

# THEMESCENE

March 2022

*In this issue we:*

*Tramp the wild moors*

**The Brontë Sisters**

*With David Walker*



*Investigate Tasmania and Melbourne*

**Colonisation of Australia part 4**

*With Chris Wheeler*



*Toast St. Patrick's Day*

**Success on sipping stout**

*With Alastair Watson*



*Look to the skies*

**Nebra sky disc**

*With Andrew Millington*



**BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION**

Volume 39, No.1. Whole Number 146

[www.britishthematic.org.uk](http://www.britishthematic.org.uk)

Exhibition at Rabat, page 31



*Oath of the Green March. Thematic entry by Hassan Bouyabrika*



*The kingdom of Morocco at the Summer Olympic Games. Thematic entry by Patrick Arlé*



*Perspolis. Picture postcard entry by Shirazi Fuad*



*360 degree tour from the Hassan Tower. Exhibit by Jean-Claude Guyaux*

# THEMESCENE

Vol. 39, No. 1, Whole Number 146

MARCH 2022

## THEMESCENE

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# EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

London 2022 International Stamp Exhibition will be done and dusted by the time you read this. We wish the organisers well, they have had more than their fair share of problems to contend with. A report on the event and the exhibit results for BTA members will be published in our next issue. Nine members entered the pictorial classes, and *Themescene* has been entered in the Literature class.

The BTA continues to attract new members. We are delighted to welcome Omar Elkarti of London and Rao Lokeswara of Bangalore. Rao has recently published *Buddhism on Stamps*, which achieved a Vermeil at the Emirates 2022 World Stamp Exhibition. It has also been entered into London 2022. And we welcome back Chris Yardley of Holt, Australia, who some of you will know from his articles published in *Themescene*.

The closing date for our second virtual one-page competition is now past and judging has started. If you like the challenge of a single sheet entry but prefer the non-competitive approach can I refer you to the American Topical Association's second annual "My One-Page Exhibit" program. This is intended for both novice and experienced philatelists, with categories including topical and thematic. ATA's goal for the program is to share the wide range of philatelic interests to inspire collectors to exhibit. The closing date is 31st March and program requirements and guidelines will be found [here](#). Exhibits will be shown online April 15 - October 31. There is no fee or society membership required, and there will be no judging or popularity vote 📖



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# CHAIRMAN

**Barry Stagg**


## Interesting times

**T**hese are truly ‘interesting times’! Back in the 1960s the then Prime Minister said that ‘a week was a long time in politics’ – from the political news over the past few weeks it seems that that measure is now down to a day! Even if we ignore politics (and I do try) then the latest Covid story will appear, either full of hope that the end is in sight or more gloomy and depressing figures! Then there is wall to wall sport on the radio and TV, be it the Winter Olympics or the Six Nations rugby or an FA Cup match (and Kidderminster would say today that a minute is a long time in sport as they just lost to West Ham in injury time of extra time!). Now perhaps philately is not changing at that pace but it is moving forward. With philatelic societies up and down the country starting up their meetings, with some stamp fairs happening and with the London International a few weeks away perhaps we are starting to return to normal, whatever that is! Let’s hope so.

As you all know the BTA is currently running its second one-sheet competition. The closing date was a few days ago and we have 106 entries (compared to 26 last year) from nine different countries. If you took part then thank you for entering. I shall look forward to seeing them in due course and I hope to get some of the best on display at Autumn Stampex; they will feature on our website and *Themescene* will feature some later in the year.

Another event that the BTA started in these interesting times is our Zoom meetings. I know it is not everybody’s cup of tea but I have found them interesting and informative. We do need a few more presenters so if you would like to tell us about your collection for 30 to 40 minutes then please [email](#) me.

I must admit, although buying philatelic items over the Internet has been useful over the past two years, I welcome the return of the opportunity to meet dealers and their stock face to face. So I am looking forward to the London International, SwinpeX, Autumn Stampex and the small monthly stamp fair at Cirencester. I think I’ve had enough of ‘interesting times’. Bring on the humdrum of normal life where shops are open and stocked, you can book an appointment to see a GP, and the Post Office delivers on time (perhaps a little ambitious, that last one!).

Keep safe. 

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES IN 2022

Saturday 11th June      BTA AGM at SWINPEX

Friday - Sunday  
16th - 18th September BTA Weekend at Oxford

Further details on page 28

# THE BRONTË SISTERS

*David W. Walker (West Yorkshire, England)*

The novels of the Brontë sisters since publication under their pseudonyms have become classics of English literature. Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* and Emily's *Wuthering Heights* in particular have been widely adapted for films, TV, plays and other media.

The lives and work of the family has attracted particular attention recently as part of the "Brontë200" programme. A series of events to celebrate 200 years since the birth of Charlotte (2016), Branwell their brother (2017), Emily (2018) and Anne (2020). 2019 was also the 200th anniversary since their father Patrick became curate of the Haworth parsonage, West Yorkshire (then the West Riding of Yorkshire).

I was born in Yorkshire and Brontë200 piqued my interest in building a thematic collection associated with the sisters. The number of stamp issues with a Brontë theme are few and to date I have only identified four: Great Britain (1980, 2005), Belgium (2010) and the British Indian Ocean Territories (2016). Unlike the science thematics I'm more familiar with, the literature thematic has not attracted the attention of the many countries known for their often prolific output of stamp issues aimed at collectors. This does not necessarily limit a collection as many modern GB commemoratives have a variety of associated philately items issued by the Royal Mail and/or third parties. A selection of these are illustrated along with the primary stamp issues. For the thematics I collect, the designs and iconography are of particular interest and comments on these aspects are noted.

In 1980 Great Britain issued a set of four stamps on the theme 'Famous People' designed by Barbara Brown (Figs 1a,b,c). The presentation pack (number 119) information card for this issue notes that the theme was chosen for the 1980 Europa stamps by the Conference of European Postal Administrations (CEPT) and their logo appears on two of the stamps. Four British women authors from the 19th century were chosen because 1980 was a year midway in the United Nations Decade for Women (1975 – 1985). Charlotte and Emily feature on two of the stamps with backgrounds depicting scenes from their respective novels *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*. The face of Charlotte may be based on a portrait by George Richmond which will be commented on later. The side profile of Emily is a mirror image interpretation of the portrait painted by Branwell ca. 1833 (National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG 1724). The online catalogue entry notes that this is only a fragment of a now lost group portrait.

The other two authors featured on the set of four stamps are George Eliot and Mrs Gaskell with scenes from their respective novels *Mill on the Floss* and *North and South*. Elizabeth Gaskell, who had become a personal friend of Charlotte, was asked by Charlotte's father to write her biography after her death. It was published as *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* in 1857, two years after Charlotte's death and remains an invaluable resource.

Two of the many covers for the 1980 GB issue are shown, both published by Benham. The cachet on the first day cover (Fig 2) reproduces an attractive illustration by Edmund Dulac for an 'Everyman's Library' edition of *Jane Eyre* published by Dent in 1905. These were pocket-sized hardbacks originally sold for a shilling to offer affordable reprints of classic literature. The second (Fig 3) issued in 1997 celebrates the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charlotte and Emily's novels, *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*



Figs 1a,b,c: GB 1980, 'Famous People'



Fig 2: GB 1980 first day cover, publisher Benham



Fig 3: 1997 cover using the GB 1980 issue, publisher Benham

respectively. It features a photograph of the Haworth parsonage on 'silk' with stylised portraits as postmarks. This example is signed by Helen Hobson who played the role of Cathy in the musical *Heathcliff* which opened in London 1996 with Cliff Richard playing Heathcliff. 'Silk' cachets feature widely for British commemoratives covers.

The third cover by A. G. Bradbury (Fig 4) features the two stamps on the cachet as part of the design to celebrate the 150th anniversary in 2017 of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. The portraits of the sisters (from left to right Anne, Emily and Charlotte) are faithful reproductions of their depiction in Branwell's ca. 1834 painting (NPG 1725). The painting originally featured Branwell between Emily and Charlotte but was overpainted with a pillar. It was found folded up on the top of a cupboard in 1914 by the Rev. A. B. Nicholl's second wife (Charlotte being the first).

This short rail branch extends SW from Keighley station, a town three miles from Haworth. It was opened in 1867 connecting settlements along the Worth valley including Haworth and today is a very popular heritage railway for tourists. Construction was not without incident and delays. R. O. T. Povey in his *The History of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway* (1) describes what he believes is a likely true incident where a cow destroyed the plans while surveyors were taking a lunch break. A type of quicksand delayed the construction of a tunnel. This work also damaged a new Methodist church which had to be dismantled and rebuilt further away. The line is popular with film makers, and film credits include 'The Railway Children' (1970) which made use of the station at Oakworth on this line and the tunnel.

