

THEMESCENE

June 2022

In this issue we:

*Look at an artist and
stamp designer*

Alfons Mucha

With Norman Hudson



*Investigate early Western Australia
Colonisation of Australia part 5*

With Chris Wheeler



Remember an earlier invasion

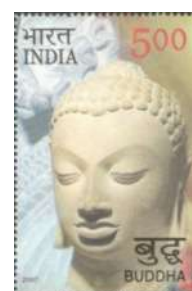
The Bay of Pigs invasion

With Chris Yardley



Contemplate a spiritual leader
Buddha

With Lokeswara Rao Madiraju



And review various meetings, seminars and competitions

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 39, No.2. Whole Number 147

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VIRTUAL ONE-PAGE COMPETITION BEST IN SHOW: BTA MEMBER

Page 49

ANTHONY TROLLOPE: PILLAR BOX PIONEER!

INTRODUCTION: Though more famous as a novelist, Anthony Trollope also had a long career with the Post Office. He is widely regarded as the person responsible for the introduction of the roadside pillar box to the British Isles.



Fonts used:
Section headings are in bold, small caps.
The narrative is in normal font.
Descriptions are in italics.



1. TROLLOPE'S PLAN: Rowland Hill, the Post Office Secretary, sent Trollope to the Channel Islands in November 1851 to improve postal services there.

He found the public of St Helier had to walk up to a mile to the main post office to hand in their letters.



2. THE EXPERIMENTAL BOXES TAKE SHAPE: The design was hexagonal and included the 'V.R.' cipher of Queen Victoria and a coat-of-arms on the back.

Trollope proposed the use of roadside pillar boxes, imitating the system he knew existed nationally in France from his travels there.



'L' mark applied to a wrapper sent from Sains to Vervins on 20th March 1852. Rural letter boxes in France contained an identification handstamp, applied to items of mail by the collecting postman.



3. THE PILLAR BOXES ARE INSTALLED: Jersey opened four pillar boxes in November 1852; Guernsey followed with six in March 1853.



4. TROLLOPE CONTINUES TO INSTALL PILLAR BOXES:

Trollope erected octagonal pillar boxes in the Western District of England in late 1853.

In 1855 he opened the first pillar boxes in Ireland: a square design imported from England.



Wayne Cox

Anthony Trollope: Pillar Box Pioneer!

THEMESCENE

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

This issue of *Themescene* has rather more than the normal number of pages devoted to reports of meetings and events. I do like to strike a balance, with the emphasis on articles of thematic interest written by you, the collectors. However, for this issue there are a number of events which I felt it important to record: London 2022 (page 60), the BTA one-page virtual competition (page 49) and paperwork for our upcoming AGM (pages 54). The last is going to feel a bit of a novelty - thanks to Covid this will be the first one we have held since 2019. It will be held at Swinpex in Swindon, which dealers regularly say is the best Society Fair in the country. There will be over 40 dealers to visit in the morning, followed by our meeting and guest speaker at 14.30. Do try and attend if you can, and if you do, please bring along this issue of the magazine with you to ensure you have a copy of the Agenda and Accounts.



Normally at the AGM we present the winner of the Francisca Rapkin memorial bowl for the best article in *Themescene* the previous year as voted for by the Committee. Unfortunately this year's winner, Chris Wheeler, is unable to be there, so I took the opportunity of a sunny day this month to present Chris with the trophy. Joint second was Estelle Shale with *Blockchain meets philately* and Barry Stagg with *Messenger of peace*.

Welcome to new members

We are very pleased to welcome new members Tony Henderson from Gwent, Arlene Powell from Bristol, Jenny Viggars from Kent and Yme Woensdregt from Cranbrook, Canada. Thanks to Zoom they have already been able to join our virtual meetings. These proved so popular during lockdown we intend to continue the programme for the foreseeable future. Dates are fixed for this

year, and the 2023 programme is in preparation. See page 70. And keep an eye on our website for new dates as they are arranged.

American Topical Association Membership

If you are a member of the ATA please could you help us by sending your name and membership number (found on the address label for those who get the printed copy of *Topical Time*, or click on your name when logged in to their website) to committee member [Owen Green](#). The BTA is an affiliated Chapter of the ATA and it helps our record-keeping with them.

Summer is here, philatelic events are up and running, may we all make the best of our time to enjoy our hobby. 📖

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg

My mother had a number of favourite sayings: ‘Every cloud has a silver lining’ was one of them closely followed by ‘When one door closes another opens’. She was a born optimist, always trying to find the best in any situation. From that dark cloud of Covid the BTA did have a small silver lining by starting Zoom calls; and the start of the BTA’s one-page competition was also driven by the need to help keep the Thematic community together. Both have been great successes for the BTA with fifteen Zoom meetings under our belt and more already organised (see Programme page 70); and we had over 100 applications for our second one-page competition from around the world. Truly amazing!

So it is hardly surprising that when I heard recently that Stampex was now going to happen just once a year I immediately thought of what positives this might bring. One Stampex a year means there is a gap in the philatelic calendar that others may see as an opportunity. It might mean bigger stamps fairs at York, Ardingly, Midpex or Perth. Perhaps it might give somebody an idea to start something new. Speaking as somebody who lives outside the M25 I relish the thought of spreading the philatelic jam more evenly across the country. Much as I love visiting London it is an expensive and busy place. And I know many of you live so far from London that a day trip is hardly viable. Not just for collectors but dealers as well. I have been to Perth and York a few times pre-Covid and found a wealth of dealers unknown to me. I am already excited with the thought of all that material just waiting for me to see over the next 12 months.

Our AGM is only a few weeks away, being held at Swinpex in mid-June (page 54). I hope you have an opportunity to come – it’s not too far from the station and the venue has plenty of parking. There are always a good number of dealers present and I usually find something in their boxes of goodies to buy. And if I can’t find anything then my silver-lining would be a very nice bacon roll!

Covid is rapidly becoming old news. The figures appear to be falling and businesses are starting to pick up, although many businesses and individuals are worried about the longer term impact. Time will tell. We now have a new cloud to worry about that may have challenged my mother to see a positive side. Philately is not immune to the uncertainty of Ukraine and its philatelic impact on Europe and the World is already being felt as International stamp shows have been delayed or have far fewer dealers and visitors. This has a knock-on effect as fewer dealers means less material available to sell. In such dark times I try and remind myself of Pandora’s Box. With all the evils of the world released the Box still contained Hope. It looks like I have inherited my mother’s optimism! Let’s hope that the second half of 2022 is somewhat better than the first.

Keep safe. 

ALFONS MUCHA (1860 - 1939). PART 1

Norman Hudson

Alfons Maria Mucha was born on 24 July 1860 in the small Moravian town of Ivančice (Eibenschitz, to its German-speaking inhabitants), south-west of Brno. At the time, Moravia was a province of the vast Austro-Hungarian Empire and Brno (German: Brünn) was its provincial capital. Alfons was the fourth child of Ondřej (Andreas) Mucha, a court usher, and the first child of Ondřej's second wife, Amálie Malá, the daughter of a miller from Budišov. Alfons had an elder step-brother and two step-sisters and two younger sisters. The family had a very modest income, yet Ondřej had ambitions for his children. He had originally hoped that Alfons, his youngest son, might be destined for the priesthood.



On finishing elementary school at the age of 11, Alfons hoped to attend high school in Brno but his father's salary was insufficient for this, having by then paid for the education of three children. Instead, Alfons, an accomplished chorister at Ivančice's gothic parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, was awarded a scholarship at the choir school at the great baroque Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul (*Katedrála svatého Petra a Pavla*) in Brno. From his experiences in both Ivančice and Brno, Mucha developed a lifelong love and knowledge of church music and ritual.

When his voice broke and he could no longer sing in the cathedral choir, Alfons became an ordinary scholar at the Slovanské Gymnázium, where drawing was his only successful subject. On finishing school in 1877, Mucha travelled with a schoolfriend to stay at the latter's home in Ústí nad Orlicí (eastern Bohemia). In the local church, Mucha was fascinated by the ceiling frescoes being painted by Jan Umlauf (1825-1916). Already possessing a talent for drawing, the experience made Mucha determined to become an artist.

