

# THEMESCENE

March 2023

*In this issue we:*

*Explore a vision of the future*

**Expo '58**

*With Paul Webber*



*Visit a nature reserve*

**Enchanting Sundarbans**

*With M. Lokeswara Rao*



*Marvel at nature's camouflage*

**Dry leaf or butterfly?**

*With Vladimir Kachan*



*Examine the message of stamp commemorations*

**Studying World War II history**

*With Chris Yardley*

**BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION**

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Fig 16: Marshall Islands 1994. 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of General Douglas MacArthur's Return to Philippines.



Fig 17: Marshall Islands 2014. 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World War II (1944)

# THEMESCENE

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## THEMESCENE

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# EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

I'm writing this Editorial on the day the next stage of the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry opens. All of us in the UK know the story: due to the faulty software introduced into post offices, postmasters and postmistresses were wrongly accused of theft and fraud, taken to court, fined, and in some cases jailed. Wrongly. I thought I was passed being shocked by this story, but then the *Today* programme ran an interview with Nick Wallis, the journalist who first exposed the story. In the wake of this appalling miscarriage of justice the government set up four compensation schemes, all with their own rules and all running at once. Result: well, nothing. There were 705 relevant convictions, 84 have been overturned and 575 unresolved. To date four, yes four, people have received full and final settlement. A number of those affected have died and one has to wonder whether the rest will ever get justice.

On a much more prosaic topic, I am again appealing for articles for this magazine. I was delighted to receive this unsolicited article on the Brussels Expo (page 4) from one of our more recent members, Paul Webber. There must be more of you who could produce a piece? If your collecting interest has never featured in the magazine then it's about time it did! Do please think about it. If you have any specific questions about submitting a piece please email me at [themescene@britishthematic.org.uk](mailto:themescene@britishthematic.org.uk). Thank you. 

## MEMBERSHIP

We offer a warm welcome to new members Nathan Chestney-Stagg from Hampshire and Bob Paterson from Berkshire.

## SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

Thank you to all those who have already renewed their membership. If you have not yet paid you will find a renewal slip with this issue of *Themescene*. We would encourage you to pay by PayPal or BACS where possible, as our bank now charges us for every cheque transaction. You have the option of paying the full renewal fee, which entitles you to a print copy of *Themescene*, or paying a reduced fee of £15.00 if you wish to receive the electronic-only version of *Themescene*. The choice of course is entirely yours, but this is a cheaper option, and for overseas members a much cheaper option. Just indicate your choice, either when emailing details of your renewal, or on the renewal form if posting a cheque.

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*If you have renewed your subscription recently please ignore the reminder.*



# CHAIRMAN

**Barry Stagg**

**A**s I write this a new philatelic dawn has just arrived in the shape of the new King Charles III stamps. You may love them or hate them, but I expect it will help to promote philately and perhaps attract a few more people into the hobby.



From my point of view the very cold weather we have had, and still have in Cheltenham, is a good reason to stay inside and spend some time with the collection. But like many good ideas it fails at the first hurdle. In my case the hurdle is the fact that my son has just bought a house and his packing cases are everywhere, including the spare bedroom where my collection is kept. Currently it is under a number of cardboard boxes, kitchen equipment and even a step-ladder! Not the easiest of working conditions. But at least it is warm. And, as most people who live in this part

of the country know, the apogee of cold weather is that yearly snow-dance in mid-March that is called the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Snow, hail, monsoon rain – all are possible, so still a few weeks left indoors before spring calls and I can venture outdoors!

I had hoped to get to the Perth show this year (14-15 April) but other commitments prevail but I would like to encourage others to attend. These things take a lot of organising and they need your support to keep going. The same can be said for the York show (21-22 July), although I hope to attend myself this year.

I would like to return to a topic that I wrote about some time ago: what happens to your collection when you are seriously ill or die. So many collections are lost, destroyed or damaged by those who don't understand what you have or how to dispose of it. I was recently given two big boxes of material to sort through for a friend of a friend. Most of it was loose and still in the packets or the cards they were bought in. No notes on what it all was nor what to do with it. I have tried to sort the wheat from the chaff but I expect I have missed some good items. I compare this to the collection of a member of the local club. The vast majority was written up and in albums. I went through the postcard albums and it was an easy task to make judgements on what was good and what was not. So please, give some thought to what you want to happen to your collection and make sure your nearest and dearest have some understanding on what you have so that it can all go to an appropriate place. 📖

# EXPO '58: THE BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION 1958

*Paul Webber*

International exhibitions, also termed International Expositions, World Fairs, or simply Expos, are generally considered to have originated with the Great Exhibition held in Hyde Park, London in 1851. The 'Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations' was a showcase for the accomplishments of the industrial nations at the time. Each country presented its industrial, technological and cultural achievements for the admiration of other countries and visitors. Modern day Expos are held under the auspices of the *Bureau des Expositions* (BIE). This organization selects the host country from the applicants and regulates the frequency and nature of events. It is the host country, however, which undertakes the organization of the event itself and determines the overarching theme which (in theory) gives direction to the exhibits of the participating countries.

The Brussels international exhibition opened on 17th April 1958 on the Heysel plateau to the north of the city, the same site as a previous Expo held in 1935. Using commemorative stamps, covers and postcards as illustration, this article 're-visits' Expo '58 and explores some of the themes of the exhibition. Very few of the buildings on the exhibition site have survived, most being taken down immediately the event closed. In the same way, the world of 1958 has long gone. The fascination of looking back at Expo '58 is that it offers us a glimpse of Brussels and some of the prevailing concerns in the world at that time, with the philatelic material helping us to re-imagine the event.

