

THEMESCENE

September 2022

In this issue we:

Continue the story of ...

Alfons Mucha

With Norman Hudson



Look at a philatelic pioneer

Joseph Sloper, patents and perfin

With Charles Oppenheim



Study some stamp issues in detail

Thematic Exhibiting, part 1

With Rudolf Spieler



Travel through a lost world

Post World War II Postcards of Sarawak

With Malcolm Gascoyne



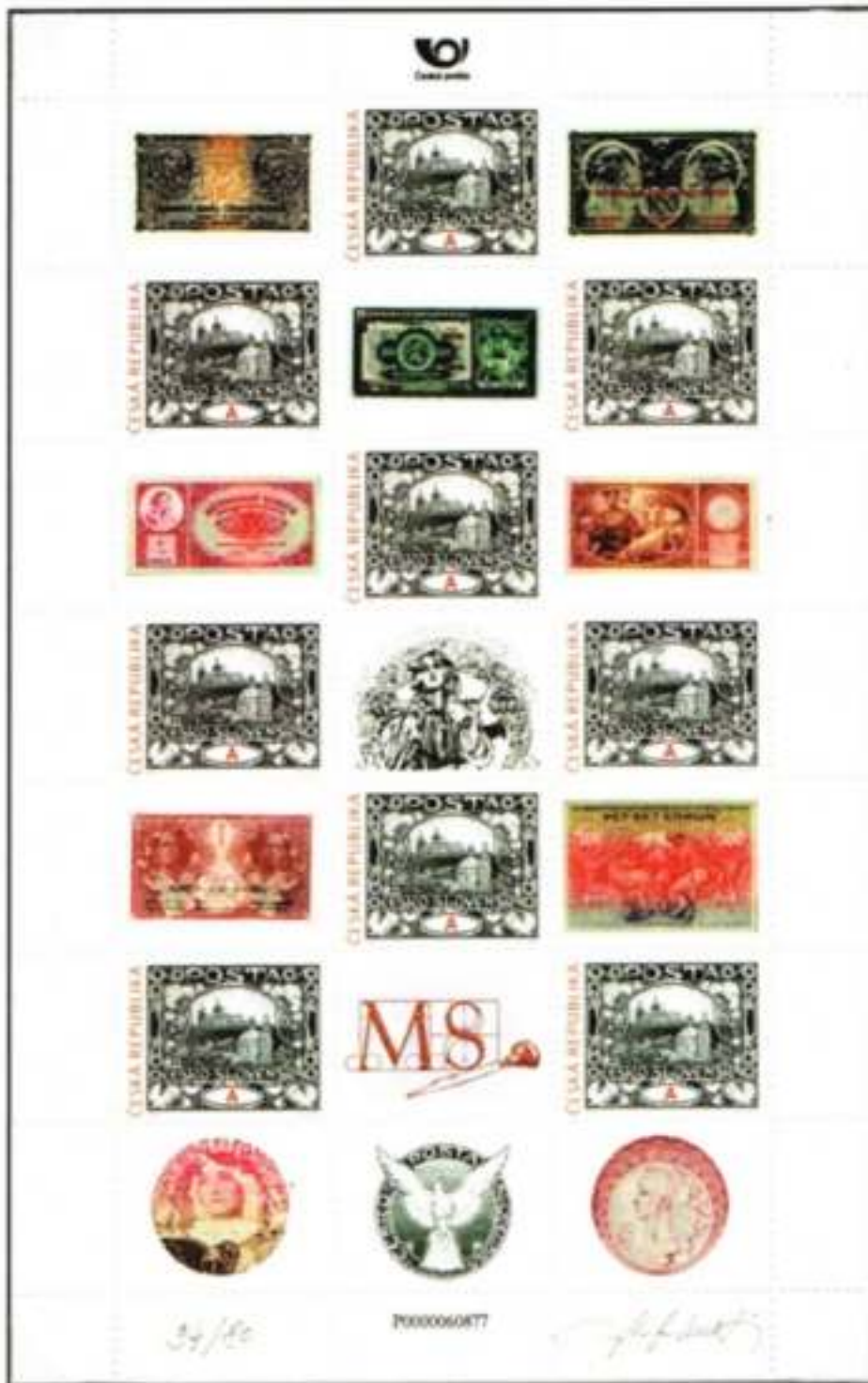
And launch this year's competitions



BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 39, No.3. Whole Number 148

www.britishthematic.org.uk



One of a pair of limited edition personalised stamp sheets (no.34 of 80) produced and signed by Martin Srb (stamp engraver), printed from Česká Pošta's sheet, originally issued 21 Feb 2018.

Non-stamp labels show graphics from banknotes designed by Mucha between 1919 and 1929.

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

By the time you read this magazine I assume the heatwave currently affecting parts of England will be over, and we will all have a bit more energy. Time to turn your thoughts to competitions! At last our traditional one-frame / 16 sheet competitions will be taking place (the first since 2019), again at Ardingly. See page 103 for full details. With four different categories - Thematic Philately, Open Philately, Picture Postcards, and a Championship Class - there is the opportunity to choose a class relevant to your collecting, and to receive feedback from the judges which will help you if you want to step up to National exhibiting.

And on a related subject, do you fancy winning a free year's membership of the BTA? Our One-Page Virtual Competition, now in its third year, is again up and running, this time with prizes on offer, see page 100. A one-page exhibit has its own challenges, and this is reflected in the grades awarded. It is not a cut-down version of a larger competitive entry, it needs its own skills. It is impressive just how much of a story can be condensed into one page, as can be seen with last year's top entries, shown on the BTA website under '[Displaying Thematic Collections](#)'. So are you up for it? Why not have a go?

As Barry says in his Chairman's Page, our Zoom programme has proved a resounding success. We are one of many societies who started such an event during lockdown; suddenly everyone became aware of a technology which had been around since 2013 but which many of us had previously not heard about. If one good thing came out of the horrors of Covid, for some of us it was to launch a completely new way of running meetings, one which has allowed us to talk to members we had never met before, either personal or geographical constraints meaning they would never be able to attend traditional meetings. The BTA is one of many philatelic societies which has now incorporated Zoom meetings into its regular programme, and indeed an entirely new society has been formed - The South-East England On-Line Philatelic Society - whose programme is Zoom only.

With societies looking for speakers there is a chance for those of us who give displays to expand our repertoire and write Zoom talks. Anyone doing so will, like myself, discover very quickly that it is an entirely different experience to standing in a room and giving a general talk about your collection. There are things about Zoom talks I hate, particularly being at the mercy of technology and the fear of something going wrong (been there, done that, it did go wrong), and also what feels like talking into a void. But the plusses are terrific: it makes you look very carefully at your material to choose what best illustrates a particular point; it makes you think much more precisely about the story you want to tell; and it gives you the opportunity to write a presentation on one single aspect of your topic, perhaps something you have not explored in detail on the page. If you are a programme secretary a good source of information about speakers is available on the ABPS website under '[Speakers List](#)'. And if you have written and presented one or more Zoom talks but aren't on the list why not sign up? 

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg

I'm not sure if I like surprises. Perhaps, like most people, it is change I don't like as, after all, some surprises are, or can be, good. I went to Swinpex a few months ago and was reassured of the status-quo: all of the dealer's desks were taken up and there was a good crowd sifting through the dealers' stock. But the venue had altered the catering arrangements at the College which was an unexpected change, and in my view not a change for the better!

Another change which I was not expecting is that Royal Mail's Philatelic Bulletin is no more. Cancelled due to lack of subscribers. I remember my Mother buying me an annual subscription back in the day: the rest, as they say, is history. Sorry to see it go. But I must admit to being surprised by the interest and audience for our monthly Zoom presentations. I know it's not everybody's cup-of-tea but it does allow us to reach our membership in far flung places. And we have speakers queuing up to give us their presentations. Thank you all for making this a success.

But I do like good surprises, particularly philatelic ones. A few months ago I bought on eBay an envelope because the postmark was of interest. And when it came I stored it away for a rainy day (and that looks many weeks away!). I stumbled across it a few weeks ago whilst looking for something else and realised the cancel date was some days before the issue of this stamp. Not a life-changing find but something interesting and a nice surprise. Whilst mentioning on-line auction sites may I advise caution for buyers. There appears to be a growing trend for some sellers to copy rare material and put it up for sale. In the small print they then mention it is a copy or a facsimile. Often this fact is not mentioned in the heading but only in the small print description! So please, if it looks a bargain, check and check again as you might be buying a worthless piece of paper. Moan over!



