

Results of 2005 Bulletin readers poll

by Glenn H Morgan FRPSL

In December you were invited to vote for your favourite set of special stamps of 2005, and your favourite individual stamp and *Bulletin* author. This was the 20th annual stamp poll and, as in previous years, a good response was received from 1,100 readers in many parts of the world, marginally down on last year. British stamps continue to be a talking point among collectors and it seems that no-one is without a view, which is how it should be.

I spent several evenings this past winter entering the votes for the 2005 Stamp Poll into my laptop, but in many ways this was not necessary. If I was to invite you to jot down your favourite and least well-liked stamp set of the year, there is a good chance that you would be correct on both counts! *Trafalgar* was easily the winner in the Battle of the Stamps and the *Changing Tastes in Britain* issue was found to be completely unpalatable to almost every reader of the *Bulletin* who voted.

It is a shame that the *Castles* MS did not qualify for voting (they are high value definitives, not special stamps, after all), as it was bound to have polled very highly due its use of intaglio printing – always a favourite printing process with stamp collectors. The employment of two other previously utilised designs in miniature sheet formats – i.e. the *End of WWII* and *London 2012 Games* – also precluded their inclusion.

Next month I will record many of the views expressed by voters, for although they were not solicited, they do give a good flavour of what the average collector is feeling about Royal Mail special stamps. “They’re all horrid!” was fortunately not a typical response, but it does make me question why this particular reader collects modern British stamps and how he still felt able to recommend his favourite set of the year (*Magic!*).

.....
Favourite set As always, points were allocated for each vote for the set; three points for first choice, two points for second and one point for third. This enabled me to get a clear picture of the relative popularity of each issue. The voting was as shown opposite.

As already revealed above, the *Trafalgar* issue was the outright winner (with 1743 votes) – a factor of approaching two-to-one, *Trooping the Colour* came second (919) and in third place was the *British Journey: South West England* issue (642).

For interest, past winners were: 1987 Flowers; 1988 Linnean Society, 1989 Birds; 1990 Queen Mother; 1991 Maps; 1992 Wintertime; 1993 Autumn; 1994 Age of Steam; 1995 Christmas; 1996 Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; 1997 The Great Tudor (Henry VIII); 1998 Lighthouses;

1999 Scientists' Tale; 2000 Tree and Leaf; 2001 Weather; 2002 London Bridges; 2003 Extreme Endeavours; and 2004 Woodlands Animals.

.....
Favourite stamps The 1st class *Trooping the Colour* stamp showing Her Majesty taking the salute was your favourite individual stamp by a mile, with the 2nd class *British Journey: South West England* design depicting Studland Bay in second place with just over half the number of votes. The *Royal Wedding* 30p value with a design showing the happy couple was in third place. The future of the British Monarchy appears safe, with two out of the three favourite stamps being royalty related!

54 of the 77 individual stamp designs attracted 10 or fewer votes each (including 15 stamps with zero points – up from six last year) and 62 out of the 77 designs received under 20 votes each.

For the record, the previous favourite individual stamps were: 1996 Wildfowl and Wetlands 19p; 1997 The Great Tudor (Henry VIII) 26p; 1998 Endangered Species 20p; 1999 Scientists' Tale 64p; 2000 Above and Beyond 19p; 2001 Flags – Union Jack; 2002 London Bridges 1st Class; 2003 Coronation 1st (Cecil Beaton's Coronation portrait of the Queen); and 2004 Woodland Animals 1st class Red squirrel.

When the single stamps are put back into their sets and votes re-counted, three of the 13 stamp issues attracted 20 or fewer votes for the entire set. These were *Magic!* (20 votes), *Jane Eyre* (6) and *Changing Tastes* (2). The top four sets were *Trooping the Colour* (177 votes), *British Journey: South West England* (127), *Christmas* (112) and *Trafalgar* (108). Quite a different result from when you chose your favourite sets.

.....
Favourite Bulletin authors This was the 10th year that a poll was conducted. Douglas Myall (*Mainly Machins* articles) was once again your favourite author, narrowly beating his nearest rival, Nigel Fordham with his fascinating *Trafalgar*-based series, by a mere 41 votes. Nigel's articles were regarded by one reader as "very well researched articles, written in a very readable style. Much appreciated by an ex-Navy man". Ron Negus and Dorothy Martin came third and fourth respectively.