The Heysel site comprised five sections. The whole of the western half of Expo '58 was given over to the host nation. An area of parkland separated this from the foreign section to the east, where each of the other forty-four participating countries had its own pavilion. A small section to the south was taken up by the buildings of international organisations, including the UN and EEC, and alongside this was a reconstruction of a Belgian village of 1900 called *La Belgique Joyeuse*, an amusement park, and the Heysel sports stadium. Nearby, the fifth section was devoted to Belgium's colonial possessions where a reconstruction of an African village, a Catholic mission and the pavilion of its two African colonies (*Palais du Congo Belge et du Ruanda-Urundi*) were located.

Of the forty-five participants (forty-three countries, the Vatican and the United Nations), twenty-one issued stamps commemorating the exhibition. Five non-participating countries also issued stamps (Bulgaria, Haiti, Liechtenstein, Panama and Romania) and eight colonies of Portugal (which was attending the exhibition) also commemorated Expo '58 - Angola, Cape Verde, Macau, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, Portuguese India, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor. The United Nations issued the largest set of stamps, sixteen commemorative issues featuring the constituent bodies of the UN such as the FAO, UNICEF and UNESCO (Figure 1 shows six of these). Stanley Gibbons notes that the postal validity of these sixteen stamps was restricted to mail posted at the UN pavilion at the Brussels' Exhibition. All sixteen stamps also appeared on FDCs in combinations of two or three stamps on envelopes with a standard design.

The second largest issue was that of Belgium. The host country issued two sets, one set of six stamps depicting principal landmarks within the Expo complex (Fig 2) and another set of four stamps featuring the Atomium, the structure designed for the exhibition (Fig 3). A feature of the set of six Expo landmarks is that each stamp carried an additional tax levied to support the exhibition. In ascending order of denomination these featured the Benelux gate, the country's civil engineering pavilion, the pavilion of Belgium's colonies (the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi), the replica of a Belgian village of 1900, the Atomium, and the TELEXPO pavilion. Each of these stamps was also issued on an FDC, with the cache on the envelope matching the stamp. While the majority of countries issued a single commemorative stamp (Brazil, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Tunisia and the USA), or two commemorative stamps (Iran, Liechtenstein, San Marino, Spain and the USSR), several countries issued sets (Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Hungary, Nicaragua, Panama, Romania, and the Vatican).

Many of the stamp designs depict the pavilions created specifically for Expo '58: stamps issued by Brazil, the Dominican Republic, France, Luxembourg, Nicaragua and the USA and USSR, for example, all depict their pavilions (Figs 4 and 5). The brief from the organising committee had been for countries to design pavilions to display their vision of the ideal city, or 'modern utopia'. As a consequence, the architecture of Expo '58 was thoroughly modernist, with new technologies and new materials of plexiglass, steel, aluminium and reinforced concrete being favoured. The Belgian civil engineering building, which had a cantilevered arm acting as a viewing platform over a relief map of Belgium, illustrates the ambitious architecture of the exhibition (Fig 6). Other modernist designs included the Philips building (Fig 7) designed by Corbusier and Xenakis which offered visitors a multi-sensory experience - eight minutes of light sound and video images. The Great Britain pavilion similarly revealed a very contemporary design (Fig 8).

Within the international section, the two largest pavilions were those of the USA and USSR. The two superpowers of the time had been allocated sites adjacent to each other, with a small triangle of land occupied by the pavilions of the Arab nations wedged in between. The two pavilions displayed very different interpretations of the modern utopia: the Soviet building was a massive glass and steel rectilinear structure, seemingly rooted solidly to its site and filling almost the whole of the space allocated (Fig 9). By contrast, the USA pavilion, the largest round building in the world at the time, was made of metal mesh with transparent acrylic panels (Fig 10). By placing its pavilion at the rear of the plot it was allocated, the USA had created a large open plaza in front. This was occupied by a round water feature, a shape mirroring that of the pavilion, and ranks of flag poles. A raised walkway to the south offered visitors a panoramic view over both of these pavilions and the plaza in between.

With the cold war a dominant feature of global politics in 1958, comparison of the American and Soviet pavilions was inevitable. Both pavilions presented displays of their newest technology. The centre-piece of the USSR's exhibition was a replica of the Sputnik satellite which had been the first artificial object to orbit the earth in the previous year. This was the first time that the general public had been offered a close-up view of the satellite. Alongside Sputnik was an array of Soviet technical and industrial achievements, and standing on a plinth at the far end of the pavilion, and seemingly overseeing the USSR exhibition, was a statue of Lenin (Fig 11). By contrast, the USA exhibition reflected the country's consumer society: men's gadgets, women's fashions



Fig 1: Some of the United Nations issues



Fig 2: Expo landmarks



Fig 3: The Atomium



Fig 4: Luxembourg FDC

Fig 5: Nicaragua FDC







*Fig 6: Belgian civil engineering building*



*Fig 7: Philips building*



*Fig 8: Great Britain pavilion*



*Fig 9: Soviet Pavilion*



*Fig 10: USSR Pavilion left, USA Pavilion right, with plaza in foreground*



*Fig 11: Russian Pavilion with statue of Lenin and featuring Sputnik in right foreground*



*Fig 12: Tunisia FDC*

and the American way of life, was one visitor's succinct assessment of the display. A Walt Disney film introduced visitors to the American dream.

Apart from the architecture of the pavilions, three other designs dominated the stamps commemorating Expo '58: a logo featuring an asymmetrical star; another logo of a seated figure contemplating a globe; and the Atomium structure. The star design (as seen in Figure 5) had won a competition in Belgium to provide the Expo '58 logo: the five arms represent the five continents, the building at the centre of the star is the Brussels town hall and to the right-hand side of this, is an image of a globe and the year 58. Symbolically, Brussels was at the centre of the world – at least for the six months of Expo '58.