I try and support my local stamp and postcard fair which happens every month in Cirencester. At the moment I feel morally obliged to do so: trying to support those small traders who don't have large and slick web sites and rely on one-to-one service. Before I go any further you must know that I have a thing about Marilyn Monroe ever since I found out she was a parachute inspector and packer in World War II. I have been looking for a nice contemporary-used postcard of her for years. One of the dealers had a Monroe section so I picked it up on the off chance and the second card down was what I have spent years searching for. Almost an emotional moment. That's what I like about philately, you just don't know when or where your search for an item will end, but it is a great feeling and a lovely surprise.



ALFONS MUCHA (1860 - 1939). PART 2

Norman Hudson

Mucha's return to Czechoslovakia, and *The Slav Epic*

In 1909 and in the face of jealous objections from local artists, Mucha was commissioned to decorate the Lord Mayor's Parlour in Prague's *Obecní dům* (Municipal House). Mucha was convinced of the national significance of this work. Having completed his work in Prague, he returned briefly to Paris to consult with the French historian Ernest Denis (1849-1921), then the most prominent authority on Czech history. He had already studied all available literature and drawn extensively on his contacts with historians in other Slav countries.



Back in Bohemia, Mucha found a suitably large studio at the Romanesque-Gothic Zbiroh Castle (*Zámek Zbiroh*), 40 kilometres south-west of Prague. Fulfilling his life's ambition, he began the *Slav Epic*, twenty huge panels, the largest six-by-eight metres, in tempera and oil depicting incidents from Slav history. Even up to his 68th year, Mucha worked nine or ten hours a day on an 18-foot scaffold painting the details required. *The Slav Epic* occupied most of Mucha's energies between 1911 and 1928. By funding the *Slav Epic*, Charles Crane had enabled Mucha to carry out what Mucha himself saw as his "life's work" and also left a considerable gift to the Czechoslovak people. In 1918 Mucha expressed his gratitude by incorporating his portrait of Josephine Crane Bradley as Slavia in his design for the first Czechoslovak 100 koruna banknote.



In 1919, the first part of the *Slav Epic* series, comprising eleven canvases, was exhibited in the Karolinum in Prague's Old Town (*Staré Město*). The Karolinum, located at the junction of *Železná* and *Ovocný trh* and originally dating back to 1383, is part of Charles University (*Univerzita Karlova*), founded in 1348).

In 1921, five of the paintings were shown, to great acclaim, in New York and Chicago. In September 1928, the finished work was gifted by Mucha to the City of Prague. All twenty canvases were shown together for the first time at the *Veletržní palác* (Trade Fair Palace) on what is now *Dukelských hrdinů* in the *Holešovice* (Prague 7) district.

Sadly, Mucha's *Slav Epic* never found a dignified and permanent home during his lifetime. Since 1st September 1928, the work had, by deed of gift by Mucha himself, been in the possession of the City of Prague. The homeless wanderings of the *Epic* were a bitter disappointment to him. The main problem, however, as Maruška had originally foreseen, was the work's massive size.

Independent Czechoslovakia

With Austria-Hungary disintegrating at the end of the First World War, Czechoslovakia - Mucha's homeland - declared its independence on 28 October 1918. The declaration

was made in Prague's *Obecní dům* (Municipal House), where Mucha had decorated the Mayor's Parlour just a few years earlier. After the glittering scenes of *fin de siècle* Paris, Mucha's later years, spent largely in Czechoslovakia, may perhaps seem an anticlimax. But in the context of his family life and in his firm belief that he was directly serving the nation with his designs for postage stamps, banknotes, the national emblem and even policemen's uniforms - for which, characteristically, he would accept no payment – he appears to have been fulfilled.

His best-known design for a postage stamp showed a classic view of Prague Castle (*Hradčany*). The stamps were issued in many denominations, with the first two (5h & 10h) being issued on 18 December 1918. Mucha's *Hradčany* design has since become an icon of Czechoslovak (and Czech) stamp design. He also designed stamps for newspaper delivery (showing a kestrel (*sokol*)), newspaper express delivery (showing doves and linden leaves) and Postage Due (a classic *art nouveau* design).



The last years

Throughout the 1930s, Mucha worked on a wide variety of endeavours. For example, in 1931 the Slavia Bank sponsored Mucha to design a stained-glass window for Prague's St. Vitus Cathedral (renamed the Metropolitan Cathedral of Saints Vitus, Wenceslaus and Adalbert (Czech: *metropolitní katedrála svatého Víta, Václava a Vojtěcha*) in 1997). In 1938 he started work on three pictures similar in size to *The Slav Epic* but even more ambitious in content. They were intended for mankind rather than the nation and were to represent *The Age of Reason*, *The Age of Wisdom* and *The Age of Love*. The triptych was never put on canvas. The signing of the infamous Munich Agreement on 29 September 1938, the subsequent annexation of Czechoslovakia's border areas ("Sudetenland") by Hitler's Germany and, on 15 March 1939, the invasion by German troops of the remainder of Czechoslovakia, all seemed to sap Mucha's remaining strength.



The fascist press, subsidised by the Germans, unleashed a disgraceful barrage, denouncing Mucha as a lackey of everything from international Jewry to Freemasonry. During the autumn of 1938 he caught pneumonia. His health was broken and he could no longer draw.

Mucha's death

Alfons Mucha was an elderly man of 79 when Hitler's Nazi forces marched into Czechoslovakia on 15 March 1939. He was one of the first people in Prague to be arrested and questioned by the Gestapo. Although soon released, his health, already suffering, did not long withstand the interrogation. He died just three months later, on 14 July 1939. A state funeral through the streets of Prague was forbidden by the Germans. Even so, a huge crowd gathered to hear the graphic artist, Max Švabinský (1873-1962), deliver the funeral oration. Mucha's body was laid to rest in the pantheon of Czech artists, the Slavín Monument in the old cemetery in the Prague district of Vyšehrad. Mucha's wife, Maruška, died on 14 March 1959, still separated from him by 20 years.

The Slav Epic, from World War II onwards

During World War II, and after Mucha's death, the *Slav Epic* was wrapped and hidden. After the war and following the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February

1948, the paintings were moved to Moravský Krumlov, a small town about 14 kilometres south-west of Ivančice, Mucha's birthplace. In Moravský Krumlov the *Slav Epic* was housed in the castle (*zámek*) and first went on display to the public in 1963. In the 1990s, the City of Prague waged a decade-long legal battle for the *Slav Epic* to be returned to Prague from Moravský Krumlov, with the latter putting up fierce resistance to avoid losing the 30,000 visitors who visited the town each year to see Mucha's monumental work. The legal battle intensified in early-2010 and Prague was ultimately successful in its ownership claim. The *Slav Epic* was returned to Prague in 2012. Prague's *Veletržní palác* was specially renovated, at an estimated cost of 20-million Czech Crowns (Koruny/Kč) (about £700,000), to house the work. The exhibition opened to the public on 10 May 2012 and remained open until the end of 2016. The Trade Fair Palace (housing the international art collection of the National Gallery in Prague) has not been designated as a permanent home for the *Slav Epic* and no permanent home has yet been provided.


In 2017, the entire 20-canvas work, rolled like large carpets, was taken to show at a temporary exhibition at the National Art Centre in Tokyo; Mucha's work being very popular in Japan. It was the first time ever that all twenty canvases had been shown abroad. Open to the public between 8 March and 5 June 2017, there were 657,000 visitors to the exhibition.

It was widely acknowledged that had *The Slav Epic* not been kept safe by the town and people of Moravský Krumlov throughout many of the darkest years of the twentieth century, Mucha's masterpiece might not exist today. It was fitting, therefore, that in September 2021, all twenty canvases of *The Slav Epic* were returned to Moravský Krumlov and were once again on public display in a specially restored exhibition space in the town's castle. It was proposed that the work would remain in the Moravian town until a purpose-built new home, designed by the English designer Thomas Heatherwick (b.1970), was built in Prague. The new building is due to be ready in the Czech capital in about 2026.

The Mucha Museum, Prague

The Mucha Museum in Prague opened on 13 February 1998. It is located in the Kaunický palác at Panská 7 in Prague 1, and has 500 square metres of exhibition and shop space.

