

## Sailing

Date of issue: 11 JUNE 1975



When the Stamp Advisory Committee (SAC) began to consider subjects for the 1975 stamp programme, the theme of sailing only featured as the 'Financial Times' Clipper Race as one of the year's events; this was despite the Royal Yachting Association (founded 1875) writing in July 1973 requesting an anniversary stamp, and the Royal Thames Yacht Club (founded 1775) making a similar request in October. Neither was there any response to this theme when the views of regional directors were routinely canvassed in September; however, a general issue on 'hobbies or sports' had been suggested by A Heaton, Chairman of the North Western Postal Board. It was generally agreed that sports subjects produced attractive and popular stamps (football in 1966, athletics in July 1970, rugby in August 1971, cricket in May 1973) and that the time was right for another such issue in 1975.

Initially, however, strong political and diplomatic pressure for an issue on skiing in 1975 (the 50th anniversary of the first Anglo-Swiss ski race) ensured that suggestions for any other sport were overshadowed. Originating from the Swiss government and backed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, pressure was applied by the Minister for Posts and Telecommunications (MPT), Sir John Eden, and his senior civil servant, Sir Frank Wood, while SAC member Brian Batsford, MP also supported the idea. The first indication to the SAC of subjects under consideration for the 1975 programme including the Swiss proposal was on 4 July 1973. The programme was formally discussed on 25 October: among the proposals outlined by the Director of Marketing, E G White, SAC Chairman, was a sports issue 'centred on' the Anglo-Swiss anniversary.

### SAILING ANNIVERSARIES PROPOSED

A query on the possibilities for commemoration in 1975 was made to the Sports Council - its reply of 31 October listed several subjects including the Royal Yachting Association and Royal Thames Yacht Club anniversaries. Also mentioned were the bicentenary of Britain's first amateur regatta, in the Thames off Ranelagh Gardens, Chelsea, and the centenary of

the Royal Canoe Club Sailing Challenge Cup. It was noted that the former had been more in the nature of a water carnival than its competitive modern equivalents, but that the latter was 'the oldest small-boat sailing trophy in the world'. The Council promised to investigate further and later advised that 1975 also marked the centenary of the Royal Southampton Yacht Club and several smaller yachting clubs, the 50th anniversary of the Royal Ocean Racing Club and the 20th of the Sail Training Association.

At the SAC meeting on 6 December, White amplified his earlier statement by urging that skiing should only be included as part of a general sports set. He felt an issue on winter sports alone including skiing would be 'too restrictive' and that it would be 'inappropriate' to attempt to combine twin 'winter' and 'summer' sports themes within one set; he suggested a thematic issue based on flowers as an acceptable alternative.

White's reservations notwithstanding, the meeting of the SAC on 16 January 1974 selected winter sports, including the Anglo-Swiss anniversary, as part of its recommended programme for 1975. The MPT's representative at the meeting, D M Elliott, successfully urged that if this proposal was agreed, the political pressure for other issues that the SAC did not wish to adopt - the quincentenary of Michaelangelo's birth, and International Women's Year - could be contained. On the following day White wrote to the Managing Director (Posts) (MDP), A Currall, explaining that the subject had been chosen due to 'a good deal of lobbying, and Government support'; also, 'we have not turned up any 1975 British sports subject which competes with the one mentioned'. He was not swayed by the concentration of sailing anniversaries, although this had not gone unnoticed.

The SAC's recommendations were duly submitted to the Post Office Management Board on 13 February - at its meeting on 18 February, however, the Board stated that 'in the view of most Members, winter sports did not have a large enough following in the United Kingdom to justify a complete issue, and there was a strong case for widening the subject to cover sport more generally'.