The second official design, what the BIE termed a 'poster stamp', carried the organizing theme for the exposition, '*Bilan du Monde pour un Monde plus Humain*'. In translation, this phrase expressed a concern to take stock of the world, with a view to making it more humane; in other words, the desire to create a world for a better life for mankind. The phrase was accompanied by a person sat contemplating a globe in his/her palm. The design is clearly illustrated on the FDC for Tunisia (Fig 12), but also features on the stamps of several other countries. Expo '58 was the first international exhibition to be held after the Second World War. In fact, its predecessor, held in New York in 1939-40, had closed as war in Europe had already broken out. The declared aim of Expo '58 thus reflected the prevailing mood of the time, the desire to move forward to a brighter world. It was hoped that the exhibition would draw attention to the vital issues facing humanity and show how a better world could be brought about by new developments in science and technology.

Of course, all this sounds very idealistic. It is evident reading the website of the BIE that the organisation regards international exhibitions as having a strong educational purpose, encouraging the exchange of ideas and inspiring visitors. The ideal is that countries come together to showcase their ideas, technologies and artistic achievements in order to share these and to learn from each other, much like the Great Exhibition in the previous century. At Expo '58 the explicit educational aim was expressed in the poster stamp, the need for countries to take stock of the current situation in the world and to guide its development in the right direction, to a more humane world. Given the amount of beer consumed at Expo '58, and the presence of a funfair, it is obvious that these lofty ideals were not always high on everyone's list of reasons to attend; enjoyment and the opportunity to participate in a global village were strong motivations for many visitors.

At the time of the Brussels exhibition, there was widespread faith in the potential of science and technology to remedy the problems facing the world. In particular, nuclear energy was regarded as offering huge potential as a source of cheap energy, and the peaceful application of nuclear energy featured prominently as a theme in exhibitions at Expo '58. The Belgian show-piece on the Heysel site was the Atomium, a structure over 100 metres in height, made of nine steel spheres coated in aluminum and linked together with an interconnecting system of tubes (Fig 13). The Atomium was a model of a greatly enlarged iron molecule set on its edge for dramatic effect. According to its designer, it was a direct reference to the nuclear age and expressed the aspiration that nuclear energy would bring about a better world. Inside the structure were displays about the generation and application of nuclear energy, as well as a sample of uranium ore from the Belgian Congo. Congolese uranium had been the basis for the nuclear weapons used by the USA to bring the Second World War to an end.

The Atomium was, unashamedly, Belgium's attempt to emulate the Eiffel Tower which had been erected at the entrance to the Paris *Exposition Universelle* of 1889 and which subsequently came to symbolize the exposition as a whole, if not Paris itself. Expo '58 thus had its own iconic structure, which conveniently also served to showcase Belgian technological and engineering skills. The structure featured on Belgium's set of four commemorative stamps (Fig 3), all four stamps having the same design, but in different colours and denominations. The stamps were also issued on FDCs, while the Atomium found its way into the design of stamps and FDCs of many other countries.

Two events help us put the Atomium, and the thinking at the time, into context. In the same year as Expo '58, the 2nd International Conference for the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy was held in Geneva, with some 5,000 scientists, government officials and observers from both east and west in attendance. A Swiss stamp commemorated the conference (Fig 14). Sponsored by the United Nations, the idea behind the conference was for countries to share information on their current research into nuclear energy in a spirit of cooperation, with the overall aim of harnessing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In the United Kingdom in the same year, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was launched, and the first protest march demanding a ban on nuclear weapons wound its way from Hyde Park, London to the Atomic Weapons Establishment in Aldermaston.

The Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi, still colonies at the time, were allocated a separate section at Expo '58, with the intention of celebrating 50 years of Belgian rule. Within the pavilion showcasing the colonies were exhibits on mining, agriculture and the arts, while outside were tropical gardens and a replica of an African village. In contrast to the modern designs and materials of the Belgian and international pavilions, the village was constructed of mud, wood and thatch. Essentially, 'Kongorama', as it came to be called, was designed to be primitive (Fig 15). The village housed Congolese families who had been brought to live in the village for the duration of the Expo. A bamboo fence separated visitors from the African men, women and children who had been asked to carry out typical daily tasks and to make handicrafts for the enjoyment and spectacle of visitors. Similar 'human zoos' had been included in previous expos in London, Paris, Oslo, Hamburg and New York, although Brussels was the last. The segregation of the African families and their display as exotic, human 'exhibits' speaks of the very racist attitudes at the time. Belgium, like many other European countries, is currently having to come to terms with this aspect of its history.

It will have become evident that a considerable amount of philatelic material commemorating Brussels Expo '58 is available. As far as I have been able to establish, thirty-four countries issued stamps and FDCs. Both tend to feature the same four designs: images of the pavilions, the star logo, the contemplating-figure logo and the Atomium. With regard to the FDCs, there are a great many different envelope designs, although there appears to be a mix and match arrangement, with the same envelope cache appearing with stamps of different countries. Over the six months of the exhibition, specific days were designated as 'national days', on which the nominated country would host events. Each of these days was commemorated by an FDC issued by the country (Fig 16 is an example issued on the German 'national day'). Expo '58 also celebrated United Nations Day on 26th June 1958 with a similar FDC. Some sets of stamps appear as mini-sheets (Haiti and Romania), while postcards of most (all?) of the pavilions at the Brussels exhibition are available. Pre-stamped postcards with the definitive Belgian lion stamp of 2F.50 and featuring either the star logo or the BIE poster stamp were also



*Fig 13: The Atomium*



*Fig 14: 2nd International Conference for the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy*



