brit themes: Television (A blend of two I did)
2017 September	Brit themes: Gardens
2017 October	Brit themes: Postal Sputnik 60th anniv
2017 November	Brit Themes: Beside the Seaside
2017 December	Brit Themes: Horses
2018 January	Brit Themes: Castles and Palaces
2018 February	Brit Themes: Insects
2018 March	Brit Themes: Toys and Comics
2018 April	Brit Themes: Farming (and Forestry)
2018 May	Brit Themes; UK World Heritage sites
2018 June	Brit Themes: Battles & Campaigns
2018 July	Brit Themes: Institutions, public services
2018 August	Brit Themes: Flowers & Plants
2018 September	Brit Themes: Politics

Pending at August 2018 (dates submitted)

Forever England Urban Renewal (22.6.16) Railways (16.3.17) Aircraft (29.3.17) (Architecture (5.4.17)
Novelists (22.8.18) Inventors (23.8.18) Industry (23.8.18) Dance (24.8.18) Fish (25.8.18)

Dogs

Few nations love dogs, first domesticated 10,000 years ago, more than the British despite the fact that the average dog will cost its owner around £17,000 to look after over its lifetime. Recently the number of domestic dogs in the UK, at around 8.5 millions, surpassed the number of cats which had for a long time been the more popular pet. There have been more representations of dogs than cats on our stamps but they didn't appear at all on "pictorial" issues until the late 1970's.

Five Top Sets

The first such set issued in February 1979 exudes charm.



Timed to coincide with the Kennel Club's Cruft's Dog Show it featured four very popular **British dogs**, all portrayed out having "walkies" and each selected for a different nation within the UK.

The Old English sheepdog, once called the "Shepherd's Dog" was first exhibited in the early 1870's and is now a very popular show dog. The Welsh Springer Spaniel which is similar to the English Springer was first recognised by the KC in early Edwardian times as was the West Highland White Terrier (aka Westie) also very popular in Germany and the USA. The highest value in the set presented the Irish or red setter—so called because of its distinctive poise when alert—has been used as a gun dog.

The next canine set, issued in 1991, marked the bicentenary of the Royal Veterinary College and the centenary of Cruft's Dog Show.



It was unusual in that it celebrated not only five dogs but the work of the famous Eighteenth Century animal painter, **George Stubbs**,

whose understanding of canine anatomy enabled him to capture the essence of each of his subjects.

The dogs portrayed from paintings, all except one in private hands, were The King Charles Spaniel (favoured by Charles II) a Pointer (like the setter, a gun dog, whose poise is captured perfectly), a pair of Foxhounds, a Rough Dog (a precursor of the Old English Sheepdog, probably painted for George IV) and Fino (a Spitz) and Tiny (a spaniel).

Ten years later the **Cats and Dogs** issue of ten self-adhesive stamps, again issued in February in perfect time for Cruft's, used five quirky monochrome photos of each animal in various social settings. One of the cat stamps



showed it sitting imperiously above a notice which read "Attention au chien" ! The dogs shown were a Lurcher sitting on a park bench, a Golden Retriever having a bath, a Boxer in a box at a dog show, a Beagle in a car and a Dalmatian (?) behind a garden fence.

Accompanying literature commented, exaggerating only a little, "dogs and cats are the only animals on which we have bestowed the full freedom of our homes".

In 2008 the treatment featuring **Working Dogs** showed six breeds performing important roles in society, in assisting disabled and/or visually challenged people, (Rowan, a Golden Retriever and Warwick, a Golden Labrador), in mountain rescue (Merrick, a Labrador-Collie cross) in sniffing out substances for Customs and Excise (Max, a Spaniel) working for the police more generally (Max, a German Shepherd) and in controlling sheep (Bob, a Collie).



In many of these roles the dog's sense of smell which is perhaps a thousand times more sensitive than that of humans is vital.



Our last featured set for the **150th Anniversary of Battersea Dogs & Cats Home** was issued in March 2010 and used ten appealing colour photos of animals rescued and rehomed by the organisation. Seven dogs are featured with their names given in the legend: Pixie - a Mastiff cross, Herbie—a mongrel, Tafka - a Collie, Boris - Bulldog cross, Casey—a Lurcher, Leonard—a Jack Russell Terrier cross and Tia—a Terrier cross.

The accompanying literature explains how in 1860 Mrs Mary Tealby opened "The Temporary Home for Lost and Starving Dogs" in a stable yard in Holloway. In 1871 the Home moved to Battersea.

1979 British Dogs

1981 Blind Man with Guide dog (Labrador ?)

1987 A Scottish deerhound on the Arms of the Royal Society of Edinburgh

1991 Dogs on Stubbs paintings

1997 Enid Blyton *Famous Five's* dog, Timmy

1998 Queen's Beasts—Greyhound of Richmond

2001 Cats and Dogs

2005 Border Collie within Farm Animals

2008 Working Dogs

2010 150 Anniv of Battersea Dogs and Cats Home

Published in edited format in *STAMP* in January 2017,
but since then additionally....

No further issues

Cathedrals & Churches

Although church going is ever declining, with fewer than three million people claiming to be regular attenders church buildings remain important architectural features of villages, towns and cities across Britain. This is strongly reflected in our stamps which since 1966 have regularly depicted mainly protestant and pre-20th Century places of worship.

Main Sets

The most often featured of these is St Paul's Cathedral, seat of the Bishop of London, in which many state funerals and



some royal weddings have been held. St Paul's is one of six churches in the 1969 British Architecture: Cathedrals set (left) and is

referenced in a handful of other stamps, though often by showing only its iconic dome in the skyline e.g. 1980 London mini-sheet and in the 1989 Lord Mayor's Show and 2002 London Bridges sets. The church is best seen in the 1995 and 2005 Peace & Freedom issues and in the 2006 British Journey: S.E. England set. The 2008 Cathedrals set is accompanied by a mini-sheet of four stamps showing the glories of the inside of St Paul's, beside an image of its designer, Sir Christopher Wren.

The first place of worship to be featured on our stamps is Westminster Abbey, which now enjoys the status of "Royal Peculiar" and as such is



used for state funerals and coronations. In 1966 two stamps marked its 900th anniversary, one showing an external view (left) and the other the intricate fan

vaulting in the Henry VII chapel. Another internal view is included in the 2003 50th Anniversary of the Coronation set.



The 13th C. York Minster can also boast three references on stamps, being one of the six churches featured in the 1969 Cathedrals set and most recently in the 2012 UK A-Z (left), with a ceiling detail showing in the 2000 Spirit and Faith set.



Uniquely, the 11th C. Ely Cathedral is featured across five stamps at Christmas 1989 the year in which 800th anniversary was celebrated. Each stamp in gold and silver

showed a different aspect of the cathedral with the 20+1 value showing the Octagon Tower (below left).

Also using predominantly silver tones the 2008 Cathedrals set of six shows churches from the 12th Century (St Magnus in Orkney) to the 20th Century (Belfast)

All but four of the stamps depicting churches show pre-20th Century buildings, with relatively modern architecture is shown in the stamps for Liverpool Metropolitan (in a 1969 set), Coventry (2012) and Belfast and Westminster Cathedrals (2008).

The oldest place of worship to be shown is probably Lindisfarne Priory within the 2011 UK A-Z set, and two Roman Catholic cathedrals, St Andrew's (1999 Christian's Tale, right) and Westminster (2008) are included.



But our stamps don't just celebrate great cathedrals with the 1972 Architecture issue being devoted to five charming local churches—in Essex, Northants, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Somerset.

Smaller local churches also feature in the 2000 Spirit & Faith issue (St Peter and St Paul in Over Stowey, Somerset, right) and St James's in Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire in the 2006 British Journey: England set.



A researched presentation showing all places of worship depicted on GB stamps would be a fascinating undertaking and by the way would reveal that no religion other than Christianity in multi-cultural Britain has been referenced, so far !

[1966 900th anniversary of Westminster Abbey](#)

[1969 British Architecture: Cathedrals](#)

[1972 British Architecture: Village Churches](#)

1975 St George's chapel, Windsor

1980 London 1980—skyline details

[1989 Christmas : Ely Cathedral](#)

1989 Lord Mayor's Show—skyline details

1995 Peace and Freedom 50th anniversary showing wartime St Paul's

1997 Religious anniversaries showing St Augustine holding model cathedral

1999 Christian's Tale: St Andrew's Cathedral (ruin)

2000 Spirit & Faith showing floodlight church and York Minster detail

2002 Bridges of London: skyline detail

2005 Peace and Freedom 60th anniversary showing wartime St Paul's

2006 British Journey England: St Paul's Cathedral & Chipping Camden church

2008 Cathedrals

2011 UK A-Z : Lindisfarne Priory

2012 Britons of Distinction: Coventry Cathedral (restoration and rebuild)

2012 UK A-Z : York Minster

Published in edited format in *STAMP* in February 2017, but since then additionally...

