

## MEMORIES

This stamp and the canvas that inspired it makes me think of my grandfather, also born in Czarist Russia, who immigrated in Paris in 1931. This old watchmaker, glancing through *Heynt*, the Yiddish newspaper printed in Warsaw. He is not interested in the headline that reads “Violent Fights in the Balkans”, but rather with the back page, where the advertisements and popular serials were printed. The message imparted by this genre painting is clear — this nonchalant watchmaker cares little about current events for as far as his clock ticks, his atelier and his traditional *shtetl* have always survived.



Painted by Yehuda Penn during the Autumn 1914, this scene is important to Judaica collectors as this stamp issued by Belarus on June 5, 2004, is first authentic use of Yiddish on a postage stamp. The Yiddish world and its rich traditions was what constituted Penn's main subject of interest. Born in 1854 in a Novo-Alexandrovsk poor family, he acquired his first artistic experience working for a relative in Minsk who made advertisement hoardings and ornamental parquets.

In 1879, he went to Saint-Petersburg for the Academy of Fine

Art entrance examination. This very exclusive school had a very small number of Jewish students. Penn was religious, wore traditional clothes and spoke little Russian, but he was accepted and faced anti-semitism from classmates, professors and the school's administration.

Upon graduation, he worked as a portrait and landscape painter in Vitebsk, a provincial town renowned for its active cultural life. There, in 1897, he opened his famous school of drawing, painting and modelling. “One day, Marc Chagall wrote, in the tram crossing Cathedral Place, I saw a big banner proclaiming in huge white and blue letters: “Penn’s School of Art”. What a highly cultured city is our Vitebsk!”

Penn himself was a realist painter, but his teaching inspired many avant garde artists. His pupils, almost all of them Jewish found inspiration in the tortuous streets and the rickety houses of the *shtetl*, the humble trades, the beggars and the talmudists.

In 1918, after the Bolcheviks closed his atelier, Penn taught at the School of Art steered by Chagall. He was murdered in 1937, during the Stalin terror.

Only some fragments of Penn’s work are known today. Like his pupils, most disappeared in the Gulag and the War.

If Penn had not been the mentor of El Lissitzky, Ossip Zadkine or Marc Chagall, his memory would have faded, with the world of the *shtetl* and the studio shared by the nonchalant watchmaker in the painting and my grandfather, also a watchmaker, that I never had the chance to know.

– Claude Wainstein

EDITOR’S NOTE: The Belarus stamp was issued in an attractive sheetlet of two stamps — one of the watchmaker reading the Yiddish newspaper, and the other a self portrait, superimposed over a cityscape.

I have a couple available for sale, so if anyone is interested e-mail me at [garygoodman@talktalk.net](mailto:garygoodman@talktalk.net)



### USA SNUBS CHANUKAH ISSUE

The US did not release a Chanukah stamp this year – and according to the 2011 schedule, they will not be issuing a Chanukah stamp next year either.

# ISRAEL - VATICAN CITY

## JOINT ISSUE

Israel and Vatican City issued a belated joint-issue, on 15th. November 2010, to commemorate the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Israel.

The Israeli stamp depicts the ancient olive trees of the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem. (As well as the church of all nations, in the background, and also on the tab). This is available in panes of four.

The Vatican City issue, actually consists of a set of three stamps, depicted the travels of the Pope in the Holy land. However, it is the e0.65 value which is of Judaica relevance to the Israeli stamp issue.

This stamp is in a pane of four with two small labels attached. The large label on the left of the pane shows the Pope at the Western Wall.



**Member Alan Benjamin has been busy producing some magnificent, and unique Judaica themed items recently. They have been produced in relatively small quantities – and would look fabulous in any Judaica stamp collection.**

## A SMILER STAMP for the QUEEN



While there have been numerous special occasions celebrated with Smiler stamps this 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 the Royal Mail finally agreed.

For this stamp, certain rules concerning the design and wording were waved so that the presentation of a sheet of these stamps plus a first day cover could be made to mark the 250th anniversary of the 1760 Pledge of Loyalty to George III by the Jewish Community of Great Britain. Mention of Her Majesty by name, inclusion of flags and religious symbols or naming of a religious group are all normally forbidden but for this stamp all these rigorously enforced rules were waived.

A small number of numbered covers were cancelled 17/11/10 with the Windsor Castle pictorial handstamp, No. 1 was mounted in a frame along with a sheet of the stamps and was presented to Her Majesty along with copy of the original 1760 document. She expressed her delight with the design of the cover and said she was pleased the castle tower was the focal point of the design.