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## **WATER vs WINTER SPORTS**

The next day, 19 February, Stuart Rose, Design Adviser to the Postal Business and a member of the SAC, expressed his views in a memorandum to David Burn of Postal Marketing: When a subject or group of subjects defies a convincing graphic solution no amount of design craftsmanship will turn it into a good stamp [and] in spite of political pressures our prime aim is to produce good stamps within these tight limits ... To break up a set devoted to such closely related activities as winter sports by introducing another sport would destroy the homogeneity of the issue and pose design problems which any amount of ingenuity could not solve satisfactorily. The

only reasonable solution would be to have a further set devoted to aquatic sports in which rowing, sailing, small-boating and canoeing for example could be dealt with in a consistent design idiom.

In an internal memorandum of the same date from the Postal Marketing Department Miss F E Ladbury argued that, despite the strength of support for the original proposal, 'winter sports are not typical of the British Sporting Life and stamps on such a theme would seem incongruous in a set featuring other British sports. Sailing or Yachting could be said to have as strong a claim as a popular outdoor activity in Britain.' While there were supposedly 500,000 active skiers in Britain and it was claimed to be 'the fastest growing recreational activity', small-boat sailing was growing at a comparable rate; there were an estimated 2½ million yachtsmen and about 50 yachting or sailing clubs. It was noted that both the Deputy Chairman of the Post Office, Whitney Straight, and the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, were members of the Royal Yacht Squadron Club. The memorandum concluded its case for a sailing issue by observing that 'stamps featuring boats are very popular ... The number of events with which it could be associated seems a good reason for such an issue.'

At the meeting on 27 February the SAC reviewed its recommendation for a winter sports set in the light of the Board's comments of 18 February and feelings within Postal Marketing. It agreed with the views in Stuart Rose's memorandum of 19 February that the admixture of 'water sport' or 'green field' elements to the winter sports issue would only detract from its design harmony and potential for visual appeal, while 'sailing' would make a rewarding subject. 'Winter sports' was not specifically rejected for 1975 - the SAC still thought its first preference correct in view of the political pressures. The chief concern was to avoid an unsatisfactory mixed set which would not be the best for either interest, but which would close both subjects at least for several years.

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### MDP OPTS FOR 'SAILING' THEME

Writing to the MDP on 1 March, White stressed the importance of heeding the SAC's advice insofar as it concerned the production of visually attractive stamps, with its consequent financial rewards:

As regards the sports set, I hope you can support the Committee's objective of design unity within any issue ... Mint stamps are put in collectors' albums chiefly in sets to be looked at together. Most first day covers carry complete sets, and we ourselves sell some 1/3m FDCs for an issue. Dealers sell their own designs as well, and the total processed is around 600,000.

As the MDP later observed, the decision was 'fairly evenly balanced', and effectively left to him; in a report to the Post Office Chairman, Sir William Ryland, later that day, Currall said

he would recommend to the Management Board that winter sports be removed from the proposed programme and replaced by 'sailing'. The Board met on 3 March and agreed; the decision, together with White's proposed issue date of June 1975, was accepted by the SAC meeting of 21 March. In a letter to Sir Frank Wood at the MPT on 29 March Currall offered explanations for the rejection of the winter sports proposal:

We aim to produce a balanced programme and would normally contemplate no more than a single sport or recreation issue in any year. After much thought we decided on sailing ... The skiing celebration was a fiftieth anniversary only whereas we usually try to keep to centenaries as in the case of the Royal Yachting Association.

Following the election of the new Labour government Anthony Wedgwood-Benn again became the minister responsible for postal affairs, as Secretary of State for Industry. In a letter to Benn on 26 June, Sir William Ryland was called on for yet another explanation as to why sailing had replaced winter sports as a stamp subject:

We considered skiing very carefully both as a separate subject and as the pivot for a set on winter sports. The breadth of public interest did not appear to justify either. The idea of a set to include skiing but with a wider range including sailing was also considered but discarded - first because sailing is for most participants a summer activity, and secondly because such an omnibus issue would have lacked design cohesion. We have moved away from 'miscellaneous' issues, which look incongruous together in collectors' albums, on first day covers or in presentation packs; they are disliked by philatelists, and we must take their views into account as they are the customers ... We preferred sailing to skiing because we believe it will make an attractive and popular issue at a time of year [June] convenient to the programme as a whole. The winter months [appropriate to skiing] are taken up with the experimental Charity issue (January), the Turner bicentenary (late February) and the Architecture issue (April).