2017 Windsor Castle :The glories of St George's chapel

2017 The Royal Wedding Platinum Anniversary

British Cinema

Images of actors and characters from the best of British film have appeared regularly on our stamps since the mid-80's. Surveying these provides much nostalgia and latterly some wonderment about Royal Mail's "no living person on our stamps" guidelines.

Top Sets

The first relevant set was issued in 1985, which had been dubbed British Film Year. Appropriately in monochrome four major stars of the silver screen and one stellar director



were shown either in rôle or from publicity photos : Peter Sellers as Inspector Jacques Clouseau in *The Pink Panther* (1963), Vivien Leigh auditioning for the role of Scarlett O'Hara, David Niven, Charlie Chaplin (in later life) and Alfred Hitchcock working on a script.

David Niven is shown again in the 2014 Great British Films set in *A Matter of Life and Death*, Charlie Chaplin featured in his classic tramp role in the 1999 Entertainers' Tale set and Vivien Leigh appears in the 1996 Centenary of Cinema set with her husband Laurence Olivier in *Lady Hamilton* and in the 2013 Great Britons set.

In 2008 a very colourful issue celebrated both the *Carry On*



films over 30 of which were produced between the late 1950's and early 1990's and the Gothic *Hammer Horror series* produced for 25 years from the mid-1950's, with three garish film posters for each. In the

48p *Dracula* stamp Christopher Lee (1922-2015) is shown in the title role, as an example of Royal Mail stretching its no living persons on stamps guidelines. Dracula's nemesis van Helsing was played by Peter Cushing another regular Hammer star, who also appears in a 2013 Great Britons stamp—as Sherlock Holmes.



Three more living actors—Michael Gambon (as Dumbledore), Ralph Fiennes (Lord Voldemort) both from the *Harry Potter* films and Tilda Swinton (The White Witch) from the *Narnia* films appear in the 2011 Magical Realms series which also feature characters from Terry

Pratchett's *Discworld* books currently being considered for cinema and from Arthurian legend, the subject of many feature films.

However when we come to the 2014 Great British films set we find even more living actors whose faces are shown on



stamps: Nigel Havers and Ben Cross from *Chariots of Fire* (1981). Brenda Blethyn and Marianne Jean-Baptiste from *Secrets & Lies*, (1996) Keira Knightley and Parminder Negra from *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002) and the star of *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), Peter O'Toole (1932—2013) who would have been alive when the issue was being planned. The other British film referenced in that set was *2001: A Space Odyssey*, made in 1968

In more recent issues the faces of living actors appear freely—in fact too many to list here.



For example in the 2014 Comedy Greats set of ten we find comedy actors who have appeared in films such Billy Connolly, Ronnie Corbett, Lenny Henry and the Monty Python team.

The 2015 *Star Wars* issue features not only images famous British actor Sir Alec Guinness (1914—2000) (who also appears in the 2014 Remarkable Lives set) but curiously of relatively unknown British actors, John Boyega and Daisy Ridley.



Other British cinema actors whose images have appeared on our stamps include Stan Laurel of Laurel & Hardy fame (1990 Greetings: Smiles), Kenneth More, known for such films as *Reach for the Sky* in which he portrayed Battle of Britain ace Douglas Bader (2014 Remarkable Lives), slapstick comedy clown Norman Wisdom and comic duo Peter Cook and Dudley Moore both of whom made films together and with others.

The one set which takes a very different approach to the topic of cinema is the 1996 Centenary issue which in addition to showing Vivien Leigh and Laurence Oliver also illustrates an old fashioned cinema ticket, the Pathé news logo, a neon sign outside a cinema and the Odeon cinema, Harrogate named after an ancient theatre in Athens but conveniently also an acronym of Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation.

1985 British Film Year

1990 Stan Laurel

1996 Centenary of Cinema

1999 The Entertainers' Tale: Charlie Chaplin

2008 *Carry On* and *Hammer Horror* posters

2011 Magical realms, Harry Potter, Narnia and Discworld

2013 Great Britons: Vivien Leigh, Peter Cushing

2014 Remarkable Lives: Kenneth More, Sir Alec Guinness

2014 Great British Films

2015 Comedy Greats

Spike Milligan, The Two Ronnies, Billy Connolly, Norman Wisdom, Morecambe and Wise, Lenny Henry, Peter Cook & Dudley Moore, French & Saunders, the Monty Python team, Victoria Wood

2015 *Star Wars The Force Awakens*

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2017 *Star Wars* androids

Landscapes

One of the many purposes of a country's stamps is to promote areas of its natural beauty to potential tourists from within or from far afield and in recent years with series like "A British Journey" and "Britain A-Z" the Royal Mail has done this really well using many striking images. The topic is fairly unchallenging to a designer who will often simply have to pick the best photographic image available, and also uncontroversial with criticism likely to come only if there is an imbalance of references to the nations and regions within a set. Right from the start the Post Office was aware of this potential pitfall...

Five Main Sets

"Landscapes" was the first topic chosen for a new category of issue, originally termed "Pictorial" because it was neither definitive nor commemorative and referenced "non-events". The 1996 issue of four such stamps designed by Leonard Rosomon also used for the first time a new Queen's head, adapted by David Gentleman from Mary Gillick's coinage design.

The four designs showed a view through trees near Hassocks, seven miles north of Brighton in West Sussex, whilst the undulating dairy country of Antrim represents Northern Ireland. Harlech Castle is the focus of the Welsh item whilst snowbound Cairngorms somewhere near Aviemore represent Scotland on the highest value stamp. Putting the four stamps side by side you get the impression that the South of England is sunny and fecund, Northern Ireland very green but Wales and Scotland austere places—and that's the problem with picking one image to represent a region or nation which was avoided in later sets by including more stamps.

Three decades later our stamps are still using an artist's impressions rather than photography and the **1994 set of paintings by The Prince of Wales** (issued to mark the 25th anniversary of his Investiture) adopts much the same approach as Landscapes in 1996.

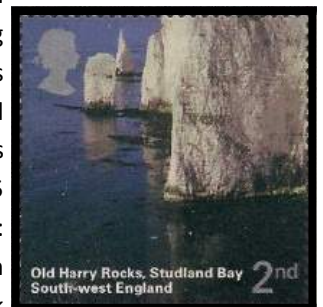


Understandably within the set of five there are two views of Wales showing Chirk Castle in Clywd in North Wales near the English border and Dolwyddelan in Gwynedd (in the North West) whilst Scotland is represented by a striking view of Ben Arkle in Sutherland, Northern Ireland by the Mourne Mountains in Co. Down and England by a view of Dersingham near King's Lynn in Norfolk.

In 2002 photographic images were used for the first time in a full set of Landscapes in a block of ten 27p stamps showing **British Coastlines**. Using aerial views added a totally new approach to the topic providing largely unfamiliar aspects of the countryside even to people who knew the parts selected well. One of the most dramatic of these photographs showed the rugged cliffs of St Abb's Head in Berwickshire a nature reserve administered by the National Trust. The other nine stamps showed six views from England and a further one each from the other three nations. One unsatisfactory element of the design was that none of the stamps used were captioned, so without the printed commentary of presentation pack or catalogue these could have been from anywhere in the British Isles. Such an error was not to be repeated, as you'll see.



Perhaps inspired by the positive reception for these images of Britain, Royal Mail then began a major project called **A British Journey**, the following year, producing six captioned landscapes for Scotland (in 2003), Northern Ireland, and Wales the following year and then in 2005 it looked as if England was going to be treated with six stamps for each of various regions as the first issue in 2005 was called A British Journey: South West England from which the three enormous chalk formations called Old Harry Rocks, on the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset, is shown.



But then it looks as if someone remembered that "less is more" and instead of producing a further perhaps four sets for parts of England in the next two years the Journey was completed with ten stamps in 2006 which included two city scenes (St Paul's Cathedral, London and Chamberlain Square Birmingham) as well as more traditional rural landscape.

This variety seemed to spawn five years later a further riff on the theme with the issue of **Britain A-Z landscapes** in two batches in 2011 and 2012 with 26 stamps from across the country showing both rural and urban scenes—from The Angel of the North to London Zoo, all of which had a natural or man-made structure as its focus. (Carrick-a-Rede the famous rope bridge near Ballintoy in County Antrim shown).



