

250th Anniversary of the Pledge of Loyalty to King George III



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A Smiler Stamp for The Queen by Alan Benjamin

Whilst there have been numerous special occasions celebrated with Smiler stamps it is believed to be the first time a Smiler stamp was produced especially for presentation to Her Majesty. Initially there were strong objections from Royal Mail when the inscription and subject matter was submitted and it took a lot of persuasion before they finally agreed.

The occasion was the **250th anniversary of the presentation of a document pledging loyalty to King George III** by members of the Jewish Community of Great Britain. A group was deputised to represent the entire Jewish community and this group then became established as the Board of Deputies of British Jews and today continues working for the community in all aspects of both religious and secular UK life, including working very closely with all interfaith and interracial groups.

On 17th November 2010 Her Majesty Elizabeth II invited a small group of Board dignitaries to a private audience at Windsor Castle to mark the 1760 Pledge of Loyalty. Knowing my involvement in stamp design & production I was asked by the Board of Deputies if I would design and produce stamps and commemorative covers to mark the event.

It was decided to present Her Majesty with a framed copy of the 1760 document together with a matching frame containing a sheet special Smiler stamps and a specially designed Windsor Castle FDC complete with the Windsor pictorial date stamp.



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I was delighted to have the honour of doing this but ran into difficulties concerning the subject matter. At first the stamp design was rejected by Royal Mail as totally unsuitable on three accounts so I had to come up with answers to all their objections which were.....

Objection 1: You cannot show any national flags.

Response 1: The Symbol within the star is part of the new Board of Deputies logo and although Red, White & Blue is not a flag.

Objection 2: You cannot refer to Her Majesty in any way.

Response 2: But this whole project is for the Queen and will be presented th Her Majesty at a private reception, therefore it must have the Queen's name on the stamp.

Objection 3: No religious symbols or reference to any religious groups are permitted.

Response 3: True I said that whilst Judaism is a religion it is also the oldest ethnic minority group in Britain and therefore had a right to be represented as such.

The Royal Mail said they would check with a higher authority (Do they have a heavenly direct a line?) A few days later I was told everything was approved.

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The Second Stamp

A second stamp plus cover and special cancel was commissioned for the actual 250th Anniversary date of 21/11/10. These covers were exclusively for the guests of the 250th anniversary dinner held on the 23rd with Tony Blair and the Rt Hon George Osborne as guest speakers.



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Turning to the November 21st stamps for the 250th Anniversary Dinner I needed to find a subject showing the early history of Jewish Britain. For this I chose the oldest synagogue that is in continual use in the UK, The Bevis Marks Synagogue built in 1701. For the cover I obtained an 18th century engraving of the interior and for the stamp an ideal choice was the modern interior. The special cancel featured the new logo of the Board of Deputies.

....and a Third Stamp Too!

Apart from the two Board of Deputies stamps I am sending you this Chanukah item.

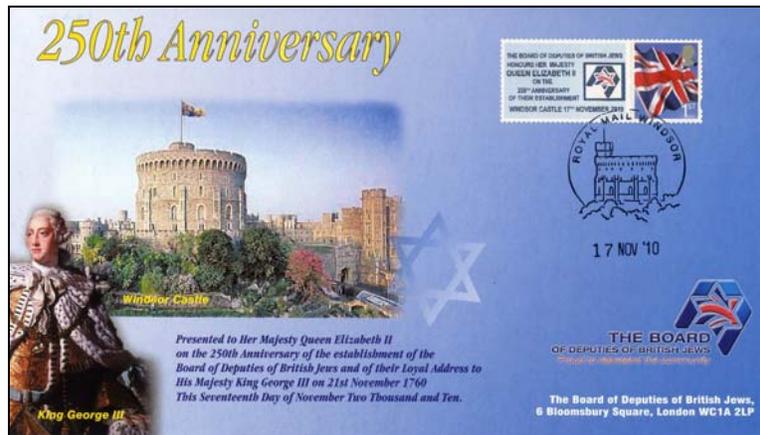
It's just a bit of fun I had with the UK Christmas 1st class stamp showing Gromit mailing letters but.... Maybe they were for Chanukah not for Christmas? I was spending so much time dealing with the Board's stamps that I decided to do this just for Wallace & Gromit (whose original family name is Gromitzky).