This was accepted and the 1975 programme was announced on 13 August 1974, the issue date of the sailing set being confirmed on 13 September as 11 June 1975.

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## **ANDREW RESTALL COMMISSIONED**

Stuart Rose discussed the proposed issue with the designer Andrew Restall, and a formal commission followed on 26 March. Restall's acknowledgement shows he was asked to complete four designs on the theme 'Yachting and Sailing', plus another four on winter sports; the standard fee of £150 for each rough design completed plus £150 for each chosen for issue was payable. On 2 April Rose wrote again to the artist with the following suggestion:

George York of Harrisons [the stamp printers] is very anxious to exploit the intaglio facility now available on their new Gemini press ... It occurred to me that the set on sailing you are doing might well provide an opportunity. I would very much like the three of us to meet, as soon as you can manage it, to see whether we can develop something new along these lines.

York, Harrison and Sons' Works Director, was referring to a two-process machine with seven cylinders for photogravure and one for recess printing in up to three colours; at first the machine was referred to as 'Gemini' but later more accurately called 'Jumelle'. It had been in use since 1972, but only for photogravure printing. As experience had shown that there would be problems with photogravure reproduction of the fine lines of rigging to be anticipated in a sailing issue, it seemed an ideal opportunity to try out the machine's recess printing facility. Rose later described his discussions with Restall and York:

The three of us spent many hours in sorting out what the machine could and could not do and in the end arrived at a reasonable design formula. The basic shape and pattern of the stamp would be designed in broad flat colour terms which would be printed in gravure; the detail which would be rendered in line would be printed by line-engraved recess. This would accommodate obvious parts of the design of rigging and the like and would also give movement to the sea areas by a series of cross-hatched lines.

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## FIRST DESIGNS PRODUCED

Restall produced a large number of designs of which only a few are in the British Postal Museum & Archive, although more are illustrated in Stuart Rose's book 'Royal Mail Stamps' (1980) and others in the June 1976 'British Philatelic Bulletin'. A preliminary set of designs was ready by the beginning of June, depicting a selection of the various categories of sailing craft and based as accurately as possible on photographs. Details of the four designs were given as follows:

1. A range of single-sail dinghies. These include two types of spritsail, a lateen, a standing lug, a cat, and a Finn (5½p).
2. Three Bermudan sloops with spinnakers (4½p).
3. A Bermudan ketch with mizzen staysail in foreground, with a Bermudan yawl in the background (10p).
4. A three-mast fore-and-aft staysail schooner in foreground, with a two-mast schooner in the background (8p).

Rose showed the designs to the SAC on 5 June; the reaction was that, while 'attractive and gay' and 'pretty and imaginative', they 'lacked an adequate feeling for the subject or expression of its quality of movement and range of forms'. In addition the set did not

sufficiently reflect ‘the well defined designs of different classes of modern racing boats’. Anthony Lousada, an SAC member, suggested that advice should be sought from the Royal Yachting Association, and this was agreed; as well as being Chairman of the Council of the Royal College of Art and ex-Chairman of Trustees of the Tate Gallery, Lousada was a keen sailor. Meanwhile Restall was asked to clarify some of the technical details in his drawings; he supplied tracings explaining these the following day.

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### ADVICE BY YACHTING EXPERTS

The same day, 6 June, Lousada wrote to Stuart Rose that he had considered the issue further and spoken confidentially to Stewart Morris, one of the most distinguished helmsmen in this country and an Olympic gold medallist. His opinion was that it was desirable to show sailing at different levels, namely

1. Boats sailed largely by children; Mirrors, primarily with their red sails, or Cadets.
2. 14 foot International Dinghies which are the forebears of all other planing dinghies and a thriving class which is always being brought up to date.
3. A Tempest or Tornado catamaran.
4. One of the competitors in the Admiral’s Cup.

