

This month

THIS MONTH a major international stamp exhibition will be held in Tel-Aviv. The National Postal Museum will be displaying some rare Palestine material, described by Douglas Muir, Curator Philately, in this *Bulletin*. We are also pleased to publish an article, by James Mackay, on postal links between the UK and Israel.

Two features have a connection with Glasgow – Jean Matheson recalls the Empire exhibition of 1938 and Margaret Morris reminds us that the UK's oldest thematic society celebrates its 50th birthday this month. In Royal Mail News we preview the forthcoming Health stamps which commemorate another 50th anniversary – of the NHS, formed in July 1948.

Life at Royal Mail National's headquarters in London and at the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh has been very busy his year with the issue of the Diana, Princess of Wales stamps and planning the forthcoming Millennium issues. Last month Tony Ramgobin, our Director Consumer & Stamps since 1994, moved to a new post developing Royal Mail's electronic services. Until a new Director is appointed, Barry Robinson, Design Director, will also be in charge of the Stamps Marketing and Production teams headed by Diana Kenning and Jon Blackwell. Mr Robinson reports directly to Mr Adam Novak, Director & General Manager of Royal Mail National. Audrey Farrington, Mr Robinson's secretary for many years, has recently retired from Royal Mail. We wish her a happy and healthy retirement, enjoying her passion for visiting art galleries. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

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Technical details

Printers The House of Questa Ltd

Process Offset lithography

Size 30 × 41 mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 20p • two bands others

Gum PVA

National Health Service Four stamps commemorating the 50th anniversary of Britain's National Health Service (NHS) go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 23 June. The designs symbolise the work done by the NHS and tell us the number of particular activities carried out each day.

The 20p and 26p stamps (basic inland 2nd and 1st class letter rates) remind us that 10,000 donors give blood and 1.7 million prescriptions are dispensed daily. The 43p and 63p stamps (basic airmail letters rates) record that 2000 babies are delivered and 130,000 hospital patients are seen each day.

The emergency medical services of the Second World War which provided free treatment for large numbers of people proved that a state-run health service was possible. After the War, Health Minister Aneurin Bevan implemented the NHS for everyone living in Britain. The Service was enacted in 1946 and came into being on 5 July 1948. Over the past half-century, the NHS has transformed the health of the nation. Unique in the world, the NHS still provides comprehensive healthcare for all according to need rather than ability to pay. The pride of the people in the NHS makes it a major political and electoral issue, and attempts to downgrade the service



Royal Mail First Day Cover

HEALTH

Celebrating 50 years of the NHS

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

"It will be a great contribution towards the wellbeing of the common people of Great Britain."
ANURIN BEVAN 29 JUNE 1948 - 14 FEBRUARY 2000

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The designer The stamps were designed by Vince Frost using photographs by Albert Watson. Mr Frost, born in Brighton in 1964, has worked on *The Independent Magazine*, BT commercials, *Photonica Europe*, and *Big Magazine*. These are his first stamps for Royal Mail.



Many happy birthdays

Before the NHS, most families could not afford the services of a doctor or a midwife. From 1948, women had access to free hospital services for the first time, but these were basic by today's standards: "Women had no privacy", comments leading midwife Lorna Munford, and most women "were ignorant about labour. There was no ante-natal education, no pregnancy books." Today, the Health Education Authority (a special health authority within the NHS) produces *The Pregnancy Book* and *Birth to Five*, which are given free to all first-time mothers by their midwives or health visitors. Women also have more choice about how and where to have their babies.



Fewer childhood diseases

Immunisation is a cornerstone of public health: simple and cost-effective. The last 50 years have seen the development of vaccines against many infectious diseases including diphtheria, tuberculosis and measles. These infections were often fatal, especially for children. Effective mass immunisation campaigns achieved by the NHS have helped to reduce infection and death rates dramatically. For example, in the 30 years since the measles vaccine was introduced, cases have been reduced by 99 per cent. The death rate of children who die before their tenth birthday is now just one-sixth of the 1948 figure.