Back in Ivančice, however, Mucha's father had found employment for his son as a court scribe. Although Alfons disliked the work he did it for two years, seeking a necessary release through amateur theatricals. Failing to gain a place at the Prague Academy of Art, Mucha left home in 1879 to become an apprentice scene-painter in Vienna, where he was also able to attend drawing classes. When a disastrous fire destroyed the Ringtheater on 8 December 1881 (causing the death of 449 people), Mucha was left unemployed and penniless.

Without plans or purpose, he arrived at the small southern Moravian town of Mikulov (German: Nikolsburg) where his sketches attracted the attention of the local landowner, Count Eduard Khuen Belasi (1847-96). Mucha received his first commission from the Count, and for nearly two years worked at his new castle, the Emmahof, in the forest near the village of Hrušovany (German: Grusbach). Here he was employed restoring family portraits and decorating the dining room with classically-inspired murals. It was Khuen-

Belasi who first introduced Mucha to masonic ideas (he was to become a freemason in 1898). Mucha later wrote that the Count was a “great moral authority” for him.

The move to Munich (1885)

Mucha also undertook work for the Count’s brother, Egon, in the family’s castle at Gandegg in the South Tyrol (German *Südtirol*; then part of the Austrian Empire but now part of Italy). Here his work attracted the attention of the German painter Wilhelm Kray (1828-89), recently appointed as a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich (*Akademie der Bildenden Künste München*, also known as Munich Academy), one of the oldest and most significant art academies in Germany. It was through Kray’s encouragement and with the Count’s financial support that, in the autumn of 1885, Mucha arrived at the Munich Academy, located in the Maxvorstadt district of the Bavarian capital, for his first formal art training.

The move to Paris (1887)

Two years later, and having completed his studies in Munich, Mucha returned to the Emmahof in Hrušovany which by this time had become a second home. Count Khuen-Belasi encouraged Mucha to continue his studies and suggested either Paris or Rome. Without hesitation, Mucha chose Paris. So, in the autumn of 1887, and still with financial support from the Count, Mucha moved to Paris to continue his studies. Not knowing a word of French, he stepped from the train at the Gare de l’Est into a city both innovative and increasingly self-confident.

On his first day in Paris, Mucha registered at the Académie Julian, a private art school established in 1868 by Rodolphe Julian (1839-1907), which enjoyed a good reputation. It was located in the Passage des Panoramas at 11 Boulevard Montmartre in the 2nd arrondissement. After an extended summer holiday at the Emmahof, Mucha did not return to the Académie Julian but, in November 1888, enrolled instead at the Académie Colarossi, founded in the 19th century by the Italian sculptor Filippo Colarossi and, from the 1870s located at 10 Rue de la Grande-Chaumière in the 6th arrondissement. Mucha became an inhabitant of the vibrant Latin Quarter (*Quartier latin*) of Paris.

In January 1889 Mucha’s financial support from Count Khuen was suddenly withdrawn and he was forced to leave the Académie. The Count’s decision to end his sponsorship of Mucha was intended to be ‘a bitter medicine’ to encourage the artist to be independent. Despite this, Mucha’s friendship with the Khuen-Belasi family continued for many years.

In Paris and penniless, Mucha returned to the artist’s traditional lot of having to struggle for survival. He was helped in this by his growing reputation as a skilled, versatile and dependable illustrator. A commission to illustrate Xavier Marmier’s fairy tales, *Les Contes des Grandes Mères*, brought Mucha’s first public recognition. He consolidated his growing reputation with increasingly prestigious commissions such as his contributions to Charles Seignobos’ monumental *Scènes et Episodes de l’Histoire d’Allemagne*.

Mucha’s meeting with Sarah Bernhardt (1894)

Early in the afternoon of St. Stephen’s Day (Boxing Day) 1894, Mucha was correcting proofs at the printing works of Lemercier when the great French actress Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923), dissatisfied with the poster for her new production, Victorien Sardou’s *Gismonda*, telephoned to demand another poster to be ready for the Parisian billboards on New Year’s Day. For want of another immediately-available artist, Mucha was asked

to do the work. He produced a poster so radically new in design that from the moment of its appearance it became a collector's piece. Bernhardt was delighted and Mucha was catapulted to immediate fame.

As a result of the *Gismonda* poster, Mucha signed a contract with Bernhardt during which time he designed nine outstanding posters for her. As well as posters, he designed costumes, sets and jewellery for Bernhardt and, together, they produced two extremely successful plays, Edmond Rostand's *La Princess Lointaine* and *La Dame aux Camelias*.



La Belle Époque

In return for a fixed and, by the standards of the time, generous salary, the printer Champenois secured the exclusive right to print as much of Mucha's lithographic work as he required. Although Mucha found his contract with Champenois increasingly onerous and complained that he was being commercially exploited, he produced some of his most attractive and popular lithographic works at this time. Works such as the commercially successful and acclaimed *Four Seasons* of 1896 and the *Four Flowers* of 1897 only added to Mucha's fame.

In March/April 1896, and within eighteen months of the *Gismonda* poster, Mucha held his first one-man show at the Salon des Cent in the galleries of the influential *La Plume* magazine.

In the summer of 1896 Mucha moved to No.6 rue du Val-de-Grâce, at the upper end of the boulevard St.Michel. This studio apartment, as his earlier studios had been, became a fashionable meeting place for artists, writers and musicians, including Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) and August Strindberg (1849-1912).



By the time of the great Paris Exhibition of 1900, for which Mucha produced many designs and exhibits, his fame was at its height. To many, *art nouveau*, the great artistic style of the day (and not a description that Mucha himself ever accepted), was known as "*le style Mucha*" ("the Mucha style").

Mucha always repudiated any attempt to classify his artistic style and to examine its origins. To Mucha himself, the style was a natural evolution of purely Czech artistic traditions, organically growing from roots in the country he loved so well.

Life and work in the USA (1904-10)

In Paris, Mucha was a regular guest of Baroness Adèle von Rothschild (1843-1922), widow of the French banker and socialite Salomon James de Rothschild (1835-64). The Baroness became both a patron and a friend to the younger artist whom she considered something of a protégé. It was the Baroness who, in 1904, orchestrated Mucha's first visit to the USA and provided him with letters of introduction to some of New York's most well-connected society figures. Mucha's arrival made front-page news in the American newspapers. The Baroness' connections resulted in commissions for a number of society portraits and led to Mucha's meeting with President Theodore Roosevelt in 1905.

Between 1904 and 1910, Mucha spent most of his time in the USA, in total making six trips across the Atlantic. On one of his trips home, he returned to marry Maruška Chytilová (1882-1959), a young Czech woman he had first met in Paris in September 1903 when he himself was 43 years of age and she, as a fellow art student, was 21. The wedding was held at the Strahov monastery in Prague on 10 June 1906. Afterwards, they travelled

by train to spend their honeymoon at the small village of Peč pod Čerchovem in the heavily-forested Chodsko district of the Šumava (Bohemian Forest) in western Bohemia.

During his years in the USA, Mucha's main source of income was from teaching. His graphic output in these years was limited and much of it was for magazines such as *Hearst's*.

In 1904 Mucha met Charles Richard Crane (1858–1939) at a banquet held at Delmonico's in New York. Heir to a Chicago plumbing-parts manufacturer, Crane was a wealthy and well-connected businessman and already a recognised connoisseur of Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The artist and industrialist met again a year later in Chicago. Mucha's son Jiří wrote "Father was greatly struck by this American who understood the Slav problem so well, while Crane found most sympathetic my father's eccentric desire to work for his nation with no profit for himself". In 1908 Mucha produced a portrait of Crane's recently-married daughter, Josephine Crane Bradley, as the symbolic figure of Slavia.

Mucha later approached Crane to discuss his greatest ambition, the *Slav Epic*. He needed financial support in order to embark on his ambitious project and knew that, as an ardent supporter of pan-Slavic nationalism, Crane may just be the sponsor he was looking for. After giving careful consideration to Mucha's budget and schedule, Crane agreed to finance the project. He later also decided that all twenty *Slav Epic* canvases should be bequeathed to the City of Prague on the condition that they be housed in a purpose-built building. 📖

To be concluded in the next issue



All murals, furniture and fittings in the Lord Mayor's Parlour in Prague's Municipal House (Obecní dům) were by Alfons Mucha (in 1909/10). The stylish café (kavárna) in the Municipal House, with its many art nouveau features, often uses a menu with designs by Mucha. The two designs on this menu were created in Paris in 1900 as menu cards for the Moët et Chandon champagne company.

