



### DEAR READER,

Every time I pick up a newspaper or catch the news on TV I am assailed

by tales of gloom and doom. Capitalism is DEAD ... we are all DOOMED ... life as we know it is OVER ... and so on.

There is no doubt that things are tough, money is scarcer, times is harder. I have a son who is an estate agent (yes I hang my head in shame) and he is finding business challenging there is no doubt, but I can still tap him for a drink when we go out and he is still 'turning a shilling'.

Wincanton High Street is still as busy, or not, on a Saturday and I have to say the orders are still plopping through the letter box on a regular basis thank the Gods.

It's all relative. I know that some reading this will be worried about mortgages, jobs and the other scaffolding of life. You are not alone, you are not the first and the bugger of it is you won't be the last to have to weather this sort of storm.

But having lived through a couple of these economic cock-ups myself and survived, I can tell you it does get better. Things do mend life goes on. I was told at a recent convention, by a very clever fellow, that he is 'investing' in our stamps. His reasoning was based on a mathematical model he had produced that proved our stamps were a worthwhile investment. My heart went cold.

The whole reason for these sticky bits of paper is to engender a bit of fun, to recreate some of the fine designs and production values that stamps used to have and create something that pays homage to the real essence of stamp collecting enthusiasm for the obscure.

The fact that our sticky bits also bind together such a wonderful and worldwide band of fellow collectors is a magic I never cease to marvel at. I can only conclude that if the world's fiscal management were given over to you lot there would not have been this monumental cock-up. Things would have been handled much differently, but knowing some of you as well as I do, I dread to think where you would have hidden the sports.

Keep the home fires burning,

Yours as ever,

ernard.

#### Message from the Editor

Immersed as I am in the fascinating and infinitely rewarding business of stamps, stamp production, stamp retail, stamp collection and other matters closely concerned with stamps, I rarely interest myself in the commercial world of Ankh-Morpork.

However, even I have become aware of certain rumours concerning that other great institution of our fair city, the Royal Bank of Ankh-Morpork. I therefore feel it is incumbent upon me to make the following statement.

I have it on the best possible authority that the Royal Bank of Ankh-Morpork is fully solvent. Any suggestion that the Patrician has pledged billions of Ankh-Morpork dollars to support the bank is entirely spurious. The Bank is entirely able, given reasonable notice, to service all account holders. The crowd of agitated citizens witnessed yesterday hammering on the Bank's doors were not, repeat not, trying to remove their funds, and it is a vile and baseless rumour that this constituted a 'run' on the bank.

This group was in fact a team of pest control experts employed to eradicate woodworm from the Bank's front doors by whacking each little grub as it poked its head out of its hole to see

what all the noise was about. The agitation simply resulted from the woodworms being too quick for them.

So it can be seen that rushing to unwarranted conclusions is entirely unhelpful. We must all keep calm heads in these uncertain times affecting our fair city. With good sense and clear objectives we shall prevail. And I would also point out that postage stamps are still entirely acceptable throughout Ankh-Morpork in payment for small sums of money.



A view of the Royal Bank of Ankh-Morpork - Wincanton Branch.

I am reliably informed that Ankh-Morpork coins will be available for purchase in the near future, and are expected to retain their value against other currencies.

#### PS

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# Comings & Goings

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In the new year, The Year of the Unquiet Land, we'll be celebrating the fifth year of Discworld stamps by introducing new versions of the Ankh-Morpork definitives.

Cabbage Trading Post

Mrs Parker's Opera Tickets and the Zellter Institute Postcard are now fully subscribed, and plans for new items in the 'return postcard' series have been put on hold for the time being, but we'll try to bring you more in the new year. In the meantime, you can exchange 25 Cabbage Trading Stamps for an exclusive sheet of Prayer Stamps; details and a picture will be on the website very soon. The Clax envelope and the Blue Bernard sheet are still available.

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4 Merchants' Guild 'Mended Drum' are all equivalent to 1 cabbage trading stamp

8 4p Seamstress' Guild.

### **Trade Cards**

Before you say anything, it's not our fault.

No, really, this time it isn't. This wicked fellow Bob Coalbran sidled up to our table at the Convention and led us into temptation, and now we have strayed off the righteous path of stamps and into the dark undergrowth of trade cards.