The Secretary General of the Royal Yachting Association, Nigel Hacking, could supply a basic design for each class, and it might be helpful to contact Keith Beken of Beken’s, a well-known firm of yacht photographers based in Cowes. He also suggested that the boats be shown in motion to underline the thrill of sailing, and stressed that all the chosen subjects should be British and bear British sail numbers – ‘I am sure that the Post Office would not wish to produce stamps which, however decorative, would cause an outcry from the large sailing community.’

A meeting with Hacking was held on 12 June, at which Lousada, Restall and Rose were present; as a result it was determined that the boats depicted in the set should be:

1. A multihull: these craft have been developed from the Polynesian proa and hold the world sailing speed record.
  2. A racing keel boat with spinnaker flying.
  3. A cruising yacht capable of extended voyages.
  4. A dinghy - sailed by thousands of families on inland waters or on the sea.
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### COMMENTS ON NEW DESIGNS

Andrew Restall’s new designs were available in time for the SAC meeting on 17 July. Of these, the 4½p ‘racing keel boats’ design was fundamentally the same as the previous



design 2, and the 10p 'cruising yachts' similar to 3; the 8p 'multihulls' design was seen for the first time, however, and the 5½p 'dinghies', although the same subject as the previous design 1, was now a new and different treatment. Lousada made the minor criticisms that the flag on the 8p design seemed to be blowing the wrong way, that few classes of boat had discs on the sails as shown, and that the dinghy on the 5½p design should preferably be depicted moving at speed. Restall agreed to change the direction of the flag on the 8p, while Lousada accepted his arguments that dinghies were often seen cruising in calm conditions and that the circular motifs on the sails made interesting focal points for the designs. In answer to a question from SAC member Kenneth F Chapman, a leading philatelic figure, it was explained that the issue would be titled 'Sailing' and have no direct link with any specific person, event or anniversary.

The adopted designs, which Stuart Rose found 'most exciting, almost abstract', were shown for comment and approval to Hacking, who appears to have found them something of a surprise. Rose commented that he showed 'great magnanimity' in accepting the designs, and securing the agreement of his club committee, 'for all along I felt that he was expecting mini-photographic pictures of yachting dramas in the Solent and elsewhere'. Restall was paid £1,200 in September for his four original and four revised designs; finished drawings for essaying went to Harrison and Sons, the stamp printers, at the end of October.

On 12 November D W Barker of Marketing reported to White (as Director of Marketing) that essaying had proceeded on the assumption that the values would be: 4½p, racing keel boats; 5½p, dinghies; 8p, multihulls; 10p, cruising yachts. This was favoured by Stuart Rose on design grounds; an alternative approach would be to match the popularity of the different types of sailing to the likely sales of each value, which would have the effect of transposing the racing keel boats and dinghies. The first essays showed dinghies and multihulls transposed from the order originally favoured. Preliminary essays were supplied by Harrisons on 9 December as follows, and approved by the SAC on 12 December:

4½p Racing keel boats

5½p Multihulls

8p Sailing dinghies

10p Cruising yachts.

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## ESSAYS AND NEW VALUES

There was some confusion over nomenclature: 'racing keel boats' were variously referred to in correspondence as 'day racers' or 'offshore racers', and 'cruising yachts' as 'ocean racers' or 'ocean-going yachts'; it was not until 12 February 1975 that the terms to be used were finally confirmed. At the beginning of 1975 the impending postage rates increase was announced, although full details were not released until 21 February, to take effect on 17

March. J R Berry of Marketing told the press office on 23 January that the new values on the Sailing stamps would be 7p (first class letters base rate, replacing 4½p), 8p (European letters, 5½p), 10p (zone B airmail letters, 8p) and 12p (zone C airmail letters, 10p). It was decided to retain the 10p value as the cruising yacht design and change the remaining to 7p - dinghies, 8p - racing keel boats, 12p - multihulls, roughly as Barker had suggested in November as an alternative to Stuart Rose's design-based approach. Final essays with the new values were supplied by Harrisons on 19 February as follows:

7p Sailing dinghies

8p Racing keel boats

10p Cruising yachts

12p Multihulls.