THE PENAL COLONISATION OF AUSTRALIA (1788 - 1868). PART 5: WESTERN AUSTRALIA (1829 - 1868)

Chris Wheeler

Fremantle is located at the mouth of the Swan River and serves as the port of Perth further up the coast. Prior to British settlement, the indigenous Noongar people had inhabited the area for centuries. The first Europeans to visit the site of modern-day Fremantle were Dutch explorers captained by Willem de Vlamingh (fig 1), in 1697. They mapped the area and went up the Swan River, and Vlamingh reported that it would be an ideal place for a settlement, although no attempts were made to do so at the time.

Fears that France would lay claim to this newly acquired land prompted the Governor of New South Wales, Ralph Darling, to send Major Edmund Lockyer, with troops and 23 convicts to establish a settlement at King George Sound, 250 miles south of Fremantle on the “Land’s End” of Australia. Lockyer’s party arrived on Christmas Day, 1826. A small convict presence was maintained at the settlement for about four years. On 7 March 1831 control of the settlement was transferred to the Swan River Convict Establishment in Fremantle (fig 2). In 1852 a Convict Depot was built at Albany (fig 3), about 12 miles away on the opposite side of Shoal Bay but it was closed just three years later. Later, as shipping increased from Shoal Bay the Depot was re-opened for the docks. Most of the convicts there had their “tickets of leave” by then and were hired to work by the free-settlers. Convicts also manned the pilot boats, rebuilt York Street and Stirling Terrace (fig 4); and the track from Albany to Perth was made into a good road. An Albany newspaper noted their commendable behaviour and wrote: “*There were instances in which our free-settlers might take an example*”. During this period most mail was carried by land and ship

The Fremantle area was again considered as a site for possible British settlement in 1827, when Captain James Stirling, in HMS *Success*, explored the coastal areas near the Swan River. His favourable report was welcomed by the British Government, who had for some time been suspicious of French colonial intentions towards the western portion of Australia. As a result of Stirling’s report, Captain Charles Fremantle on HMS *Challenger* (fig 5), a 603-ton, 28-gun frigate, was instructed to sail to the west coast of Australia to establish a base there, and it was named after him.

Fremantle was thus the first area settled by Swan River colonists. On 2 May 1829, Fremantle hoisted the Union Flag in a bay near what is now known as Arthur Head, and in accordance with his instructions, Fremantle took formal possession “of the whole of the West Coast of New Holland” in the name of Britain’s King George IV. The penal settlement was established but struggled in its first decades. In April 1848, Charles Fitzgerald, Governor of Western Australia, petitioned Britain to send convicts to his State because of labour shortages. Britain rejected sending fixed-term convicts, but offered to send first offenders in the final years of their terms.



Fig 1: French Antarctic Territory
Willem de Vlamingh

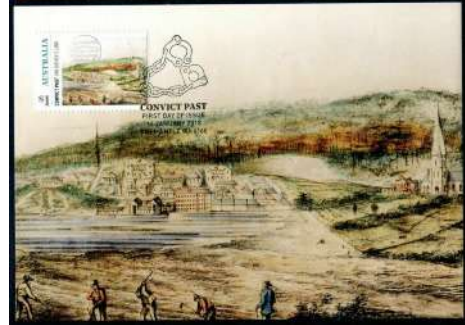


Fig 2: Australia 2018
Convict Past - Fremantle



Fig 3: Australia 1991
Exploration of Albany



Fig 4: Queen's Park and Stirling Terrace,
Albany. Undated.



Fig 5: Australian Antarctic
Territory 1979
HMS Challenger

Fig 6: 'Mirror'
newspaper 1831.
Swan River Colony




Although not philatelic, in issue 480 of *The Mirror*, 12 March 1831 (fig 6), there is a very descriptive commentary of the conditions and determination at that time:

“The prospects of the country are every day improving, to the satisfaction of all classes; and the greater number of respectable settlers, and their patience and perseverance in establishing themselves, are the surest grounds for ultimate prosperity of the settlement, The only objections, as I can see, that can be urged with any degree of plausibility against the success of the colony, are that the land at Perth and in the neighbourhood is not of that description to encourage to induce the settlers to cultivate, and that all the good land now being granted, there is no more on this side of the mountains to satisfy the demands of new settlers; but these objections I am happy to say, are about to be removed, as an ensign of the 63rd Regiment (a Mr Dale), has lately returned from a tour of discovery into the interior, and has brought intelligence that to the eastwards of the Swan River there is a large and fertile tract of beautiful country with a river passing through it.”

On 1 June 1850, the first convicts sailing direct from Britain arrived at Fremantle aboard the *Scindian*. The thirty-seventh and last convict ship to dock at Fremantle was the *Hougoumont* on 10 January 1868. It had 280 convicts on board. This ended the transportation to Australia, which since the First Fleet had landed in Sydney Cove in 1788, 70 years earlier, brought the total number of deported convicts to about 165,000 on 806 ships. Western Australia's convict era thus came to an end with the cessation of penal transportation by Britain, having spanned about forty years. From 1850 to 1868 9,668 convicts had arrived on 43 ships.

Most convicts in Western Australia spent very little time in prison. Those who did were stationed at Fremantle and were housed in the Convict Establishment, the colony's convict prison. The majority, however, were stationed in other parts of the colony, but those who misbehaved were brought back and punished by stints in the prison. Although there was no convict assignment as such in Western Australia, there was a great demand for public infrastructure throughout the colony, and so most of the convicts were sent out to quite remote areas to build new homes, roads, shops and farm buildings, and of course the construction of the Convict Establishment itself. Meanwhile the city of Perth quickly developed, became the capital of the State of Western Australia, with land, sea and eventually air used for delivery of the mail.

This indeed became the general practice throughout the country and in Norfolk Island, the prisons being used to detain miscreant free-settlers as well as unreformed convicts. As we know massive changes took place in all areas of life during the 19th and 20th centuries, and the demand for workers was enormous, especially with the huge losses during the two World Wars. Prospectors discovered vast mineral deposits and mining companies were set up to excavate and export coal and iron ore, but also precious metals. With this was the gold rush north of Melbourne, and the development of international trade to meet the needs of the ever-growing population. Without the harsh deportations, Australia would not be the thriving and diverse country it is today.

Nor indeed would we have the rich and diverse story of the development of the mail system, both before and after the issue of the first stamps, and their evolution as States and Territories were established, and then unification as the Commonwealth of Australia. Their wide range of cancellations and the introduction of air mail services only adds to the diversity for the collector resulting from the Convict Era. 

THE BAY OF PIGS INVASION

Chris Yardley

The Bay of Pigs invasion (April 17, 1961), was an abortive invasion of Cuba at the Bahía de Cochinos (Bay of Pigs), on the southwestern coast, by some 1,500 Cuban exiles opposed to Fidel Castro. The invasion was financed and directed by the U.S. government.

Within six months of Castro's overthrow of Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship in Cuba (January 1959), relations between Castro's government and the United States began to deteriorate. The new Cuban government confiscated private property (much of it owned by North American interests), sent agents to initiate revolutions in several Latin American countries, and established diplomatic and economic ties with leading socialist powers. Castro himself often and vociferously accused the United States of trying to undermine his government. Several U.S. congressmen and senators, from early 1960, denounced Castro; and by June the Congress had passed legislation enabling President Dwight D. Eisenhower to take retaliatory steps: the United States cut off sugar purchases from Cuba and soon thereafter placed an embargo on all exports to Cuba except food and medicine. In January 1961, Eisenhower, in one of the final acts of his administration, broke diplomatic ties with Cuba.

An invasion of Cuba had been planned by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) since May 1960. The wisdom of proceeding with the invasion had been debated within the newly inaugurated administration of President John F. Kennedy before it was finally approved and carried out.

On April 15, 1961, three U.S.-made airplanes piloted by Cubans bombed Cuban air bases. Two days later the Cubans, trained by the United States and using U.S. equipment, landed at several sites. The principal landing took place at the Bay of Pigs on the south-central coast. The invasion force was unequal to the strength of Castro's troops, and by April 19 its last stronghold had been captured, along with more than 1,100 men. In the aftermath of the invasion, critics charged the CIA with supplying faulty information to the new president and also noted that, in spite of Kennedy's orders, supporters of Batista were included in the invasion force, whereas members of the non-communist People's Revolutionary Movement, considered the most capable anti-Castro group, were excluded.