*Fig 15: African village*



*Fig 16: German National Day*



issued in Belgium. Likewise, commercial pre-stamped postcards advertising a wide range of products, termed publifels are also quite common. Some of these offered free entry to the international exhibition with purchase. There are also interesting variations of postmark cancellations: the five-point star was frequently used (as in Figures 5, 12 and 17), but there was also a TELEXPO cancellation (Fig 18) and of course throughout Expo '58, postmark advertisements would have reminded everyone who received post in Belgium that Expo '58 was taking place in Brussels. 📖



Fig 17: Brazil FDC with five-point star logo



Fig 18: TELEXPO stamp cancellation



# ENCHANTING SUNDARBANS ON STAMPS ... SAVE THE SUNDARBANS. PART 1

*M. Lokeswara Rao*

Sundarbans is the largest estuarine mangrove forest in the world. It is a contiguous natural region in India and Bangladesh formed on the world's largest delta of 80,000 km<sup>2</sup>, formed from sediments deposited by the three great rivers, the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Meghna, which confluence in the Bengal Basin (Fig 1). The entire basin is traversed by a complex network of interconnecting waterways and is a designated world heritage site. Sundarban got its name because of its most abundant mangrove tree species, the Sundri tree (*Heritiera fomes*) (Fig 2). In this World Heritage Site, the Royal Bengal tigers swim in the creeks, the Gangetic dolphins play in the rivulets, while the estuarine crocodiles bask on the river banks. The habitat supports approximately 4.37 million people.

The Sundarbans are spread across approximately 9,630 square kilometres, of which 5,363 square kilometres are reclaimed and 4,267 square kilometres are protected mangrove forests. A further 6,000 square kilometres of contiguous mangrove forests are spread across neighbouring Bangladesh. It spans the area from the Baleswar River in Bangladesh's division of Khulna to the Hooghly River in India's state of West Bengal. It comprises closed and open mangrove forests, land used for agricultural purposes, mudflats and barren land, and is intersected by multiple tidal streams and channels.

Four protected areas in the Sundarbans are listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, viz. Sundarbans West Wildlife Sanctuary, Sundarbans South Wildlife Sanctuary, Sundarbans East Wildlife Sanctuary, all in Bangladesh, and Sundarbans National Park in India. The Sundarban National Park is a Tiger Reserve and a Biosphere Reserve in West Bengal, India. The delta is densely covered by mangrove forests, and is one of the largest reserves for the Bengal tiger (Figs 3 - 4) (*Panthera tigris tigris*), the national animal of both India and Bangladesh. As of 2018, India's tiger population stood at a total of 2,967, which is 70 percent of the global tiger population. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists them as Endangered.

The forests provide habitat to 453 fauna wildlife, including 290 birds, 120 fish, 42 mammals, 35 reptiles and eight amphibian species. The area was declared a tiger reserve in 1973, a wildlife sanctuary in 1977 and a national park on 4 May 1984. Despite these protections, the Indian Sundarbans were considered endangered in a 2020 assessment under the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems framework. Sundarban is also the only mangrove forest in the world having the tiger as its indigenous population. Sundarban has an extremely rich diversity of aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna. Its highly productive ecosystem acts as a natural fish nursery. Sundarban mangrove reduces the fury of cyclonic storms and prevents erosion from tidal action. Millions of people depend on the Sundarban ecosystem for their livelihood and sustenance through fishing, collection of honey and fuelwood / timber.

### **Biodiversity of the Sundarbans**

The Sundarban ecosystem is one of the most biologically protective and taxonomically diverse ecosystems of the Indian Sub-continent. The entire area is a conglomeration of river channels, creeks and islands which total about 102 in number. Of these, 54 islands are inhabited while the remaining 48 islands are forested.

Mangroves are spawning and nursery grounds for a variety of fish, shrimps, crabs, oysters, and crocodiles. They are also feeding and nesting grounds for many sea birds and home to other wildlife. They provide us with fuel, fodder, timber, charcoal, tannin and paper pulp. There are large human communities which directly or indirectly draw their livelihood from them. Mangroves are a unique biological phenomenon because they survive waterlogging, poor soil aeration, salinity, high humidity and strong winds. They are rich and diverse, and support a variety of animals, amphibians, reptiles, fishes, mammals and thousands of species of invertebrates (Fig 5).

“Golpatta” (*Nypa fruitcans*) is common in tidal channels, rivers, low salinity estuaries and in swampy localities in the interior of the Sundarbans mangroves (Fig 6). The plant has a variety of uses. The leaves are principally used as thatching material, but they can also be made into bags, baskets, hats, mats, raincoats and wrappers. From the cut stalk, sap can be extracted from which alcohol, wine, sugar and vinegar can be obtained. Ripe fruits can be eaten raw. The Hental Tree (*Phoenix paludosa*) or “Mangrove Date Palm” is a species of flowering plant in the palm family, indigenous to coastal regions of India, Bangladesh and Southeast Asia (Fig 7). The trees grow in clusters, up to five metres high, usually forming dense thickets. This species is threatened by the loss of mangrove habitat throughout its range, primarily due to extraction and coastal development. The IUCN lists them as Near Threatened. Dhundhul Fruit (*Xylocarpus granatum*) or “Mangrove Cannonball tree” is a small to medium sized tree native to India that grows in the marshes of the Sundarbans (Fig 8). The large fruits resemble cannon balls. The tree is monoecious or rarely dioecious. The bark of the trunk is rich in tannin and is used for tanning heavy hides into sole leather and for toughening and preserving fishing nets. The wood is a good mahogany-like timber. The fruit is used in India to treat swellings of the breast. Burnt seeds are used mixed with sulphur and coconut oil against itchy skin.