1966 British landscapes

1971 Ulster (paintings)

1981 50th anniv National Trust for Scotland

1984 Urban renewal

1989 Industrial Archaeology

1992 Four Seasons

1994 West Highland Line in Railway Photography

1994 Paintings by The Prince of Wales

1994 Scottish Golf Courses

1995 St David's Head, Dyfed in National Trust set

2000 Reed Beds, River Braid, Ballymena, Life & Earth

2000 Millennium Bridge, Gateshead, People & Places

2000 Forest Doire Dach, Tree & Leaf

2002 British Coastlines (bird's eye view)

2003 A British Journey (Scotland)

2004 A British Journey (Northern Ireland)

2004 A British Journey (Wales)

2005 A British Journey (S.W.England)

2005 World Heritage Sites

2006 A British Journey (England, rest of)

2011 Britain A-Z (1st series A-L)

2012 Britain A-Z (2nd series M-Z)

Additionally the selvage of each mini-sheet accompanying the six Classic Locomotives series (2011-14) shows a panorama of part of the country

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2016 Landscape Gardens

2017 Windsor Castle panoramas

2018 Hampton Court palace panoramas

Artistic Portraiture

A challenging and absorbing approach to the many pre-photography portraits of famous people on our stamps would be to source a copy the original image of the subject and mount the stamp beside it, so producing a mini art gallery in an album or display, perhaps in chronological order. This way you can deduce what the stamp designer has done with their original material.

The backbone of such an approach would be the extended Kings and Queens series issued in six groupings from 2008-2012 all of which used portraits of monarchs as well as images of famous people who belonged to their Age.



So, for example, the first monarch we see in the series is Henry IV (1367–1413), King of England and Lord of Ireland from 1399. This turns out to be a 16th-century imaginary painting of Henry IV, held in the National Portrait Gallery, London.

In addition to all sovereigns this series references famous commoners and a similar approach can be taken to them. So in the mini-sheet which accompanies the second group in this series (Age of the Tudors, 2009) there is a portrait of the explorer Sir Francis Drake. This is a Portrait miniature by

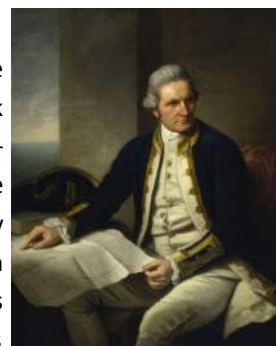


Nicholas Hilliard, 1581, in Latin "42 years of his age, 1581 AD", a detail cropped from the stamp.



In fact explorers are particularly well served in our stamps with occasional issues in addition to Polar Explorers and Explorers in 1972 and 1973, respectively. Someone who deserves more attention in our stamps than a singleton is Captain James Cook, squeezed into the Millennium Travellers' Tale of 1999, beside a Maori warrior,

recognising Cook's explorations in the Antipodes. The full portrait of Cook was composed by Sir Nathaniel Dance-Holland, c.1775, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Quite clearly around 90% of the original has been cropped which seems an enormous shame. Equally the portrait of Scots explorer David Livingston used on a 1973 stamp is a coloured interpretation of a monochrome photograph taken for the Royal Geographical Society, which sponsored the third phase of his exploration of Africa and disguises the fact that Livingston is nursing the arm mauled by a lion in 1844.



Stamps in the 1982 Maritime Heritage, 2007 Abolition of Slavery, the 2009 Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution, some in the 2009 Eminent Britons, the 2010 350th Anniversary of the Royal Society and some in the 2014 Prime Minister set adopt a similar approach, which invites research. For example the stamp for Richard Arkwright in the Industrial Revolution set uses a gloomy portrait by Joseph Wright and



overlaps it with an image of the inventor's Spinning Jenny.

Wright is *the* painter of the Industrial Revolution and was famed for his use of chiaroscuro, contrasting light and dark, often achieved by illuminating his subject by candles, as evidenced in this work, but not in the stamp.





- 1967 Master Lambton by Sir Thomas Lawrence
- 1968 Queen Elizabeth I (anonymous)
- 1969 Pinkie by Sir Thomas Lawrence
- 1972 British Polar Explorers
- 1973 British Explorers
- 1973 Nelly O'Brien and self portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds
- 1973 Rev R.Walker and self portrait by Sir Henry Raeburn
- 1982 Maritime Heritage
- 1986 Sir Edmond Halley, caricature by Ralph Steadman
- 1993 Roman Heads in various media
- 1995 Alice Keppel with daughter by Alice Hughes
- 1997 Henry VIII and his wives
- 1999 Millennium: Travellers' Tale : Captain James Cook
- 2003 British Museum—variety of masks
- 2006 National Portrait Gallery 150th anniversary
- 2007 Abolition of Slave Trade Bicentenary
- 2008 Kings and Queens I : Lancaster and York
- 2009 Pioneers of Industrial Revolution
- 2009 Kings and Queens II : Tudors
- 2009 Eminent Britons: Purcell and Johnson
- 2010 350th Anniversary of the Royal Society
- 2010 Kings and Queens III : Stewarts
- 2010 Kings and Queens IV : Stewarts
- 2011 Kings and Queens V : Hanoverians
- 2012 Kings and Queens III : Windsors
- 2013 The Queen: six decades of portraits
- 2014 British Prime Ministers: some only

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but since then additionally....

- 2016 Royal Mail 500 : Sir Brian Tuke
- 2016 British Humanitarians
- 2016 The Queen's 90th birthday
- 2017 Royal Wedding; Platinum Anniversary
- 2018 Captain Cook and the *Endeavour* Voyage

None called *Boaty McBoatFace* !

It will be no surprise to you that a maritime nation like ours has produced stamps with scores and scores of images of seafaring craft of various sizes, from skiffs to ocean liners and from the very old to the contemporary, as a quick glance at the tables opposite will confirm.....

Over thirty famous ships are celebrated with Nelson's flagship



HMS Victory meriting three stamps in 1951 (left), 1983 and 2003. Equally popular is the Pilgrim Fathers' *Mayflower* (1970, 1999 and 2003, though not

named in the Settlers' Tale Millennium issue.

Half a dozen other vessels appear on two stamps, e.g.



warships like Henry VIII's *Mary Rose* (1982 left, 2009) and the World War 2 battleship *H.M.S. Warspite* (1982, 1994). Sir Francis Chichester's *Gypsy Moth IV* globe circumnavigating is also seen twice, in 1967 and 2013 as

is the tea clipper *Cutty Sark* (1969, 2013), Brunel's *Great Eastern* (1987, 2006) and the liner *Mauretania* (1969, 2004). However, because of the Ernest Shackleton issue of 2016 his polar exploration vessel *Endurance* is the most referenced ship on our stamps appearing on one in 2003 and on four in the most recent set.

The most referenced type of ship is the warship with over two dozen images and well behind with around fifteen each are yachts, ocean liners and rowing boats, whilst at the other end of the list, shown on one stamp only are a police patrol boat, an oilfield support vessel, a tourist launch and a single person keel boat.

The Main Sets

The backbone of any presentation on boats and ships on GB stamps would have to be the 1969 British Ships set, and 1982's Maritime Heritage, 2004's Ocean Liners and 2013's Merchant Navy issues, each of which adopt an historical perspective across centuries. Two other sets for Sailing (1975) and the Fishing Industry (1981) simply show a variety of design at a particular time.

The oldest vessel in the 1969 set is an Elizabethan galleon, several of which are also seen in the Spanish Armada issues



of 1988 whilst the most modern is the *Queen Elizabeth II* (aka *QE2*) built by

Upper Clyde Shipbuilders and in service from 1969-2008 but now laid up in Dubai port with an uncertain future.

In the 1982 set which concentrates on warships and personalities mainly associated with them the earliest ship is the Tudor carrack *Mary Rose*, sunk in 1545, salvaged in 1982 and now on permanent display following partial restoration in Portsmouth Dockyard.



The most recent battleship shown is the Queen Elizabeth class *HMS Warspite*, launched in 1913 and which saw action in both World Wars, so gaining more battle honours than any other Royal Navy ship.

The earliest built ship in the 2004's Liners set is the Brunel designed, Bristol built, wooden paddle steam *Great Western* of 1838, the first steam ship built for Atlantic crossings and later used by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, after use as a troop ship in the Crimean War.



The newest ship in the set, P&O's Belfast Built SS *Canberra*, in service from 1961-1997 was also used to transport troops in the Falklands campaign of 1982.