In 2005 Great Britain issued a set of six stamps to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Charlotte's death in 1855 and feature scenes from *Jane Eyre* (Fig 5). The stamps were designed by Peter B. Willberg and feature lithographs by the well-known Portuguese-born artist Paula Rego. The artist's distinctive style is briefly remarked upon in the Royal Mail Prestige Booklet DX34 for the issue. The designs can be better appreciated and understood in the artist's book *Jane Eyre* with introductory essay by Marina Warner (2), where 23 lithographs are presented full page, each with an accompanying description by the artist. The formal titles of the lithographs chosen for the stamps are: 'Mr Rochester', 'Come to me', 'In the comfort of the bonnet', 'La ligue des rats', 'Refectory' and 'Inspection'.

Royal Mail frequently issue Prestige Booklets (Fig 6) to accompany commemoratives, and that for the 2005 issue is attractive and informative with text by Lucasta Miller, author of *The Brontë Myth*. The well illustrated text is accompanied by stamp panes featuring all of the commemoratives in addition to panes of selected definitives often with related se-tenants. The continuous progress in Brontë scholarship is reflected in the photograph on the inside cover to show Charlotte (and separately her husband the Reverend Arthur Bell Nicholls). The caption notes that it is 'The only known surviving photograph of Charlotte'. The same photograph (Brontë Museum SG109.a) features in *The Oxford Companion to the Brontës* (3) which the caption ascribes to Ellen Nussey her close friend. A website devoted to assessing photographs that may be of one or more of the Brontë sisters is [www.brontesisters.co.uk](http://www.brontesisters.co.uk).

Covers often feature a pane from a Prestige Booklet when one was issued, an example by the Royal Mail is shown in Fig 7. The postmark is an attractive design of the Haworth Parsonage in the Brontë's times and is now the museum. A range of postmarks have been used for Brontë stamp issues and could form a thematic in its own right. The background design to the stamp pane is a facsimile of the first page of *Jane Eyre*. The photograph on the cachet is of Top Withins farmhouse and will be commented on later.



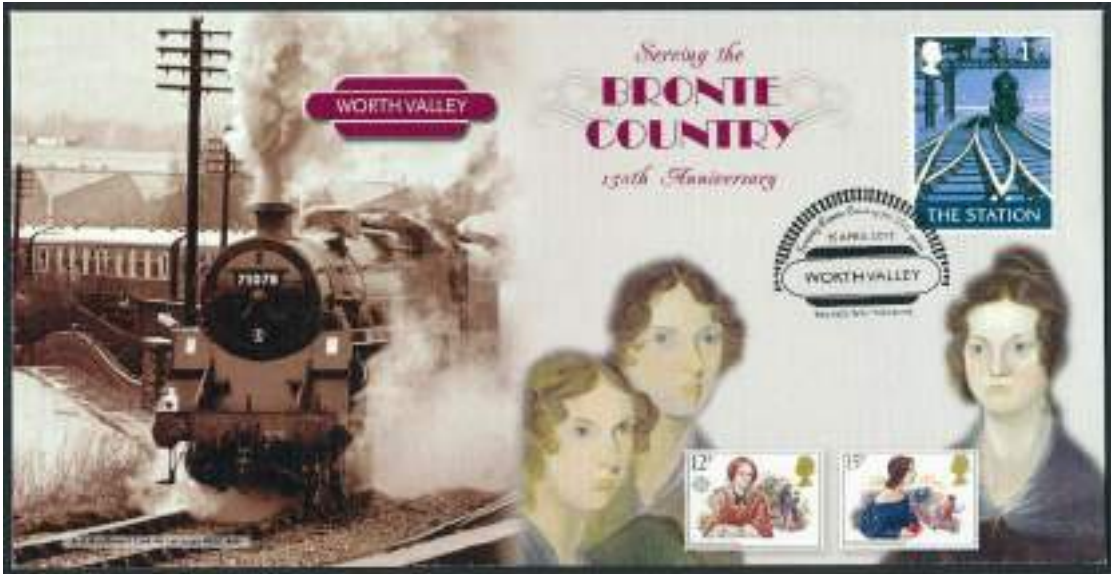


Fig 4: GB 2017. 150th anniversary in 2017 of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. Publisher A. G. Bradbury



Fig 5: GB 2005, Charlotte Brontë Presentation Pack no. 369, with Paula Rego's book

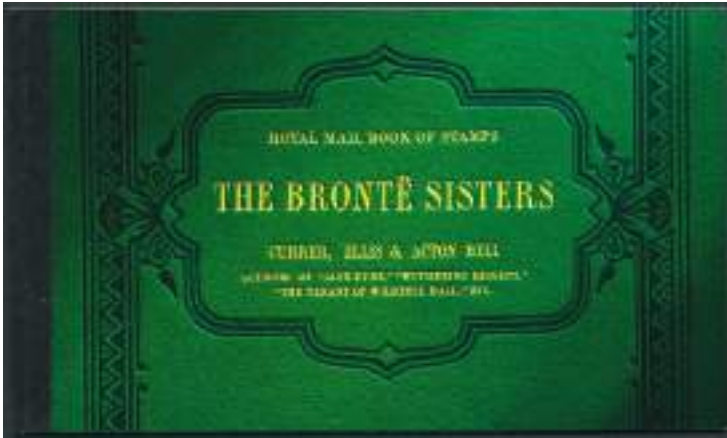


Fig 6: GB 2005.  
Royal Mail Prestige Booklet  
no. DX34



Fig 7: GB 2005  
Royal Mail first  
day cover



Fig 8: GB 2005 coin cover by  
Royal Mail and the Royal Mint



Fig 9: GB 2005 coin cover,  
publisher Westminster Collection

The GB 2005 issues have attracted at least two coin covers. Such covers are clearly collectables rather than for philatelic use and can be expensive new so I look out for examples sold used where the prices can drop markedly some years after issue. One has the distinctive seven sided GB 50 pence coin dated 2005 with Samuel Johnson's definition of 'fifty' and 'pence' from his 1755 dictionary, the design reflecting the original typography (Fig 8). It was jointly issued by Royal Mail and the Royal Mint. The coin is embedded in an illustrated card on the cover's theme of 'The Written Word'. The postmark is from Hay on Wye, a Welsh town noted for its bookshops and the annual Hay Literary Festival.

The second larger cover and part of the Westminster Collection (Fig 9) features a five pound 2001 coin from the Bailiwick of Guernsey, a British Crown Dependency. One face features Queen Victoria who was on the throne from 1837 – 1901, i.e. at the latter part of the sisters' lives. The portrait of Charlotte dominating the design is an engraving based on the widely reproduced portrait in coloured chalk by George Richmond. It dates to 1850 (NPG 1452) and was commissioned by Charlotte's publisher George Smith for her father. It features as an engraving in a frontispiece to Elizabeth Gaskell's biography of Charlotte.

The desk with lockable cover may reflect a typical teacher's desk of the period. The sisters Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte and Emily were sent to a boarding school for daughters of the clergy in Lancashire. The conditions there are regarded to be in part responsible for both Elizabeth and Maria's early death from tuberculosis, with Charlotte and Emily being withdrawn by their father (Anne did not attend). Aspects of the school feature as Lowood where Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* was educated and later taught at.

A third coin cover (2001) was issued in the Westminster Collection with the theme of 'The Victorian Age' on the 100th anniversary of the end of Queen Victoria's reign (Figs 10, 10a). An engraving of the Richmond portrait of Charlotte again dominates the design. The 2001 one crown coin for Gibraltar features a detailed engraving of Anne, Emily and Charlotte derived from the group portrait by Branwell. The stamp for Guernsey shows a young Queen Victoria.

In 2010 Belgium issued a set of five stamps showing literary figures associated with Brussels, Belgium; Paul Verlaine / Arthur Rimbaud, Charles Baudelaire, Multatuli (penname of Eduard Dekker), Charlotte / Emily Brontë and Victor Hugo. The postmark reads 'Literair Wandeling door Brussel' (Literary walk through Brussels). Both sides of the stamp booklet are shown in Figs 11 and 12. Charlotte in 1842-3 and Emily in 1842 attended the Pensionnat Heger in Brussels to improve their French and other languages. This was with a view for the sisters to open their own school at the Haworth parsonage but this did not materialise due to lack of any response to their later adverts.

In 2016 the British Indian Ocean Territories issued four stamps (Fig 13) on the theme of 'Famous Authors Anniversaries' featuring Roald Dahl, Beatrix Potter, Charlotte Brontë and William Shakespeare. Each stamp shows their portrait and a scene from one of their published works. Charlotte's shows the scene when *Jane Eyre* first meets Mr. Rochester. Both the stamp and cachet show Charlotte derived from the Richmond portrait. This is the only issue I have found to date that celebrates an aspect of the 200th anniversaries.