The Breathing Roots Mangrove *Sonneratia* species grow in oxygen-poor sediments (Fig 9). The underground root system needs and demands oxygen and the underground soil system is not able to support this. As such, the underground root system outgrows aerial roots that grow vertically up to the air above the soil. The cone roots have numerous lenticels that enable gas exchange directly above the surface. The cone roots provide the additional needed oxygen which cannot be taken from the soil. The Stilt-root Mangrove or Garjan (*Rhizophora apiculata*) has arching stilt roots that emerge from the trunk, hence their scientific name “Rhizopora” (which means “root bearer” in Greek) (Fig 10). These roots not only hold up the tree in soft mud, but also help the tree to breathe. It uses ultra-filtration at the root level to exclude salt. This species is found in the intermediate estuarine zone in the Sundarbans. The seed of this tree germinates in the fruit forming a seedling which drops into the mud and anchors itself.

Mudskippers are completely amphibious fish that can use their pectoral fins to walk on land (Fig 11). They are uniquely adapted to intertidal habitats, unlike most fish in such habitats which survive the retreat of the tide by hiding under wet seaweed or in tidal pools.



Fig 1: Sundarbans location map

Images from fig 2 onwards are all postcards issued by India Post unless otherwise stated



Fig 2: Sundri Tree (*Heritiera fomes*)



Fig 3: Bengal Tiger



Fig 4: India 2000. Bengal Tiger



Fig 5: India 2002 COP8. Mangrove swamps showing *Rhizophora mucronata*, *Sonnerata alba*, *Nypa fruticans*, *Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*

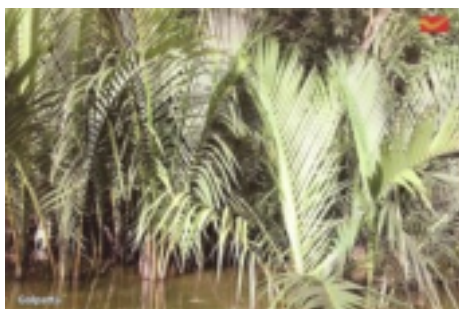


Fig 6: Golpatta



Fig 7: Hental Tree





*Fig 8: Dhundhul Fruit*



*Fig 9: Breathing Roots Mangrove*



*Fig 10: Stilt-root mangrove*



*Fig 11: Mudskipper*



*Fig 12: Irrawaddy Dolphin*



*Fig 13: River Terrapin*



*Fig 14: Horseshoe Crab*



*Fig 15: Fiddler Crab*



*Fig 16: Water Monitor*



*Fig 17: Saltwater Crocodile*



*Fig 18: Indian Boar*



*Fig 19: Rhesus Macaque*



*Fig 20: Spotted Deer*



*Fig 21: Jungle Cat*



*Fig 22: Leopard Cat*



*Fig 23: Giant Honeybee*

The Irrawaddy Dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*) is an oceanic dolphin found in discontinuous sub-populations near sea coasts and in estuaries and rivers in parts of the Bay of Bengal and Southeast Asia (Fig 12). The Sundarbans and Chilika Lake in Odisha are their known habitats. Genetically, the Irrawaddy dolphin is closely related to the killer whale (Orca). The Irrawaddy dolphins in Asia are increasingly threatened by tourist activity, such as large numbers of boats circling the areas in which they live. The IUCN lists them as Endangered.


The northern River Terrapin (*Batagur baska*) is a species of riverine turtle (Fig 13). Terrestrial and highly aquatic (freshwater and brackish), they are found in the Sundarbans forests of India, Bangladesh and parts of Myanmar. As part of its conservation programme, the Sunderbans Tiger Reserve has been successful in its efforts in hatching the Batagur turtles at the Sajnekhali Mangroves Interpretation Centre. Human activity and global warming are considered to be the main reasons behind their way to extinction. The IUCN lists this species as Critically Endangered.

Horseshoe crabs are hard-shelled bottom dwelling arthropods that live both in estuarine and the continental shelf of the sea floor (Fig 14). As this crab has got a high medicinal value it is commercially exploited for pharmaceutical use. The IUCN lists them as Endangered. The Fiddler Crab (also called a “Calling Crab”) is one of the approximately 100 species of semi-terrestrial marine crabs which make up the genus *Uca* (Fig 15).

The Water Monitor (*Varanus salvator macromaculatus*) is a large lizard native to South and Southeast Asia (Fig 16). It lives in areas close to water. The species can survive where other large carnivores cannot, as they are cold-blooded, hence they are efficient. It is the world’s second heaviest lizard after the Komodo dragon. The Saltwater Crocodile is a formidable and opportunistic hyper-carnivorous, apex, ambush predator (Fig 17). It is capable of taking almost any animal that enters its territory, including tigers, sharks and humans. Due to their size and distribution, Saltwater Crocodiles are the most dangerous extant crocodylian to humans.

The Indian Boar (*Sus scrofa cristatus*) differs from its European counterpart by its larger, more sharply featured and straighter skull and overall lighter build (Fig 18). The boar appears occasionally in Indian mythology in the “Charak Samhita”, the boar is described as a form of “Prajapati” (The “King of the people”) and is credited with having raised the earth from the primeval waters. In the Indian epic *Ramayana* and the ancient Indian texts *Puranas* the boar is portrayed as one of the “avatars” (incarnations) of Lord Vishnu. The Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*) has a tolerance of a broad range of habitats from grasslands to forested areas, also human settlements (Fig 19). The Spotted Deer or “Cheetal” (*Axis axis*) is found in large numbers in dense deciduous or semi/evergreen forests and open grasslands (Fig 20).

The Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*) is a medium-sized cat native to Asia (Fig 21). It prefers wetland environments with tall grasses or reeds to hide in and is often seen in the neighbourhood of villages. The Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) is a small wild cat native to South and East Asia (Fig 22). They are solitary, except during breeding season. Some are active during the day but most hunt at night, preferring to stalk murids, tree shrews and hares. They are agile climbers and quite arboreal in their habits.

For generations, the villagers around the Sundarbans have been collecting the precious wild honey of the Giant Honeybee (*Apis dorsata*) for their livelihoods, risking their lives from tiger attacks (Fig 23). 

*To be concluded in the next issue*



# DRY LEAF OR BUTTERFLY?

*Vladimir Kachan*

**B**utterflies are one of the most adored insects for their enchanted beauty. The dead leaf butterfly *Kallima inachus* or the orange oakleaf, from Asia, is the most spectacular example of tropical butterflies. It is one of the most fascinating butterflies of Asia. When its wings are open, it reveals a luminous colour pattern that can hold its own against the world's prettiest wings (Fig 1). *Kallima inachus* butterfly is one of the most incredible mimics in nature. When its wings are open it reveals beautiful blue and yellow colors, but when closed exactly resembles a dry leaf (Fig 2).

The leaf butterfly owes its name to its form of camouflage: its wings (including the ribbing) look just like dead leaves (Fig 3). Its outer wings even have an appendage that looks like a leaf stalk. Specialists agree that the leaf butterfly is one of the best copycat insects. Leaf mimicry in *Kallima inachus* was described by the famous British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace as “the most wonderful and undoubted case of protective resemblance in a butterfly”.

This butterfly is real master of camouflage. When its wings are closed it bears a remarkable resemblance to a dead leaf both in colour and shape. It uses this disguise as a means of hiding from predators and when it is on a tree, or on the ground amongst the leaf litter, it is extremely difficult to spot. There are differences in colouration and the cryptic pattern on the underside of the wings varies greatly from one individual to another, making it even harder for predators to recognise it. The veins are often darkened and resemble the central stem and veins of a leaf (Fig 4).

The *Kallima inachus* has two generations per year, one in the wet season and one in the dry. In each season the butterfly's underside leafy pattern and size seem to change. In the wet season the dead leaf butterfly is a smaller size and has a darker coloration (Fig 5). It has managed to strike the optimal balance between hiding completely, and employing some neat anti-predator strategies. During the dry season, tropical butterflies tend to be less active. So, as long as they stay perfectly still, camouflage is all they need to hide from predators. But in the wet season, when these butterflies are more active, they display eyespot patterns that are meant to deflect birds, ants, spiders, and wasps from trying to eat them (Fig 6).

Early in the morning the butterflies descend from their overnight roosting places to settle in a head downward posture on woody stems or low foliage. If the sunlight is weak they will often bask with their wings fully outspread. Later in the day, in the dappled sunlight of the forest interior they settle on foliage to bask, and at these times they usually hold their wings half open. When at rest butterflies are virtually impossible to spot, due to their incredibly effective dead-leaf disguise (Fig 7).

*Kallima inachus* is a strong flier and a medium-large butterfly with a wingspan of 85-110mm (Fig 8). They fly for a large part of the year with the precise months depending on location, and are multivoltine, producing three or more broods per year. Their typical habitat is tropical and sub-tropical broad-leaved forest at altitudes of between 500 and 1200m a.s.l. However they can be found at altitudes of more than 2000 metres above sea level in places like Nepal. They are often found near mountain

*Images of Kallima inachus*



*Fig 1: Nepal 1974 artwork*



*Fig 2: Vietnam 1983*



*Fig 3: Nepal 1974 underside*



*Fig 4: Ryukyu Islands 1966 maximum card*



*Fig 6: Bhutan 1990 essay*



*Fig 5: Ryukyu Islands 1959*



Fig 7: China 1999 stationery lottery card

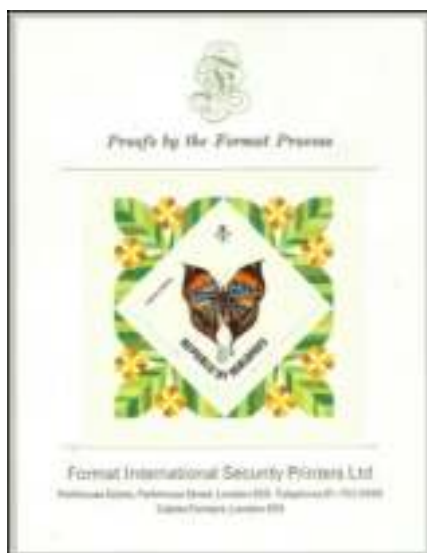


Fig 8: Maldives 1973 imperforate proof on presentation card



Fig 9: Sri Lanka 1983



Fig 11: Solomon Islands 1982 showing *Doleschallia bisaltide*



Fig 10: Tanzania 1988 miniature sheet showing *Kallima rumia*

streams where they can be seen puddling with other butterfly species but are more frequently observed amongst the undergrowth.

Both sexes only occasionally visit flowers for nectar and have a much bigger preference for tree sap and rotting fruit instead (Fig 9). When feeding on sap they typically do so upside down and this enhances the deception that they are a dead leaf. Animal dung is also visited and males are frequently seen puddling for minerals.

A similar species is the African leaf butterfly *Kallima rumia* (Fig 10). This butterfly is closely related to the Asian butterflies in the genus *Kallima*, and shares with them a leaf-like wing shape, a cryptic dead-leaf underside pattern and an upperside featuring a broad suffused blue diagonal band, and a narrow orange subapical band. *Kallima rumia* is found throughout the forested regions of sub-Saharan Africa, from Guinea to Angola, Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and north-west Tanzania. When perching they hold their wings slightly apart in readiness for flight. They roost under leaves in overcast weather. Adults are attracted to sucking-trees and sometimes also to fallen fruit and banana-baited traps.