Sets of the final essays were submitted on 24 February to Sir William Ryland, MDP, and to D Wesil, the Senior Director of Postal Services, who replied expressing some reservations: The issue is being made to commemorate sailing but the designs are clearly about yachting. To me sailing seems much wider in a British context - one thinks of tea clippers, the Golden Hind, for example ... The essays show no wording at all and ... give the effect of being simply attractive pictures which we are using on our stamps in place of the definitive pattern for no apparent reason. In our thematic issues, eg trees and birds, I believe we printed the name of what was being represented.

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## APPROVAL BY THE QUEEN

After discussing the matter with Stuart Rose, however, Wesil sent a set of essays to the Department of Industry on 26 February; they were forwarded to the Queen on 7 March and returned with her approval on 11 March. In the wake of Wesil's point regarding the lack of captions, White enquired whether descriptions could be placed in the margins of the sheets; the same suggestion had been made regarding the Turner bicentenary stamps, and received the same answer: 'Our view is that such descriptions would be of marginal value and would only be seen by people buying whole sheets or stamps with part of the margin attached.' [David Burn to Stuart Rose, 27 March 1975.]

Another set of essays was sent to Harrisons on 18 March. However, the original deadline by which Harrisons should have received the approved essays was 21 February, and as early as 13 January the Supplies Division had felt that this should be brought forward at least to 7 February. In mind were the delays caused by unsuccessful attempts to make limited use of the Jumelle machine's recess printing facility on the Great Britons and Christmas issues the previous year. Nevertheless some preparatory work had already been done on cylinder development before 18 March, and printing began as scheduled on 7 April (any earlier date was effectively ruled out by the work arising from the tariff increase). The first problems



were reported on 21 April, when the cylinder for the 7p values had had to be remade, while the remaining stamps had not yet advanced that far. The immediate reaction in Marketing was that the recess requirement be dropped, as was done when similar problems had arisen in the production of the Great Britons and 1974 Christmas stamps; this was not practicable in the present case, however, because the designs as they stood required not only lines but blocks of colour to be recess printed, and a redesign was simply not possible under existing time constraints. Supplies stressed that printing must resume no later than 5 May if the issue date of 11 June was to be met.

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## PRINTING PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

Some modification of the designs was possible in the time available; the 7p was amended so that areas of light and dark mauve could be reproduced in photogravure leaving black as the only colour to be produced by recess, but it was not possible to do the same with the other values. Stuart Rose described the work done by Andrew Restall:

Progressively, as we got deeper into the production problems, we realised that there were still a lot of bugs in the system that had not been worked out. The first design idiom that had to be jettisoned was the overprint of one engraved colour on another. In no way could this be made to work without one colour 'bleeding' into another. So Andrew re-drew those sheets to allow one colour to stop short, on the same plane, of another by a defined distance. That seemed to work, even though it was a long way from his original concept.

Even after the design problems had been alleviated, considerable technical difficulties remained. Wastage was far above normal, and the quality of 'good' stamps supplied was correspondingly below the norm. Supplies reported 'a substantial proportion of ... poor registration and missing bits of the intaglio printing'. In later discussions with the printers it proved hard to determine the causes of these problems; York cited 'inking' as a major unanticipated factor, while Stuart Rose remarked 'Whereas Harrisons had got a new machine that could print supremely well, they could not cope with a wholly new problem of disposing of the washing-up effluent.'