Trade cards? Well those of you with long enough memories will remember cigarette cards and cards that came with packets of tea. There would be various series of designs sportsmen, filmstars, flora and fauna and the like - and you could send off for an album to keep them in. Now, doing interesting things with bits of paper and card is, we like to think, something we do rather well. So with a lot of guidance from our tame expert, Bob, we are hard at work creating trade cards.

The aim is to launch with three different series, one of which may well be of interest to Stanley Howler Subscribers: the first year of Discworld stamps. Along with an image of the stamp there will be a little background history on each one. For this first run of 25 there will be no cards featuring sports stamps, but these will no doubt appear in the fullness of time, and the series will include the Brass Bridge Triangle. The other two series in this first tranche will be badges from the Inaugural Discworld Jamboree and Bernard's classic ceramics, which is sure to appeal to Clare Craft collectors.

How do we get hold of them?, we hear you cry. Well this is what distinguishes trade cards from their less respectable cousins, trading cards. Trading cards, like Pokemon, are sold. Trade cards are a means of promotion of a business, to encourage sales and reward brand loyalty, and as such they are given away. So we'll be giving them away. For every five pounds spent with us you will receive a trading card. You won't be able to specify which card you want, but we're sure that a good deal of exchanging

can be done through the Forum, and you'll be able to trade for specific cards with your Green Cabbage Trading Stamps. But if you're suffering from a complete failure of patience, you can buy the set. We'll be selling albums to stick them in, and also framed sets. There will be no limited editions, no sports, no funny business at all, but we will occasionally bring out a small series of perhaps 6 or 12 cards that will only be available to purchase.

We hope to get the first three sets in circulation by the end of October or the start of November and take it from there. We think you'll like them. We think it'll be fun. And best of all, it's all Bob's fault, not ours.



# Themes and Variations

The recently published Folklore of Discworld has provided ample evidence that certain themes resonate across the multiverse. It seems that the Postal Service of Ankh-Morpork is not immune from these ideas, images and inspiration that seem to manifest themselves both on Roundworld and Discworld.

For example, the eagle-eyed Flatalist will have noticed that the 'lady' inspecting the arms of the Seamstress' Guild on the new fourpenny horizontal bears a striking resemblance to the so-called 'Rokeby Venus'.

More properly titled 'The Toilet of Venus', it is the only female nude by Diego Velázquez that has survived. Nudes were frowned upon by the Church in 17th century Spain, but this Venus was probably painted for the private collection of the Marqués del Carpio, son of the First Minister of Spain, and thus escaped the attention of the Spanish Inquisition. In later years it was added to the Morritt Collection held at Rokeby Hall in Yorkshire, where it acquired its nickname, and is now held in The National Gallery, London.

Of course, it is impossible that the artists and engravers at Messrs Thomas Goatberger could be aware of the works of Velázquez, so the source of their inspiration is unknown. We can only note that, with such a view, it's not surprising that the Patrician has gone pink.



The Nation Collection - Museum replicas from the Royal Society

# OVER-OVERPRINT?

In another ripple across the multiverse, the recent overprinting of the Unseen University penny by Messrs Sidney Sport and Sports recalls the overprinting of stamps in various parts of the British Empire in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Typical were those of the Indian Convention States; during the 1880s a series of postal conventions were agreed between the Imperial government and a number of Indian states not yet absorbed into the Empire. Under this agreement, the Post Office supplied British India stamps overprinted with the name of the state which would be valid for mail within the state, to other 'Convention' states, or within British India.

In 1884 Bahrain was also absorbed into the British Indian Post Office. A branch was opened in the capital, Manama and it remained the only one in the country for the next 62 years. Until 1933 the Bahrain office issued standard British India stamps, but from 1933 to 1946 the stamps were overprinted 'Bahrain'. Following India's independence Bahrain was issued with standard GB stamps overprinted both with 'Bahrain' and Indian currency values.

Examples of overprints can be found in many other nations that came under the postal influence of the British Empire, such as Crete, Cyprus, Ireland, Kuwait, Eritrea, Morocco, Tangier. The tables could have been turned in 1940 when the German army occupied Britain's Channel Islands. The local administration suggested that British stamps should be overprinted with the Nazi swastika, and a few samples still exist. It isn't clear why the suggestion was to overprint British stamps rather than German, but for whatever reason the German high command rejected the idea.