Another species of butterfly is known that also uses one side of their wings to resemble dead foliage. this is the autumn leaf butterfly (*Doleschallia bisaltide*) which is found in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Australasia (Fig 11). However, this species has not mastered the art of camouflage quite like *Kallima inachus*.

The leaf resemblance of some species of butterflies is an important ecological adaptive mechanism that increases their survival. 📖



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# A WRITER'S VIEW ON STUDYING WORLD WAR II HISTORY ON STAMPS

*Chris Yardley*

Pursuing my fascination in trying to determine the message the designers of postage stamps are sending and my interest in military history, being in Covid lockdown was not been too bad.

Additionally, my reading of recent philatelic news has been positive and it would appear that people have found the time and renewed passion for stamp collecting during lockdown and are spending money through public auctions – all good. My research is enabling me to define the general observation that you can find postage stamps to illustrate almost any subject you care to investigate.

At the end of 2019 I self-published a book on World War One (1) and during 2020 and 2021 I completed and self-published a book on the Second World War (2).

I have learnt through the first book the necessity to use multiple sources to find all the postage stamps issued across the world. My interest has taken me beyond the constraints imposed by some of the ‘stamp cataloguers’ of the world whereby they will only recognise the stamp issues of postal authorities who have had the stamp issue generally available over the post office counter in the country of origin for at least six months and that those stamps are never sold at a discount. My problem with that is that it excludes stamps issued by a third party as a revenue earner for the country it represents. I’ll go further to state that the third party will be seeking to optimise revenues and will be producing attractive designs within subject areas they expect to sell as collectables and / or souvenirs in addition to being used to send mail through the postal system. I believe that all postage stamps reflect the living history, albeit changing, of the subject that they choose to issue.

I deduce that some third-party issuers do not necessarily want to sell their entire stamp printings at the specified time of issue and hold stock back for future sale – why not if they accept the issue is NOT JUST for everyday use to send mail? My basis for this assertion is the evidence through eBay, for example, when unknown older material appears – often offered as at a discount. 2021 “Black Friday” saw a large number of unexpected issues sponsored by a dealer in Cornwall I did not know of until that day.

Any and every issue reflects how an event (a military historical event – my interest) is viewed at the time of design and issue. It is a real, current, historical perspective.

I have taken a whole world approach to this project. Overall, I have looked at the world as six regions – defined in the index to my book. I have found 10,000 stamps that specifically relate to the Second World War from 215 postal authorities

## **Europe : A theme for a continent**

I anticipated every European country would have been influenced by the war, although I had in mind the maxim that the winners celebrate whereas the losers might want to forget. Several European postal authorities, in fact, waited until the EUROPA (the



European Organisation of Postal Authorities) initiative of 1995 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. The spread of design / messages from the 49 contributing European countries are a future project but a few specific examples are shown: EUROPA recommend an annual theme for its members but this seems to me to be of a 'class' classification unique in military historical terms.

I would describe the Slovenia image (Fig 2) as reflecting an independent country (from 1991), after the split-up of the Soviet Union. Rudi Španzel, engraving designer, visualised the theme through the country having been ravaged by the skeleton during the conflict and finally a sense of freedom and breaking free. The two stamps were issued se-tenant, and as shown as a miniature sheet, each stamp was included twice with a four-language explanation of the context.

Rob Buyloert, the designer, uses the symbolism of a barbed-wire enclosure and a stylised atomic explosion to tell his Belgian story (Fig 3). The Czech Republic, after the split of Czechoslovakia, used the traditional intaglio print convention, faces and flowers to symbolise the chosen theme (Fig 4).

Austria has used a single image to tell its story incorporating a skull enclosed within a halo of barbed wire and the exultation of a prisoner released from bondage (Fig 5). The holocaust is a repeated theme of the Europa issue.

Belarus chose a war memorial design repeated on two different coloured images (Fig 6). The countries of the post USSR-era often use the official memorial as images.

As a member of the EUROPA community, Germany has envisaged the theme through a photograph of retreating soldiers and the symbol of the larger European Community to commemorate the end of the war (Fig 7). In 1995 Germany also issued, outside the Europa mandate, two miniature sheets: one commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, and the other the 50th anniversary of the Liberation of the Concentration Camp Prisoners. It is historically interesting to note that the locations of the camps are noted (Fig 8).

### **North America**

One of the foundation postage stamp issues that prompted my book were the miniature sheet / maps each including ten definitive postage stamps of the US Postal Service 1991-1995 telling the US story (Fig 9). The detail on the maps, showing the geographical emphasis of the five years of the war, are really too small to follow, but the stamp images (50 in all) describe the US perspective 50 years after the events related.

### **South America**

Just eight country's postal authorities have responded to the Second World War. To my mind the most interesting acknowledgement is from Columbia. Columbia was able to maintain its sovereignty throughout the war, as well as avoid sending troops into battle. The country ceased diplomatic relations with the Axis powers in December 1941, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. As the war ended Columbia overprinted three of their own stamps with the profiles of the Allied leaders, (Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill) (Fig 10).

Uruguay declared itself neutral in 1939 but like Columbia overprinted four of its own stamps to declare the Allied Victory.

### **Africa**

If I have learned anything from this study, it has been the influence of the French Colonial system pre- and post-war in Africa and Oceania, such as the Central African



Fig 1 : The geographical spread of the 215 postal authorities who have issued World War Two specific stamps over the period 1939-2021.