On 29 April it was reported that Harrisons hoped to complete printing by 9 May, but that requisitions for the 7p might have to be cut, as it had been necessary to take it off the machine before the run was completed to make a start on the other values. By 8 May the situation had not improved: 17 million 7p had been printed, only enough to meet 25 per cent of head postmasters' needs so that requisitions would probably have to be reduced to that level; two million 8p had been printed, not even enough to meet the Philatelic Bureau's requirements; no 10p had been printed; 800,000 of the 12p had been printed. Harrisons problems were exacerbated by a nationwide dispute between printers and the union, the

National Graphical Association; the employers were attempting to reduce over-manning and the union had retaliated with an overtime ban, which effectively barred Harrison's normal practice of making up for lost time by working a third shift. Meanwhile Harrison's failure to start production of the 10p was causing alarm as late as 19 May; on 1 June it was estimated that production was 3 weeks behind schedule. The greatest problem proved finally to be the 12p - a final delivery of 14,500 sheets was rejected outright because the blue could be simply rubbed off.

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## FINAL PRODUCTION TOTALS

Statistics for total production and deliveries of the Sailing stamps were recorded on 17 June 1975 as follows:

| Value        | Sheets ordered | 'Good' sheets * | 'Waste'        |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 7p           | 458,000        | 173,027         | 176,488        |
| 8p           | 98,000         | 47,514          | 124,826        |
| 10p          | 80,000         | 40,023          | 55,272         |
| 12p          | 81,000         | 25,523          | 173,943        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>717,000</b> | <b>286,087</b>  | <b>530,529</b> |

\* These figures were not completely finalised and the true totals were probably very slightly lower.

Good stamps delivered compared with total ordered

7p, 37.8 per cent; 8p, 48.5 per cent; 10p, 50 per cent; 12p, 31.5 per cent; total, 39.9 per cent (final figure reported as 39 per cent).

Good stamps delivered compared with total produced

7p, 49.5 per cent; 8p, 27.6 per cent; 10p, 42 per cent; 12p, 12.8 per cent; total, 35 per cent.

Total sales were ultimately reported as (in sheets of 100): 7p, 170,000; 8p, 43,200; 10p, 36,200; 12p, 24,700. Counters reported the 12p as completely sold out by the end of June 1975, although enough of the value remained at the Philatelic Bureau to complete the production of 1975 Collectors Packs. The levels of 'good' stamps delivered were only achieved, as R E Carter of Supplies told Harrisons on 17 June, by the forced acceptance of 'sub-standard items as there was no prospect of obtaining further supplies in time'. In a later memorandum to Marketing, Carter considered that Harrisons would have needed another two or three weeks to deliver the full requirement of stamps, 'albeit of not very high quality technically and possibly incurring further excessive waste'.

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## CONSEQUENCES OF SHORTFALL

On 23 May it had been announced that requisitions of the 12p by Inner London offices would be cut to 25 per cent; elsewhere this would apply to all values of the issue, and only philatelic counters and the Philatelic Bureau would receive a full supply. However, even this was not practicable, those philatelic counters not receiving full requisitions including Glasgow, Newcastle, Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham, Belfast and York. Care was taken, however, to ensue full supplies to philatelic counters in areas of the south-east and south-west where most local interest in sailing and yachting could be anticipated. To achieve this there were instances of stamps being recalled from head offices and diverted to philatelic counters; the issue was withdrawn from ordinary counters after one month instead of the normal two, and remaining supplies were sent to the Philatelic Bureau to maintain limited stocks.

The idea of cancelling or postponing the issue was briefly considered but ruled out because of the risk that instructions would be misinterpreted or misapplied, especially in 'particularly remote' offices, and also because of the customary pre-release of stamps to dealers, plus 3,000 sheets of each value sent to Vernon's Pools for a special direct mail shot. Further printing to make up the production deficit had to be ruled out because this would have impeded the programme for the remainder of the year. Advance warning of the shortfall, especially of the 12p, proved impossible to contain, and dealers snapped supplies up; there were several reports of offices selling out completely in the first half hour on the day of issue, while 'The Times' reported a few days later that 'the colourful set of sailing stamps issued last week by the Post Office have disappeared into the blue like the Mary Celeste'. Thus the unusually high ratio of stamps sold to 'good' stamps produced, about 95.8 per cent overall.