The whole subject of British overprints is too large to cover here in fact there's a society solely dedicated to it, so for more information contact the GB Overprints Society or have a look at their website: www.gbos.org.uk

But it must be noted that the British overprints tend to be discretely marked in the measured, sober and essentially dull fashion that characterised the British civil service of the period. In contrast, Messrs Sidney Sport and Sports have carried out their brief to overprint the UU penny with a flamboyance and panache that is characteristic of the Fourecks native.

#### **DULL BUT DISCRETE?**





OVER THE TOP?

#### PLACES OF INTEREST

The Merchants' Guild has already sponsored two stamps depicting Ankh-Morpork's places of interest and there are plans for more, but once again this seems to be an idea that has resonated across the multiverse. British stamps have regularly featured significant buildings, starting with the high value definitives of the later 1950s which depicted various castles of the British Isles.

The Houses of Parliament turn up regularly. In 1965 they were portrayed as they would have looked in 1647; ten years later they were shown in their current version. And places of worship have been given a good airing, ranging from the great cathedrals of St Paul's and Canterbury in 1969 to the tiny church of Greensted-juxta-Ongar in Essex, believed to be the oldest surviving wooden church in the world in 1972.

Architects have been given a surprising level of exposure. In 1971 a set spotlighted notable University buildings by leading contemporary architects, and in 1973 a set of four stamps was dedicated to the work of Inigo Jones to mark the 400th anniversary of his birth. Perhaps the highest compliment to the built environment came in 1980. To commemorate the London Philatelic Exhibition, Royal Mail issued a set of five stamps featuring single famous London landmarks, together with a special large format 50p stamp combining all London's most recognisable icons in one design. The stamps were themselves designed by one of the most eminent British architects of the time, Sir Hugh Casson.

As we understand it, the Ankh-Morpork Post Office has no plans at present to celebrate the work of the city's best-known architect, but the Merchants' Guild has plans to sponsor more stamps of A-M's landmarks. Having dealt with middle and low



A view of the Watch House courtyard

culture, the next stamp will depict a building of particular interest to tourists, particularly if they've already experienced the delights of the Mended Drum - the Watch House before possibly returning to high culture some time next year with a stamp of the Opera House.

### Top Drawers Introducing new additions to our team

Saoirse Towler drew the illustration of The Dysk and adapted the Rokeby Venus for the new Seamstress' Guild stamp. This is how she describes herself:

'I picked up a pencil at about 3 years old and started drawing. Fair enough, it was the worst sketch of a six legged spider you've ever seen, but I enjoyed it. So I drew some more, and more again. I am now studying illustration at Kingston University, just outside London, where I can be found in my little bedroom spilling ink and blaspheming.



My Discworld obsession started only a few years ago. After receiving a book token for Christmas, I

bought 'The Wee Free Men' on an impulse, and never looked back. I have been collecting Discworld odds and ends ever since, and am still ploughing my way through all the books. I feel very lucky that I have been able to share part of my view of Discworld with other collectors.'

Karen Dupe designed the two Merchants' Guild 'Places of Interest' stamps and here she introduces herself:

'I trained as an artist first at the Central School of Art and Design and then at the Chelsea School of Art. My training covered a wide range of disciplines from painting, printing and sculpture through to ceramics, textiles, architecture and theatre design. I've recently completed both a Foundation Degree in Multimedia and a BA Hons Degree in Film and Television at Bournemouth University. I've been a professional graphic designer for the past 15 years.'

Sara Mawdsley created the artwork for the 'Turtle Moves' Convention stamps.

'My background is in animation, and I enjoy painting in watercolour as a hobby, so when I was asked to design a stamp for the Convention I suppose it was inevitable that I should come up with a sort of watercolour storyboard. That's how one stamp ended up as seven.

I've been a Discworld fan for many years and I still have my childhood stamp collection, but I've never collected Discworld stamps. I may have to start!'