The captured members of the invasion force were imprisoned. From May 1961 the Kennedy administration unofficially backed attempts to ransom the prisoners, but the efforts of the Tractors for Freedom Committee, headed by Eleanor Roosevelt, failed to raise the \$28,000,000 needed for heavy-construction equipment demanded by Castro as reparations. The conditions for the ransom changed several times during the next several months; after painstaking negotiations by James B. Donovan, Castro finally agreed to release the prisoners in exchange for \$53,000,000 worth of food and medicine. Between December 1962 and July 1965, the survivors were returned to the United States.

Some critics thought that the United States had not been aggressive enough in its support of the Bay of Pigs invasion and had left an impression of irresolution, while others later questioned U.S. misjudgement of the Cubans' fighting prowess. The incident was crucial to the development of the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962.



1962



1964



1966

Cuba: Anniversaries of The “Playa Giron” - Sea Invasion Attempt of Cuban Exiles.



1971



1976



Vietnam 1982.

Apart from Cuba itself, which used the event as Nationalist confirmation, the rest of the world shrugged its shoulders and got on with life. Vietnam showed an interest, as anti-US propaganda reminder. Liberia and Madagascar have gone along with the third-party postal service providers of their choice.

One is bound to query the interest of the Madagascans, living in one of the world’s least developed countries (United Nations) during a pandemic? A different story on Ebay with plenty of dealers wanting to sell these three miniature sheets.

Liberia 2021 : Bay of Pigs / JFK.
Sixtieth anniversary of the event.



Madagascar 2021 : Sixtieth anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion

BTA ONE-PAGE VIRTUAL COMPETITION 2022

Let's start with some statistics. We received 108 entries from 76 people, 16 of them BTA members. Overall eleven different countries were represented, competing in seven different classes, with winners coming from four of those countries. By any measurement, the competition was a huge success. Congratulations to everyone who took part and contributed to this event.

The rules as published invited exhibits which fell within the remit of a Thematic, Topical, Picture Postcard, or Open Philately class. In the event there were so many thematic entries we decided to break that class down according to international practice, in order to recognize top class entries on a variety of subjects. And we were delighted to get some Youth entries, so marked those differently, giving much more emphasis on presentation. Thus there were seven categories:

Thematic - Nature	Topical
Thematic - Technology	Youth - ages 10 - 15
Thematic - Culture	Youth - ages 16 - 18
Open	

We deliberately chose our own marking schedule which avoids any comparison with national and international grades, as a one-page competition is a difficult and very different discipline to mainstream philatelic competitions. In marking the entries we were looking for specific elements: at least two or three different philatelic items; at least two or three different countries; a title; a good story line and the whole sheet used to its maximum advantage. Using that model we awarded four different grades:


- Diamond: all the above elements achieved;
- Ruby: all or most of the required elements, either to a fair standard or with one of the requirements missing;
- Emerald: Some of the elements included, but with perhaps one or two of those elements missing;
- Opal: an exhibit which failed to meet all or many of the elements.

Both judges commented on how much they enjoyed the very wide range of subjects; with entries from so many countries it meant some topics were completely new to the judges, who certainly learnt a lot!

Although we made it clear at the outset that this was a competition without prizes, we subsequently decided that we should mark people's efforts in some way. So as well as a certificate, every entrant has been sent a complimentary e-copy of June *Themescene*, and all the Youth entrants have been given a year's electronic subscription to the BTA.

Sadly, we cannot print all 108 exhibits in *Themescene*, but the two overall winners' exhibits - by Wayne Cox and Yme Woensdregt - are shown on the front inside and back outside covers, and all the Diamond, Ruby and Youth entries are available on our [website](#).

A full list of entrants follows. In addition a selection of exhibits will be displayed by the BTA over two frames at Autumn Stampex 2022 in London later this year.

Thank you to everybody who took part. 

PALMARES

THEMATIC - NATURE

Tushar Deshpande	BEST IN CLASS The Unending Saga of the Exploitation of Elephants	Ruby
Gary Green	Honey	Ruby
Jean-Claude Guyaux	Le Caf��ier - sa fleur et sa cerise	Ruby
Mark Humfrey	A brief history of perfumery in Grasse	Ruby
Ramani Srinivasan	Insects did it first	Ruby
Satish Kumar	The Fluttering Rainbow	Emerald
T. Murugavel	Elephants the Gentle Giants	Emerald
T. Murugavel	Let us keep the Tigers in Jungles and not in History - Save Tigers ***	Emerald
Lokeswara Rao	Vanda Miss Joaquim	Emerald
Lokeswara Rao	Vanilla	Emerald
Madanagopal Swamiappan	Pollinators - Farmer's Friends	Emerald
Michael Thompson	The Frog	Emerald
S. Suradha	Barn Swallow - A Ray of Hope	Opal

THEMATIC - TECHNOLOGY

Wayne Cox	BEST IN CLASS Anthony Trollope - Pillar Box Pioneer!	Diamond
Hansraj Alva	Philatelic Expressions of Covid	Ruby
Debasish Das	Where Does Time Begin?	Ruby
Jacquiline Roberts Singh	A Journey from Fibre to Fabric	Ruby
Jacquiline Roberts Singh	The TAZARA (Tanzania-Zambia) Railway	Ruby
P. Sreetharan	'Rocket' that changed the world	Ruby
Vidya Kishore Baglodi	Step Wells	Emerald
Arun Kumar	The Solar System	Emerald
Dr R. K. Ranjan	Malaria Awareness through Inland Letters	Emerald
Sundar Rathinavel	India Mission in Space	Emerald
K. Sridhar	Greenhouse Gases and Carbon Pricing	Emerald
Dr. M. Vasantha	Twinkle Twinkle Little Star	Emerald
Sujithra Devi	Our Solar System	Opal
Ramapriya Krishnamurthy	50th Anniversary of RSAF	Opal
B. Madhini	Mapping the Mount Everest and the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India	Opal
Anju Mitra	Evolution of Cuba Railways	Opal

THEMATIC - CULTURE

Mark Humfrey	JOINT BEST IN CLASS William Dampier: British Explorer and Scientific Observer	Diamond
Yme Woensdregt	JOINT BEST IN CLASS Down the rabbit hole with Lady Liberty	Diamond
Fran Adams	The Arcadia Conference	Ruby
Derwin Mak	The Alliance for Progress	Ruby
Thomas Oguntke	Buddy Holly	Ruby
Salvatore Picconi	Coat of Arms of the Republic of San Marino	Ruby
Paolo Vispi	Gubbio: history, custom and gastronomy	Ruby
Yme Woensdregt	Women Writing Music	Ruby
Vidya Abhaya	Indian Musicians	Emerald
Fran Adams	The Well-baked man	Emerald
Vidya K. Baglodi	Entertainment	Emerald
Kishore K. Baglodi	Indian Hand fans	Emerald
Thomas W. Broadhead	Josephine Baker	Emerald
Briti Deb	Ancient Paintings and Their Incredible Stories	Emerald
Vinay Gokula	The Adventures of Tintin	Emerald
David Hope	Prize	Emerald
Rodney Knight	The Amazon - The Expedition that never was	Emerald
S. K. Lakshmanan	Decathlon	Emerald
Duraisamy Natarajan	Presidents and Prime Ministers of India	Emerald
Krishnaswamy Ramarathnam	Historic Jewellery	Emerald
Lokeswara Rao	Buddha Sitting Postures	Emerald
Lokeswara Rao	Kandayan Dance	Emerald
M. Jayorakash Rao	Parakram Diwas: a day to celebrate Valour	Emerald
Bala Sakthis	Historical Gates of Indian Forts and Monuments	Emerald
Radikha Shet	Indian Cuisine	Emerald
Jacquiline Roberts Singh	Congregation of R.J.M. - A Journey from France to India	Emerald
Sundaresan Thanikachalam	From a Common Man to a Great Soul 'The Mahatma'	Emerald
Antonio Triolo	Luigi Orione and Annibal Maria of France	Emerald
Yme Woensdregt	The Pride Flag	Emerald
Peter Wood	Sport in America - The Irish Connection	Emerald
Augusto Zavala R.	From Chaturanga to Chess	Emerald