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## HIGH COSTS OF THE ISSUE

The MDP noted as early as 9 May that 'the sailing stamps are pretty but, I believe, expensive to produce'. This proved the case; printing and development costs for the issue were provisionally estimated at £109,138 on 5 August, compared with Great Britons (£68,000), Turner (£70,000) and European Architectural Heritage Year (£66,000). A discussion was held of Harrison's representatives and officials from Postal Finance, Marketing and Supplies on 17 September, to determine whether the printers should be required to meet some of these costs themselves, in view of the high wastage and low quality of the output. It was pointed out that the Post Office's reputation had been damaged, particularly among philatelists, and that there had been letters published in national newspapers, notably the 'Financial Times', and accusations of deliberate restriction of supplies to create demand (The Post Office has sunk to the level of some East European countries which produce special

'blocked' values to exploit the stamp collector! - letter to 'Stamp Collecting', 7 August 1975). Marketing projects at Cowes and Pembroke dependent on supplies of the stamps had to be abandoned. Although the outcome of this meeting is not recorded it appears that a token 'concession' by Harrisons was negotiated; the view prevailed that the printers had not been negligent but simply over-optimistic, both regarding its capacity to handle a complex job using a largely untried facility of the Jumelle machine, and in committing inexperienced staff to the project. The Post Office had been equally sanguine in encouraging the commitment, mainly at Stuart Rose's instigation, but with the Director of Marketing's sanction. It was certainly true, however, that the shortfall in supplies resulted in damage and bad feeling, as at least three MPs were involved in passing on the complaints of their philatelist constituents. One of these, the President of the Clacton Philatelic Society, was still maintaining a heated correspondence the following January in an attempt to obtain satisfaction.

To the disappointment of both Harrisons and Rose, plans for further photogravure/recess production on Jumelle were suspended for the rest of 1975 while a solution to the machine's problems was sought. Nevertheless its potential remained impressive. In descriptions given for the press and 'British Philatelic Bulletin' in April, it was explained first that recess reproduced lines with greater clarity and firmness than was possible with photogravure; second, the image in photogravure was etched in to the cylinder mainly as dots and the viscosity of the ink was such that it penetrated well into the surface of the paper, whereas with recess the image was predominantly made up of lines and tended to lie on the paper's surface. Use of both processes, especially in combination, should thus lend a third dimension to the printed image.

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## **ISSUES - STAMPS, COVER AND PACK**

Issued on 11 June 1975, the stamps were on phosphor-coated unwatermarked paper in the following colours:

7p - brownish black, rosine, bright orange, vermilion, violet, gold, light mauve, dark mauve; recess in black

8p - bright blue, bright violet, bright orange, vermilion, purple, royal blue, gold; recess in black, blue and mauve

10p - reddish brown, bright orange, blue-green, brown-olive, gold; recess in green and black

12p - deep turquoise-green, dull ultramarine, grey-black, bright rose, gold; recess in blue, green and black.

There were numerous examples of all values on which the black was wholly or partly omitted, or could be rubbed off - 'Gibbons Stamp Monthly' for July 1975 believed that

apparent cases of broken masts and rigging, or missing crews, could be easily manufactured by simply scraping the stamps, 'that any flaws of this nature are, regrettably, not worthy of consideration'. The 8p is known with missing gold and the 12p with missing rose; on earlier printings of the 10p the bright orange could be rubbed off, while later the orange was 'sealed' but paler. Despite these defects the issue's visual appeal ('a poster-like presentation with bright cheerful colours') is generally acknowledged.