The Mucha Trail in South Moravia

In September 2021, John Mucha (Alfons Mucha's grandson), president of the Mucha Foundation, signed a partnership with regional councillors from South Moravia to open a new Mucha Trail through the region. 

Bibliography

Various, including *Alphonse Maria Mucha: His Life and Art*, Jiří Mucha, 1989

Acknowledgment

Originally published with extra illustrations as a booklet available from the author at his display to the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain at London 2022.

JOSEPH SLOPER, PATENTS AND PERFINS

Charles Oppenheim

One of my thematic collecting areas is patents: the history of patents and of patents for inventions, notable inventors and inventions, people who have worked, even if for a short time, in Patent Offices, and so on. In recent years, I have tended to specialise on the overlap between patents and philately, so I have an interest in, for example, Congreve's 1820 patent for compound colour printing, and Charles Whiting's acquisition of his patent around 1825. That's when I discovered perfins. Most philatelists will have come across perfins whilst browsing for new acquisitions or reading philatelic magazines. According to Wikipedia, the name "perfin" refers to a stamp that has had initials or a name perforated within it; this is not quite accurate as a definition, because a perfin could also be any kind of symbol or image perforated into a stamp, not just letters or words. "Perfin" is a contraction of **perforated initials** or of **perforated insignia**. Many philatelists collect perfins, and the UK has a thriving society for such collectors, the Perfin Society, which has its own website (www.perfinsoc.org.uk) and which, like so many philatelic societies, produces a magazine, has meetings and runs auctions. It was founded in 1957 and has about 300 members. Although its emphasis is on the UK and Commonwealth, it also covers (and has members in) other countries. Great Britain was the first country to permit perfins, in 1868, followed quickly by many other countries. Though first applied to just stamps, the philatelic use of perfins later spread to prepaid postcards, and other types of postal stationery in the years that followed. Some perfins are very common and sell for a few pence; others sell for hundreds of pounds, as we shall see. They are not seen nowadays because they have been largely replaced by meter marks.

Why were perfins developed? They were an anti-fraud measure. These were the days where all medium- and large- sized companies had a dedicated post room, which organised both outgoing and incoming mail. Clearly, such post rooms needed a stock of stamps, no doubt of various denominations, to operate. The danger was that post room staff could and did purloin from these stamp stocks for one, or both of two reasons. Firstly, they could use the stamps for their own private correspondence, and thereby save themselves the cost of buying stamps. Secondly, they could exchange unused stamps for cash, as unused stamps had become a type of small change. Indeed, in the UK, unused postage stamps could be officially redeemed for cash at any post office. To reduce this problem of theft, stamp-issuing authorities, beginning with the UK, permitted the use of perfins. Stealing postage stamps which had a perfin and trying to sell them to a post office or any third party quickly became impossible. Figure 1 shows a half penny (GB SG49) used stamp with a perfin spelling the word "Fox". Most perfins comprised initials or other symbols relating to the company that had them added. The Perfin Society has tried to translate as many of such abbreviations into the full name of the organisation responsible for them as possible. Another anti-fraud measure introduced at about the same time (I am not sure exactly when) was the use of underprints, again a popular philatelic collecting area.

Let me now introduce you to the man who first benefited from the Post Office permission for perfins, Joseph Sloper. Figure 2 shows an image of him. Sloper was born



Fig 1: GB 1/2d with FOX perfin



Fig 2: Joseph Sloper, reproduced with permission from www.collection.science-museum.org.uk

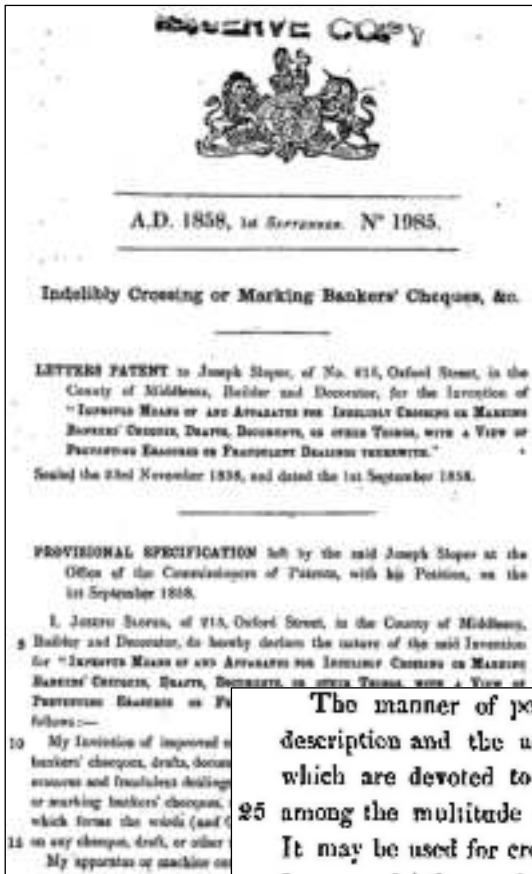


Fig 3: Earliest perfin patent

The manner of performing my Invention is explained by the following description and the accompanying illustrative Drawings, the first portions of which are devoted to the exemplification of a few of the more prominent 25 among the multitude of applications of which the Invention is susceptible. It may be used for crossing or marking bankers' cheques and drafts with (as for example) the words "Smith & Co.," see Figure 1, or other words or devices for marking bank notes with their value instead of or in addition to a paper water mark (see Figure 2), such value being represented either in figures as 30 shown, or otherwise in words or marks, as may be preferred; for marking cheques, as under, particular amounts or values (see Figure 3); for marking the value, date, or number, or a symbol, upon exchequer bills, dock warrants, and documents of a like nature, for numbering, dating, or marking, railway tickets (see Figure 4); for numbering or marking the value upon scrip, or 35 certificates, or shares, for producing, or in substitution of, the present embossed stamp, or for cancelling signatures upon cheques and other documents, and at the same time marking the date &c. of cancelling (see Figure 5); for marking the number or date upon turnpike tickets, and the value upon pawnbrokers' tickets, and for marking personal and household linen. But it is to be

Fig 4: Potential uses for the invention

in 1812 and died in 1890. He was a moderately prolific inventor, with five British patents and one US patent to his name. The first of his patents, nothing to do with perfin, was issued in 1857. His earliest perfin patent (number 1985 of 1858) was his second patent; this gave him a UK monopoly on all perfins using his equipment until 1872 (the maximum lifetime for patents was 14 years in those days). His perfin patent (Figure 3) has the interesting title “Indelibly Crossing or Marking Bankers’ Cheques, etc.”. The patent specification states that the purpose of punching holes in the documents is to “prevent erasures and fraudulent dealings”. Why is this title interesting? Because it makes no mention of postage stamps (which were, of course, well established in 1858, the date he got the patent). The text of the patent specification mentions the use of his invention on railways tickets, bank notes, share certificates, turnpike tickets, pawnbrokers’ tickets, and even personal linen! (See Figure 4, where Sloper described potential uses for his invention.) However, there is no mention of postage stamps in either the patent’s text or title, even though perfins in stamps became common once the Post Office had approved their use, so there was clearly a pent-up demand for them. Not that it matters to Sloper’s monopoly, but it seems he did not initially think his invention would be needed or used on stamps. The fact that stamps were not mentioned in his original patent seems odd when we see that the official history of his company (see below) noted that in February 1868 he was lobbying the Postmaster General to authorise perfins. This makes me think he gradually, over a period of ten years, became convinced that his invention was particularly appropriate for postage stamps. He clearly recognised the importance of his perforating method to stamp production when he obtained a US patent (155,340, issued in 1874, and shown in Figure 5) entitled “Improvement in perforating stamps”, which not merely only discussed stamps, but also noted that what is created by the perforations could be letters, words or images. Incidentally, he obtained a second relevant UK patent, 3,740 of 1872, on perforating paper (Figure 6). This, as for the US patent, specifically states that his invention can be used to create perforated letters, numbers and/or images, though it does not mention its use on postage stamps. His 1872 UK patent may well have reasserted his dominance of the perfin business very soon after his 1858 patent had expired.