For the potential collector of Brontë themed philately, although stamp issues as remarked seem few with four to date found, the associated covers and collectables are substantial. At the time of writing the British First Day Cover website [www.bfdc.co.uk](http://www.bfdc.co.uk) lists 61 different covers for the 1980 and 2005 GB issues.

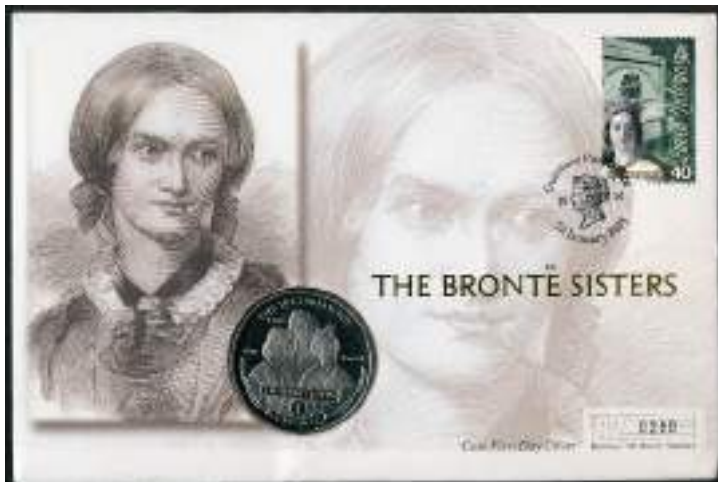
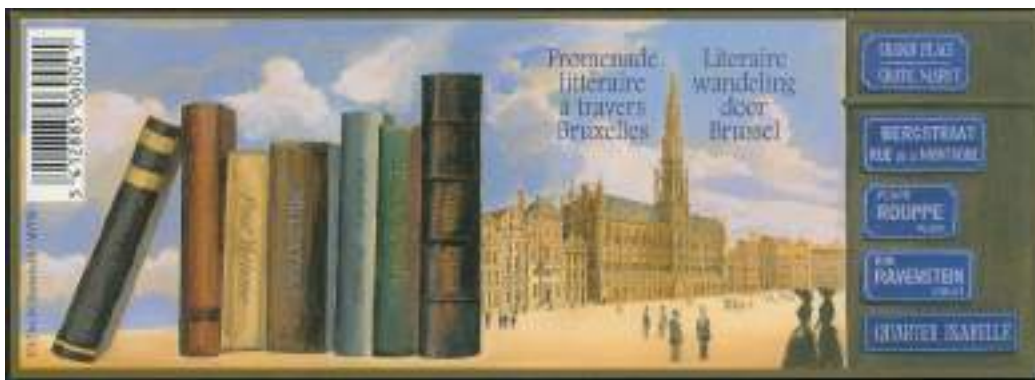


Fig 10 and 10a: Guernsey, 2001, Queen Victoria coin cover.  
 Publisher Westminster Collection



Figs 11 and 12: Belgium 2010, 'Literair Wandeling door Brussel'

Fig 13L British Indian Ocean Territories 2016,  
 Famous Authors Anniversaries.  
 Official first day cover



## Postcards

As the popularity of the sisters' novels increased and their true identities became widely known, Haworth and the surrounding moors became increasingly popular as a place for tourists to visit. Photography was becoming well established as the second half of the 19th century progressed and postcards of the area became available. A small selection of the many issued to complement the thematic stamp collection have been acquired but I seek out only monochrome examples, late 19th century if possible, or first half of the 20th century prior to colour becoming popular. I particularly seek out examples which include people. They are often clearly staged, as here (Figs. 14 and 15), but they capture a snapshot in time over a hundred years ago to reveal insights into dress, occupations and leisure activities.

Unsurprisingly, the parsonage is a popular subject. Earlier undated postcards can be roughly dated from certain features of the house. The original twelve small panes for each sash window (Fig 14) were replaced by two panes of sheet glass by their father's successor the Reverend John Wade in 1861 (Fig 15); they were restored to the earlier style in 1958. The pleasing original symmetry of the house front was altered by the large two storey extension added by Wade in 1878.

Haworth was a rapidly growing village as the dominant local textile production became industrialised. In the Brontës time the water supply for Haworth was polluted by seepage from the overcrowded graveyard. This, together with the prevailing poverty, congested and unsanitary living conditions made Haworth a very unhealthy place to live. The average life expectancy was just under 26 and was compared to the worst areas of London. The parsonage had its own well but prompted Patrick Brontë and others to petition for improvements and a survey was undertaken by Benjamin Herschel Babbage and report published in 1850. Improvements were made albeit slowly. (As an aside Benjamin Babbage was the eldest son of the computer pioneer Charles Babbage and I have built up a thematic on the man and his work. So two apparently unrelated thematics had an unexpected connection albeit tenuous!)

Although at present there are no known authenticated photographs of any of the Brontë sisters nor of their brother Branwell, photographs of their father Patrick, Charlotte's husband Nicholls and some of the family's employees are known. A photograph of Patrick features on a postcard (Fig 16). He looks rather austere and is now regarded to have been misrepresented in Gaskell's biography of Charlotte. It is widely acknowledged that the family environment he established helped nurture what were to become three outstanding writers in one family, see for example Dudley Green's essay *The Father of the Brontës*(4).

A popular walk a few miles from Haworth, and following in the footsteps of the sisters, is that to the farmhouse at Top Withins occupying a windswept location on the moors. It has been widely photographed, featuring on many postcards (Fig 17). It is now derelict but was occupied in the sisters' times. A farm has been there since Elizabethan times, see *The Real Wuthering Heights* by Wood and Brears (5). Charlotte's close friend Ellen Nussey suggested that the farm was the site of *Wuthering Heights* but Brontë writers note that although its setting in the bleak landscape was likely to be inspirational, the farmhouse bears little resemblance to that described in Emily's novel. Features may have been inspired by a number of houses with which Emily would have been familiar and the topic has been widely discussed by scholars.

Many postcards show aspects of the moorland landscape of the South Pennines with which the sisters would have been so familiar and inspired much of their work. A dominant rock of the South Pennines is millstone grit, a coarse sandstone which was widely used



*Fig 14: 'Haworth Old Rectory' before ca. 1861. Publisher, Brontë Copyright Series, F. & M. Smith, 1 West Lane, Haworth.*



*Fig 15: 'The Parsonage, Haworth' no. 7007, after ca. 1861. Publisher, Walter Scott, Bradford*



*Fig 16: Patrick Brontë no. HWH 46. Publisher, Lilywhite Ltd., Brighouse.*



*Fig 17: 'Withens supposed, 'Wuthering Heights'' of Emily Brontë's novel'. No. H.1887. Publisher, Valentines.*



*Fig 18: 'The Brontë bridge and beck, Haworth Moor'. No. 7069. Publisher, Walter Scott, Bradford.*



*Fig 19: 'Stanbury from Haworth Moor.' No. 7163. Publisher, Walter Scott, Bradford.*

for buildings and to enclose fields with drystone (mortarless) walls. The Haworth parsonage was built from this type of stone as were the local buildings, including its wide use for roofing flags. Streams and rivers cut through the landscape to form often steep sided valleys or cloughs. The scenic Brontë bridge is shown (Fig 18) which the walker can encounter on a popular route to Top Withins farm. The Brontë Falls are not far away. A typical moorland scene (Fig 19) shows a view from Haworth Moor to the village of Stanbury. The reservoir in view was built after the sisters' deaths.

The postcard of the moorland scene includes a few lines from a poem by Charlotte. All three sisters, their brother Branwell and father wrote poems. The sisters' first publication was a compilation of their poems but only sold two copies in the first year. Their poetry became more widely known and regarded in later years as their fame as novelists grew. Emily's poems are particularly noted.

In conclusion, one of the appeals of collecting thematics is the incentive to research the theme. To date the thematics I collect have all been in science and technology which reflects my work and hobbies background, so a Brontë thematic offered an unfamiliar genre but with a local connection. I live barely thirteen miles from Haworth on the outskirts of Huddersfield which also nestles in the same South Pennines landscape, and my local walks 'on the tops' offer scenery very similar to those which inspired the sisters' work. Despite this local connection I've never really explored before the topographical aspects of where I lived, or of aspects of 19th century life in a typical community that the sisters would have experienced. I've enjoyed reading a number of their novels, my favourite being *Jane Eyre* but this on a casual basis and I am very far removed from being a classical scholar! 📖

### References

- (1) Povey, R. O. T. (1977) *The History of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway*. 5th ed.
- (2) Rego, Janet (2002) *Jane Eyre*
- (3) Alexander, C. & Smith, M. (2018) *The Oxford Companion to the Brontës* Anniversary Edition, p. 81
- (4) Green, Dudley (2014) "The father of the Brontës"; in *The Brontës in Context* ed. Thormählen, M., p. 36
- (5) Wood, S. & Brears, P. (2016) *The Real Wuthering Heights. The Story of the Withins Farms*

### Credit

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The author can be contacted by [e-mail](#).