THEMATIC - CULTURE (cont)

Bhavana K. Baglodi	Mahatma Gandhi in Odisha	Opal
Rajit K. Bhat	Fashion	Opal
Debasish Das	Remembering India's Magnificent Mughals	Opal
M. Gurudath Kamath	Commonwealth Games India	Opal
Arun Kumar	UTSC - An Indian State formed after Independence	Opal
Praveen Ganeshan	Suryanamaskar	Opal
Nikhilesh Melkote	Bradman - The 'Don' of Cricket	Opal
Mythili Ranjan	Teachers Day	Opal
Reshma R.V.	Hockey	Opal
Reshma R.V.	Shera	Opal
S. Sahdev Sharma	Goa Liberation Day	Opal
M. Prashanth Shet	Head Gears	Opal
K. K. Swaminathan	Postcrossing.com	Opal
K. K. Swaminathan	Timor Leste - an island nation in south Asia	Opal

OPEN

Alastair Watson	BEST IN CLASS The Blue Whale	Diamond
Fran Adams	Sir Arthur Keith - Perpetrator or Victim?	Diamond
Greg Galletti	The World's Capitol - The UN Headquarters	Diamond
Geoff Blackwell	The Story of the Discovery of Photography and Early Developments	Ruby
Michele Bresso	St Bernards as Rescue Dogs	Ruby
Michele Bresso	Willie Mays	Ruby
Debasish Das	Hands of Time	Ruby
James Dickinson	Shire Delight - Northamptonshire Philately	Ruby
Salvatore Picconi	What is a Nuraghe?	Ruby
Thomas W. Broadhead	The Corpse Flower	Emerald
Thomas W. Broadhead	The Sinking of the Russie 1901	Emerald
Paula Cleary	The Royal Air Forces Escaping Society	Emerald
Abdelkader Lemrahi	La solidarite nationale	Emerald
Abdelkader Lemrahi	H.M. Mohammed V, King of Morocco	Emerald
Venkatesan Perumal	City with four lighthouses	Emerald
M. Jayorakash Rao	Ahimsa The Non-Violence Route for Life	Emerald
Mohan P. Vaze	The Gaewkar's Baroda State Railway	Emerald
Selvanambi Balasundaram	The Rarest Bird of India Jerdon's Courser	Opal

TOPICAL

Kannappan Shanmugam	BEST IN CLASS M.K.Gandhi stamp varieties	Ruby
Thumanivannan Ramakrishnan	HiStory telling stamps	Emerald
Krishnaswamy Ramarathnam	Think Green	Emerald
M. Gurudath Kamath	Indian Symbols through Philately	Opal
Krishnaswamy Ramarathnam	Fragrances of flowers to promote harmony	Opal

YOUTH 12 - 15

Vivan Deshpande	JOINT BEST IN CLASS Red Panda - The Vanishing Firefox	Ruby
Vivaan Singh	JOINT BEST IN CLASS Scoring a Football Goal	Ruby
Anbu S. Chidambaram	Sleepless City - Madurai	Ruby
Kannammai Sivakumar	Symbols which symbolise our country	Ruby
Savar Dayal Roy Chowdury	The Tadoba Andhari National Park - Tiger Conservation	Emerald
C.M. Dhanuj	Yoga Birth in India	Emerald
S.S. Sneha	Exotic Stamps of the World	Emerald
P. V. Vishesh	Rashrapati Bhavan	Emerald
P. V. Vishesh	Lighthouse	Emerald
T.S. Sivakumar	Freedom Fighters	Opal

YOUTH 16 - 18

Bahrataraj Srinivas	BEST IN CLASS Harmony and Peace for Humanity - Yoga	Emerald
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DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES IN 2022

Saturday 11th June BTA AGM at SWINPEX

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

Saturday 24 September
Members' meeting at Wickham, Hampshire

Saturday 15 October
Annual competitions at Ardingly

Plus a full Zoom programme

AGENDA

For the 29th Annual General Meeting of the British Thematic Association to be held on Saturday June 11th 2022 at 2.30 p.m. at Swinpex at St Joseph's Catholic College, Octal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 28th Annual General Meeting published in *Themescene* Sep 2019
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report and adoption of Accounts for year ended 31st December 2021
6. Election of Officers
The following Officers have been nominated or are willing to stand for re-election

Barry Stagg	Chairman
Anne Stammers	Secretary
Peter Wood	Treasurer

7. Election of Committee members
The following members have indicated that they are willing to stand for re-election:

Currently	Wendy Buckle	Editor <i>Themescene</i>
Currently	Michael Blackman	Advertising Manager
Currently	Lesley Marley	FIP Representative
Currently	Jon Matthias	Webmaster
	Owen Green	Membership Secretary & ATA Liaison Officer
	Andrew Millington	Competitions Organiser
	Charles Oppenheim	

NB. There are Committee Vacancies for a Press / Publicity Officer and a Programme Coordinator. Please let the Chairman or Secretary know, prior to the meeting, if you are interested in either of these positions.

8. Ratification by the membership of appointment of
Brian Turner Examiner
9. Any Other Business

Nominations for Officers and Committee Members and any other motions for discussion should be received by the Secretary by June 4th 2022.

A display *Post WWII Postcards in Sarawak* by Malcolm Gascoyne will follow the meeting.

Signed: *M. Anne Stammers* (Hon. Secretary)

Dated: 28th April 2022

THE BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION
Account for the year ended 31 December 2021

2020	INCOME	2021	
2,691	Subscriptions	2,804	
194	Sales and other income (incl. weekend deposits)	28	
2,885		2,832	
	EXPENDITURE		
1,541	"Themescene" - Printing and distribution expenses	1,651	
-468	less : Advertising Income and Donation	-520	1,131
0	Meetings (incl. AGM)		0
0	STAMPEX expenses	387	
0	less : from reserve	-387	0
0	Committee Meeting expenses		0
0	Publicity		82
109	Web Site		137
144	Insurance		144
205	Affiliations		207
69	Administration expenses		10
0	Bank charges (incl. Paypal fees)		26
1,600			1,737
150	Deposits to weekend reserve		0
1,135	Surplus		1,095
2,885			2,832
	<u>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021</u>		
	Accumulated fund		
10,660	Balance at 1.1.2021	11,795	
1,135	add : Surplus for the year	1,095	12,890
1,267	Weekend Events Reserve/Deposits		1,492
612	Stampex Reserve		0
13,674			14,382
	Represented by:		
4,890	Cash at Bank: Deposit Account		4,890
10,122	Current Account		9,919
15,012			14,809
-883	less: Subscriptions Received in advance		-357
-455	less: Amounts due or Received in advance		-70
13,674			14,382

Hon Treasurer, P.J.Wood.

PJ Wood
29/4/2022

Examiners Report.

I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet and confirm that they are in accordance with the Association's accounting records which have been properly kept.

Hon. Examiner, B. Turner.

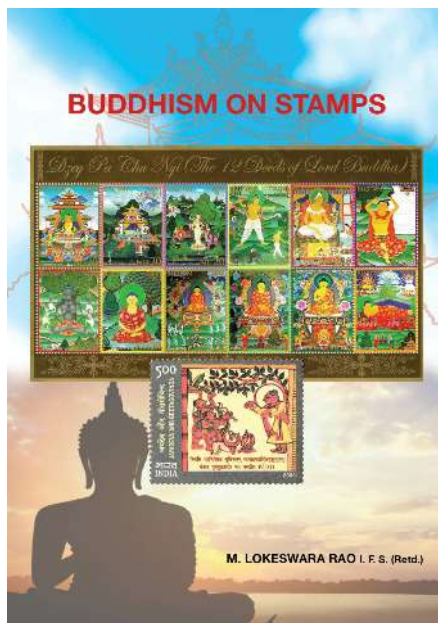
Brian Turner
26/4/2022

THE BUDDHA

Lokeswara Rao Madiraju

Buddhism is one of the major religions in the world and the second largest spiritual path, practiced by an estimated 1.6 billion people, representing 9% to 10% of the world's total population. It began around 2,500 years ago in India when Siddhartha Gautama discovered how to bring happiness into the world.