So, by the time the use of perfins on postage stamps had received an official stamp (sorry!) of approval, Sloper’s initial patent did not have many more years to run – four to be precise (1868 – 1872). Nonetheless, by the time Sloper’s two patent monopolies had finally, around 1888, expired, his company had established such a dominance that it remained the most important UK manufacturer of perfin-creating parts for many years. In 1878, Sloper set up a company called Sloper’s Patent Perforating Machines, but this changed to J. Sloper & Co. Ltd. shortly afterwards. His company issued its own perfins on “stamps” in various colours with the perfin “J S”, and later “J S Co” as part of its marketing efforts, no doubt liberally distributed to target organisations; examples can be seen in Figure 7.

The importance of patents to the company he founded is made clear in a small booklet issued by the company in 1958, to celebrate its centenary (Figure 8). This official history notes that Sloper founded his first company in 1858, but I do not know what it was called. Nelson (see references) noted that the company was still active in 1967 but probably folded soon after that, no doubt killed off by the popularity of meter marks. The official history notes that the Postmaster General issued a general instruction approving the use of perfins in March 1868, followed by a remarkable announcement dated March 1869 specifically recommending Sloper’s company, using the following words: “Mr. Sloper, of Walbrook House, Walbrook, who has devised the machine, would no doubt afford you information

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOSEPH SLOPER, OF LONDON, ENGLAND.

IMPROVEMENT IN PERFORATING-STAMPS.

Specification bearing part of Letters Patent No. 133,336, dated September 22, 1874; application filed February 6, 1874.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOSEPH SLOPER, of London, England, have invented improvements in perforating stamps for producing perforations (grouped to represent marks, letters, figures, or devices upon wet through paper and other materials, of which the following is a specification:

This invention consists mainly, first, in the combination of certain removable parts of the perforator with suitable stops for securing proper register of the parts when the machine is used, and, second, in the combination of certain fixed parts with certain removable parts, as will be fully described hereinafter.

In the drawings my invention is represented fully in detail elevation and plan views.

To make clear the nature of the invention, I will now proceed to describe fully its construction and manner of operation.

Fig. 1, Figure 1, represents a perforator of usual construction, but separated into two parts, as shown, which is suitably attached to a proper stand, adapted to move vertically by the usual set-screws or other proper means. *a* represents the cleaver, also suitably divided, which is either connected at each end to the divided matrix *M*, or suspended in any proper manner from the frame of the machine. The adjoining ends of these divided parts are properly removed, as shown in Figs. 1 and 3, to receive and hold securely the intermediate removable pieces *d* & *e*, Fig. 2.

The stationary parts described, and also the removable, may be provided with any suitable device, it being designed, of course, to use in practice such devices for the fixed sides as will be desired constantly, and such others for the removable center-piece as require to be changed from time to time, such as dates and numbers.

For the purpose of insuring the proper relative position between the fixed and removable parts, in order that a perfect register may be obtained, I employ stops or blocks, or equivalent devices, adapted to hold the removable pieces in their proper place, the stops passing through the openings *F*, Figs. 7, 8, and 9.

If desired, the removable parts may be engaged in connection with a removable carriage, as shown in Figs. 10 and 11.

The device as constructed may be used in series, either circular or otherwise, for producing a series of marks, as indicated in Figs. 12 and 13; or they may be used singly.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The combination of the removable perforator, cleaver, and matrix with suitable stops or check-pins, to secure the register of the parts when in operation, as set forth.
2. The combination of the permanent perforator, cleaver, and matrix with the removable perforated cleaver and matrix, as described.

JOSEPH SLOPER.

Witness:
G. F. WARREN,
17 Goswell Street, London.
JOHN DEAR,
Of counsel.

Fig 5: US Patent 1874

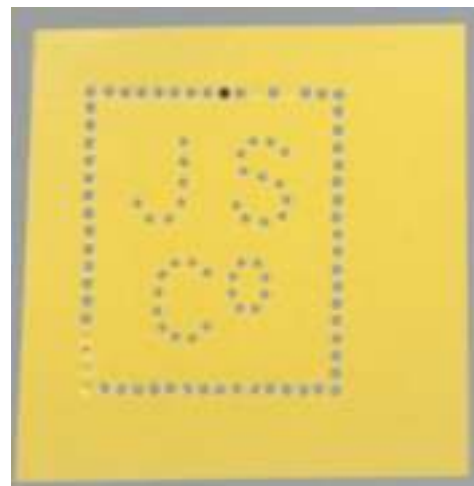



Fig 7: Examples of Sloper's own company perfin

RESERVE COPY



A.D. 1872, 10th December. N^o 8740.

Tools for Perforating Paper, &c.

LETTERS PATENT to Joseph Sloper, of Waltham House, Waltham, in the City of London, Civil Engineer, for the Invention of "IMPROVED MEANS OF ARRANGING THE PERFORATING PERFORATORS (CLEAVERS OR SCISSORS) AND DEVICES FOR USE) PERFORATING PAPER AND OTHER MATERIALS."

Sealed the 26th February 1873, and dated the 10th December 1872.

PROVINCIAL SPECIFICATION in: by the said Joseph Sloper at the Office of the Commissioners of Patents, with his Office, on the 10th December 1872.

I, JOSEPH SLOPER, of Waltham House, Waltham, in the City of London, Civil Engineer, do hereby declare the nature of the said Invention for "IMPROVED MEANS OF ARRANGING THE PERFORATING PERFORATORS (CLEAVERS OR SCISSORS) AND DEVICES FOR USE) PERFORATING PAPER AND OTHER MATERIALS," to be as follows:—

Certain perforating tools or perforators constructed, and so called, flow in accordance with my own patented invention (No. 1885, A.D. 1855), consist of three principal members, namely, a top member hereinafter called "perforator," consisting of or carrying the perforating punches or needles called needles or pins; a bottom member hereinafter called

Fig 6: UK patent on perforating paper

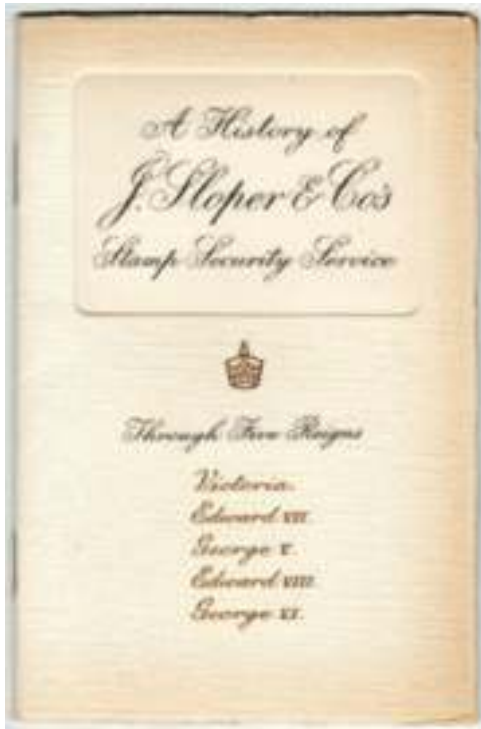


Fig 8: Company booklet 1958



Photograph of the original Letter Patent granted by Queen Victoria in 1846. "From the original hand-written parchment (12 inches x 18 inches) attached to the original seal and by order of the Queen, I have had it reproduced in ink in the possession of J. Hooper & Co. Ltd."



Photograph of the original Letter Patent granted by Queen Victoria in 1841. "From the original hand-written parchment (12 inches x 18 inches) attached to the original seal and by order of the Queen, I have had it reproduced in ink in the possession of J. Hooper & Co. Ltd."

Figs 9 - 10: Patents as published in the company's official history

on the subject [of perfin]”. The history continues with further extracts from later letters dated 1871-1876 addressed to Mr Sloper offering support and encouragement for the use of his equipment by organisations. The history also quotes from an 1894 letter from a group of large city firms to the Postmaster General, stating that they strongly supported the use of Sloper equipment, having been shown it by Mr. Percy Sloper (presumably Joseph Sloper’s son) of J. Sloper & Co., of 20 King William Street, London E.C. The history concludes with a list of companies who at the time the history was written used the Sloper system; this list includes many of what you would call the great and the good; to my mind, the most interesting client was De La Rue.

The importance of patents to the company is made clear by the two large reproductions of the key Sloper patents - his 1858 original patent, and his later 3740 of 1872 (incorrectly described as 1871) in the company’s official history (Figures 9-10). These were the patent documents held by the company, and readers will note the fact that the patent documents issued to the patent owner are much fancier than the copies of patent documents obtainable by the public (for examples of these, see Figures three and six).