# SUCCESS ON SIPPING STOUT

*Alastair Watson*

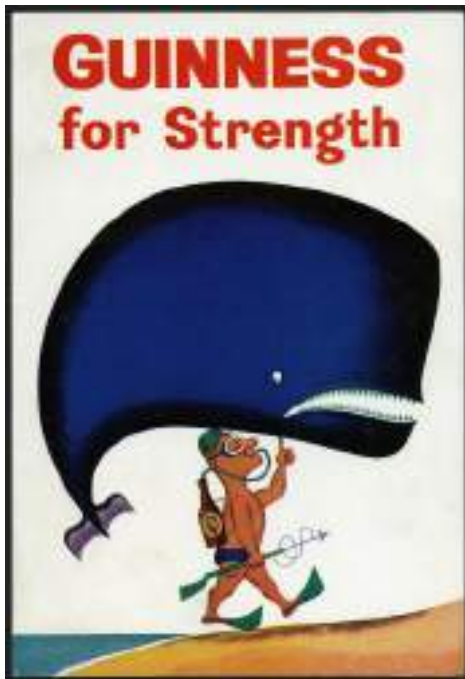
It is close to Saint Patrick's Day and this postcard from the Emerald Isle presents interesting perspectives relating to sipping a beloved beverage.

The picture-side says it all: it looks like an Advertising Trade Postcard for a popular Irish beverage establishment, which has a harp as its iconic symbol – prominent on the label on the beer bottle substituting for the life-giving oxygen cylinder on the back of this triumphant scuba-diving trophy hunter. The implied strength derived from the imbibed fluid demonstrated in the power of his raised index finger (Fig 1).

The Guinness harp motif (since 1862), is distinguished from other symbolic harps by facing right (Fig 2a and 2b), although it is modelled on the left-facing harp embedded in the seal of Trinity College Dublin (1592). The Trinity College harp (also known as “Brian Boru's harp”) is an actual medieval Gaelic musical instrument, a wire-strung *cláirseach*, dating likely from the 15th century, and eminently portrayed as the Golden Harp heraldic emblem in the coat of arms of Ireland (Fig 3). The harp motif is variously incorporated in Irish philately: for example, imprinted indica on postal stationery (1922 – 1984), pair of Eagle & Harp stamps (1939), the *An Tóstal* stamp series (1953 – 58), and a postmark (Northern Ireland 2004). The Gaelic harp also features on Irish banknotes and coins.

The strength-defying spear fisherman is clad in skull-cap, goggles, flippers, and spear gun all in patriotic green. His monstrous catch is an entertainingly drawn sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*), by far the largest of the living toothed whales, with mature males measuring 16 – 20 m long and weighing 41 – 57 metric tons (approx. 90,000 -125,000 pounds). This fearsome whale so exaggerated is sporting many shark-like teeth in both its upper and lower jaws; whereas living sperm whales, however, have teeth only in their lower jaws – normally 18 to 26 conical teeth on each side of their lower jaw, which fit into soft tissue sockets in the upper jaw (Figs 4a and 4b). The largest sperm whale teeth weigh up to 1 kg and were much used in bygone whaling days as raw material for scrimshawing away the beerless days aboard years-long sailing ship's whaling expeditions. This comic-shaped whale lacks flippers (making it easier to be caught?) and its body terminates with bird-like feathered tail flukes! Was the illustrator sipping the iconic beverage?

As for the postal history on the address-side: this rates a triple-D: the postcard was printed in Dublin, which is also home of the noted brewer selling over 1.8 billion US pints annually, and the postcard was posted from Dublin (machine cancellation 30-VII-1960) (Fig 5). The postmark shows the city of origin as “BAILE ATHA CLIATH” being Gaeilge for Dublin [Irish Gaelic – National and first official language of Éire]. The writer of this postcard records that it was raining on their day of arrival (how vital to maintain the green of the country's rolling pastures and for the shamrocks) ... and then posted it back home across the Irish Sea to their Lancastrian friend in Bootle. The township of Bootle, Lancashire, Northwest England, is located at the northern edge of Liverpool on the north bank of the River Mersey, where its riverfront is completely taken over by the Liverpool docks. The boxed slogan “Teach your children / to clean / their teeth” ties a contemporary Irish definitive 2d grey-green Map stamp to the postcard.



*Fig 1: Advertising postcard*



*Fig 2a: St James Gate Brewery, Dublin, showing harp motif facing right*



*Fig 2b: Harp motif facing right*



*Fig 3: Harp featured in the coat of arms of Ireland*



*Fig 4a: Sperm whale teeth and skeleton. Oman 1993*



*Fig 4b: Head end of a mature sperm whale showing teeth in lower jaws and sockets in upper jaws*


For those history-minded beer drinkers, “stout,” this brewer’s quintessential Draught, was originally named in reference to the beer’s strength – fully in evidence on this postcard! Furthermore, the Guinness Brewery founded in Dublin in 1759, soon became the largest brewery in Ireland – it remains the largest producer world-wide of its pseudonymous liquid - - to be soulfully sipped, away from the Philatorium.

A brief account of this postcard first appeared as “Cover Corner” in the *The Tulsa Stamp Examiner* (Tulsa Stamp Club Newsletter, OK, USA) August 2012.

### Sources

Wikipedia and eBay offered background.

### The Author

Alastair Watson is an ATA member and a successfully retired University Professor still fascinated by the biology and morphology of whales and dolphins, especially the Big Blue Whale (award-winning one-frame Topical Exhibit) and others living around his New Zealand’s native shores (Pelorus Jack, Hector’s Dolphin). Alastair also enjoys walking mountain trails and all things Brown Trout. He has been known to sample a well-hopped malted tipple at times. Comments are welcome directly via [email](#). 

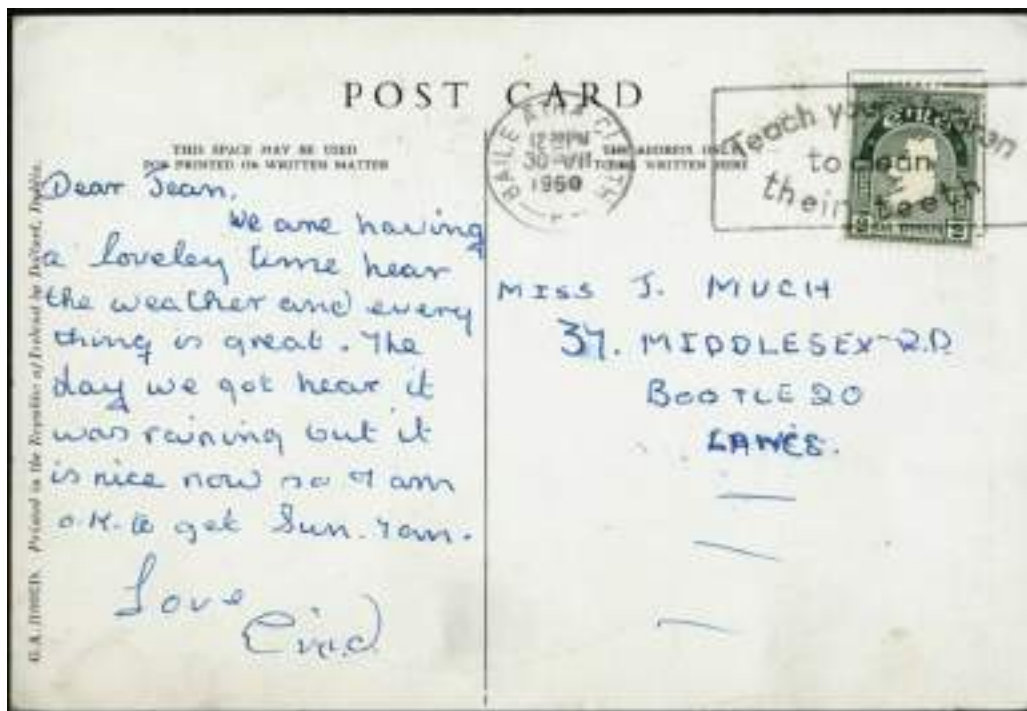


Fig 5: Postcard from Dublin to Bootle 30.VII.1960

# THE PENAL COLONISATION OF AUSTRALIA (1788 - 1868). PART 4: VAN DIEMEN'S LAND (TASMANIA) AND MELBOURNE, VICTORIA (1803 - 1853)

*Chris Wheeler*

Unlike New South Wales, the first Europeans to arrive in Van Diemen's Land were settlers rather than convicts from Great Britain, mainly from Scotland, but also joined by Canadians and other nationals. Like the mainland of Australia part of the purpose of occupying the island was to prevent claims to the land by the French during the then current Napoleonic Wars. Initially the island was part of New South Wales but it became a self-governing colony named Van Diemen's Land in 1825 (Fig 1). Finally, in 1855 the colony changed its name to Tasmania.