Buddhism and nature are inseparable. Buddhism was born in nature, in the sense that the ascetic Buddha attained enlightenment under a Bodhi tree in a forest on the bank of the Nerañjara River, and he delivered his first sermon in the Deer Park. He spent quite a significant part of his life in natural surroundings. Nature is never absent from the four main events of the Buddha's life: birth, Enlightenment, First Sermon and death. Moreover, he always appreciated nature and encouraged others to do the same. Buddha's message clearly says that caring for nature must go hand in hand with respect for fellow human beings. Buddhism is relevant to the present world because of the environmental crisis we are facing at present and we are heading towards mass extinction of species. We live in an age of conflict and war, of hatred and violence all over the world. Mahatma Gandhi has followed the teachings of Buddha and practiced and preached "Ahimsa Parmo Dharma" (Non violence is the highest religious principle. Non violence is the Best policy). Through The Buddha I am symbolising peace that everyone needs in today's world. The first thing that comes to mind when one sees / thinks of the Buddha is a sense of peace.



A new book has been published *Buddhism on Stamps*. The book focuses on how a very wide range of different philatelic materials, from a range of different countries, can narrate the story of Gautam Buddha. The 22 chapters cover Introduction, Jataka Kathas (Stories), Birth of Buddha, Twelve Deeds of Buddha, Eight Auspicious Symbols of Buddhism, Monasteries, Chhoeten, Prayer Flag and Prayer Wheel, Musical Instruments of Buddhism, Four Mythical Animals, Six Elements of Longevity, Precious Attributes of Universal King, Teachings of Buddha, Buddhist Mudras, Hand Gestures and their Meaning, Postures, Symbols Representing Gautama Buddha, Buddhism in Different Parts of the World, Borobudur Ship Expedition, Buddhist Festivals, Buddhist Sacred Places of the World, Buddhism and World Peace, References.

BUDDHISM ON STAMPS

M.Lokeswara Rao

Published by the author 2021. 290 pages, 1127 colour illus.

ISBN: 9789354266447

Contact the author to purchase: madirajul@gmail.com

ZOOMING ALONG

On 19th April 35 BTA members and friends enjoyed a wonderful Zoom presentation on Illustrated Airgraphs. Daphne McMillian, the presenter, showed us how Airgraphs came about (the desire to reduce the weight and hence cost of (largely) military mail during World War II) and the process involved (getting an Airgraph form, writing the message in large writing, back to the Post Office to get the Airgraph sent. Once in the system each one was photographed and 1600 were placed on a single reel of film. In this way millions were sent to and from the UK and most military theatres during World War II).

Daphne went on to show a wide selection of Airgraph material from a variety of locations across the world. Many were official illustrations, often centred on Christmas or Easter, but there were plenty of private drawings on Airgraphs that displayed some amazing artistic skills. I personally liked the drawing of military stores, piled high into the air with the pyramids in the background! The drawing was immensely detailed and must have taken hours to complete. Plenty of interesting material for many thematic collectors. Thank you Daphne for a most interesting presentation.

NB We are always 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 contact [Barry](#) to discuss your ideas, or even better - to volunteer! 



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Since publishing my first website in 1999 I have developed a portfolio of websites covering all aspects of philately and have recently provided a dedicated Thematics section which now contains over 2000 items and is expanding weekly.

Dealers & Collectors who may be interested in listing and selling items on this site are welcome to email me for further details. The fee for this service is 5% of any sales. No other charges. Listing Free

 **Ian Lasok-Smith (Philatelist)**
enquiries@gbphilately.co.uk

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BTA RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND

16 - 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

NO MORE DELAYS, COME ALONG TO THE FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND, OXFORD

This should have been held in 2020, but of course we all know what happened that year. Two years and several changes of speaker later it is finally going ahead (Covid permitting). Details of the full programme and booking form are on pages 63 - 65. You will see that we have one more change of speaker: Katrin Raynor-Evans is unable to attend (although we hope to have her at a future event); instead we are delighted to welcome Barry Hobbs with *Mind your P's and Q's - The history of Pills, Potions and Quack Medicines of North America*. Surely a title to tempt anyone!

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. And please note, despite what the hotel website says, you will not be charged extra for parking.

Let us all hope that Covid does not flare up again, but rest assured that we will follow all government rules and guidelines. In the unlikely event it does have to be cancelled of course deposits will be reimbursed. It would be very helpful if you are hoping to come but have not yet booked, to send your booking form in soon so we can indicate potential numbers to the hotel. Thank you.



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BTA NEWS

BTA MEMBERS' MEETING AT HAMPEX 24 SEPTEMBER AT 13.30

Thanks to the generosity of Hampshire Philatelic Federation we are able to hold a members' meeting at Wickham in Hampshire on 24 September. Please bring along up to 16 sheets to 'show and tell'. The meeting is being held as part of [HampeX](#), the annual Federation fair which offers over twenty dealers, catering, and free parking.

SUCCESS FOR BTA MEMBERS

Congratulations to Grace Davies, who has been awarded the Royal Philatelic Society London Lee medal for the best 5pm presentation in vivo (see March *Themescene* page 29); and to Lawrence Fisher, who was awarded Gold and Special Prize at Hunfilex for his entry *The Jewish Homeland, our Struggle for Survival*.

VACANCIES ON THE BTA COMMITTEE

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

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 [contact me](#) or phone me on 01242 519245 at any time.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION

19 - 26 February 2022

The BTA is not all about exhibiting, far from it, but it is one part of our remit. And as such, we were delighted to officially sponsor one of the London 2022 silver medals, awarded to Best in Class. The winner of the Thematic Philately Class (David Griffiths) won the Christine Earle Memorial Award, while the BTA sponsored the Picture Postcard award, won by Jennifer Long. The Open Philately Class medal meanwhile was sponsored by the Irish Philatelic Circle and the Éire Philatelic Association.

In the exhibiting area it was pleasing to see very good lighting (something that previously had been a problem in a few rooms). Unfortunately problems beyond the organisers' control meant that the thematic exhibits were taken down a day early, so those who attended only on the second Saturday were unable to see them. But it was good to see a strong BTA showing in the pictorial classes:

THEMATIC PHILATELY

Lesley Marley	<i>A Whale's Tale</i>	8 frames	Large Gold
Peter Weir	<i>Liquid of Life - Blood, from an Ancient Myth to a Modern Medicine</i>	8 frames	Large Gold
Brian Sole	<i>Go by cycle!</i>	8 frames	Large Vermeil
Wendy Buckle	<i>Paper past and present</i>	5 frames	Large Vermeil
George Henshilwood	<i>Having fun with Numbers</i>	5 frames	Large Vermeil
Simon Moorcroft	<i>Winston Churchill - "Where did I go wrong?"</i>	1 frame	Gold

OPEN PHILATELY

John Davies	<i>A Jubilee Reminiscence</i>	8 frames	Large Gold
Peter Wood	<i>The road to independence: Ireland from the Act of Union to Irish Free State</i>	5 frames	Vermeil
Barry Stagg	<i>The Messenger of Peace - the life and legacy of the missionary John Williams</i>	1 frame	Vermeil

LITERATURE

John Davies	<i>A Jubilee Reminiscence</i>	Gold
Lokeswara Rao Madiraju	<i>Buddhism on stamps</i>	Large Silver
BTA	<i>Themescene</i>	Large Silver

HERE AND THERE

STAMPEX 2022. 28 SEPTEMBER - 01 OCTOBER.

Tickets are now available [for sale](#). First day tickets are priced at £10 each and include a show guide. Thursday, Friday and Saturday tickets are still complimentary, however the organisers are asking everyone to register online. Those who register for the free entry days can pre-order their Show Guide for £5. Current ticket sales constitute an 'Early Bird Offer' which ends in August after which tickets will incur a processing fee.

NEW WEBSITE FOR F.I.P. THEMATIC COMMISSION

A totally new [website](#) was launched late last year. It describes the aim of the website to be "the first port of call for; exhibitors, judges and all who are interested in Thematic Philately". Now hosted on the FIP server the whole design and layout is a radical improvement.