# Up, up and away

In the early 1930s the improbably named International Association for Exploring the Arctic by Means of Airships was in need of funding to further its aim of, well, exploring the arctic by means of an airship. Polar explorer Sir Hubert Wilkins came up with the idea of sending an airship to the North Pole to rendezvous with a submarine and exchange passengers and mail in a philatelic stunt that would attract media attention.

Newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst stumped up \$150,000 for the rights to report from on board the airship plus a further \$100,000 if the two vessels successfully met up. With the publicity this would guarantee, the demand for souvenir covers was expected to provide the remainder of the funding necessary for the airship to then get on with the serious business of research.

Range



Capt Per Stalby over the Pole

The director of the Graf Zeppelin company made an airship available, but the secondhand submarine Sir Hubert had acquired from the US Navy proved to be unserviceable. By chance the Soviet Union was planning a scientific survey to the area of Franz Josef Land and it was agreed that the Zeppelin would carry supplies for the expedition and meet up with their icebreaker, the Malygin.

The Zeppelin set off from Berlin with passengers, mail and equipment on July 25, 1931 and headed for the USSR. At Leningrad it picked up supplies including caviar and other survival equipment and flew north. On July 27 the icebreaker was sighted and the Graf Zeppelin landed on water and dropped anchor. A boat set out from the icebreaker carrying mail; the crew were hoping to be invited aboard the airship for afternoon tea, but the Zeppelin started to drift close to the ice floes and was obliged to take off again, just 15 minutes after landing.

The USSR issued special stamps for the occasion which show the Zeppelin flying above the icebreaker, as a polar bear looks on. And 77 years later, a special stamp was created for a very different Zeppelin flight, as Per Stalby now explains:





Discoorld airship mail

I have always been fascinated by dirigibles and airships. When they started to emerge they were the great

technical breakthrough of their time and the pinnacle of luxury in travelling. You could go from Europe to America in just two days, compared to seven days by ocean liner. Just as fast as they emerged, as fast did they disappear from the skies. The air did, as it were, go out of the airship idea. However, for a short time the air did truly belong to these silver whales of the sky.

Not only were humans transported by these air giants, so was mail. The first Zeppelin air-mail, where official postmarks where applied on board, was sent in Germany in 1912. The first Zeppelin stamp was released the same year.

Ninetysix years later, the Roundworld was ready for the first Discovorld dirigible stamp and the first Discworld dirigible mail. The reason being that the Airship Zeppelin NT-07 was going to fly tourists over London during the summer 2008. Having a keen interest in dirigibles as well as in Discworld, I decided to kill two birds with one stone. After having booked a ticket, I contacted Bernard who helped me by making an official stamp featuring a dirigible, in order to celebrate the first dirigible Discworld mail flown on the 21st of August 2008. The stamp got the value of 1 penny, and the colours are red and blue. On the stamp sheets that I received I found a sport: the dirigible was turned upside down. The stamps were put on 20 envelopes together with a 1p Patrician. To supervise the event I was appointed temporary post master and captain. As I arrived at the airfield in Upminster, I saw the airship that, 250 feet long, was bigger than I had imagined. Soundless and smooth, the dirigible rose over the metropolis and went along the Thames to the Tower Bridge. During the flight the envelopes were franked with a special airship frank and the Ankh-Morpork post office frank. They where all signed by the two pilots Capt Fritz Günter and Capt Katharine Board.

Back on the ground I brought the envelopes to the Discworld Convention in Birmingham, where half of them were donated to the charity auction. They sold for  $\pounds 60$  each. One of the ones with a sport raised  $\pounds 90$ . Considering that all flatalists could not attend the event, I decided that the remaining envelopes would be sold on the stamp forum later this autumn. I hope that they will raise at least the same amount for charity.

Just as the Convention was an unforgettable experience, so was the Zeppelin flight. It will be a long time before Zeppelins will fly over London again. Due to weather conditions, half of the flights were cancelled, and the six weeks of flying probably did not make any real profit. The dirigible has now been transported to California where it will fly tourists. The ship may be gone but the memories are still here. So is the first dirigible Discworld mail, delivered under my supervision, and adding a new collectible to the joy of all flatalists. "Per ardua ad spes astra."