In 1803 two separate groups of convicts arrived on the island. One was a British expedition sent from Sydney to establish a new penal colony there. The small party of about 50 settlers, crew, soldiers and convicts, led by Lt John Bowen, established a settlement at Risdon Cove, on the eastern side of the Derwent River (Fig 2), on the south eastern side of the island. The same year convicts on two ships had arrived in Port Phillip (later Melbourne) on the mainland (Fig 3). The *Calcutta* under the command of Lt. Colonel David Collins transported 300 convicts, and was accompanied by the supply ship *Ocean*. Collins selected Sullivans Bay near the present-day Sorrento for the first settlement, some 50 miles south of present-day Melbourne. However, about two months later the settlement was abandoned due to poor soil and water shortages, and Collins moved all the Port Phillip convicts across the Bass Strait to the new penal station at Risdon Cove, but very soon found that also to be inadequate. So in 1804 he established another settlement nearer the mouth of the Derwent River, on the western side of Sullivans Cove (Fig 4) (now known as Hobart) (Fig 5), and the original settlement at Risdon Cove was abandoned. Collins became the first Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land.

Norfolk Island also served as a penal colony for two periods, from 1788 to 1814, and then again from 1825 to 1853. Convicts were transferred there from New South Wales with the intent of settling on the island and developing it. However, from 1807 to 1814 some of the convicts were transferred again (Fig 6) this time with free settlers, also to Sullivan's Cove on Van Diemen's Land, causing an enormous problem there due to the lack of infrastructure and supplies. On this site at Sullivan's Cove, the Hyde Park Barracks (Fig 7) designed by convict Francis Greenway was constructed by convicts in the 1810s. Searching for and then transporting suitable materials for the construction of the settlement and Barracks was a huge task.

To add to this already overstretched facility, convicts started to be deported to Van Diemen's Land direct from England, the first group arriving on the *Indefatigable* in 1812, bringing the number of felons in the colony to about 2,500. By the end of 1833 this


number had increased to 14,900. Of these, about 1,448 held tickets of leave (Fig 8), 6,573 had been assigned to settlers, who were paid to feed and manage them on their estates, and 275 were recorded as 'absconded or missing', the majority of whom died of starvation or from being hunted down by the indigenous dispossessed people. In 1835 over 800 convicts are recorded as working in chain gangs at another penal station set up nearby at Port Arthur which operated from 1830 to 1877.

Convict ships were sent direct from England to Van Diemen's Land from 1803 until 1853 and over those 50 years around 67,000 convicts were transported to Tasmania. About 14,500 were Irish but many of them had been sentenced in English and Scottish courts. Initially some of the settlers assisted the guards in managing the convicts. Apart from the very harsh conditions at the gaol in Hobart, the conditions on the island were much more relaxed and purposeful for the convicts, who under supervision were sent out across the Island to construct roads, build bridges, Government buildings and villages, clear land, plant crops and assist in the fencing of farmland for the freemen and settlers. The climate was excellent for fruit-growing, but huge sheep and cattle farms were also established. However, the farmers soon found that the price for their wool was not as high as for the Merino wool (Fig 9) coming from the large industrial farms and processing centres on the neighbouring mainland of Victoria, so many of the wealthiest farmers moved across the Tasman Sea to the Australian mainland and bought vast acreages of land, and there they thrived in spite of the major droughts and bush fires (that we still read about happening today across the whole of the east coast of Australia including Tasmania) (Fig 10).

As the land-grab spread across Van Diemen's Land, the indigenous people were displaced, rounded up and deported to Flinders Island (Figs 11 - 12) where the majority died from diseases and homesickness. Matthew Flinders had been involved in several voyages of discovery between 1791 and 1803, the most famous of which are the circumnavigation of Australia and an earlier expedition where he and George Bass (Fig 13) confirmed that Van Diemen's Land was an island.

Separately, on the west coast of the island the Macquarie Harbour penal colony was established in 1820 to exploit the valuable timber, Huon Pine, found to be growing there. It was used for furniture making and shipbuilding. The colony was established on a small island in the harbour, thus having the added advantage of being almost impossible to escape from, most attempts ending with the escapees either drowning or dying of starvation in the bush. Convicts sent to this settlement had usually re-offended during their sentence. They were treated very harshly, working in cold and wet weather, and subjected to severe corporal punishment for minor infractions. As the new Port Arthur establishment grew, those in Macquarie Harbour were transferred across, and it was closed down.

Meanwhile, in 1834, the British Parliament passed the South Australia Act (1834), which enabled the province of South Australia to be established. Victoria also separated from New South Wales and became an independent colony in 1851, with the Port Phillip District retaining its own administration which it had been granted in 1837. However, between 1844 and 1849 a second wave of about 1,750 convicts arrived there from England. They were referred to either as "Exiles" or the "Pentonvillians" because most of them came from Pentonville Probationary Prison. Unlike earlier convicts who were required to work for the government or were on hire from penal depots, these Exiles were free to work for pay, but could not leave the district to which they were assigned.

The next and final article will cover the Swan River Colony in Western Australia. 



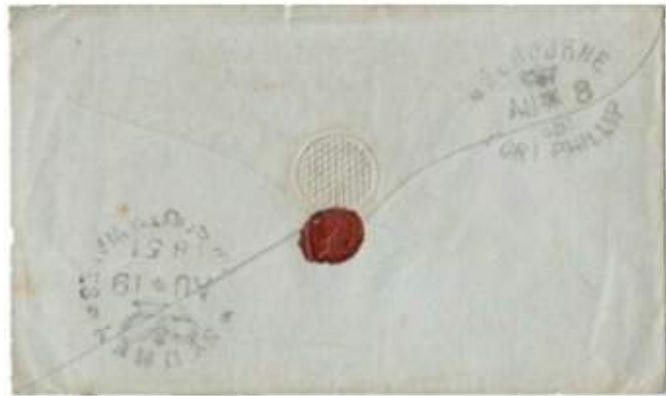
*Fig 1: Internal Van Diemen's Land to Hobart Town 1865*



*Fig 4: Australia 1954 Sullivan's Cove*



*Fig 2: Tasmania letter card Reverse: Port Derwent, New Norfolk*



*Fig 3: Melbourne, Port Phillip postmark 1851*



*Fig 5: Tasmania 1904 Hobart*



*Fig 6: Norfolk Island 2007 'Lady Nelson' leaving for Tasmania 1807*



*Fig 7: Norfolk Island  
Hyde Park Barracks*



*Fig 8: Australia 2018  
Ticket of Leave*



*Fig 9: Spain 1986  
Merino sheep*



*Fig 10: Hobart to NSW 28 Feb 1992  
'Prevent bush fires'*



*Fig 11: Flinders  
Island to NSW 1959*



*Fig 13: Australia 1963  
George Bass*



*Fig 12: Australia lettercard  
Whitemark, Flinders Island  
to NSW 21 Mar 1977*

# THE NEBRA SKY DISC: A HAND-HELD STONEHENGE?

*Andrew Millington*

**H**enry Westphal and Mario Renner located a bronze and gold plate, bronze swords and tools, and parts of a bracelet with metal detectors in a field near Nebra in Saxony-Anhalt in 1999. As I will explain, this was no ordinary find. The key object was a gold-studded bronze plate, known nowadays as the Nebra Sky Disc, illustrated on a 2008 German stamp (Fig 1). For a start they weren't licensed to use their metal detectors, so sold the hoard on the next day to a dealer in Cologne for DM 31,000. A network of dealers moved the hot property on until it was bought, finally, for DM 700,000 two years later in a police-led sting operation in Basel. Westphal and Renner were traced and received prison sentences.

The Nebra Sky Disc has become one of Europe's most important archaeological treasures. Acting on information given by the metal detectorists, an archaeological dig was carried out where the disc was supposedly dug up. This turned out to be a prehistoric enclosure on Mittelberg, a hill an hour's drive south west of Halle, in Ziegelroda Forest - a landscape rich in Neolithic and Bronze Age structures. Archaeologists found more bronze fragments and took soil samples. They were convinced it was the place where the disc had been found, though other archaeologists are sceptical about its date and location. But before we visit that argument, what is the sky disc and why is it important?