Disappointingly, 190 readers failed to complete this section of the form, although this is probably due to the high editorial standards set by our Editor, thereby making a decision difficult, rather than indifference on the part of voters. Indeed, one reader mentioned that "it is difficult to state a favourite article, as all are of the greatest interest" and another stated that the *Bulletin* was a "monthly gem", so while the stamps come in for criticism, the *Bulletin* continues to find favour with its audience.

.....

Draw winners All the voting forms went into two draws. The four winners of £50 each in the FAVOURITE STAMPS draw were Robert W Reid (Glasgow), G van Cleave (Japan), Peter D Chamberlain (Rushden) and Tim Wells (Wootton Bassett). The winners of £50 each in the FAVOURITE *BULLETIN* AUTHOR draw were Mrs A Willis (Great Bookham) and P J Smith (Stroud).

.....

Favourite stamps and sets.

FAVOURITE INDIVIDUAL STAMPS The number following each stamp description and face value is as shown in December's *Bulletin*.

Issue	Value	No.	Votes
Trooping the Colour	1st	39	115
SW England	2nd	11	061
Royal Wedding	30p	28	058
Christmas	1st	73	046
Christmas	42p	74	035
SW England	40p	13	034
The Ashes	1st	62	032
The Ashes	1st	63	032
Trafalgar	68p	70	031
Trafalgar	1st	67	030
Classic ITV	1st	57	029
World Heritage Sites	68p	36	028
Classic ITV	2nd	56	028
The Ashes	68p	65	027
Trooping the Colour	£1.12	43	023
World Heritage Sites	2nd	31	019
Trafalgar	1st	66	016
World Heritage Sites	1st	32	015
Trooping the Colour	2nd	38	015
Trafalgar	42p	69	015
Farm Animals	1st	05	014
SW England	43p	14	013
Christmas	2nd	72	013
World Heritage Sites	2nd	30	010
Farm Animals	1st	08	009
SW England	68p	16	009
Trooping the Colour	42p	40	009
Motorcycles	47p	47	009
Trafalgar	42p	68	009
Magic!	1st	23	008
World Heritage Sites	47p	34	008
Trooping the Colour	68p	42	008
Trooping the Colour	60p	41	007
Trafalgar	68p	71	007

Christmas	60p	75	007
Christmas	£1.12	77	007
SW England	1st	12	006
World Heritage Sites	68p	37	006
Motorcycles	1st	44	006
Magic!	40p	24	005
Magic!	47p	25	005
Royal Wedding	68p	29	005
Motorcycles	42p	46	005
SW England	57p	15	004
Jane Eyre	2nd	17	004
World Heritage Sites	47p	35	004
Christmas	68p	76	004
Farm Animals	1st	03	003
Motorcycles	40p	45	003
Motorcycles	60p	48	003
Classic ITV	68p	61	003
Farm Animals	1st	01	002
Farm Animals	1st	02	002
Farm Animals	1st	10	002
Magic!	£1.12	27	002
Motorcycles	68p	49	002
Changing Tastes	2nd	50	002
Classic ITV	68p	60	002
Farm Animals	1st	07	001
Jane Eyre	1st	18	001
Jane Eyre	68p	21	001
Classic ITV	47p	59	001
Farm Animals	1st	04	000
Farm Animals	1st	06	000
Farm Animals	1st	09	000
Jane Eyre	40p	19	000
Jane Eyre	57p	20	000
Jane Eyre	£1.12	22	000
Magic!	68p	26	000
World Heritage Sites	1st	33	000
Changing Tastes	1st	51	000
Changing Tastes	42p	52	000
Changing Tastes	47p	53	000
Changing Tastes	60p	54	000
Changing Tastes	68p	55	000
Classic ITV	42p	58	000
The Ashes	68p	64	000

FAVOURITE SETS

Issue	Votes
Trafalgar	1743
Trooping the Colour	919
British Journey: South West England	642
Motorcycles	585
World Heritage Sites	574
Christmas	458
The Ashes	340
Farm Animals	305
Royal Wedding	194
Classic ITV	189
Magic!	149
Jane Eyre	119
Changing Tastes in Britain	65

.....

(1400 words)