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Temporary post master Capt Per Stalby

#### Competition Results

#### WELCOME TO CM.O.T DIBBLER'S MAIL ORDER CATALOGUE

As brought to you by some of the subscribers to the Stanley Howler Journal. Some of whom obviously have too much time on their hands: several entrants contributed four suggestions. Like Keith Matthews' whose offerings included a Guide to Mime, by Marcel Dibblereau. Not surprisingly, given Lord Vetinari's views on this type of performance art, Keith points out that people who bought this also bought (eventually):

Escapalogy by Harry Dibblini

Chapters on Releasing manacles, gyves, bilboes and other restraints

Bribing the turnkey, Using cutlery as tools, Tunnelling, Cutting the Bars, Training Rats as Helpers, Hunger Strikes

Just \$15 AM post free

Newcomer Mark Holloway is getting the hang of it, also with a choice of four products, including:

Dibbler's Mail Order Product Range The Times Toilet Roll Read It and Wipe Now Perforated Easier to Tear and Share

John O'Neill in the Netherlands should be expecting a visit from the Ankh-Morpork Post Office enforcement division: 'Make your Own Stamps' Kit Kit includes: one (1) potato and one (1) sharpened wooden stick for carving AM\$5.95 plus p&p

Larry Hart offered: Genuine Collectible Mended Drum Silver Horde Barbarian Mugs Cohen the Barbarian Caleb the Ripper Boy Willie 'Teach' Truckle the Uncivil Old Vincent Mad Hamish Unknown Special Edition AM\$3 cannot guarantee which mug is sent



\*Kit includes: one (1) potato and one (1) sharpened wooden stick for carving,

There's always one who plays havoc the rules, and this time it's Martyn (Doc Brown) Ransom. When we said not more than 30 words plus price, we weren't expecting a detailed rate card with a choice of options:

Message onna Bun

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Wrap your message around one of my buns, our trained dogs will deliver it anywhere in the city for the bun, to be eaten on delivery.

Rates: All Ankh-Morpork one sausage except The Shades, two sausages. Unseen University, one meat pie. Special rate for Watch messages of a BLT. Cats delivered for free.

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4 Merchants' Guild 'Mended Drum' are all equivalent to 1 cabbage trading stamp

8 4p Seamstress' Guild.



And an entry from someone for whom, I am ashamed to say, I have lost the details:

Name a star after yourself for this once in a lifetime price. Act now while stocks last.



The accompanying certificate states:

This certificate identifies the cosmic presence previously known as BF235FG127 as (your name). The Star can be found just to the left of the big round white one near to the small yellow one above the Mended Drum on Friday Nights.

A prize of a special Consulate envelope bearing one each of stamps created by our three new lady artists will go to everyone, including the un-named contributor if he would be kind enough to remind me who he is.

# **JOURNAL 16 SPECIAL OFFER:**

It will be another fine Thomas Goatberger proof sheet, this time featuring both the Seamstress fourpenny horizontal and this issue's free stamp, the Seamstress farthing. Available on the

website for £7.50, but you'll need the special password:



Mr Goatberger supervising an old printer

### Your Editorial Team Editor in Chief Mr Stanley Howler

Editor in Chief Sub-editor Travel Editor City Desk Picture Desk Ink Monitor Mr Stanley Howler Hilary Daniels Per (up up & away) Stalby Gavin Arnold Bernard Pearson Isobel Pearson

The Competition

#### **Journal 16 Competition**

The competition is to

# NAME THAT STAMP

The new Seamstress' Guild stamp is nicknamed the 'Fourpenny Horizontal', replacing the 'Tuppeny Upright'.

Either suggest a nickname for a current or previously issued stamp, or suggest a stamp that would suit a particular soubriquet. Please keep descriptions to a maximum of 40 words.

Entries by post or email by 31 December 2008.





ALL ABOUT STAMPS FROM THE HOME OF STAMPS

NGE PAJO



FREE

with this issue



### Mr Gavin Arnold's AUCTION PRICE GUIDE



If any of these items are missing from your Journal, please contact the editor, who will make the usual excuses.

Kindly address all correspondence, abuse, valedictory communications, or marriage proposals to:

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E-mail: hilary@cunningartificer.demon.co.uk www.discworldemporium.com

## Back Issues of the Journal , together with free stamps while stocks last, £4.00 per issue.

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