I did say that perfins can be very expensive for philatelists. I give you Figure 11 to ponder over. 📖

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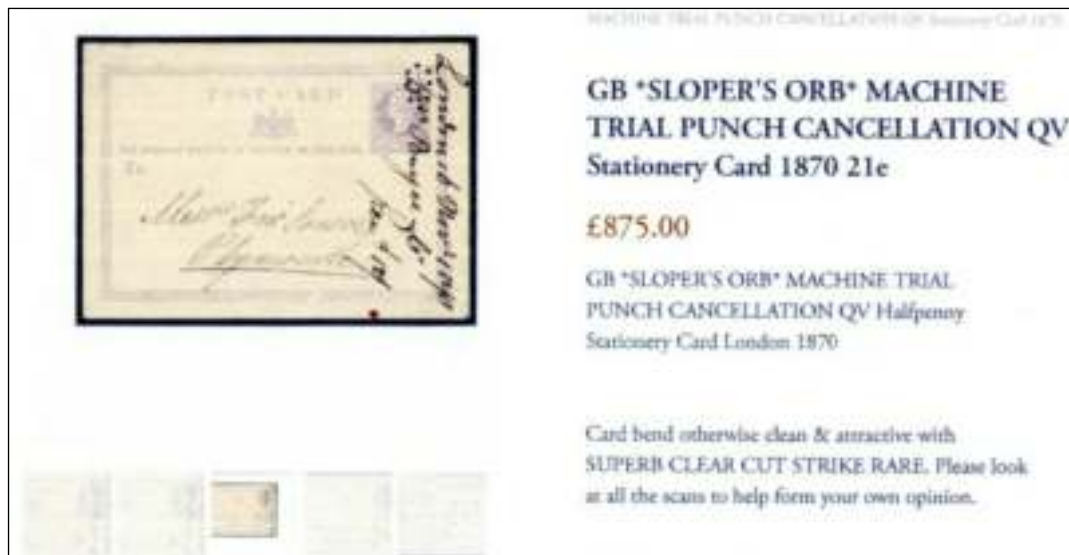


Fig 11: A well-known dealer has (or had) this Sloper item for sale on his website

THEMATIC EXHIBITING: TRADITIONAL PHILATELY IN THE SUBJECT MATTER

Rudolf Spieler

Today it is not enough to show only “normal” stamps in a competitive exhibit. There is a need for varieties, proofs, perforation differences, different watermarks, company perforations, overprints and much more. In order to be able to show all this, individual stamps from definitive series are of course suitable for thematic collectors. These usually run for several years (at least in the past) and offer this desired variety due to the usually high print runs. If one then has appropriate material together one makes a so called “philatelic study” from it. The stamp itself must fit the theme and should be included in the thematic elaboration. As a study, however, one shows the differences of the individual issued pieces. One must be careful that such a study must be included in the thematic elaboration without disturbing the flow of the story.

In the following I would like to show a study from my collecting area (the automobile). Treated is the 50 heller value of the issue for Bosnia Herzegovina “Landscape Pictures” from 1906 and subsequently the commemorative issue for the “80th birthday of Emperor Franz Josef” from 1910. These were produced in intaglio with line perforation 9.25 to 13.5 for the first issue and line perforation 12.5 for the second issue. This stamp depicts the first k.u.k. Military Postal Car from 1905 built by the Austrian Austro-Daimler Works in Wiener Neustadt.

Figure 1 issue 1906 perforated, perforation 12.5 x 12.5. *Figure 2* issue 1906 imperforated. *Figure 3* 1906 issue perforated, Coleman perforation 3411 12.5 x 10.5; 6.5 x 6.5.

For stamps with unequal perforations, the Coleman system is used. Each possible perforation is assigned a digit, which is then indicated clockwise around the stamp, starting from the top.

Figure 4 issue 1906 proof, imperforated on cardboard. *Figure 5* issue 1906 proof perforated on original paper perforation 12.5 x 12.5.

The stamps were then re-issued in a slightly higher format for the 80th birthday of Emperor Franz Josef. At the bottom centre, the previous reign 1830-1910 was added as an inscription.

Figure 6 issue 1906 proof imperforated on original paper. *Figure 7* 1910 issue perforated. *Figure 8* issue 1910 colour proof in green colour. *Figure 9* issue 1910 colour proof in orange colour.

After World War I the state of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs was created first in 1918. In the same year the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, colloquially known as the SHS Kingdom or SHS State, was established by merging with the Kingdom of Serbia. From 1918 the stamps of Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to be used. These were overprinted in both Latin and Cyrillic script.



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3



Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7



Fig 8



Fig 9



Fig 10



Fig 11



Fig 12

Figure 10 issue SHS-State with Cyrillic overprint. *Figure 11* issue SHS-State with error in left overprint 981 instead of 1918. *Figure 12* issue SHS-State with overprinting. *Figure 13* issue SHS-State with inverted overprint. *Figure 14* issue SHS-State with double overprint. *Figure 15* issue SHS-State with double overprint, one of them upside down.

One can then end a study very nicely with a real used letter. *Figure 16* registered letter from Bugojno to Petrovaradin, mixed Slovenian and Bosnian franking, franked with 90 crowns postage due.

Interesting aspects of traditional elements in thematic philately are often the materials on which stamps are printed. Mostly it is paper and often a special one.

In Latvia due to paper shortage after World War I stamps were printed on the back of general staff cards. These cards came from stocks of the Army High Command 8 stationed in Riga. When the German troops left, these cards were simply left behind. The first issue with the sun pattern on the cards was printed in Riga. There were three classes of these maps. Class 1 is a finely drawn German General Staff map with brown contour lines. Class 2 was crudely drawn and printed in black only, and Class 3 had white on the reverse. *Figures 17 and 18* show on the left the front side of Latvian stamps, on the right the back of the same stamps. The map was number 18 and showed the surroundings of Szawle. In total, stamps were printed on 83 different general staff maps. On the theme of maps, traffic and mountains, this is a very nice piece.

Each postal administration had to report the new issue to the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in Bern. From there all UPU member countries then received the information about the newly issued stamps of each country. In Mauritania three stamps of each issue were pasted on sheets and then cancelled or marked with a three-line red stamp with the inscription "SPECIMEN COLLECTION MAURITANIE" of type D12 (30 x 14mm).

Figures 19 to 21 show stamps from Yugoslavia for the International Automobile and Motorcycle race in Belgrade 1939. The stamps were all cancelled with a red three-line postmark "SPECIMEN COLLECTION MAURITANIE". However, there was no motorcycle race at this event, so the inscription on the stamps is actually wrong.

Various companies also used sheet margins to place their advertisements. Special supplies for automobile workshops were delivered by the company Gerhard Nagel. *Figure 22* shows the advertising imprint for such automobile supplies on the sheet edge of the stamps from the German Reich. The stamps show people at work. Possibly they are trying to remove some dents from a car body part with their big hammers! It is also worth taking a closer look at these stamps as one can discover many printing coincidences, varieties, perforations and much more.

Similarly in *figures 23 to 27* from left to right may be seen on the original stamp, the centrepiece (car) reversed and specimen overprint. Next to it is a reprint from 2001, in the middle the centre is up, next to it the centre is down, on the far right the centre is shifted to the right. In *figure 28* there is a piece from the so-called Roosevelt album. (Roosevelt as President received 85 imperforate pieces of each issue). *Figure 29* shows a larger block with plate number.

Continuing with a closer look at stamps, *figures 30 and 31* show Gottlieb Daimler. On the left is a plate flaw of the so-called starting handle (a very good detail for car collectors) and on the right is a glued paper web through the entire stamp image.

Figure 32 shows a prominent mis-perforation. In *figure 33* the blue ink was too faint to be able to print the stamp properly; whilst in *figure 34* showing the issue from Trieste



Fig 13



Fig 14

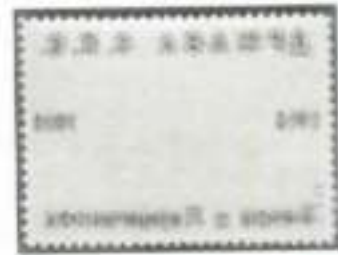


Fig 15



Fig 16



Figs 17-18



Figs 19-21



Fig 22



Fig 28

Figs 23-27



Fig 29



Fig 30

Fig 31



Fig 32



Fig 33



Fig 34



Fig 35



Fig 36



Fig 37



Fig 38



Fig 39



Fig 43



Fig 40



Fig 41




Fig 42

Zone A the gutter margin showing Xmas 1953 was celebrated. Note there were thirteen different types of “AMG-FTT” overprints (AMG-FTT = Allied Military Government Free Trieste Territory).