Finally the 2013 Merchant Navy set ranges from the 1813 built East Indian man *Atlas* to the enormous bulk carrier *Lord Hinton*. The former, shown off Dover, sailed slowly to India and back ten times before 1830.

Such vessels sometimes also known as tea clippers carried both cargo and passengers. The modern bulk carrier typically carrying coal, ore, cement or grain was launched into the



Clyde in 1986 and is currently operated by a company in the Cook Islands.

1946 Victory : Cargo boat

1951 High val defs *HMS Victory* , yachts

1963 Lifeboat Conference—19th cent and modern lifeboats

1964 International Geographical Congress: Shipbuilding yard, Belfast

1965 Parliament's 700th anniv: skiffs on Thames

1966 British Technology: hovercraft

1966 Battle of Hastings: Norman invasion longboat

1967 EFTA : Cargo boat

1967 Sir Francis Chichester's *Gypsy Moth IV* yacht

1968 Anniversaries: Captain James Cook's *Endeavour*

1969 British Ships : *QE2*, galleon, East Indiaman, *Cutty Sark*, *Great Britain* and *Mauretania I*.

1970 Anniversaries: Pilgrim Fathers' *Mayflower*

1972 Anniversaries: Coastguard—sailing vessel shipwrecked

1974 UPU Centenary :P&O steam packet *Peninsular*

1975 J.M.Turner Bicentenary, sailing vessel, steamer, gondola

1975 Sailing—variety of yachts

1979 150th anniv of Met Police—Thames patrol boat

1980 London 1980—cargo boat under Tower Bridge

1981 Fishing Industry—variety of fishing boats

1982 Maritime Heritage: warships through the ages

1982 Christmas: "I saw three ships" carol

1983 Engineering: *Iolair* oilfield support vessel

1984 Safety at sea: lifeboats, cargo boat and yacht

1986 Christmas: Hebrides Tribute— rowing boat with sail

1987 150th anniv of Q.Victoria's accession: *Great Eastern*

1988 Europa: Transport—*Queen Elizabeth* ocean liner

1988 Australian Bicentennial—sailing clipper

1988 Spanish armada—Spanish and English galleons

1988 Edward Lear—*The Owl and the Pussycat*—rowing boat

1989 Greetings—yacht

1990 Europa : Games & Toys—yacht

1992 Intl events : Columbus *Santa Maria* and brigantine

1993 Gilbert & Sullivan: pirate sailing ship, Venetian gondola

1993 Inland waterways: barges, fishing boats

1994 D-Day 50 anniv: battleship *HMS Warspite*

1994 Summertime: yachts at Cowes Week

1995 Globe Theatre: rowing boats and sailing boats on Thames

1997 Religious anniversaries St Columba in rowing boat

1998 Enid Blyton: Famous Five and rowing boat

1999 Travellers' Tale : ship under steam and sail

1999 Settlers' Tale : sailing ship to US, and clipper to Australia

1999 Workers' Tale : shipbuilding

2000 Mind & Matter: rowing boat on Norfolk Broads

2001 Cent of R.N. Submarine Service

2002 Kipling : rowing boat in "The Crab that played with the sea"

2002 British Coastlines: Padstow harbour: yachts

2002 Bridges of London: rowing boats and skiffs on Thames

2003 Extreme Endeavour Chichester's *Gypsy Moth IV* yacht and Shackleton's *Endurance*

2003 Pub Signs: Pilgrim Father's *Mayflower*

2004 Ocean Liners from *Great Western* to *Queen Mary II*

2005 Battle of Trafalgar: British and French fighting ships

2006 British Journey: England yachts at Brancaster, Norfolk

2006 Brunel Bicentenary: *Great Eastern*

2008 Rescue at Sea : Lifeboats

2009 Industrial revolution pioneers: barge on aqueduct

2009 Age of Tudors: Henry VIII's *Mary Rose*

2009 Olympics: canoe slalom

2010 Smilers: ocean liner

2010 Britain Alone: Dunkirk : rowing boats, launches, destroyer and steamship

2010 Paralympics : competitive rowing boats

2011 Paralympics : yachts

2012 UK: A-Z tourist boat on Thames near London Zoo

2012 Olympic Gold medallists in yachting, rowing (3) canoeing (2)

2012 Paralympic Gold medallist in single person keelboat

2013 Merchant Navy across the ages, Arctic convoys

2016 500th anniv of Royal Mail: packet ship and rowing boat

2016 Shackleton's expedition

Published in edited format in *STAMP* in June 2017 but since then additionally....

2018 Captain Cook and the *Endeavour* Voyage

Folk Customs and Cultural Traditions

Folk Customs takes us into a weird and wonderful world of eccentric events celebrated at one particular time of year for many years, often centuries. Sometimes these events happen only in a particular place like cheese rolling at Cooper's Well in Gloucestershire or Up-Helly-Aa in The Shetlands. Other folk customs are more widely observed like Maypole Dancing on May Day, burning Guy Fawkes effigies on Bonfire night or pancake tossing and racing on Shrove Tuesday.

The Christmas: Folk Customs set from 1986 celebrates five such peculiar activities... *The Glastonbury Thorn* (12p) refers to the legend that a Christmas flowering thorn tree grew on the spot where Joseph of Arimathea concluded his journey from the Holy Land. Even today sprigs of the thorn are presented to the British monarch. *The Hebrides Tribute* (22p) was celebrated by fisher folk from The Uists, who would row



707 strokes—the same number that on Christ's command Peter took to pay a temple tribute—before catching fish to be given to the poor. *The Dewsbury Parish Church Knell* (31p left) refers to an unusual bell

ringing custom from Yorkshire whereby on the night before Christmas one bell is sounded for every year since Christ's birth. *The Enthroning of the Hereford Boy Bishop* (34p) is a revived practice in which a young chorister is dressed like and allowed to mimic the actions of a real bishop for three weeks from December 6th. *The Tanad Valley Plygain* (18p) from Wales is a candlelight carol service which heralds the anniversary of Christ's birth.

Carol Singing, which can be traced as far back as the Thirteenth Century, is regularly referenced on our stamps and is an example of the much broader topic of Cultural Tradition where a custom is honoured not just locally but across an ethnic group, a nation or even further afield.



The 1978 Christmas issue illustrates the practice across centuries. The words of 500 year old *Boar's Head Carol* (13p) describe the sacrificing of a wild boar and giving its head pride of place on the

banqueting table. *The Waits* (9p) were originally municipal watchmen playing musical instruments to let townsfolk in the 19th century know they were about. In seeking reward for their labours they were very much in the old tradition of wassailing. The other two stamps in the set show *Eighteenth century carol singers* (11p) and going by their clothes a

prosperous Victorian family group celebrating around a Christmas tree (7p).

As the checklist shows there are other sets relating to carols, notably in 1977 which allocates six stamps to the cumulative carol *The Twelve Days of Christmas* which dates from 1780. The 1982 Christmas issue illustrates five well known carols from *While Shepherds Watched* written by Nahum Tate in the Seventeenth Century to *Good King Wenceslaus* By John Neale in 1853.

The **1976 Cultural Traditions** set illustrates further examples showing Morris Dancing, Highland Dancing and the Eisteddfod.

Morris Dancing (10p), also referenced on the 18p value in the 1981 Folklore set, where dancers are shown in medieval times, can be traced back to Fifteenth Century England and is characterised by rhythmic stepping to music with dancers sporting bells on their breeches and sometimes carrying sticks, swords and handkerchiefs. ("Morris" is possibly derived from "Moorish".)



Highland dancing (11p) to bagpipe music is a regular competitive feature for solo boys and girls at annual Highland games events but also practised in Scottish army regiments. *Eisteddfods*, which can be dated at least to the Twelfth Century are competitive Welsh cultural festivals in literature, performance and music as suggested by the harp shown on the 13p value. The 8½p value shows one of the druids who play important ceremonial roles at eisteddfods holding a horn.

In the **1981 Folklore set**, *St Valentine's Day* (14p) is too well known to need explanation, but *Lammastide* and *Medieval Mummers* (right) less so.

The former term refers to a festival held in August to celebrate the wheat harvest, whereby people brought loaves made harvest grain to church to be blessed. In the design we see dancing figures carrying scythe and rose either side of a large corn dolly and along the bottom are two cornucopia laden with the fruits of the harvest. The latter term refers to groups of amateurs who, wearing elaborate costume and masks, presented folk plays in the open air or in people's houses or pubs. Their simple crude plots usually involved fighting and dancing



The examples referred to above mostly have a very long history but there is one stand-out case of a modern equivalent—the **Notting Hill Carnival celebrated in a 1998 set.**



The two day carnival led by members of the British West Indian community was first held on the last weekend in August in 1966 by local people eager to boost a sense of community on the streets of Notting Hill, Kensington and Chelsea.