OPEN PHILATELY SEMINAR AT HUNFILEX

At the Budapest International last month Birthe King gave a seminar on *Open Philately and the Importance of the Non-Philatelic Material*. It is now available on the [FEPA website](#)

NEW EXHIBITION AT THE POSTAL MUSEUM

Sorting Britain: the power of postcodes is on display until the end of the year. Its publicity says "From wartime tech pioneers to Poco the Postcode Elephant, uncover the surprising story of the postcode. Sorting Britain delves into the Post Office innovation that revolutionised how post was processed, sorted, and delivered and its unintended outcomes for life in Britain".

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EXHIBITING PAGE

SEMINAR HELD AT LONDON 2022 INTERNATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION

The Thematic Commission of the F.I.P. organised a seminar during London 2020. The first talk was given by Peter Suhadolc (Chairman of the FIP Thematic Commission) on *The New Guidelines for Judging Thematic Exhibits*. This examined changes to the Guidelines which accompany the Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Thematic Exhibits at FIP Exhibitions. The talk was based on a seminar given by Peter originally at Verona in 2019 which can be viewed [here](#).

The slides show the original *Guidelines* with changes highlighted in red. They start with fundamentals: a detailed Definition of Appropriate Philatelic Material, which clearly explains the difference between postal elements and private elements. Much detail illustrating this follows. Next is an explanation of the Criteria for Evaluation, whereby a baseline of 80% of each part of marking breakdown will be awarded for the exhibit having all the basic requirements. To get higher marks than this requires ‘achievements’ - “gradual goals on the road to make the exhibit outstanding”. The following thirteen slides give explanations and examples. Anyone exhibiting internationally would benefit from examining this talk, as the slides explain and amplify the rules. Judges use these guidelines and so should competitors.

The second talk was given by Paolo Guglielminetti on *How to make use of philatelic knowledge to select and describe proper and borderline material*. He outlined some basic things to consider when putting an exhibit together: there should be a good variety of philatelic material in terms of type, period and country; use items of real philatelic significance, not “extravagant pieces”; and use borderline material [see Peter’s paper above] only when you would otherwise miss an important part of the story. And remember as you go along: don’t settle for the items you have, always look to replace them with items of better quality / condition. The full seminar can be viewed [here](#). 

BTA ANNUAL COMPETITIONS

Our annual one-frame competitions are back! After two years of Covid-enforced absence we are delighted to announce that our competitions will be run, as in previous years, at the [South of England Stamp Fair](#) at Ardingly, on 15 October. This is a lovely venue, with 35 stamp and postcard dealers, plenty of free parking, and good catering.

There are four categories of competition: thematic, open, picture postcard and championship classes. Entries can be hand-delivered on the day or posted in advance. Full details are given on pages 66 - 69. This is an excellent opportunity to try your hand at exhibiting. Perhaps you have entered your local club competition and want to reach a higher standard, or you are considering entering nationally and want to test out your ideas. Or perhaps this will be the first time you have tried a competition. In any event you will be given positive feedback, and most importantly, encouragement. Give it a go!

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 16th to Sunday 18th September 2022

voco Oxford Spires Hotel

Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS

<https://oxfordspires.vocohotels.com/>



COST

Full Delegate

Will include:

2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast; pre-dinner drink both evenings; some wine with dinner; teas, coffees and biscuits or pastries between the sessions.

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. If you are coming by car there are many places which are a short drive away, see 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 Barry Hobbs: *Mind your P's and Q's: Pills, Potions and Quack Medicines of North America*
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:

- Rooms based on two people sharing £249 per head
- With single room supplement £299 per head
- Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Thursday £109 per head;
[plus single room supplement £25.00]
- Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Sunday £99.00 per head;
[plus single room supplement £25.00]

Or:

- Evening meal Friday £42.00 per head (inc. drinks)
- Day delegate Saturday £15.00 per head
- Evening meal Saturday £42.00 per head (inc. drinks)
- 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.



BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION 2022 COMPETITIONS

**The South of England Stamp Fair & Sussex Convention, Norfolk Pavilion,
South of England Centre, Ardingly Showground, Ardingly, RH17 6TL**

SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER 2022 10.00am – 4.30pm

Competition categories are:

BTA CUP

16-sheet One Frame competition subject to the Rules and Regulations for National **Thematic** Philately competitions

JOHN FOSBERY TROPHY

16-sheet One Frame competition subject to the Rules and Regulations for National **Open** Philately competitions

BRIAN SOLE TROPHY

16-sheet One Frame competition for **Picture Postcards** subject to the Rules and Regulations for National Picture Postcard competitions

BTA CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS

16-sheet One Frame competition for **Pictorial Classes**; open to previous winners of the BTA's annual competitions. Subject to the Rules and Regulations for National Pictorial Class competitions.

See next page for Rules

Please complete the Entry Form and send it to –
Andrew Millington, Flat 4, 87 Shurdington Road, Cheltenham, GL53
0JQ. Tel: 0770 8356757. Email: andrew.millington@gmail.com

Closing date for receipt of entry forms: Friday 7th October 2022.

Please send sheets to:

Wendy Buckle, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth, BH1 4RS

Between Monday 10th - Thursday 13th October but no later.

Or deliver them to the Fair (first floor) by 10.00 on 15th October

RULES

All classes

1. Every exhibit must have an Introductory Page as the first sheet. All sheets must be enclosed in protectors and the pages numbered at the foot of the page.
2. There will be an entry fee of £10 for each competition. A receipt will be issued and must be produced if collecting the entry after the Exhibition has closed. All four competitions will be open to all and not restricted to BTA members.
3. Judges will be appointed who are qualified in judging Thematic Philately and/or Open Philately and/or Picture Postcard exhibits at Federation or National level.

Thematic, Open and Postcard Class

The winner of any of these competitions will not be allowed to enter the same exhibit in the same competition at any time in the future.

Championship Class

1. The Championship Class will cover all aspects of theme-based philately: i.e., Thematic Philately, Open Philately, and Picture Postcards.
2. The Championships Class is open to past winning exhibits of any of the BTA's competitions: The BTA Cup, The John Fosbery Trophy and The Brian Sole Trophy. Exhibits will be based on previous winning exhibits but can of course be modified. Past winners who are exhibiting new subjects should enter the other classes in the BTA's Annual Competitions.
4. Entries will be one frame (16 sheets), regardless of whether the qualifying winning exhibit was one or two frames.
5. A person may only enter one exhibit in The Championship Class.
6. All entries will be judged to national standards using the appropriate marking schedule (Thematic, Open, Picture Postcard) on the next page. There will be one winner and that will be the entry with the most points.

All previous winners of all competitions can be found listed on the [BTA website](#)

AWARDS. The Minimum points required to achieve LARGE GOLD level is 90.

For Gold level is	85	For Silver level is	65
For Large Vermeil level is	80	For Silver Bronze level is	60
For Vermeil level is	75	For Bronze level is	55
For Large Silver level is	70	For Certificate of Participation below	55

MARKING Thematic Philately – BTA Cup

Treatment	Title and Plan	15	
	Development	15	
	Innovation	<u>5</u>	35
Knowledge, Study & Research	Thematic	15	
	Philatelic	<u>15</u>	30
Condition and Rarity	Condition	10	
	Rarity	<u>20</u>	30
Presentation		<u>5</u>	
TOTAL		<u>100</u>	

MARKING Open Philately – John Fosbery Thematic Trophy

Treatment	Title & Plan	10	
	Treatment	<u>20</u>	30
Knowledge and Research	Philatelic	20	
	Non-philatelic	<u>15</u>	35
Material	Condition	10	
	Rarity	<u>20</u>	30
Presentation		<u>5</u>	
TOTAL		<u>100</u>	

MARKING Picture Postcard Class - Brian Sole Trophy

Idea, Plan and Treatment of the Topic	Idea and Plan	10	
	Treatment	<u>20</u>	30
Knowledge and Research			35
Condition and Rarity	Condition	10	
	Rarity	<u>20</u>	30
Presentation		<u>5</u>	
TOTAL		<u>100</u>	

British Thematic Association Competitions 2022 Entry Form

I wish to enter

- A. 16-sheet BTA CUP
Thematic Philately Competition (please tick)

AND/OR

- B. 16-sheet JOHN FOSBERY TROPHY
Open Philately Competition (please tick)

AND/OR

- C. 16-sheet BRIAN SOLE TROPHY
Picture Postcard competition (please tick)

AND/OR

- D. 16-sheet CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS
Thematic, Open or Picture Postcard (please tick)

Name

Tel No.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....E-mail.....