Andrew Restall was commissioned in January 1975 to design a first day envelope and filler card, souvenir envelope, presentation pack and pictorial handstamp for the issue, for which he was paid £306.40 at the end of March. The pack included four photographs for which the John Watney Photo Library was paid £32. Text for the filler card and pack was written by Hugh Somerville of 'The Sunday Times' for a fee of £50. There were 41,350 PHQ cards reproducing the 8p stamp issued. It appears that production of all these items was hampered by the industrial dispute; for example, no PHQ cards reached head offices in the South West Postal Region until the day of issue itself, so that there was no distribution to sub-offices and the bulk of potential sales was thus lost as sales after the day of issue were normally very low. A special souvenir envelope, similar in design to the first day envelope, was produced but did not become available until some weeks after the issue date. Finally, a Collectors Pack was issued in November - because it included the 12p stamp, which many collectors had failed to obtain in June as a result of the shortage, it sold out within two months, while a reissue in April 1976 sold out by the following September.

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## FIRST DAY POSTINGS

The normal first day posting facilities were provided; special handstamps by the Royal Dorset and Royal Thames Yacht Clubs were also available on the day of issue, each club providing its own cover. The Rye Harbour and Meneham Rytthe Sailing Clubs also produced their own covers, as did the International Boat Show at Southampton. The official first day cover with Philatelic Bureau handstamp was available with a special 'British Post Office' cachet from the Arphila 75 exhibition in Paris (6 to 16 June; 11 June was appropriately the 'Day of Youth and Sport'). The 'Financial Times' also produced covers bearing the Sailing stamps to commemorate its round-the-world Clipper Race leaving the mouth of the Thames on 31 August and returning via Sydney and Cape Horn, for which a commemorative handstamp dated 30 August was used on items posted in a special posting box in St Katherine's Dock, London E1. Ordinary first day of issue postmarks which proved of particular interest included Hastings, Newport Isle of Wight, Plymouth, Southampton and Weymouth as centres of sailing and yachting, plus Woking as headquarters of the Royal Yachting Association. Appropriate standard circular datestamps included Cowes Isle of Wight and Burnham-on-Crouch, while others were specifically connected with local sailing or yacht club anniversaries: House of Commons SW1 (House of Commons Yacht Club);

Lytham, Lancs (Ribble Cruising Club); Rye Harbour (Rye Harbour Sailing Club); West Wittering (W. Wittering Sailing Club). 11 June 1975 also marked the last use of the 'Oldest Post Office in Britain 1763' handstamp at Sanquhar, Dumfries, which had been used for each special issue since the previous October.

The sailing and yachting organisations with significant anniversaries falling in 1975 included:

**200th**

Royal Thames Yacht Club

**100th**

Royal Yachting Association, Bristol Channel Yacht Club, Royal Southampton Yacht Club, Royal Dorset Yacht Club, Royal Torbay Yacht Club, East Dorset Sailing Club, Royal Western Yacht Club (Scotland)

**75th**

Erith Yacht Club

**50th**

Royal Ocean Racing Club, Dell Quay Sailing Club, Rye Harbour Sailing Club

**25th**

House of Commons Yacht Club, Junior Offshore Group, Marconi Sailing Club, Mengeham Rythe Sailing Club, Radley College Sailing Club, Ribble Cruising Club, West Wittering Sailing Club, Sail Training Association.

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**THE ARTIST**

ANDREW RESTALL was born in Headington, Oxfordshire in 1931 and educated at George Watson's College, Edinburgh. He studied drawing and painting at Edinburgh College of Art and later worked first as a graphic designer in the printing industry and then as the art director of an advertising agency. He lectured in art and graphic design at polytechnics in Coventry and Brighton and held a two-year fellowship at the Royal College of Art during which he investigated the problems and possibilities of postage stamp design. He produced a great number of stamp designs between 1964 and 1983 and was valued by Stuart Rose for his flexibility in adapting to technical innovation.

GILES ALLEN  
30 September 1996

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