Now the biggest and most vibrant multi-cultural festival in Europe—involving fantastically costumed participants parading to loud music—it has regularly attracted over a million onlookers. The four stamps using blurred images by photographer Tim Hazael of South Kensington capture the energy and colour of the event.

Because this theme has relatively few stamps devoted to it—if worked up for a display—it would be best complemented by event cancels and postcards, both of which are plentiful.

1976 Eisteddfod, Morris Dancing and Highland dancing (4)

1977 Christmas : The Twelve Days of Christmas (6)

1978 Christmas: Carol singers illustrated—15th-19th century (4)

1981 Folklore : St Valentine's Day, Morris Dancing, Lammastide, Medieval Mummers (4)

1982 Christmas : Five well known carols illustrated (5)

1986 Folk Customs : five fairly obscure examples illustrated (5)

1990 Christmas: modern Carol singers on 26p

1994 Summertime : Events—Royal Welsh Show, Braemar Gathering

1998 Europa: Festivals—The Notting Hill Carnival (4)

2010 Christmas : Wallace and Gromit singing carols on 2nd class value

Published in edited format in *STAMP* in July 2017, but since then additionally....

No further issues

Children's Television

Stamps showing programmes specially made for children or popular children's literature texts adapted for TV have appeared regularly since the mid 1990's, not least because such stamps themselves might well appeal to children and spark an interest, albeit temporary, in starting a collection.

Top Sets

Two sets, in 1996 and 2014, totalling seventeen stamps have celebrated the best of children's TV from early classics like Muffin the Mule and Andy Pandy through to modern shows like Peppa Pig and Shaun the Sheep.

The five earlier stamps celebrated string puppet *Muffin the Mule* (first broadcast in 1946 and shown with presenter Annette Mills), glove puppet *Sooty* (1948 shown with Harry Corbett), *Stingray* (the Supermarionation series, created by Gerry and Sylvia Anderson first shown in 1964), the stop-motion animated whistling aliens *The Clangers* (1969) and the Cosgrove Hall animated secret agent *Dangermouse* (1981). Some of these shows, notably *Sooty* and *Dangermouse* have enjoyed revivals for modern children.

Gerry and Sylvia Anderson's creations were treated handsomely with ten stamps in 2011 with another stamp for *Stingray*, five for *Thunderbirds* (1965) including a 3D "moving" minisheet and others for *Joe 90* (1968), *Captain Scarlet* (1967), *Fireball XL5* (1962) and *Supercar* (1961) with



each stamp suggesting the shape of an old fashioned television with curved corners. The minisheet in particular was controversial as it was difficult to cut up individual stamps and adhere them successfully to covers and it did not receive and retain ink-jet cancels very well at all.

In the same year Royal Mail issued a second populist



Children's TV set of ten stamps (six in elongated format) related to *The Railway Series* books by the

Reverend Wilbert Awdry and his son, Christopher between 1945 and 2011 recreated for in 1984 ITV as *Thomas & Friends* with drawling Scouse narration by Ringo Starr, formerly of The Beatles between 1984 and 86. Each of the long stamps illustrated a different locomotive like Thomas, Percy or Daisy from the TV incarnation whilst the mini-sheet

used illustrations from four different books.

A further twelve stamps were issued in 2014 in a Classic Children's TV set providing a full chronological range of entertainment starting with *Andy Pandy* (1958) *Ivor the Engine* (1959) *The Magic Roundabout* (1964) *Camberwick Green* (1966) *Mr Benn* (1971) *The Wombles* (1973) *Bagpuss* (1974) *Paddington Bear* (1975) *Postman Pat* (1981) *Bob the Builder* (1998) through to *Peppa Pig* (2004) and *Shaun the Sheep* (2007) These stamps were self-adhesive which allowed parts of the characters portrayed to project beyond the square boundary of the stamp, as illustrated so making them that little bit more quirky. Of these characters only *Paddington*—the creation of former BBC TV camera man Michael Bond had appeared on GB stamps before (in a 1994 Greetings stamp and in the Animal Tales set of 2006) though *Postman Pat* had been given a set by the Isle of Man in 1994.



The stars of two Children's TV programmes were used by Royal Mail for their secular Christmas issues in 2004 and 2010. Raymond Brigg's book about the Christmas snowman who comes to life first appeared on a Greetings stamp in 1993, a short movie about the character having been broadcast on Channel 4 a decade before. The Snowman appeared on six designs at Christmas in 2004, with the ever popular Wallace and Gromit characters (created by Nick Park of Aardman Animations using clay animation) getting similar treatment six years later as they performed a number of Christmassy activities like carol singing, posting Christmas cards and decorating the tree. The characters have appeared in such short films as *A Grand Day Out* (1989), *The Wrong Trousers* (1993) and *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005).



In addition to sets specifically issued to mark Children's TV characters, many other stamps have been issued celebrating characters who first appeared in print and then had TV shows built around them such as *Rupert Bear* (1993 and 1994), *Noggin the Nog* (1994), Enid Blyton's *Noddy* (1997), Mary Norton's *The Borrowers*, Beatrix Potter characters (1979, 1993, 1994, 2006 and 2016) several Roald characters (Animal Tales 2006 and a dedicated set in 2012) in novels made into feature films and of course A.A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* (in 1979 and 2010).



As a means of interesting children in stamps, collecting GB issues showing their favourites would be a great way to start.

1979 Year of the Child

1993 Greetings—Gift Giving

1994 Greetings—Messages

1996 50th anniversary of Children's TV

1997 Enid Blyton novels

1998 Children's Fantasy novels

2004 Christmas: The Snowman

2006 Animal Tales

2010 Winnie the Pooh

2010 Christmas : Wallace and Gromit

2011 Gerry Anderson's FAB

2011 Thomas the Tank Engine

2012 Roald Dahl stories

2014 Classic Children's TV

2016 Beatrix Potter

Published in edited format in *STAMP* in August 2017, but since then additionally....

No further issues

Broadcasting

Borrowed from the farming practice of casting seeds widely from a pannier, the term, meaning transmission from a single radio station to a wide audience was possibly coined around 1920 by the manager of a Pittsburgh radio station. However the world's first radio service was delivered by BBC Ltd., in June 1920.

There are a few stamps relating to radio broadcasting but most are about TV. In the 1972 Broadcasting Anniversaries issue the 9p captioned "Marconi/Kemp experiments 1897" shows an oscillator and a spark-gap transmitter which generated electromagnetic waves, standard wireless technology before WW1. The 41p value in the 1995 Pioneers of Communication set, captioned "First Wireless Message 1895" shows Guglielmo Marconi and early equipment.



Alexandra Palace, the famous entertainment venue in Haringey in North London, shown in a 1990 Europa stamp became the home of the BBC from 1936 to 1960 and is still a BBC facility. The children's string puppet show *Muffin the Mule* (1996 50th anniversary) was broadcast live from "Ally Pally" in 1946.

The first radio broadcast from Wimbledon occurred in late June 1927 and *Test Match Special* was first broadcast in 1957. (Both can be referenced with stamps in the 1994 Summertime set).

A broadcast by Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret in October 1940 is pictured in the 2010 Britain Alone issue. A number of famous comedians who are featured in the 2015 Comedy Greats set such as Spike Milligan with *The Goon Show* (1950-60) and Morecambe and Wise made their broadcasting debuts on BBC radio. More serious broadcasters like Richard Dimbleby (Great Britons 2013) the BBC's first war correspondent, Roy Plomely (of *Desert Island Discs* fame) and Barbara Ward (of *The Brains Trust*) also were first heard on BBC radio.



TV cameras are featured in the 1967 British Invention, the 1972 Broadcasting Anniversaries and 2007 World Of Invention issues.

A number of sets showing famous programmes or individuals include many first seen on BBC TV : within the 1994 Greetings

set for example *Noggin the Nog* (right) and *Paddington Bear* were first seen in 1959 and 1975 respectively. The 1996 50th Anniversary of Children's TV references two BBC shows *Sooty* and *The Clangers* and within the Classic Children's TV set of 2014 all but two of the shows ranging from *Andy Pandy* in 1950 in the Watch With Mother slot to *Shaun the Sheep* in 2007 were broadcast by the BBC.