Inscription slips can also be very interesting for thematics. These can make connections to localities and their names as well as events, companies and their products. *Figures 35 to 39* show registered labels with *figure 35* showing a registered label from the Fiat plant in Turin and stamps cancelled with the local postmark from the plant with postage stamps from the Socialist Republic of Italy. *Figure 36* shows a registered label from the Alfa Romeo plant in San Martino, *figure 37* the International Motor Show in Melbourne, *figure 38* from the Veith tyre plant in Höchst and *figure 39* from the plant of KDF trucks in Fallersleben.

Finally in this part, a story that fits today, but happened more than 40 years ago. The Turkish post office issued a stamp on the subject of road safety. The inscription on it was “ASIRI HIZ OLDURUR” meaning “Speeding leads to death”. In the first issue of this stamp the license plate of the crashed car has numbers in Arabic script (*figure 40*). In the second issue the license plate is without any inscription (*figure 41*). It is believed that the Turkish postal administration made this change due to protests from Iran and other neighbouring Arab countries. In *figure 42* the stamp is missing the colour black and in *figure 43* the stamp is printed in black only, but with Arabic characters in the license plate.

Part 2 of this series “Postal History in the Subject matter” will be published in December *Themescene*. 

Acknowledgement

This series was first published in *Filamobil* Magazine of the Motivgruppe Kraftfahrzeuge (Motorized Vehicle Study Group) no.210 2022.

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Minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 11th June 2022 at Swinpex, at St Joseph's Roman Catholic College, Ocotal Way, Swindon SN3 3LR

Present:- 18 members and 1 visitor

- 1 Apologies** were received from Mike Blackman, John Davis, Lesley Marley, Jean Alexander and Nick Nelson
- 2 Minutes of the 28th Annual General Meeting, as published in Themescene 2019** were agreed as a correct record. (No AGM had been held in 2020 or 2021 because of the Covid-19 Pandemic).

3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising

4 Chairman's report

I would like to start by thanking all the committee for all their work over the past 12 months. Without their tireless efforts the BTA would not exist. I would rather not mention each by name for fear of missing one; however, every one of the committee has put in a lot of their own time and effort into making the BTA a successful organisation. I thank you all for this commitment.

The past few years have been difficult for all of us and like most, if not all, philatelic societies we struggled to find ways to keep the society going. Fortunately, one of our members, Gerald Lovell, had suggested to me something called Zoom back in August 2020 and the rest is history! Our first Zoom presentation was in December 2020 and to date we have had 16 presentations on a wide range of topics with an audience of around 30 or more members and guests each time.

The BTA instigated an annual virtual one-page competition over the Covid period and it has been a great success with over 100 entries from a variety of countries. I thank Andrew Millington for all his efforts in ensuring the success of this venture. We hope to make this event a staple in the BTA calendar.

And last but not least the BTA was the lead society at Autumn Stampex in 2021. We had promised the ABPS at least 100 frames of material, both competitive and non-competitive, and we smashed that figure with 130 frames of Thematic Philately, Open Philately and Postcard exhibits. A truly wonderful display of material and thank you to all those who took part and helped with its organisation. I started by thanking the committee for all their work but I would like to finish by thanking you, the membership of the BTA, for your continued support and I wish you all well for the next year.

**5 Treasurer's Report
RESULT FOR 2021**

The accounts show an operating SURPLUS of £1,095.

This follows a surplus of over one thousand pounds in 2020 – the main factor being the lack of live meetings of any kind.

INCOME

Subscription income has held up well over the past three years since the fall between 2018 and 2019.

Our other source of income is advertising in *Themescene* and on the website which has increased somewhat and as usual this is shown offsetting *Themescene* costs.

EXPENDITURE

Our regular operating costs of insurance, website and affiliations remain consistent year on year. As you see bank charges make an appearance for the first time and I have included PayPal charges which arise when members paying subscriptions by that method choose to make BTA bear them.

2023

I propose subscription levels remain unchanged.

I am grateful to Brian Turner, who is Treasurer of Henley PS and Thames Valley Federation for acting as Examiner and delighted to say he is willing to continue in that role next year.

The Treasurer's report was agreed unanimously

6 Election of Officers

The following Officers were proposed and re-elected unanimously:-

Chairman – Barry Stagg; Treasurer Peter Wood; Secretary Anne Stammers

7 Election of Committee Members

It was proposed by Gerald Lovell and seconded by Malcolm Gascoyne that the committee be re-elected. It was agreed unanimously that the following be re-elected: Wendy Buckle, Editor of *Themescene*; Andrew Millington Competitions Organiser; Mike Blackman Advertising Manager; Lesley Marley FIP Representative; Jon Mathias Webmaster; Owen Green Membership Secretary and ATA Liaison Officer and Charles Oppenheim.

Wayne Cox, previously a co-opted member of the Committee, was proposed by Barry Stagg and seconded by Wendy Buckle to become a full member of the Committee. Agreed unanimously.

8 Ratification by the membership of the appointment of Brian Turner as Examiner

Brian Turner was proposed by Peter Wood and seconded by Wendy Buckle for the position of Examiner. Agreed unanimously.

9 Any Other Business

- a Life membership** Peter Wood proposed and Wendy Buckle seconded that Graham Boutle (immediate past Examiner) be made an Honorary Life Member of the BTA. Agreed
- b Congratulations** Peter Wood congratulated Andrew Millington, Wendy Buckle and Barry Stagg for judging all the one- page competitions and getting them onto the website and for the initiative of setting up the competition.
- c Speaker needed** Janet Nelson asked if anyone would like to give a display at Hereford and Mid Wales Society?

There being no other business the meeting closed at 2.53 p.m. It was followed by a display of Post World War II Postcards of Sarawak by Malcolm Gascoyne.

POST WORLD WAR II POSTCARDS IN SARAWAK

Display given by Malcolm Gascoyne to the BTA AGM

In the aftermath of the liberation of Borneo in 1945 there was little demand for picture postcards. Reconstruction, repatriation of troops and civilians and shipping of essential supplies occupied all shipping during the following years. It was not until 1947 that any passenger ships were released from military service, and they had to undergo extensive refurbishment before being returned to service. With no evidence of any postcards sent in the 1940s, usage was still rare during the early and middle 1950s. There is no evidence of pre-war cards re-emerging for use, but only new photographs. With no availability of printed postcard photo paper all the early cards have plain backs. The display featured the work of two major photographers.

Lim Poh Chiang was born in 1924 at Lembangan, Sibuan, to Chinese immigrants. After the war he was sent to Singapore to attend the Seventh-Day Adventist College, which was where his love of art and interest in photography developed. When he returned home he had his first camera, a Rolleiflex, and he became a founder member in 1952 of the Sibuan Photographic Club. Chiang's work focused on the peoples of Sarawak living around the Rejang River.



Dayak paddle maker

Ken Foo Wong was born in Sarawak in 1916. His father was a Chinese rubber planter and he became interested in photography as a youth. His legacy is a wonderful record of Borneo and Singapore during the colonial and early independence eras. He established the Anna Photo Studio in Kuching in 1937. He is best known for his photographs of the Iban and Dayak peoples of Sarawak, illustrating their traditional lifestyles.

In the 1960s two Singaporean companies started producing cards of Sarawak. S. W. Postcard Publishers (known to be Sing Wah and Co) focused on images of buildings and scenes. A.S.M.K. & Co Postcard Publishers produced two series of postcards. They appear to have taken over production of Lim Poh Chiang's work, particularly focusing on Dayak women; and produced a second series devoted to scenic views and prominent buildings.

All of these postcards provide a record of a society which had thrived for centuries and has now completely disappeared. Tribal people have moved into towns and an entire way of life has gone. These may have been postcards designed for the tourist market, but they provide a valuable historical record. 📖



'Tua Pek Kong' Chinese temple, Wayang Street, Kuching. Published by S.W.