Title of Entry (A).....

Title of Entry (B).....

Title of Entry (C)

Title of Entry (D)

Please indicate Thematic Open Picture Postcards

I accept that the material is submitted entirely at my own risk and I undertake to make my own arrangements with regard to the insurance of the entry whilst it is out of my possession; this includes all transit risks, temporary housing of the entry and its display at Ardingly Showground. I confirm that all information on this form is correct and I am enclosing a remittance of £10, per entry, payable to the British Thematic Association.

TOTAL REMITTANCE enclosed £

Please tick to indicate how your entry will be delivered:

- By post beforehand* *Hand in on the day*

Signed.....

Date.....



BTA PROGRAMME 2022

- 11 June
14.30 **Annual General Meeting and guest speaker**
Guest speaker: Malcolm Gascoyne
Sarawak Postcards
At Swinpex, St. Joseph's Catholic College
Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR
Over 40 dealers, free parking, and cafe facilities.
- 30 June
19.00 for 19.30 **Zoom Meeting**
Members Displays.
Following our very successful members' Zoom meeting last October we again invite members to present up to five pages from their collection.
- 13 July
19.00 for 19.30 **Zoom meeting**
Keith Burton
Viaducts
A potpourri of viaducts, their histories and the ways that they have developed or fallen into disuse; shown through postcards, photographs, maps and a few words.
- 09 August
19.00 for 19.30 **Zoom meeting**
Mike Blackman
Aspects of Umbrellas
Both umbrellas and parasols have a long and interesting history and culture which will be explored in this presentation using philatelic material, ephemera, postcards, poster stamps and more.
- 16 - 18
September **BTA Weekend**
At voco Oxford Spires Hotel
Guest speakers, members displays and social events
Full details 58, 63 - 65
.
- 24 September
13.30 **Members' Meeting**
Bring along 16 sheets from your collection.
At [HAMPEX](#), the Hampshire Philatelic Federation annual fair.
Wickham Centre, Mill Lane, Wickham, PO17 5AL
At least 20 dealers, refreshments, free parking.
- 15 October
10.00 - 15.00 **BTA Competitions at the**
[South of England Stamp Fair](#)
At Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL
Over 40 dealers, free parking and cafe facilities.

Hello from Herbie the Hedgehog!



Hi! I'm one of the most easily recognisable mammals in Britain - everyone seems to know me! I have a very spiny coat and long coarse hair on my face and underparts. I live mostly in woodlands, hedgerows, fields, parks and gardens. I'm around 20-30cm in length, and I weigh around 700g. And I can live for up to 6 years!



Baby hedgehogs are called hoglets, and when we hoglets are born in May we are blind and pink, but we soon sprout soft white spines. After 14 days our eyes open and our spines turn brown and hard. We drink milk from our mother at first, but after four weeks our Mum shows us how to find food, and 10 days after that she leaves us and we set off on our own!



An adult hedgehog has between 3,000-5,000 spines! Our spines last for about a year then they gradually drop off and new ones grow. If I sense any danger, I quickly raise my spines and curl up into a tight, prickly ball. That usually puts most enemies off!

We hedgehogs are nocturnal creatures - that means we mostly sleep all day and come out at night to hunt for food. We can walk over 2-4 km each night looking for food! Our eyesight isn't very good, but we have an excellent sense of smell. I love eating, and my favourite foods are slugs, snails, caterpillars, beetles, worms, birds' eggs, and sometimes even frogs and snakes - yum yum!



We also love tinned cat and dog food, and if you know we are living nearby and leave some out on a saucer for us, we will come back every night for some more! But please don't give us milk or bread, it gives us very sore tummies. We have to eat loads of good food to build up stores of fat for the winter.



There isn't much food around during the winter, so we hedgehogs hibernate - that means we have a very long sleep. We eat as much as we can all Autumn, and then in November we build ourselves a warm, deep, snug nest of leaves under a hedge or in a compost heap. Then we curl up tightly and fall into a very deep, long sleep. We stay asleep until March. Zzzzzz.



But the the number of hedgehogs is declining, that means there are less and less of us. You can help us by encouraging us into your gardens (and away from dangerous roads) by making sure we can get in and out of your garden easily by leaving holes for us to pass through, or digging a tunnel under your fence. And if you think we might be in your area, you could leave us a saucer of cat or dog food. You could also put bundles of straw, hay or leaves under a dry shed, thick hedge or log pile for us to hibernate in. Sometimes gardeners use nasty chemicals in their garden products which can be poisonous to us, such as insect sprays and slug pellets. Please ask your adults to use wildlife friendly products - and tell them that we hedgehogs will gladly eat all of their slugs and insects! And please be careful if you stick a garden spade in your compost bin - we might be sleeping in there!



Look out for me, I hope to see you soon!

from your friend Herbie Hedgehog x

Write to us and tell us about your 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 on the
[Stamp Active website](#)**

VIRTUAL ONE-PAGE COMPETITION BEST IN SHOW: NON-BTA MEMBER

Page 49

Down the Rabbit Hole with Lady Liberty

In 1865, Lewis Carroll coined the phrase "down the rabbit hole" to describe Alice's foray into the fantastical world called Wonderland. It has become a metaphor for an engrossing and time-consuming distraction—such as an allegedly straightforward Google search.
My journey begins with a small exhibit of the rainbow flag...



Almost 20 countries have issued stamps featuring the Pride flag. In 2017, Canada issued twelve stamps to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Confederation, one stamp marked the passage of the Civil Marriage Act of 2005. Argentina issued nine stamps featuring new laws and policies affecting Argentine society in 2024, one marked the marriage equality law in 2010. Sweden celebrated LGBTQ rights in 2010. New Zealand showed the "Progress Pride Flag", redesigned by Portland based artist Daniel Quasar, representing the broadening of the movement to include trans, non-binary individuals and those lost to the AIDS crisis.

This colourful and ubiquitous symbol of pride in the LGBTQ movement was designed in 1978 by artist and gay rights activist Gilbert Baker (1951–2017), at the encouragement of San Francisco Councilman Harvey Milk (1930–1978), the first openly gay elected official in California...



The United States honoured Harvey Milk with a stamp in 2024, which includes a tiny stripe of the flag (upper left). The cachet by Kevin Colton (KSC Cachets) features a blowing pride flag behind Milk and advocates for equal rights. (illustration reduced)

... One stamp stood out for me, issued by Uruguay in 2013 to commemorate the legalization of gay marriage. It features centre of the 1830 masterpiece *La Liberté guidant le peuple* ("Liberty Leading the People") by Eugène Delacroix. Cleverly, the stamp replaces the French tricolour with the rainbow flag...



Uruguay (December 16, 2013) taps into history, suggesting a growing movement for liberty for people in the LGBTQ community.

... which led me to explore the original painting, featured on many stamps to mark the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution, such as this sheet from Argentina. This revolutionary painting, portrays Liberty as a daughter of the people, alive and fiery, embodying revolt and victory. She wears a Phrygian cap, a symbol of liberty, leading the people to victory across a landscape littered with the dead. The musical Les Misérables captures the mood well—"Do you hear the people sing? Singing a song of angry men? It is the music of a people who will not be slaves again!" The painting honours the July Revolution of 1830, the final triumph of the 1789 Revolution and the overthrow of the Bourbon regime ...



... the journey continues with the same painting on a sheet from Sao Tomé e Principe. In addition to the painting and its artist, it shows eight Marianne definitives issued by France in 1982 ... Why Marianne? In 1982 President François Mitterand chose this face of Lady Liberty for the new series of Mariannes ...



São Tomé e Principe (illustration reduced) and the lowest and highest values of the 1982 French Marianne definitives.

... which led me to explore those French definitives, which have shown various likenesses of Marianne since 1944. Helpfully, France issued a sheet in November 2008 showing the Mariannes of the Fifth Republic (the current government) from 1959–2008 ...



... the ideals of Liberté, Egalité, and Fraternité embodied by Marianne are also the fervent hopes of the LGBTQ community, as shown on these two stamps ...



... and we climb out of the rabbit hole; to where we started. A fascinating journey to be sure.

Yme Woensdregt

Down the rabbit hole with Lady Liberty