In the 1998 Comedians set Tommy Cooper and Joyce Grenfell (right) both made their TV or radio debuts on the BBC and in the 2015 Comedy Greats set of ten, *The Two Ronnies*, *Morecambe & Wise*, *Peter Cook & Dudley Moore*, *Monty Python* and *French & Saunders* were all BBC productions.



Two very famous BBC shows were given a set to themselves on the occasion of their 50th anniversary—the astronomy magazine show *The Sky at Night* in 2007 and the sci-fi drama *Dr Who* in 2013, though a Dalek had appeared in the *Entertainers' Tale* set in 1999.



The 50th anniversary of commercial television in 2005 was marked with an issue of six celebrating serious drama (*Inspector Morse* and *The Avengers*) a soap (*Emmerdale*), a sitcom (*Rising Damp*) a quiz show (*Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*) and the Arts magazine *The South Bank Show*.



All of Gerry Anderson's marionette sci-fi fantasy series made by ATV like *Stingray*, *Thunderbirds* and *Joe 90* were celebrated in a 2011 issue. Other popular children's TV shows which first appeared on commercial TV were *Dangermouse* (1996 50th anniversary), *Ivor the Engine* and *Peppa Pig* (Channel 5) in 2014 Classic Children's TV set, *The Snowman* (Channel 4) in the 1993 Greetings set and Wallace and Gromit e.g. *A Grand Day Out* (Channel 4) who starred in the Christmas 2010 issue.





Some very famous entertainers received their big break on commercial TV like Lenny Henry and Victoria Wood (Comedy Greats

2015, above) who appeared first on ATV's *New Faces* talent show and Les Dawson and Peter Cook (1998 Comedians) were first seen on ITV.

- 1967 Invention—TV equipment
- 1972 Broadcasting Anniversaries re BBC 1922/72
- 1990 Europa : Alexandra Palace
- 1993 *Just William and The Snowman* stories : radio &TV adaptations
- 1994 Greetings—Messages—Noggin the Nog, Paddington Bear
- 1994 Summertime: BBC radio and TV coverage of Wimbledon, Cricket test matches
- 1995 Pioneers of Communication : Marconi and early wireless
- 1996 50th anniversary Children's TV
- 1999 The Entertainers' Tale : Dalek from *Dr Who*
- 2005 50th anniversary of ITV
- 2006 Animal Tales : *Paddington Bear*
- 2007 World of Invention: TV camera
- 2007 50th anniversary of *The Sky at Night*
- 2010 Britain Alone: Royal Broadcast by the Princesses
- 2010 Christmas: Wallace and Gromit
- 2011 Gerry Anderson's TV series
- 2012 Queen's Diamond Jubilee: 1st Christmas TV Broadcast 1957
- 2013 Great Britons: Richard Dimbleby, broadcaster
- 2013 50th anniversary of *Dr Who*
- 2014 Classic Children's TV (12)
- 2014 Remarkable Lives: broadcasters Roy Plomley and Barbara Ward
- 2015 Comedy Greats

Cz

Gardens

Britons love their gardens and this could be a surprisingly large theme, showing not only famous ones but illustrating all sorts of flora and fauna one associates with them — including entities you don't particularly want there !

If you discount the national symbols—roses, daffodils, thistles and shamrocks— as shown for example on KG VI and QEII definitives and Coronation issues, the very first plant to appear on a GB stamp (in the 1961 PO Bank set) is the wild flower Thrift often found in rockeries. After that stamps referencing gardens abound and there are over 30 sets for you to consider.

Top Sets



Two sets pay homage to famous public gardens in Britain with Kew Gardens, Richmond upon Thames, which houses the world's largest collection of living plants referenced on no fewer than nine stamps, in 1990, 1993 and 2009. Its iconic William Chambers designed pagoda built in 1761 is featured on each occasion in addition to the Joseph Banks Building, the Princess of Wales Conservatory. The Millennium Seedbank The Sackler Crossing, and the Palm House, twice.



In 1983 a set of four called British Gardens featured famous sites across four centuries, the 20th century represented by Sissinghurst Castle garden, created in the 1930s by Vita Sackville-West, poet and gardening writer, and her husband Harold Nicolson, as a series of themed rooms.

The 19th C is represented by Biddulph Grange, a National Trust landscaped and themed set of gardens, near Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, developed by James Bateman an accomplished horticulturist and landowner, whose family's wealth had come from heavy industry. The garden of Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire designed by Sir John Vanbrugh and now a classic example of the English landscape garden movement represents the 18th C. whilst the fourth garden, noted for its geometric parterres is Pitmedden in Aberdeenshire established by the family of Sir Alexander Seton in the 17th C.



Sets showing flowers can be found easily, firstly in 1964 to mark a major Botanical Congress in Edinburgh. Four handsome multi-coloured

stamps show Spring Gentian and the climbing Dog Rose, (though rarely found in Britain) and the widely seen Honeysuckle and the Fringed water lily, both of which have since developed reputations as nuisance noxious weeds.

Three years later in 1967 a beautiful set of six stamps using artwork by botanical illustrator Rev William Keble Martin presented a collection of British Wild Flowers which often find their way into cultivated gardens, some more appreciated than others : Hawthorn and Bramble, Larger Bindweed and Viper's Bugloss, Ox-eye daisy, Coltsfoot and Buttercup, Bluebell, Red Campion and Wood Anemone, (on 4d shown) Dog Violet and Primroses.



However roses are the star flower on British stamps, shown in stunning detail firstly in a 1976 set for the Centenary of the National Rose Society and then in a 1991 set for the World Congress of Roses in Belfast that year. Five species of roses are shown in this set: Rosa Silver Jubilee, which as you see has Large well-formed pink shaded apricot double blooms, Rosa Mme Alfred Carrière, Rosa Moyesii, Rosa Harvest Fayre and Rosa Mutabilis.



Other features of garden life could also be employed to develop this theme comprehensively, such Butterflies (1981 and 2013), other Insects (1985) Garden Birds (1992 and 1995) Endangered Fauna like the song thrush (1998) and stag beetle (2008), Pond Life (2001), Woodland Animals (2004) and most recently Bees (given ten stamps in 2015). As is well known there is much concern about the effect of field pesticides on British bees which are vital to much plant growth, a point highlighted in the accompanying literature for this issue. Ironically one of the first British stamps to show flowers (for National Nature Week in 1963) showed a bee taking pollen from a *picked* posy of flowers, which was apparently a major design error, as bees do not do this !



Finally, a slightly left field approach could also be taken by seeking out garden references in English literature in our stamps, for example Jane Austen characters in the 1975 set, Jayne Eyre in a 1980 stamp and the garden paradise of Rivendell in *Lord of the Rings*.

1953 Coronation—rose, thistle, daffodil and shamrock
1961 Cent. P.O.Savings Bank—Thrift plant
1963 National Nature Week—posy of flowers
1964 10th International Botanical Congress, Edinburgh
1967 British Wild Flowers
1975 Jane Austen : Mr Darcy, Catherine Morland in gardens
1976 Centenary of National Rose Society
1979 Spring: Wild flowers
1980 Charlotte Bronte: Jayne Eyre in garden
1981 Butterflies
1983 British gardens
1985 Insects
1987 Flower Photography
1990 150th anniv Kew Gardens
1991 9th World Congress of Roses, Belfast
1992 Four Seasons : Redwing
1993 Europa Kew Gardens
1993 Four Seasons : Autumn Fruits
1995 Christmas : Robins
1996 19th Cent Flower Paintings
1998 Endangered Species, song thrush, snail etc
2001 Pond Life
2002 Christmas Plants—holly, mistletoe etc
2004 *Lord of the Rings* : Rivendell
2004 Bicentenary of Royal Horticultural Society
2004 Woodland Animals
2005 Smilers : Gazania
2008 Action for Species: Insects
2008 Lest We Forget : Poppies
2009 250th anniv Creation of Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew
2013 Butterflies
2014-16 WW1 commemorations—Poppies
2015 Bees

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2016 Landscape Gardens: Capability Borwn

2017 Windsor Castle

2018 Hampton Court Palace

Postal Services

This topic is one of the very first to appear on British stamps with a relevant issue in 1960 when with two stamps the Post Office paid tribute to a long dead ancestor, **the General Letter Office** which was constituted on the restoration of Charles II to the throne. Oliver Cromwell himself had recommended such a move suggesting someone be appointed as "Postmaster General" (replacing the term "Master of the King's Post") and Henry Bishop was. However this was no sinecure but a franchise expensively purchased by Bishop for seven years. When the General Post Office was formed Bishop introduced the first postmarks, known as "Bishop marks".