Healing the wounds

Accidents are the most common cause of death in people up to the age of 30 but only very few admissions to A & E departments (under 1 per cent) represent life-threatening conditions: most are for cuts, grazes or broken bones. The NHS now provides accident and emergency treatment every year on almost 12 million different occasions (which represents one visit each for 20 per cent of the UK population). More than 20 per cent of us will also suffer from depression at some time; suicide is one of the highest causes of death in young men. Mental wellbeing is high on the health agenda: current targets aim to improve the health and social integration of mentally-ill people and continue the dramatic decline in the overall suicide rate.



Prevention is better

The NHS has expanded screening programmes to provide comprehensive health coverage for people most at risk from specific illnesses such



heart disease has increased five-fold since 1950



The last word in care

As patients spend less time in hospital, more receive care in their own homes. Physiotherapists may treat people at home: chiropodists make a million home visits every year. District nurses make 2.3 million visits per year: other to people recovering from injury or surgery or to those requiring long-term care, including many older people. Life expectancy has increased by an average of some eight years since 1948 and the elderly proportion of the population is increasing. For those who have degenerative conditions, emphasis on quality of life is important. Community nursing can help to maintain the independence and self-esteem of the most vulnerable among us so that, despite the limitations caused by disability and disease, living remains a positive experience.

Presentation pack and stamp cards A well-illustrated pack (price £1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. The pack, written by Nina Behrman, details the many aspects of NHS work.



Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

either nationally or locally are met with fierce resistance. A service of thanksgiving for the NHS's 50th anniversary will be held at Westminster Abbey on 3 July.

Aneurin ('Nye') Bevan was born at Tredegar, south Wales in 1897, one of 13 children of a miner. He followed his father down the pits age 13 and later became an active trade unionist. He was elected Independent Labour Party MP for Ebbw Vale in 1929 and was Minister of Health in Attlee's government 1945-51 and then briefly Minister of Labour. He is remembered for his radical fervour and was the most publicised Labour politician of his time. Bevan died in 1960.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 23 June, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or Tredegar (birthplace of Aneurin Bevan) must reach the Bureau by 23 June. Price £2.20 UK (including VAT) or £1.88 overseas (no VAT).

Alternatively, collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 1AA (Tredegar postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9809' (Bureau), or 'FD9810' (Tredegar). Collectors can post or hand in covers at main post offices for local (mostly non-pictorial) first day handstamps.

Covers may be posted bearing just the 20p NHS stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 23 June; the normal 1st class rule is waived for the day.

PHILATELIC NUMISMATIC COVER A joint Royal Mail/Royal Mint cover will be available. This bears the four stamps cancelled by a special Ebbw Vale postmark for 5 July – the 50th anniversary of the NHS. Encapsulated in the cover will be the new Health service anniversary coin. Price £12.95, available from the British Philatelic Bureau. Early ordering advised ●



Centenary of the Red Cross 1963. The 125th anniversary of the British Red Cross was commemorated by a stamp in the Peace and Freedom set of 1995.

Health on stamps There have been numerous British stamps relating to health and medical matters although this is the first set commemorating the NHS. The first health stamps commemorated important centenaries – of the Red Cross, 1963 and antiseptic surgery, 1965. The discovery of penicillin by Sir Alexander Fleming was the subject of one of four British Discoveries stamps in 1967. The most famous nurse of all, Florence Nightingale, and British Legion and district nurses featured in the Anniversaries sets of 1970 and 1971 and the Telephone Centenary set of 1976. The centenary of the Royal Institute of Chemistry set of 1977 features prominently in a medicine/health thematic collection. Artificial respiration ('kiss of life') was shown on the 22p stamp in the 1981 Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme set, and a doctor with baby in a Nigerian clinic on the 17p British Council stamp of 1984. The 22p stamp in the 1986 Industry Year set depicted a thermometer and Pharmaceutical Laboratory representing the multi-mil-