The disc was constructed in four stages. Initially it was a 30-cm diameter bronze disc (*the sky*) studded with 32 round gold studs (*stars*, the cluster of seven being *Pleiades* or the *Seven Sisters*, which was known to many ancient cultures), and round and crescent-shape plates (*the sun and moon*, one of which was in eclipse). Two gold arcs were added on the edges to represent the rising and setting sun. Finally, a gold 'sun boat' or 'solar barge' was added (Fig 1). Some gold adornments have been lost, probably damaged by Westphal and Renner's carelessness when they dug it up. The cosmic iconography has been interpreted as either Bronze or Iron Age – one disparity which stokes the age debate.

So how old *is* the disc? The Bronze Age swords found at the site date from the mid-second millennium BCE, an age confirmed by radiocarbon dating of wood. The disc may have been in use earlier, as the 3,600 years before present estimate is the date of burial. In 2020, a group of German archaeologists cast doubt on whether the disc was part of the hoard discovered by Westphal and Renner, arguing it dated from the first millennium BCE - the Iron Age. The dispute about dates is rooted in the circumstances of its discovery. The disc and other artefacts were not properly recorded by the villains of this tale; they just needed to cash in quickly on their illegal stash. Attributing the disc to a Bronze Age hoard would make it more valuable than, say, an Iron Age object. Nonetheless, as it stands the weight of evidence tilts strongly in favour of a Bronze Age origin.

The date isn't important in terms of value – after all it is not going to be sold – but because it has far reaching cultural and historical implications.

At the summer solstice the sun sets behind the highest point in the Harz Mountains, Brocken, (60 km to the east) when viewed from Mittelberg. Fig. 2 – a 2008 slogan



postmark - summarises the key alignments. The left hand side reads *indicates the sunset at the winter solstice*, while the right hand side reads *points to Brocken and the sunrise at the summer solstice*. The conclusion is that it was an astronomical instrument with religious significance – a hand-held Stonehenge, if you wish. It is not only the oldest portable astronomical calendar found in Europe, but is the first expression of a clear astronomical phenomenon – the Pleiades constellation. One archaeologist described it as a window on the minds of the people who used it. It also reveals the trade in metals across Bronze Age Europe. Isotope analysis reveals the copper was mined at Bischofshofen near Salzburg and the gold from River Carnon in Cornwall. Tin used in the bronze alloy was also Cornish.

Three and a half millennia after the gold and tin mined in Cornwall was taken to metalworkers to make the sky disc, it is returning to these shores as the centrepiece of *The World of Stonehenge* Exhibition at the British Museum (17 February-17 July 2022). It has travelled before. Between 2004 and 2007 it was exhibited with other Bronze Age artefacts as the prime attraction of *Der geschmiedete Himmel* ('The forged sky') Exhibition in a number of European cities. If you miss it in London, it is on permanent display at the State Museum in Halle (Fig 3).

### References

- Wikipedia (n.d.) [Nebra sky disc](#) (n.d.) Last accessed 25 Nov 2021.  
 Ferreira, B. (2021) A Bitter Archaeological Feud Over an Ancient Vision of the Cosmos. *The New York Times* Jan 19, 2021. Last accessed 25 Nov 2021.



Fig 1: Nebra Sky Disc  
SG 3568

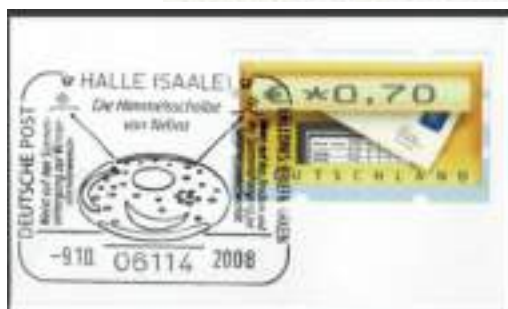


Fig 2: Slogan postmark 2008



Fig 3: Slogan postmark 2004  
Nebra Sky Disc Exhibition  
Halle Museum 15.10.2004 - 20.4.2008

# HERE AND THERE

## SCOTTISH CONGRESS / NATIONAL EXHIBITION

The 91st Congress will be held by the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies in the Dewars Centre, Perth during the 22nd and 23rd April 2022 where Perth Philatelic Society will be the host society. They have produced a cover, postcard and a miniature sheet to mark the event.

Full details of the event can be found [here](#)

This also has links to download the entry forms for the national competitions.



## MUSIC COLLECTORS

If you are a music collector you may be interested in an email sent to us recently. Dr. Heinz Drexler from Israel wrote to say “I collect music stamps worldwide since 1976 and am interested exchanging music stamps with British colleagues. I would appreciate if you could transmit my petition in your club”. If you are interested in this please contact him on [hdrexler@netvision.net.il](mailto:hdrexler@netvision.net.il).

## AMERICAN TOPICAL ASSOCIATION ‘MY ONE-PAGE EXHIBIT’ 2022

Full details can be found at [www.ataexhibits.com/](http://www.ataexhibits.com/)



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# YOUR BTA NEEDS YOU!

The BTA is looking to fill a number of Committee posts. Chairman Barry Stagg has outlined what we are looking for:

*Can you use a computer? Do you like working with others? Can you spare about 30 minutes a week?*

If the answer to all three questions is 'yes' then the BTA would love to have you as their new **Membership Secretary**. No previous experience needed.

The job will involve keeping a record of our membership, both individual and affiliated clubs and working with the Treasurer and others to make sure members renew their membership; also writing a short report every quarter on the membership situation.

*If you like having fun, love to plan things, and love philatelic events then you are just the person I'm looking for!*

I am looking for somebody to **coordinate the BTA annual programme**, including Zoom meetings, making sure that events don't clash and that they put together an interesting and varied thematic programme. Some events are organised by other BTA members, such as the BTA residential Weekend, and they will advise you of the dates, but others will need to be discussed and agreed with various committee members, such as the AGM timescale and venue.

The job will involve talking to committee members to gather and give relevant information; in particular the *Themescene* Editor, Secretary, Treasurer, Competitions Officer and Chairman. The good news is that none of us bite! And the really good news is that most of the 2022 programme has already been sorted.

*Can you use a computer, write in plain English and can spare no more than 30 minutes a week?* If the answer is 'yes' then the BTA would love to have you as their new **Publicity Officer**. No previous experience needed.

The job will involve sending emails/news releases to the philatelic press on events past and present (such as our competitions and meetings) with a view to getting them published.

If you are interested in any of these posts or would just like to know a little more please [email](#) me or phone me on 01242 519245 at any time.

*Plus*

We are looking for more speakers for our Zoom programme. If you have enjoyed watching the programme so far do think about putting something together on an aspect of your own collection, and giving a talk for around 30 - 40 minutes.

Please email Barry to discuss your ideas, or even better - to volunteer! 

# ZOOMING ALONG

*Reports by Barry Stagg and Wendy Buckle*

Like so many philatelic societies the BTA has been permanently affected by Covid. Where once we thought of meetings only in terms of being physically present, now we have an ongoing Zoom programme, reaching out to far more of our members and providing a much wider range of subjects. The 14th December saw a milestone reached: exactly a year of Zoom meetings since the first one given by Andrew Millington in December 2020. The chosen subject was obvious: it had to be Christmas! And the speakers were two of the BTA's very highly-regarded members. Brian Sole, founder member, ex-Chairman, President and now Patron, took the first half, showing a whole range of Christmas-themed items. Some of them are better-known than others. Greetings telegrams were first introduced by the British post office in 1935 because the public had until then associated telegrams only with bad news. It seems the PO did not have a monopoly on the telegram service, because Cable & Wireless introduced commercial greetings telegrams. Christmas seals and labels were sold in many countries; Brian showed examples from Denmark and the USA. The British post office also sent cards from one branch to another, designed by employees of the sending office; examples were shown including the artwork of the Birmingham 1943 card. In 1960 the Post Office introduced Christmas greetings cards to which a postal order could be inserted, four designs were used. Somewhat earlier they had issued cards where you could stick in your national savings stamps. Various styles of Christmas postmark were also shown, and it was no surprise to see bicycles featured in the design, this time from Scouts Christmas card delivery service, who were permitted to charge less than the second class rate.

In contrast to the wide range of Christmas-themed material, in the second half of the talk our Chairman Barry Stagg showed *British Christmas Air Letters: a selection from a lost philatelic past*. These were first introduced in 1965 at a sixpenny rate. Within a year it had gone up to 9 pence! They were issued annually until 2007, usually alternating secular and religious designs, or sometimes issuing one of each. A different artist or designer was used every year. Where at first the design was on the front of the folded letter only, by 1975 they were getting more detailed with the illustration covering the whole form. In 1982 the letter changed to a bigger format and in 1989 NVI's were introduced. All the examples shown were very attractive, with much potential for the thematic collector (umbrellas, Penfold post boxes and other items all feed our collecting interests). Occasionally the designer got carried away to the realms of fantasy. The 1994 issue featured the three Wise Men travelling to Bethlehem, on a camel (traditional), a horse (across a desert?) and on an elephant (you won't find that reference in the Bible). But like all the designs it was attractive and eye-catching, and it seems a shame that modern communications systems caused the death-knell of this service.