There are subtle references to Charles II in the design of higher value stamp. His cypher appears top left and beside the traditional symbol of the post—the post horn—we see the St Edward's Crown (the Coronation crown) surrounded by sprays of oak and acorns, alluding to Charles hiding from the Cavaliers in an oak tree following the Battle of Worcester in 1651.



In 1984 the Bicentenary of First Mail Coach was marked with a se-tenant strip of five stamps showing mail coaches from 1784 and four others from various parts of the country between 1816 and 1831. Until the Eighteenth century overland mail was carried by messengers or "post-boys" on horseback (as shown on the 3d value from the 1960 pair). Then in 1784 the first Royal Mail stage coach set out with an armed guard between London and Bath averaging 10 miles an hour. This proved so successful that within a few years there were over three dozen such routes.

The centenary of the death Rowland Hill, the official who is usually credited with originating the basic concepts of the modern postal service is commemorated with an issue in 1979. Postage rates had been high ever since the Napoleonic War and Hill had long campaigned for the introduction of the Uniform Penny Post. Thus he is inescapably linked to the topic of the Penny Black first introduced in 1840 as the world's first



postage stamp. Issues in 1995, 2004 and 2015 further celebrate Hill and the Penny Black. A penny was to remain the set charge for postage for more than twenty years.

The four 1979 stamps show Hill, officers of the General Post and the London post c 1839 and a woman and child on their way to post a letter in a pillar box.

Pillar boxes and post boxes themselves are featured on several stamps, in particular dedicated issues of 2002 and 2009 where the earliest illustrated is the ornate green and gold Victorian specimen of 1857. The former set shows other examples from 1874 to 1980, whilst the latter covers boxes set into walls from 1896 to the 1960s.



The first mail-van was added to a railways service between Birmingham and Liverpool in 1837. This idea proved so successful that more and more letters were sent by train with mailbags transferred to and from express trains with a net attached to special trackside



equipment as referenced in one of the **1988 Transport and Mail Services** in 1930's set and in the mini-sheet referring to the *Night Mail* documentary which accompanied the 2014 British Film issues. The introduction of mail carried by air was celebrated in 2011 with the Centenary of Aerial Post minisheet.

In 1969 something of contemporary **Post Office technology** was explained to be public with four stamps, with references to National Giro, International Subscriber Dialling, Pulse Modulation and for our theme—Automatic Sorting of Letters.

This was a massive new programme and the design of the stamp showing three destination boxes in a sorting machine was inspired by equipment in the London W1 District Post Office. Beneath



the value indicator and the legend you can see the postcode phosphor dots which when read activate hinges to let the items drop into appropriate boxes.

In the 1985 350 years of Royal Mail's Public Postal Service set four stamps illustrating current aspects of postal services, covering a Datapost Motorcyclist, a rural Postbus, and letter and parcel deliveries

1947 75th anniv of UPU

1960 Tercentenary of the General Letter Office

1961 Centenary of the Post Office Savings Bank

1963 Paris Postal Conference Centenary

1965 ITU centenary

1969 Europa/CEPT emblem

1969 Post Office Technology

1974 Centenary of UPU

1979 Death centenary of Rowland Hill

1984 25th anniv CEPT

1984 Bicentenary of First Mail Coach run..

1985 350 years of Royal Mail Public Postal Service

1988 Transport and Mail Services in 1930's

1995 Rowland Hill and Penny Black

1997 Sub Post offices.

2002 150th anniv of First Pillar box

2004 Rowland Hill award

2009 Post boxes

2011 Centenary of Aerial Post

2013 Post Office van in Auto Legends

2014 Postman Pat in Classic Children's TV

2014 *Night Mail* documentary in Great British Films

(since this is already so long I omitted from my first notes several references to the history of the Penny Black, Wildings, Machins etc)

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2016 Royal Mail 500 years

2016 The Great War: The Post Office at War mini-sheet

Beside the Sea !

This is quite a light-hearted (and surprising substantial) topic perfect for introducing young collectors to thematic collecting. Three main areas suggested are Places to Visit, Things to do Once There and Safety and Rescue should things go wrong.



British Tourist seaside attractions can be well illustrated by selecting within issues such as Landscapes (1981), Scottish Golf Courses (1994), British Coastlines (2002), The British Journey series (2004-6) and the UK A-Z (2011-12, exemplified above). Amongst these issues can be found stamps for top Seaside or Coastal attractions such as Blackpool's Pleasure Beach (2014) and Blackpool Tower (2011, and 1994), Brighton Pier and Worthing Pier (2014), The Giant's Causeway (2004, and 1981) Beachy Head (2006, and 1985), links golf courses like The Old Course, St Andrews and Royal Troon (1994), The White Cliffs of Dover (2012, and 2002) and Marloes Sands (2004) and Stackpole Head (1981), both in Pembrokeshire.

Stamps showing Seaside activities for family can be found—in our issues from 1975 to the present day—for sailing, fairgrounds, Punch & Judy Shows, Amusement arcades, Sandcastling, Exploring rock pools, links golf, face painting, sightseeing, ice cream, donkey rides, sunbathing, bandstand concerts, swimming in the sea and in open lidos and the attractions of piers—variety shows with famous comedians, booths offering food and slot machines and helter-skelters etc.



One of the most amusing sets Royal Mail has ever issued celebrated the **Centenary of Picture Postcards in 1994** with more than a nod to the undisputed master of the comic postcard Donald McGill. Across all five stamps a grossly overweight mum and dad (from another era) draw attention to their obesity by wearing red polka dot or stripey bathing costumes. Mum (above) is shown paddling in shallow water on Blackpool's sandy beach, being bitten by a crab and offering herself as a padded sofa for her son, whilst dad wins chocolate bars from a penny crane, rides a small

seaside donkey, writes a "Wish You Were Here" postcard and seems to have lost his son, under his pot belly inviting us to nostalgically recall the rude "I can't see my little Willie" postcard.

The 35p value in the set shows the children being amused by a Punch and Judy show, a topic treated fully in the **2001 Punch and Judy Puppets** issue and also referenced on a 1990 Greetings stamps. Many of today's seaside amusements have long traditions like variety shows with risqué



comedians in pier theatres, amusement arcades and ice cream parlours but Punch (above) and Judy go back over 300 years, evolving from the Italian commedia dell'arte characters and translated to glove puppets around 1790. In today's climate concerns about domestic violence in a relationship mean that Mr Punch's ways of addressing his partner Judy in a comic show for children are being challenged because of the message it puts across so the hey day of such a traditional show involving also the Policeman, the Beadle, the Clown and the Crocodile (all shown on a stamp) are well and truly past.

Other traditional features of seaside entertainment are addressed in the **2007 Beside the Seaside** and the **1983 British Fairs** issues not exclusive to seaside carnivals, of course. One thrill referenced in both sets is the Merry Go Round carousel on which children sit on wooden or fibreglass horses which revolve and undulate to gaudy music. In the former set ice cream, sandcastles, deck chairs and beach donkeys feature as do beach huts which are less common. The latter set references traditional side shows like rifle shooting, knocking over targets and ball throwing, the Big Wheel, performing animals and the helter skelter.



The most recent issue for this theme is **Seaside Architecture in 2014** whose six stamps are complemented with a mini-sheet showing the piers at Llandudno (built in 1877), Dunoon (1835), Worthing (1862) and Brighton (1899) with its helter-skelter prominent. The stamps shows a range of entertainment possibilities across the years from Eastbourne bandstand (built in 1935), Plymouth's Tinside Lido (1935),



Bangor Pier (1896), Southwold Lighthouse (1890), Blackpool's Pleasure Beach (opened in 1939) and the modernist Shelter at Bexhill-on-Sea (2011). The need for a shelter on a beach reminds us that beaches and the sea are not always fun, depending on The Weather (2001), tides and currents, chance and human error.



So, as a cautionary nod to such dangers, a small group of stamps (e.g. **1985 Safety at Sea** and **2008 Rescue at Sea**) can be assembled showing the emergency services at work when accidents occur. These stamps feature the brave men and women who staff our lifeboats and helicopter rescue services—pilots, crew and winchmen.

Now then altogether, “Oh we do like to....”

