

BRITISH PHILATELIC

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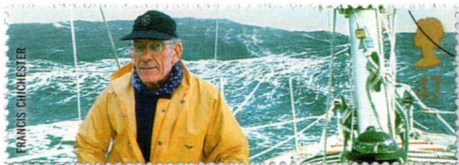
Bulletin

Extreme Endeavours issue •
Photostamps of the world



Amy Johnson is remembered along with six other extraordinary individuals in Royal Mail's Extreme Endeavours stamps, to be issued on 29 April.

Extreme Endeavours Next month's stamps



Technical details

Printer House of Questa (now part of De La Rue)

Process Gravure

Stamp size 60 x 21mm

Sheet size 50

Perforation 15 x 14.5

Phosphor 2nd class one band
others two bands

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical

Cylinders and colours

All values Q1 gold ● Q1 black
● Q1 magenta ● Q1 yellow ●
Q1 cyan (blue) ● Q1 phosphor

British Postmark Bulletin

For a sample copy write to:
The Editor, British Postmark
Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old
Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

Tariff increase The prices of
the 2nd and 1st class stamps
and presentation pack will be
increased if a proposed tariff
increase comes into effect
from 17 April. The pack will
then cost £2.80.

THE THEME of next month's issue of special stamps is Extreme Endeavours and honours seven people who have tested themselves in such endeavours. The six, large format, stamps on this theme will go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House, Edinburgh on 29 April. They depict: 2nd class Amy Johnson, 1st class Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, E rate Freya Stark; 42p Ernest Shackleton; 47p Francis Chichester; and 68p Robert Falcon Scott. The stamps mark the centenary of the birth of Amy Johnston and the 50th anniversary of the conquest of Mount Everest. The six stamps were designed by Howard Brown.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 29 April, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the six stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House or Plymouth must reach Royal Mail (address below) by the day of issue. Price £3.25 UK or £2.77 overseas.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA (Plymouth postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO309' (Tallents House), or 'FDO310' (Plymouth). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Plymouth postmark. Other handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/ Europe; £24.95 elsewhere).

PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack containing the six stamps (shown opposite, price £2.75) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets.

STAMP BOOK A book containing four 1st class definitives in gold and two 1st class Extreme Endeavours stamps will be available from 29 April, price £1.62. All six stamps are self-adhesive, printed by De La Rue ●

recall the achievements of seven explorers and adventurers



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The latter was a feat of extraordinary grit in the most inhospitable terrain on Earth. Hauling sledges and enduring wind chills of minus 50°C, Finnesen and Dr Mike Stroud were the first to cross the Antarctic landmass without supply drops or motorized assistance. At 2164 kilometres it was the longest polar journey in history and reduced the pair to frobbin' brats.

Who inspired him? It was not, he admits, polar heroes Shackleton or Scott, though he came to admire them later. His guiding spirits were Livingstone and Stanley, and the exotic Sir Richard Burton and Lawrence of Arabia. After service in the SAS and fighting communists for the Sultan of Oman, Finnesen explored the Nile and repeatedly returned to the desert looking for the fabled 'lost' city of Ugar. His ultimately successful search spanned 26 years.

Despite losing his fingertips and having raised more than £6 million for charity, Finnesen's competitive urge is still fierce. He is guarded about future ventures. The poles, he thinks, have been all but exhausted. But add: "If one of our expedition friends rings up with some amazing idea, then it is hard to say no."



REBECCA STEPHENS was the first British woman to climb Mount Everest and to bag 'the Magnificent Seven' – the highest summits on each of the world's seven continents. As one of these – Vinson – is in Antarctica and another – Carstensz Pyramid – rises from dense jungle in a South Pacific island, select contrasting climates join with their challenge. And then there is Everest. The highest mountain in the world presents suitor with the full gamut of hazards – collapsing ice cliffs, avalanches, screaming winds, and sub-zero temperatures – plus the thinnest, most oxygen-starved air on the planet.

Yet Stephens fell in love with Everest and returned from a 1983 journalistic assignment to the mountain's Tibetan side determined to climb it. "I went out really green," she says. "We all got turned on by different things and I just love being in the mountains." Then one evening at the Royal Geographical Society in London she heard Sir Edmund Hillary talking about his historic ascent with Sherpa Tenzing in 1953. Forty years after Hillary and Tenzing's triumph, Stephens followed in their footsteps up Nepal's Khumbu valley. She had quit a secure job to be part of a British expedition, but failure seemed inevitable as the Everest season drew to an end. Stephens was close to exhaustion and the weather forecast was grim. "I knew the chances were very slim, but I had to know I had done everything I could." On 17 May 1993, she and Sherpa Ang Pasang

Rebecca Finnesen's expedition faces to from frozen Arctic lakes to barren & deserts. Between 1978 and 1982 he & the first polar navigation of the Earth

Rebecca Stephens was the first Brit to climb the highest mountain in each world's seven continents, reaching it of Everest in May 1993.



The presentation pack was written by Stephen Goodwin and designed by Silk Pearce.