On 18th January Les Ashton-Smith treated 29 members and guests to a wonderful display of stamps and covers depicting the achievements of one of the 20th century's greatest physicists, inventors and explorers: Auguste Piccard. And what an achievement that was; from the stratosphere to the bottom of the ocean! Les started his talk by showing stamps

and pictures of Piccard's ascent into the stratosphere in 1932; in particular the audience was impressed by Piccard's improvised headgear which involved a wicker basket and blankets! As a physicist Piccard was interested in the stratosphere. No one had ever been that high before and Piccard wanted to measure the activity of cosmic rays and investigate Einstein's theory of relativity. To make the journey he made an aluminium capsule attached to a large hydrogen balloon and it took just 30 minutes to travel the 9 miles up to reach the stratosphere. All of this was depicted and shown on colourful stamps and postcards. Piccard went on to develop and build the bathyscaphe, which ultimately he took to the ocean floor at the bottom of the Marianas Trench – again depicted in stamps and covers, with many signed by Piccard. His brilliance and quest for knowledge was shared around his family with his brother Jean who designed and used the first pyrotechnic devices to open locks in the upper atmosphere (with the technique still used by NASA and others to this day), his nephew Don who is a famous American balloonist and his grandson Bertrand who 'sailed' the first solar plane to go around the earth. All of this shown in stamps, cancellations and covers.

Les finished his display by showing that the Belgium cartoonist Hergé based his Professor Calculus character from the Adventures of Tintin cartoons on Piccard. Also, it will perhaps come as no surprise to learn that one of the Captains in the Star Trek series was named Jean-Luc Picard. Gene Roddenberry (of Star Trek fame) said that he was inspired by Auguste Piccard. And Les showed this in some interesting modern and colourful stamps.

Our thanks to Les for showing an interesting indeed fascinating story in stamps and covers of one of the world's less known but nevertheless important characters. 📖

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# BTA NEWS

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 11 JUNE 2022 at 14.30**

For the first time in three years we are able to organise an AGM (assuming Covid does not suddenly rear its head again). As we normally do, we will hold it during SWINPEX; the Swindon Philatelic Society annual fair, which attracts around 45 dealers. With free parking and good catering arrangements it's easy to spend a whole day there.

The AGM Agenda and Annual Accounts will be published in June *Themescene*. Following the formal business there will be a talk and display by Malcolm Gascoyne on "Sarawak postcards". Malcolm won our single-frame competition in the Picture Postcard class last time we held it, back in 2019.

Swinpex is held at St. Joseph's Academy, Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR.

## **BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND, OXFORD, 16 - 18 SEPT 2022**

Another event which was scuppered by Covid will finally take place this year. Details of the full programme and booking form are on pages 32-34. If you have not been to one of these events before do think about coming this year. You will receive a warm welcome from a very friendly and relaxed bunch of collectors and have the opportunity to 'talk stamps' for the whole weekend (if that's your thing). Partners are equally welcome; with the centre of Oxford a short walk or bus drive away there are plenty of non-philatelic activities nearby. The whole event is very informal, and - in a word - fun.

## **BTA AT LONDON 2022**

International exhibitions always include the presentation of prizes for the major awards, sponsored by various organisations. Those awarded the 'Best in Class' will receive a Silver London 2022 Medal. We are proud to say the Picture Postcard Class has been sponsored by the BTA. All prizes will be presented at the Awards Ceremony on 25th February.

## **SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS**

Thank you to those members who have renewed their subscription. If you have not yet done so you will find a renewal slip with this issue of *Themescene*. You have the option of paying the full renewal fee, which entitles you to a print copy of *Themescene*, or paying a reduced fee of £15.00 if you wish to receive the electronic-only version of *Themescene*. The choice of course is entirely yours, but this is a cheaper option, and for overseas members a much cheaper option. Just indicate your choice, either when emailing details of your renewal, or on the renewal form if posting a cheque..

Whichever option you choose, all members have access to the e-version of *Themescene* via the 'Resources' tab on the BTA website. The full text of the magazine is available from 2005 to date. You will need to set up a username and password. Go to the 'Users' tab of the BTA website and click "Request a Password". If you have any problems please email us via the 'Contact' link on the website.


# PEACE

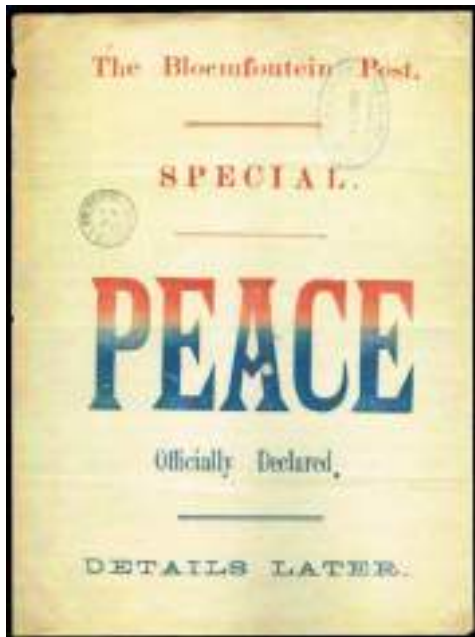
*Report of a talk and display given by Grace Davies at the Royal Philatelic Society London on 02 December 2021*

Most of us who collect pictorially choose something concrete, perhaps an event, a mode of transport, a science or a sport for instance. Such a choice makes it relatively easy to start collecting: we just look for that topic shown on a stamp. 'Peace' however is an abstract concept and difficult to define. "The absence of war" is a starting point, but hardly does justice to the term. That meant that Grace, who has a family background of pacifism, was faced in the early days of collecting with both a challenge and an opportunity: a challenge to decide exactly what story she wanted to tell, and an opportunity to pull in all sorts of topics which may not be immediately obvious to the audience. The long-term result was a display at the Royal that was a wide-ranging and thought-provoking display of twenty frames encompassing twelve discrete topics.

The first two frames introduced the obvious starting point *Cessation of War*, covering the Boer War, featuring a splendid 'Declaration of Peace' (Fig 1), and both World Wars. In the case of World War II both VE (Victory in Europe) and VJ (Victory Over Japan) days were commemorated. It was the 1946 Peace issue by New Zealand (Fig 2) that first inspired Grace to start her collection. After war is the need to resolve the political situation, and *Peace Conferences and Treaties* covered the 1856 Paris Peace Conference which ended the Crimean War, through to the Four Power Conference which tried, and failed, to create a united Germany. By no means all conferences end in peace treaties, and not all organisations created to prevent war actually achieve their aim, as evidenced by the League of Nations and its successor. *Toward United Nations* and later frames *League of Nations* and *The League of Nations Union*, told the story of the various movements which preceded the UN. In 1891 the International Peace Bureau in Berne was founded. Of course it failed in its aims, and the First World War was the impetus for the formation of the League of Nations, proposed by US President Woodrow Wilson, which came into force with the Versailles Treaty of June 1919. Ironically the USA never joined the League. Figure 3 shows labels issued in 1939 by the British Poster Stamp Association to commemorate the League's 21st anniversary. As we know, the League failed, and was succeeded after World War II by *The United Nations*, still in place after 75 years and attempting if not succeeding to maintain peace and improve the lot of mankind.

At this point the display branched out, exploring different avenues, including *The Peace Movement* which was very active during the nineteenth century, when many Peace envelopes were produced; and *Symbols of Peace*. As an allegorical figure she always holds an olive twig and sometimes a dove. Here was a chance to show some early stamp issues, including the 1880 St. Vincent Peace and Justice stamp (Fig 4), a motif revisited through to 1965; and the Spanish 1873 issue (Fig 5). Grace shared her admiration for Picasso, and his depiction of the dove of peace (Fig 6).

Following a whole miscellany of fascinating byroads (Fig 7), the display ended with Alfred Nobel and the Nobel Peace Prize, an award that provoked controversy right from the start. This is the only Nobel Prize which can be awarded to organisations, in 2007 jointly to Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a highly topical subject on which to end the display. 