The 1st class Christmas stamp shows nothing Christmasy only Gromit posting cards but could they have been for Chanukah not Christmas? So I had some Chanukah Smiler stamps done plus a suitable W & G cover. These covers are cancelled with a London Big Ben pictorial postmark on 12/01/10 the 1st night of Chanukah.

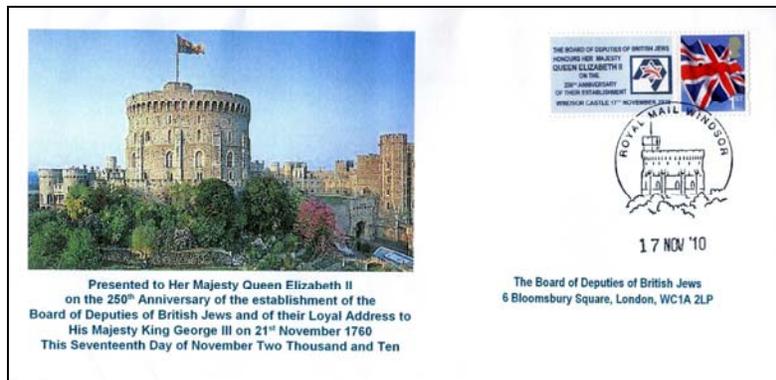


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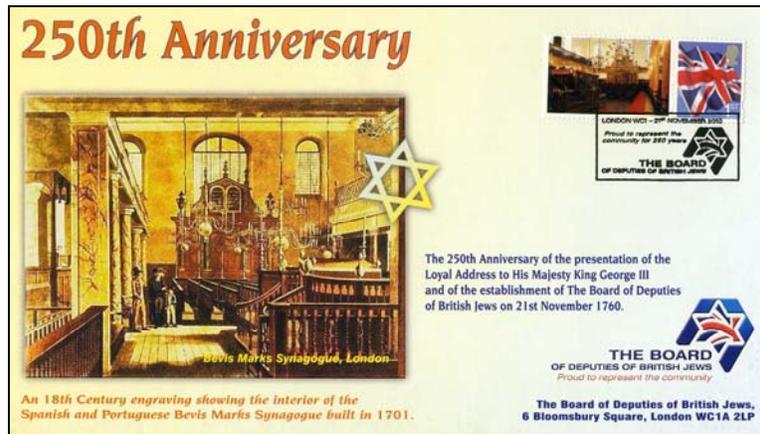
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Cover 1

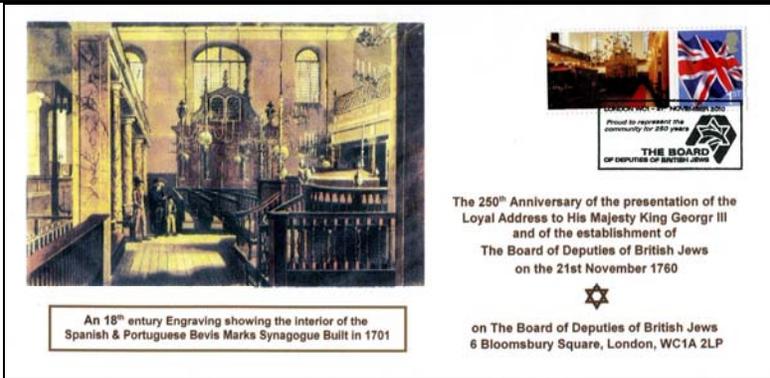


Cover 2



Cover 3

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Cover 4



Cover 5