

Royal Mail News

100 Years of Going to the Pictures Stamps

Five stamps commemorating cinema going will be available at post offices, and philatelic outlets from 16 April.

The **19p** (inland 2nd class rate) depicts the Odeon in Harrogate, one of the best preserved period cinemas in the country. The **25p** stamp (basic inland 1st class and EU rate) features a scene from the film *Lady Hamilton* (GB title, or *That Hamilton Woman*, US title) starring Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh made in 1941.



The **30p** (Europe, non-EU rate) shows a typical cinema ticket of pre-decimal days (1/3 = 6p approx).

The **35p** stamp (airmail postcard rate) depicts a still from a Pathé newsreel; 1996 marks the centenary of Pathé News. From 1946 newsreels were entitled "British Pathé News". British Pathé, owner of the Pathé News archive of almost 3000 hours of old newsreel shot between 1896 and 1970, was bought by the Daily Mail & General Trust in December 1995.

The top value, **41p** (basic airmail letter rate) features the Big Screen showing display at the Odeon in Manchester.

The Designers

The stamps were designed by The Chase design group, based in Manchester. These are their first stamps for Royal Mail; they previously designed the 1995 Rugby League Centenary stamps presentation pack.

Centenary of Cinema

During 1895 rival inventors were developing film cameras and projectors. On 28 December, the Lumiere Brothers, Louis and Auguste, gave the first successful public showing of their *Cinematographe* at the Salon Indien, Grand Cafe, 14 Boulevard des Capuchines. Birt Arces and R W Paul made their first films for showing in Edison Kinetoscope Parlours during 1895, notably *The Boat Race* (March 1895) and *The Derby* (May 1895). Arces gave a presentation of projected films to a photographic club in Barnet and to the Royal Photographic Society in January 1896. The following month Paul made a similar presentation to the Finsbury Technical College and the *Cinematographe* was shown to the UK press at the Regent Street Polytechnic – the first UK cinema show in the public domain.

To mark the centenary of cinema in the UK numerous events are being organised by Cinema 100 under the patronage of HRH The Prince of Wales. The Chairman of Cinema 100 is Lord Attenborough, the distinguished actor and director. The events include lectures, exhibitions, radio and television programmes, and publications as well as screenings of important films.

7 March is an important date, being the centenary of the first "picture show" at the Empire Theatre of Varieties, Leicester Square, London. A celebratory event will be held on the centenary date with a "Centenary Trail" and "Picturegoer" exhibition opening at the Museum of the Moving Image (South Bank) the following day. The exhibition will be on show until 19 May, the Trail until November.

The diamond jubilee of Loughborough's Curzon Cinema will be celebrated at the end of March and *The Living Picture Show* begins its national tour at Brighton on 25 March. Described as "a stunning montage of cinema with live action", it takes the audience on a personal journey from 1896 to the present. It will be shown in Newcastle, Bradford, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Stoke on Trent, Knutsford, Somerset/Dorset, Manchester, Kingston upon Thames, Glasgow, Liverpool, Preston, Gloucester, Leicester, Basingstoke,

Royal Mail Mint Stamps present
100 years of going to the pictures
 a cinema celebration

246 16.4.96



'Going to the Pictures...' the words ring around the memory, evoking that exotic world, that bright shining world which lay awaiting at the mere payment of a bob. On 7 March 1896 Leicester Square held its first picture show; the audience at the Empire was agog. For the following century British picture-goers have been bathed in sunshine, romance, adventure and laughter through the magic portal of the screen – a gateway to a Paradise where heroes triumphed, good beat evil, and bad was sent tumbling by the antics of the meek.



But however brilliant and diverting it may have been, film soon offered more than that. Evolving into a piercing commentary on life as the century unfolded – a century of invention, untold savagery and sublime nobility – our screens reflected it all, leaving with us unforgettable dramas unmatched in any other medium. With vibrancy, truth, poignancy and vision, they presented to ordinary people the world over all that mankind was, is and may, God willing, become.



Royal Mail First Day Cover



Royal Mail presents
100 years of going to the pictures
 a cinema celebration

Mrs J Robinson
 200 Manorbar Road
 Ilkeston
 Derbyshire
 DE7 4AB

Nottingham, Welwyn, Scarborough, Oxford, Stamford, Norwich, Isle of Wight, Swansea, Chester, Exeter, Belfast, and Newark. For further information contact Cinema 100, 10 Stephen Mews, LONDON W1P 0AX, Tel. 0171 636 7214.