ZOOMING ALONG

JEAN ALEXANDER WATERFALLS ON POSTAL STATIONERY 20th MAY

Jean Alexander is well known for her love of Waterfalls and the use of postal stationery in thematic collections and we were treated to both in the same presentation at the same time with her talk. Members and their guests enjoyed a deluge of wonderful waterfall images, some on the stamps, some on the imprints to the postcards and some on the reverse (picture side) of the postcard. And in some cases both the stamps and picture showed the same image. Some lovely scenes showing the power of water.

Material was shown from Canada, China, Ecuador, Iceland, Kashmir and South Africa to name but a few of the locations of waterfalls. I must admit I never appreciated there were so many! Many of the cards were 19th century and wonderfully drawn and colourful. Jean also showed advertising cards that had waterfalls in their design. Meghdoot and Chinese lottery cards featured in this section. Some wonderful material, well presented and given with great enthusiasm. A treat to watch.

ANNUAL SOCIETY NIGHT. 30th JUNE

Four speakers with interesting presentations entertained members and friends.

First up was Mark Humfrey who showed a few sheets on *Arctic and Antarctic Orchids*. Many orchids survive inside the Arctic Circle, some just a few millimetres high. As only a thematic collector can show, Mark showed arguably the largest orchid inside Antarctica – the Vanda orchid – which just happened to be the name of the research station run by New Zealand! A fun presentation nicely delivered by Mark.

Peter Wood gave us *An introduction to Guinness for the philatelist*. From perfins with the letter G (what else but Guinness), a penny pink embossed stamp, cancelled with post office cancel number 186 (Dublin), postal stationery reply cards to Guinness, special bottle labels and the 1959 stamps showing Arthur Guinness, the founder of the business in 1759, including the stamps sent in presentation packs to shareholders. A diverse collection of material that was fun to see.

Third up was Gary Cook talking about *The Eiffel Tower*. Early visitors to the Eiffel Tower in 1889 bemoaned the lack of souvenir postcards – postcards being in their infancy at the time. Gary showed souvenir cachets from the three different levels of the Tower and a stationery card with a private cachet from 1889. The world's first illustrated tourist postcard featured the Eiffel Tower. The illustration, an engraving of the Tower by Leon-Charles Libonis, is one of the best engravings I've seen. A 'must-have' postcard. A lovely and informative presentation that was a pleasure to see.

And last but not least Les Ashton-Smith showed material related to *Justus Liebig*, the founder of modern organic chemistry. Starting with four covers showing various anniversaries of Liebig all with some lovely cachets. Then we had images of some trading cards from the 1950s showing aspects of his work, postal stationery showing the Liebig factory, postage stamps showing Liebig products and finally a stamp showing the 'English Fridge' at Fray Bentos in Uruguay. A good mix of material that was well received.

Thank you to all of the presenters. It was a most interesting and informative evening.

KEITH BURTON VIADUCTS 12th JULY

Keith Burton gave us a fascinating tour of viaducts via old postcards linked to modern photographs of the same scene. According to the Oxford English Dictionary a viaduct is

“An elevated structure, consisting of a series of arches or spans, by means of which a railway or road is carried over a valley, road, river, or marshy low-lying ground”. (Keith made clear he did not include aqueducts, which carry water). To add interest and scale, every illustration included a train on the viaduct, which I suspect makes the hunt for postcards a bit more challenging.

We began with Keith’s childhood memories of Ravenshore Viaduct, south of Burnley. Built in 1838 it crosses the River Ogden linking Manchester and Accrington. In the nineteenth century local mills and factories discharged their effluent into the river, making it toxic, but today it is a local beauty spot with the viaduct itself a Grade II listed building.

From there we looked at Sankey Viaduct, the earliest major railway viaduct in the world, designed by a nineteen year old architect (can’t see that happening today!); and Monsal Dale Viaduct in the Derbyshire Dales. Next stop was Wales, with the Barmouth Viaduct / Pont Abermaw, which crosses a very wide river estuary, and required a drawbridge (replaced in 1900 with a swing bridge) to allow ships to pass underneath; then Porthkerry Park at Barry, built in the 1890s, and now within a country park.

Then it was off to France, with Wimereux in the Pays-de-Calais providing philatelic interest since soon after its opening it was used for mail trains between Boulogne and Calais. Three other French viaducts featured in the talk, plus one German example: Göltzchtalbrücke, the world’s largest brick-built viaduct, featuring four levels – stunning though vertigo-inducing.

Back home, the final location of Ribbleshead Viaduct reminded us of the human toll involved: hundreds of navvies died building these huge structures, and some of them are buried here.

This fascinating talk was packed with information and anecdotes. Perhaps one day Keith will consider giving us a further selection of these engineering masterpieces.

MIKE BLACKMAN *DISCOVERING THE WORLD OF UMBRELLAS AND PARASOLS* 9th AUGUST

What a wide-ranging talk this was! For a start, don’t just think of umbrellas as a personal item. Historically they can be found in structures, such as a Siamese throne and royal barge, and built into ancient Chinese carts. They were symbols of power in some countries: the larger the umbrella (carried by someone on your behalf of course) the more important you were. There are images of the Buddha carrying an umbrella, as well as Buddhist monks in China.

In more recent times they have featured in paintings. In the West they often reflected the fashions of the time, featured by artists including Goya, Renoir and Boudin. They are found in Japanese art, being carried as protection against sun, snow and heavy blizzard.

Entertainment was covered in the presentation, including dancers and a Chinese parasol foot juggler. The image was brought completely up to date with a pass card for the ‘Umbrella Corporation’ in the video game *Resident Evil*.

Some wonderful postal history was shown. An 1832 cover featured the umbrella or ‘pavilion’ cachet of the Italian Community of Castelfidardo; and a lovely Mulready caricature by William Spooner featuring an umbrella protecting a fisherman.

So many types of material were shown as well as stamps and covers: postal stationery, postcards, advertising and trade cards, poster stamps, invoices and more. The presentation finished with something I suspect none of us had heard of: the Umbrella and Parasol Museum at Gignese in Northern Italy. Has Mike visited it? Of course he has. He’s a collector. Thanks Mike for your insights into such an unusual subject. 📖

BTA NEWS

FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND 16 - 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

At last it's nearly here, two years late due to Covid. All the details will be found on the website and in previous editions of *Themescene*, but if you find yourself free at the last minute and would like to book please contact our Secretary [Anne Stammers](#) without delay. She will contact the hotel on your behalf to reserve a room if at all possible.

For those who are attending:

- Parking is free (despite what the hotel website says). Just make sure you record your registration number at Reception on arrival.
- We will be using the same meeting room as the previous event: the Drawing Room, which is on the first floor, conveniently right by the lift.
- Thanks to Jean and Crawford Alexander there will be a BTA Welcome Desk near Reception on the Friday. Please go and say hello, so we know you have arrived.

BTA MEETING IN HAMPSHIRE 24 SEPTEMBER



The organisers of HAMPEX, the Hampshire Philatelic Federation, have kindly offered the BTA a free meeting room at their Fair on 24 September at 13.30. It will be a members' meeting; please bring along up to 16 sheets to 'show and tell'.

[HAMPEX](#) is being held at the Wickham Centre, Mill Lane, Wickham, near Fareham, PO17 5AL (off A32 and A334 and near the M27).



Congratulations to BTA members who achieved success at CAPEX, the first International One Frame Stamp Championship Exhibition, held in Toronto. In the Thematic Philately class two members were awarded Gold: Lawrence Fisher for *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem and its Perpetuation* and Simon Moorcroft for *Winston Churchill: Where did I go wrong?*

STAMP COLLECTION MAKES A GUINNESS WORLD RECORD

Congratulations to BTA member Konstantinos Antonopoulos, who - after a very long process - has been awarded Guinness World Records Title Holder for the Largest Collection of First Day Covers. He has 13,360 completely different covers but far more in his collection as a whole.

HERE AND THERE

TC NEWS (Newsletter of the FIP Thematic Commission)

The latest edition of *TC News* (Feb 2022) has several interesting articles, including *Pictorial stationery cards of the Belgian colonies 1912–1932*. These are very acceptable in a thematic exhibit and the twelve page article has a lot of useful philatelic as well as thematic information. It is written by Jari Majander, who also supplied the article *Unusual postage stamps – A threat or a possibility for thematic philately?* This is a 38 page look at odd sized and shaped stamps, lenticular stamps, and various other modern gimmicky issues, not to decry them but to examine how they can best be used in an exhibit..