- 1963 Lifeboat Conference, Edinburgh—lifeboat and helicopter
- 1975 Sailing (4)
- 1981 British Landscapes: Stackpole Head (Wales) Giant's Causeway (Northern Ireland)
- 1983 British Fairs : Merry-go-round, Side shows etc (4)
- 1985 Safety at Sea : Lifeboat
- 1989 Greetings: Yacht
- 1990 Greetings: Smiles—Mr Punch, Laughing Policeman
- 1992 Greetings: Memories Bucket, Space and Starfish
- 1994 Centenary of Picture Postcards (5)
- 1994 Scottish Golf Courses—links courses (5)
- 1994 Four Seasons: Summertime—Cowes Week
- 1998 Lighthouses (5)
- 1998 Comedians (5)
- 2000 Water & Coast (3)
- 2001 Rights of Child : Face Painting (4)
- 2001 The Weather (4)
- 2001 Punch and Judy Show Puppets (6)
- 2002 British Coastlines (10)
- 2003 British Journey #1 Scotland : Papa Little, Shetland
- 2004 British Journey #2 N.Ireland : Giant's Causeway
- 2004 British Journey #3 Wales : Marloes Sands
- 2005 British Journey #4 SW England: Old Harry Rocks, Start Point, St James' Stone, Lundy
- 2006 British Journey #5 England: Beachy Head, Brancaster, Norfolk, Robin Hood's Bay, Yorkshire
- 2007 Sealife (10) e.g. jellyfish, starfish, anemone, mussels, crabs
- 2007 Beside the Seaside: Ice cream, Sandcastles, Carousel, Beach Huts, Deckchairs and Donkey rides
- 2008 Rescue at Sea (6) lifeboats. Helicopter etc
- 2011 UK A-Z #1 Blackpool Tower, Carrick-a-Rede (Antrim,) The Kursaal Amusement Park (Southend)
- 2012 UK A-Z #2 White Cliffs of Dover
- 2014 Seaside Architecture : e.g. bandstand lido, pier attractions (6+4 on mini-sheet)
- Published in edited format in *STAMP* in November 2017, but since then additionally....
- No other issues

Horses

Our stamps generously reflect the very important role of horses in pre-Industrial Revolution Britain where they were essential for transporting people and goods, as a source of strength and power and as a crucial element in warfare. Various issues also show the continuing value of horses in the modern era.

Most of our 100+ horse stamps portray them in one of five contexts: military, ceremonial, recreational, working and competing. Horses are shown in war mode from Hastings to Waterloo to The Great War, in ceremonial occasions like Trooping the Colour to the Lord Mayor's Show, as part of a circus show to trotting along country paths, from working the fields pulling farm machinery to supporting mail deliveries by coach or on horseback to police duties and from competition in steeplechase or on the flat to dressage events in the Olympic Games.

Several Christmas stamps depict Joseph leading Mary on the back of a mule on the journey to Bethlehem. Another grouping shows horses in literature, for example Guinevere and Lancelot from Arthurian legend on horseback, Bottom from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* sporting an ass's head, Mr Rochester from *Jane Eyre* on horseback, Winne the Pooh with Eeyore—not forgetting Muffin the Mule, the earliest of TV marionettes. A handful of famous people or characters of stature are shown on horseback like St George, Robert the Bruce, Henry V and our Queen. A further small grouping can be made of horses modelled for children's entertainment as rocking horses or on fairground carousels.

The first GB stamps to reference horses are the iconic "Seahorses" - the George V high value definitives of 1913 designed by Bertram Mackennal where two horses pull a chariot driven by Britannia through the waves. Sixteen years later it is St George who is the heroic figure on horseback on a George V high value issue for the Ninth Postal Union Congress.

But the first set lovingly devoted to **Horses** appears in **1978** where four stamps designed by the leading animal and wildlife painter Patrick Oxenham show the variety of equine elegance.



Here we see a Shire horse with a plough in the background, the diminutive Shetland pony and a Welsh pony in rural settings and a thoroughbred in a paddock.

Thoroughbreds are the focus of two sets (in 1979 and 2017). The former uses paintings of four race meetings in different centuries: the Derby in 1936, the Great National Steeplechase 1839, the Great Spring Meeting at Newmarket in 1793 and Racing at Dorsett Ferry, Windsor in 1684.

The **2017 issue of eight Racehorse Legends** features a number of horses so famous that they are household names such as Arkle, Red Rum and Desert Orchid. All are shown in racing mode.



Well over a dozen stamps show Royal connections with horses via photos of the Queen at a handful of Trooping the Colour ceremonies across her reign but in **1997 a set entitled All The Queens Horses** was issued to mark the 50th anniversary of the British Horse Society. These four stamps show a carriage horse and coachman, a Lifeguard's horse and trooper, a Blues and Royals Drum horse and drummer and the Duke of Edinburgh's horse and groom.



Finally the **2014 set entitled Working Horses** again emphasises the versatility of horses but in modern contexts using photos referencing the Riding for the Disabled Association, The King's Troop Ceremonial horses of the Royal Artillery, dray horses pulling a brewery wagon, Royal Mews carriage horses, Police horses and a Forestry horses pulling a heavy tree trunk.



The earliest historical references to horses in a variety of work modes appear in three stamps within the **1986 900th anniversary of the Domesday Book** issue where we see at a distance one horse ridden in a peaceful agrarian scene, another carrying a citizen about town whilst a third is ridden by a knight as he prepares to go to battle.

1913 "Seahorses" George V high value definitive (4)
 1929 Postal Union Congress £1 : St George on horseback
 1951 George VI 10/- definitive : St George on horseback
 1960 General Letter Office Tercentenary : postboy on horseback
 1963 Shakespeare Festival: Bottom the Weaver sporting an ass's head
 1965 De Monfort Parliament's 700th anniv—horse on De Monfort seal
 1966 Battle of Hastings 900th anniv—horses shown on 7 values
 1967 British Paintings 9d val "Mares and Foals in a landscape" by George Stubbs
 1968 Christmas Toys 4d shows a rocking horse
 1971 Anniversaries : York, centurion on horseback
 1974 Trees : Horse Chestnut , believed by some to be toxic to horses
 1974 Medieval Warriors : Robert the Bruce, Owain Glyndwr, Henry V and the Black Prince on horseback (4)
 1976 British Printing 500th anniv: Chaucer's Knight on horseback
1978 Horses : 4 different types illustrated
 1979 Horse Racing paintings (4)
 1979 Metropolitan Police 150th anniv: Policewoman on horseback
 1979 Christmas : Three Kings on horseback , and Mary on a mule (2)
 1980 150th anniv of Liverpool & Manchester Railway—horse in horsebox wagon
 1981 Christmas: Mary on a mule
 1983 Fairs: Merry-go-round with model horses on carousel and horses at early produce fair (2)
 1984 Bicentenary of First Mail Coach Run: coaches pulled by horses (5)
 1985 Arthurian Legend: Guinevere and Lancelot on horseback
1986 Domesday Book 900th anniv : various figures on horseback (3)
 1988 Christmas : Mary on a mule
 1989 Lord Mayor's Show: horses pulling coaches and others ridden by military on parade (4)
 1990 London 90: Seahorses on £1 mini-sheet
 1992 40th anniv of Queen's accession: Trooping the Colour
 1993 Inland Waterways: horse pulling barge

1995 Shakespeare Globe theatre: Bottom the Weaver sporting an ass's head on one stamp
 1996 50th anniv Children's TV: Muffin the Mule
1997 50th anniv British Horse Society All The Queen's Horses (4)
 1998 650th anniv of Order of the Garter: Horse of Hanover shown on one stamp
 1999 Farmers' Tale: horse-drawn rotary seed drill
 2000 Stone & Soil: Horses hooves on Trans Pennine Trail
 2002 Europa : Circus—acrobat on horseback
 2005 Farm Animals: Clydesdale mare and foal
 2005 150th death anniv of Charlotte Bronte: Mr Rochester from *Jane Eyre* on horseback
 2005 Trooping the Colour : Trumpeter and The Queen on horseback (2)
 2006 Queen's 80th birthday: Queen at Royal Windsor Horse Show
 2007 Beside the Seaside : carousel horse and beach donkeys (2)
 2007 Queen's Diamond Wedding: Queen inspecting King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, and at Royal Ascot
 2009 London Olympics & Paralympics : dressage exemplified
 2010 London 2010 Festival of Stamps : St George on horseback and Seahorses on 2 mini-sheets
 2010 House of Stuart : cavalier on horseback
 2010 Winnie the Pooh and Eeyore (a donkey)
 2012 Diamond Jubilee: Queen at Trooping the Colour
 2012 London Olympics & Paralympics : Gold medal winners on 8 separate stamps
2014 Working Horses— in 6 different roles
 2015 Battle of Waterloo— cavalry horses in all 6 battle scenes
 2015 Christmas: Mary on a mule
 2016 Royal Mail's 300th anniv: horse drawn mail coach
 2016 The Great War: horse drawn travoys bearing wounded
2017 Racehorse Legends (8)