As a retired consultant to postal administrations around the world I was commissioned by the Board of Deputies to design and produce the stamps and have a small number of items to offer to collectors.

|  |        |         |
|--|--------|---------|
| MINT SHEET OF 20 WINDSOR STAMPS          | £35.00 | \$55.00 |
| Trial Design for the final FDC - 20 USED | £8.50  | \$12.50 |
| Official FDC - ALL NUMBERED FROM 1 - 25  | £19.50 | \$31.50 |

Nearly all covers from both the Windsor & Bevis Marks events went to Board of Deputies executives & guests

As it was the day after the announcement of Kate & William's engagement the group wished her *Mazel Tov*, words which she said she knew.



# Wallace & Gromit (Gromitzky) CHANUKAH ISSUE

*PRODUCED STRICTLY BECAUSE GROMIT WANTED IT!*



-1 DEC '10

When I first saw the new Christmas stamps I realised that Gromit was probably mailing Chanukah greetings not Christmas cards, after all his family name was Grominsky. So after working so hard designing the Windsor and the Bevis Marks stamps and FDC's I decided to have a little fun with the latest Christmas issue. The result is a stamp

with a menorah plus a cover showing Wallace & Gromit rushing home to light the first Chanukah candle. The FDC's are cancelled with the Big Ben pictorial postmark for the 1st night of Chanukah, December 1, 2010.

I had no idea how much interest there would be but several friends were quite ecstatic about these covers which goes to show we need some Chanukah stamps as well as Christmas.

|   |        |         |
|---|--------|---------|
| SHEET OF 20 MINT GROMIT CHANUKAH STAMPS   | £30.00 | \$48.00 |
| Wallace & Gromit FDC - 20 DONE & NUMBERED | £12.50 | \$18.50 |

## PLACING AN ORDER WITH ALAN

All orders subject to availability. Please add postage and packing costs on orders under £75.00 (\$120.00). Postage & packing costs are dependant on whether they are for UK, Europe or Worldwide. I will try to keep cost to a minimum so please place your order and I will E-mail you how much the order will cost to send.

Pay by UK£ cheques, US\$ checks or by PayPal adding 5% to cover their charges. All orders over £100 or \$160.00 will get a 10% discount.

Please make out cheques to  
Alan Benjamin, PO BOX 40, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9LE, United Kingdom

## NEW MEMBERS:

- #102 Rabbi Shalom Zaiden.  
43, St Georges Road,  
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- #103 Alan Cahn.  
6653 N. Minnehaha Avenue,  
Lincolnwood, Illinois  
60712, USA  
e-mail: rphnate1@gmail.com

*INTERESTS: Any stamps that have a Jewish and/or Israel theme. Especially, but not exclusive to pharmacy, medicine, Maimonides, political leaders, Cinderellas, and Tax Stamps.*

## 250th Anniversary



An 18th Century engraving showing the interior of the Spanish and Portuguese Bevis Marks Synagogue built in 1701.



The 250th Anniversary of the presentation of the Loyal Address to His Majesty King George III and of the establishment of The Board of Deputies of British Jews on 21st November 1760.



A Limited Edition of 300 Covers. This is number 217

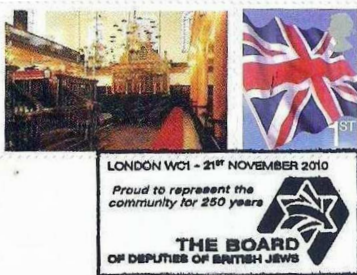
## 250th Anniversary of the establishment of The Board of Deputies of British Jews 1760 ~ 2010

RIGHT: The Tablets of the Law that are above the Ark of the Bevis Marks Synagogue. This place of worship was for more than a century the religious centre of the Anglo-Jewish world and is the oldest synagogue in use on British soil.

Designed by Alan W. Benjamin for The Board of Deputies of British Jews.



## 250th ANNIVERSARY of the BOARD of DEPUTIES of BRITISH JEWS



The Board of Deputies was formed from the Jewish community when they were deputised by the community to present a Pledge of Loyalty to George III at the time of his coronation. Today the

BOD continues to represent the UK Jewish Community as loyal British subjects and works in all aspects of modern life both religious and secular as well as interfaith and interracial work with all UK organisations.

I chose the Bevis Marks Synagogue for the design of both stamp and FDC as it is the oldest GB synagogue in continual use since it was built in 1701.

The issue was commissioned by the Board of Deputies for the official FDC's for presentation to 300 of the guests at the 250th anniversary dinner held on November 23rd with guest speakers Tony Blair and the Right Honourable George Osbourne MP. There were far more guests than anticipated resulting in a severe shortage of covers.

|                                     |        |         |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| MINT SHEET OF 20 BEVIS MARKS STAMPS | £35.00 | \$55.00 |
| Official FDC - NUMBERED FROM 1 -300 | £19.50 | \$31.50 |