OPEN PHILATELY OR POSTAL HISTORY?

The latest edition of *FEPA News* (July 2022) contains an interesting article by Chris King *Emerging from the dark: postal history and open philately at European exhibitions*. It highlights the clear distinctions between a Postal History Special Study and an Open Philately exhibit.

AWARD WINNING PHILATELIC TREATMENT & PRESENTATION. A GUIDE TO DISPLAY, THEMATIC AND TOPICAL EXHIBITS FOR EXHIBITORS, COLLECTORS AND JUDGES

This new book by Edwin J. Andrews, which won a Large Vermeil at CAPEX, is now available from Amazon at £30. 174 pages, fully illustrated. The author can be contacted at 278 Serenity Hill Circle, Chapel Hill, NC 27516-0389, USA.

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BTA One Page Virtual Competition 2023

We are delighted to announce the third edition of our one-page thematic competition. It is open to non-members as well as members and last year we received more entries than anticipated; so to make the judge's burden manageable we are limiting this year's competition to 100 entries or thereabouts. Entries will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis, and we cannot guarantee accepting multiple entries from one person.

Entries can be [submitted](#) between 1st September 2022 and 31st January 2023. An entry form (on page 102 or available on the [BTA website](#)) should be submitted with each entry. There is no entry fee.

A previous entry needs to show significant differences to be accepted. Entries will be given Diamond, Ruby, Emerald and Opal grades. Best in class winners will be announced, and all Diamond award exhibits will be judged for Best in Show awards. Anticipate receiving results and feedback by 31st March 2023.

The Best in Show (BTA member) will receive a full credit for their next year's membership of the BTA. The Best in Show (non-BTA member) will receive one year's electronic membership to the BTA. In addition, all Youth entrants will receive one year's electronic membership of the BTA, and all entrants will receive a pdf of the edition of *Themescene* carrying the competition report.

Rules

1. There will be seven philatelic classes:
 - Thematic Philately – Nature
 - Thematic Philately – Science and Technology
 - Thematic Philately – Culture
 - Open Philately
 - Topical
 - Picture Postcards
 - Youth Philately. Split into:
 - Up to and including age 9
 - Ages 10 – 14
 - Ages 15 – 17
2. All entries require an application form to be completed.
3. The exhibit must tell a story (with the exception of Topical entries). Not a list of stamps or a procession of stamps but material that is linked to tell a story.
4. The exhibit page must have a clear title on it.
5. The entry may be on A4 or A3 size white or pale cream paper.
6. An exhibit (apart from Postcard entries) will be expected to show more than just stamps. Cancellations, air letters, telegrams, stamp booklets and postal stationery are but a few alternatives. Using a variety of material makes the exhibit more interesting and gives the exhibitor a greater range of material to tell the story. The Open Philately Class gives the opportunity to supplement the philatelic material with a variety of

non-philatelic material rather than just postcards. It is expected A3 pages will have a greater range of material than A4 pages.

7. The exhibit must be in English
8. The exhibitor will be expected to demonstrate good presentation, but grammar or spelling will be disregarded; particularly from those for whom English is not their first language.
9. Every item must be shown full size. Scanned reduced images of the reverse of covers etc. are permitted, shown next to the full-size front, with a note that they are being shown at a reduced rate.
10. Awards will be in 4 categories:
 - Diamond: all the elements listed in rules 3 – 10 achieved to a good standard;
 - 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.

The top category in each class will be scored as follows:

<u>Adult entries</u>		<u>Youth entries</u>	
Title and Introduction	<i>max</i> 10	Story	<i>maximum</i> 20
Presentation	15	Knowledge of the material used	20
The story	40	Variety of material	
Quality of material	10	(both philatelic and non-philatelic)	20
Non-thematic information	15	Presentation	40
Variety of material	10		100
	<i>100</i>		



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**British Thematic Association
3rd One-Page Competition, 2023
Entry application form**

Name:

.....

Name you want it to appear on your certificate (*if different from above*):

.....

City and country of residence:

.....

e-mail:

.....

Age, if 17 or under:.....

Please include proof of age as a separate file

Exhibit title:

1st exhibit:

.....

2nd exhibit:

.....

Please note 2nd entries may not be accepted if more than 100 exhibits are received.

How did you hear about this competition?

.....

.....

.....

This form can be [downloaded](#).

It can be completed electronically *or* printed out, completed by hand, and scanned.

Send exhibit and entry form to competitions@britishthematic.org.uk

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION 2022 ONE-FRAME 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: competitions@britishthematic.org.uk

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 at

www.britishthematic.org.uk/kcfinder/upload/files/Composite%20winners.pdf

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.....



THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2022!



On 28th July 2022, Royal Mail issued a set of eight Special Commonwealth Games stamps to mark the 2022 Commonwealth Games hosted in the city of Birmingham, England, from 28th July to the 8th August. All of the sports shown on the colourful stamps were played in the 2022 Commonwealth Games. Can you work out which sport is shown on each exciting stamp? (*Answers in the box below.*)



The stamps were illustrated by artist Charis Tsevis.

The vivid images feature action illustrations of selected sports and para sports: Aquatics - Diving; Boxing; Para Table Tennis; Para Powerlifting; Gymnastics - Artistic; Cycling; Mountain Bike; Athletics; and Wheelchair Basketball 3x3

The Commonwealth Games is a multi-sport event that is held once every four years and is often referred to as the 'Friendly Games'.



The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games featured 19 sports and eight para sports. 72 nations and territories came together to compete in 280 medal events. More than 5,000 athletes took part over 11 days of sports!



The Commonwealth Games is similar to the Olympic Games, but is only open to athletes from countries or territories who are members of the Commonwealth of Nations - a group of countries or territories known as the Commonwealth, most of which were originally under British rule.

The Games were first held in 1930, and they have taken place every four years since then, with the exception of WW2 years 1942 and 1946. In 1930 only six sports were played - Athletics, Bowls, Boxing, Rowing, Aquatics and Wrestling. This year in Birmingham 19 sports were played - Aquatics, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Beach Volleyball, Bowls, Boxing, Cricket (women's), Cycling, Gymnastics, Judo, Hockey, Netball, Rugby 7s, Squash, Table tennis, Triathlon, Weightlifting, Wrestling.





Only six nations have participated in every single Commonwealth Games since they began in 1930; Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand, Scotland and Wales.



Start your own stamp collection finding any sport stamp showing each sport that was played at the 2022 Commonwealth Games. You could end up with 28 different stamps! After that you could try to collect one stamp from every country or territory which took part - there are 78 to find! (these don't have to be sport stamps.)

??? QUIZ TIME ???

1. How often are the Commonwealth Games held?
2. What are the Commonwealth Games often referred as?
3. Where were the Games played in 2022?
4. Can all countries across the world take part?
5. How many nations took part in the Commonwealth Games in 2022?
6. How many sports were played in the Games in 1930?
7. How many sports were played in the Games in 2022?
8. How many days did the Games last?
9. How many athletes took part?
10. Name at least one nation that has taken part in every Commonwealth Games since they began in 1930.

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



Quiz answers: (1) Every 4 years. (2) The Friendly Games. (3) Birmingham, England. (4) No, only members of the Commonwealth of Nations. (5) 72. (6) Six. (7) 19 sports and 8 para sports (8) 11. (9) More than 5,000 (10) Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand, Scotland, Wales.

BTA PROGRAMME 2022

- 16 - 18
September **BTA Weekend**
At voco Oxford Spires Hotel
Guest speakers, members displays and social events
- 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.
- 16 November
19.00 for 19.30 **Zoom meeting**
Jon Matthias
Philatelic Passports
Sold as souvenirs for stamp exhibitions, philatelic passports provide an interesting window into the way stamps are promoted and marketed to collectors. This presentation looks at some passport pages from various exhibitions over a 40 year period, complete with stamps, special cancellations, and some other surprises!
- 14 December
19.00 for 19.30 **Zoom meeting**
Wendy Buckle
Pictures in Miniature: the art of illuminated manuscripts
European medieval manuscripts are an important source for our knowledge of the history of European art, and they provide a vivid picture of life in that period. This presentation will look briefly at how manuscripts were produced and in particular at how some famous manuscripts have illustrated the Christmas story.