*Fig 1: Declaration of Peace by the Bloemfontein Post*



*Fig 2: New Zealand Peace issue 1946*



*Fig 3: League of Nations*



*Fig 4: St. Vincent 1880*



*Fig 6: Postcard of Picasso's painting of a dove for the first Paris Peace Conference in 1949*



*Fig 5: Spain 1873*



*Fig 7: The Peace Rose, created by Francis Meilland in 1935*



# EXHIBITING PAGE

*Andrew Millington*

## THEMATIC PHILATELY IN MOROCCO

What themes do our pictorial collecting cousins elsewhere focus on? I was recently invited to enter Morocco's third Exposition National Philatélique et Numismatique Virtuelle "Rabat Philexpo 2021" organised by the Amicale Philatélique et Numismatique Rabat, and was intrigued by the pictorial entries from the Arab World and the European collectors who entered the exhibition. In total, there were 27 competitive entries from philatelists in Morocco, France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Unsurprisingly I was the only UK entrant. Of most interest to BTA members will be the eleven pictorial class exhibits which comprised Thematic/Open (5 x multi-frame competition; 3 x 1-to-2 page competition) and Picture Postcard exhibits (2 x multi-frame competition; 1 x 1-to-2 page competition).

Some of the subjects exhibited were universal - we could see them at a BTA meeting – Summer and Winter Olympics, and Cats. But most focused on Morocco (Morocco in the Summer Olympics, The [Green March](#), Moroccan folklore, Memories of the port life of the Bou Regreg Estuary, and The Fez fair of 1916) or Islamic and African countries (Persepolis, the Glories of Shiraz (the Iranian city, not the wine!), the Copper trade across the Arabian Peninsula, and the Benin Bronzes). In addition, one of two special entries was a 360 degree tour of the Hassan Tower in Rabat, by Jean-Claude Guyaux (an entrant in BTA's one-page competition last year).

So, what did I learn? Moroccan philately is distinctive, in a healthy enough state to run a virtual competition that attracts collectors from Morocco and other countries and is connected to Arab and European philatelic communities. Good news then for the global thematic collecting community. Let's support them in their future efforts. I can provide digital copies of the exhibits, and the regular newsletter they send me. If you are interested, please [email](#) me. Thanks go to M. Abdelkadar Lemrahi, President of the Amicale Philatélique et Numismatique Rabat (yet another entrant at last year's BTA one-competition) for inviting me to exhibit. 📖

*Illustrations on inside front cover*

## BTA VIRTUAL ONE-PAGE COMPETITION 2022

Interest in this year's competition exceeded all expectations. We have received 106 entries from nine different countries, covering every relevant category except Picture Postcards, i.e. Thematic, Open, Topical, and Youth. Judging will be going on as you read this, with the winners announced on our website and then in June *Themescene*.

## BTA ANNUAL COMPETITIONS

We normally (i.e. pre-Covid) run single-frame four competitions a year, for thematic, open, picture postcard and championship classes. We are looking at the options for doing so this year, and will confirm arrangements in June *Themescene*.

# **BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND**

**Friday 16th to Sunday 18th September 2022**

**voco Oxford Spires Hotel**

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Two people sharing: £249

With single room supplement £299

There are also a number of other options, including an extra night on the Thursday or Sunday, a day (or half day) delegate rate, and options for meals. Please see the booking page for full choices.

## **TRAVEL**

By car: the hotel is easily reached from the A40/A34 to the north, or the M4/A34 to the south. The hotel has free parking.

By train: only a short taxi ride from Oxford Station.

## **LOCAL ATTRACTIONS**

The City of Oxford is easily reached either by bus from the end of the hotel drive, or in good weather only a short stroll along the Thames tow-path. Oxford - 'City of Dreaming Spires' - needs no introduction. But if you want some ideas see the web site [www.oxfordcityguide.com](http://www.oxfordcityguide.com). If you are coming by car there are many places which are a short drive away, see [www.experienceoxfordshire.org/](http://www.experienceoxfordshire.org/).

# BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 16th to Sunday 18th September 2022

voco Oxford Spires Hotel

Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS

## PROGRAMME

### Friday

p.m.

Arrival

18.00

Welcome, with Pimms and soft drinks

Members' displays (6 sheets, one minute)

19.30

Dinner; followed by invited display by Bob Hill

*Where are the Kit Cats??!*

### Saturday

09.00

Invited display by Katrin Raynor-Evans on *Astronomy*

Coffee

11.00

Members displays of latest acquisitions (12 sheets)

Lunch not provided. Hotel has restaurant, lounge and bar, or spend some time in Oxford.

Saturday afternoon

*Your choice:*

Demonstration of stereo-zoom microscopes by Owen Green. Please bring along any stamps you would like to see examined.

*and*

*Go By Cycle!* Brian Sole's multi-award winning exhibit. Static display over lunchtime and afternoon.

*or*

Free time to visit Oxford.

16.00

Members display on a theme, letter E or F (12 sheets)

19.30

Pre-dinner drink

Dinner followed by a light-hearted quiz and raffle

### Sunday

09.00

Invited display by Andrew Millington

*Copper: commodity and catalyst*

Coffee

11.00

Members displays of any theme (12 sheets)

12.45

Lunch (optional)

*Themes for members displays are suggestions only, feel free to bring something else*

# BTA WEEKEND BOOKING FORM

I wish to book:

- |                          |                                     |  |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rooms based on two people sharing   | £249 per head  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | With single room supplement         | £299 per head  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Thursday | £109 per head;<br>[plus single room supplement £25.00]   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Sunday   | £99.00 per head;<br>[plus single room supplement £25.00] |

Or:

- |                          |                       |                               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Evening meal Friday   | £42.00 per head (inc. drinks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Day delegate Saturday | £15.00 per head               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Evening meal Saturday | £42.00 per head (inc. drinks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Day delegate Sunday   | £7.50 per head                |

## Deposit

£25.00 per person (non-refundable). Or: Day delegate rate per person

*Please tick as appropriate (BACS or PayPal preferred):*

- I have paid £..... by BACS. Sort code 40-03-29; account number 71157701. Please add your name and '2022 Weekend' in the 'Reference' box.
- I have paid £..... by PayPal; paid to peter.wood95@btinternet.com. Please add your name and '2022 Weekend' in the 'Add a note' section. (Sending money to 'Family or Friends' will not impose a fee to yourself or the recipient).
- I enclose a cheque for £..... made out to BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION
- I wish to repeat the booking made for the 2020 Weekend. You already have my deposit. (*This only applies to a few people. Please check with Peter Wood if you are not sure.*)

## Your details

Name.....

Name of partner .....

Address.....

..... Post code .....

Telephone number (home) ..... Mobile.....

Email.....

*Acknowledgement of booking will be sent by email where possible.*

*Rooms are limited so please email a scan of this form if no cheque, or post form plus cheque, as soon as possible, to:*

Mr. P. Wood, 182, Andrewes House, Barbican, London EC2Y 8BA

*Please do NOT book directly with the hotel.*



# 新快乐

## (That's 'Happy New Year' in Chinese!)

This year, the Chinese New Year started on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022. Every year a different animal from the Chinese Zodiac is chosen as a symbol for that year, and this time it is the Year of the Tiger! But not all tigers live in China - in fact, most tigers live in India.

### *Here are some fantastic facts about tigers:*

Tigers are the largest cat species in the world reaching up to 3.3 metres in length and weighing up to 670 pounds - that's the same as 10 ten-year olds! Despite being big and heavy, they can run very fast - at full speed, tigers can reach up to 65km/hr.



The Bengal tiger is the most common tiger.



Tigers live between 20-26 years in the wild. Tigers have been around for a long time - fossils of tigers found in China are believed to be 2 million years old!

Adult tigers generally live alone.

Tigers are easily recognizable with their dark vertical stripes and orange fur. Each tiger has different stripe patterns making them unique.



Unlike most other cats, tigers are great swimmers and actually like to cool off in the water.

Cubs are born blind and only open their eyes 1-2 weeks after birth.



Cubs start learning to hunt at six months of age but stay with their mother until they are about 18 months old.

Tigers are carnivores - that means they eat meat - and they are stalk-and-ambush hunters; they lie in wait, often at night, slowly creeping towards their prey until they are close enough to pounce. They hunt deer, antelope, wild boar and buffalo.





Tigers communicate using scent markings, visual signals and lots of sounds like roars, growls, snarls, grunts, moans, mews and hisses. A tiger's roar can be heard as far away as 3 kilometres!

P.S. - it's been said that a tiger's urine smells like buttered popcorn!



*Write to us and tell us about your favourite animal stamps and receive some free stamps (children only) to: Just4Kids, c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth BH1 4RS.*

**Find out more about stamp collecting (and how to get free stamps) on the [Stamp Active website](#)**

**SOME WINNERS OF THE NEXOFIL AWARDS  
FOR THE BEST STAMP IN THE WORLD 2021**



Best hand engraved stamp:  
Spain. 150th anniversary of the  
National Geographic Institute



Best design stamp:  
Finland. Art awards 2020



Best stamp in the world:  
Belgium. The silence of Alzheimer's



Best definitive series:  
GB. Country definitive Scotland



Best stamp in other printing techniques:  
Belgium. Iconic postage stamps