Special events will be held in Edinburgh on 13 April, Cardiff on 5 May, and Belfast on 16 November to mark the centenaries of the first cinema shows in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The key celebratory event – “Cinema 100 Day” – will be on 2 June when audiences will be able to attend any one of nearly 2000 screens at 700 cinemas across the UK for the admission price of just £1. “With special showings of previews and classics, as well as the latest releases”, it will be says Lord Attenborough, “a truly national celebration.”



Cinema Stamps

This will be Royal Mail's second set of stamps celebrating British films and film-going. Five stamps marked British Film Year in 1985,

featuring some of our best known actors: Peter Sellers, David Niven, Charlie Chaplin, Vivien Leigh, and Alfred Hitchcock.

Numerous stamps have been issued recently to commemorate the centenary of cinema, including issues from Australia, Brazil, Finland, Gibraltar, Israel, Italy, San Marino, Spain (showing Lumiere Brothers), and Sweden – all adding up to a colourful omnibus issue.

A feature article on cinema on stamps and postmarks will be published here next month.

Technical details

Printers: Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process: Photogravure

Size: 37 x 35mm

Sheets: 100

Perforation: 14 x 14.5

Phosphor: 19p – one phosphor band
25p-41p two phosphor bands
Blue fluor in phosphor

Paper: OBA free (OBA = Optical
Brightening Agent)

Gum: PVA

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 16 April, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or London WC2, price £2.18 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.86 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 16 April.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for these cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB (for London WC2 postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed “FD9607” (Bureau), or “FD9608” (London WC2).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) “First Day of Issue” handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark*

Bulletin – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe; £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

Collectors are reminded that it will be in order to affix just the 19p Cinema stamp to covers to receive all special cancels ("First Day of Issue", sponsored and philatelic counters), in use on 16 April. The minimum 1st class rate is suspended on this day as this set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to Cinema stamps; otherwise covers must bear at least 1st class postage.

Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

A presentation pack (price £1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, and main post offices. The text of the pack is by Colin Welland, the Oscar and BAFTA-award winning screenwriter, actor and playwright. It was he who held up the Oscar in 1982 and said: "The British are coming!"

Queen's Birthday Stamp Book

To commemorate the 70th birthday of HM The Queen, a book containing four 1st class NVI stamps and a commemorative label will be issued shortly before Her birthday (21 April) on 16 April. The label, designed by John Stibbe, features a study of The Queen by Karsh of Ottawa, with Windsor Castle in the background. It is a worthy successor to earlier labels marking the tercentenary of the Bank of England (1994) and the centenary of the birth of Spitfire designer R J Mitchell (1995).

The book has been printed by Walsall Security Printers. The stamps bear two phosphor bands

with blue fluor. In the books the pane will be folded between the stamps and the label. Unfolded panes will, as previously, be available from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Philatelic/Numismatic Cover

A joint Royal Mail/Royal Mint Philatelic/Numismatic Cover bearing the stamp pane, cancelled by a special 21 April 1996 postmark, and an encapsulated £5 crown coin, is being produced. This will be available from the Bureau, price £15.95. Early ordering is advised as such covers are very popular and the edition limited.

First Day Arrangements

As the stamps are not new, the pane (stamps and label) will not qualify for "First Day of Issue" postmarks on 16 April. Other special handstamps can be applied – details of which will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*. Of particular relevance to this issue are the permanent philatelic postmarks showing Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace. Collectors should send covers for these to: South East Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, SLOUGH SL1 1AA (Windsor request handstamp number 2133) or London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB (Buckingham Palace, handstamp 2599).

Stamp Cards

Three stamp cards will be issued on 16 April, reproducing the designs of the three commemorative labels – Bank of England, R J Mitchell, and Queen's Birthday. They will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, and main post offices, price 25p each.

HM The Queen

Princess Elizabeth Mary was born at 17 Bruton Street, London W1 on 21 April 1926, eldest daughter of the Duke and Duchess of York and first grandchild of the reigning monarch King George V and his consort, Queen Mary. The young princess became heir apparent when her uncle, King Edward VIII, abdicated in December 1936 and her father became King George VI. The Royal Family stayed in London during the Second World War and Princess Elizabeth, and her younger sister Margaret, joined in the VE Day celebrations in front of the Palace, cheering their parents on the balcony. The Princess