Figs 2 - 7 are the 1995 Europa issues for “Peace and Freedom” commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War:



Fig 2: Slovenia



Fig 3: Belgium



Fig 4: Czech Republic



Fig 5: Austria



Fig 6: Belarus



Fig 7: Germany



Fig 8: Germany miniature sheets



Fig 9: United States 1994 : The fourth of five historical / philatelic issues recognising the events of World War II.



Fig 10: Columbia



Fig 11: Straits Settlements (Singapore) 1942 : Overprinted "DAI NIPPON – 2602 – MALAYA"



Fig 12: Straits Settlements (Singapore) 1942 : Overprinted in Japanese.

Republic, Chad, Madagascar and Senegal. The Colony's stamps were influenced from France and designs were consistent across these Colonies. Initially part of Vichy France after the German conquest, having had Marshall Petain introduced on their 1940 stamp issue, they decided to follow General de Gaulle as members of "Free France", a decision circulated through overprinting messaging on previously unused surplus images. The stories are consistent, the messaging was disciplined and controlled, and I perceive that the independent countries they have become still use stamp images to explain their place in the world – and make revenue through the quality of the design and volume of material.

### **Asia**


The countries of Asia became very much involved in World War II with the December 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the plans for The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, an imperialist concept which was developed in the Empire of Japan and propagated to Asian populations which were occupied by it from 1941 to 1945. It introduces a different political genre of control over an occupied country when its own stamp images are defaced by a foreign overprint – letting the world know who is in control (Figs 11-12)..

### **Oceania**

Oceania encompasses the Pacific Ocean and islands through which the Pacific War was fought, they were directly involved. From within this region the Marshall Islands have issued two "histories" of the War at the 50th year and 70th year anniversaries. The first set graphically illustrate key events through 1939 to 1945 illustrating the events through 156 images. The second set highlights the United States leaders on five miniature sheets each describing elements of the war year by year described as The 70th anniversary of World War II. Figures 13 - 17 are a sample showing the integrity of the stamp issue and visual impact.

What I found particularly useful in viewing the Marshall Islands' issues sequence of stamps has been to appreciate the breadth of Allied activities being undertaken at one and the same time.

### **Eighty years later the World War II stories are still relevant**

The world's postal authorities, and their agents, watch the calendar when planning future stamp issues such as anniversaries, particularly at 10, 25 or 50 year intervals. Recent issues reflect the revenue enhancing, souvenir-oriented appeal of modern design incorporating a service fee regimen that provides both local and international service fees within an issue. 

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*Purchase details of these books are available from Amazon.*





Fig 13: Marshall Islands 1991. 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the evacuation of Dunkirk (1940)



Fig 14: Marshall Islands 1993. 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of the Bismarck Sea (1943)



Fig 15. Marshall Islands 1994. 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Allied landings in Normandy (1944)




# BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION: 40th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

*Barry Stagg*

**A**s I am sure many of you know the BTA celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024. The committee would like to mark this occasion with a special non-competitive event where the BTA members show the rest of the philatelic community what it collects. The Royal Philatelic Society London has agreed to host a 1pm display of BTA material on 21 March 2024. We will have 42 frames to show the width and depth of BTA material, and, as space is limited, only one entry per person please. You will not be expected to talk to the audience but some words about your entry will be required beforehand for the handout accompanying the display.

I do not want to show just exhibits but collections as well. So if you have a collection or an exhibit that would fill between one to five frames (exceptionally eight frames) and you wish to show this at the Royal then please contact myself giving me the title of your collection/exhibit and the number of frames required. A closing date for entries and information to be included in the handout is provisionally set as 1 December 2023 and, as entries are likely to outstrip capacity at the Royal, a sub-committee will choose the material that will be shown.

There is no frame fee and you do not need to be a member of the Royal. Those who wish to enter and live too far away will be able to send their entry (at their cost) and details will be provided later in the year. We will need original pages, not reproductions. Any queries please contact me via email: [chairman@britishthematic.org.uk](mailto:chairman@britishthematic.org.uk). 



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## ZOOMING ALONG

On 14th December, despite the attractions of a World Cup semi-final on the television and freezing temperatures across the UK keeping most people only feet away from their fires, 29 members and guests of the BTA were glued to their PCs and were treated to an informative, colourful and fun Zoom talk by Wendy Buckle on the topic of *Pictures in Miniature: the art of illuminated manuscripts*. Wendy used images of illuminated manuscripts and philatelic items that were based upon them. For those of you who missed it then you missed a treat! Wendy started by saying that the talk was limited to European Christian manuscripts and then went on to explain the many stages of 'production' of a single page. The 'illumination' refers to the story on that page with important passages often in red. Monks and nuns known as scribes worked on these manuscripts producing a few lines every day. One scribe left an annotation at the end of his work describing his efforts as '...a terrible ordeal ...'!

Wendy went on to talk about and illustrated the decorated initials, borders and miniatures found on manuscripts along with the paints used; pigments from animal, vegetable and mineral sources. Many manuscripts were bound in gold or silver, precious and semi-precious stones, ivory and other valuable materials, although few have survived to the present day having been looted and stolen over the centuries. Wendy showed some wonderful images of the Gospel Books, the Lindisfarne Bible and the Book of Kells and supported by relevant stamps, FDCs and other philatelic items. It has to be said that not all philatelic items remained truthful to the design of the original item and certainly not as colourful. The Christmas story featured highly with wonderful colours from the De Lisle Psalter (which is in the British Library) and stamps which, not always, reflected the actual manuscript! But a lovely talk, well presented as ever, by Wendy.

On 12th January Julian Bagwell presented an eclectic mix of philatelic material to 28 BTA members and friends on the topic of cricket, entitled *Cricket related philatelic material 1830s to 1960s*. And what a journey that was: from an 1838 entire posted in Brighton whose contents commented on a recent cricket match, from early postcards inviting the recipients to a cricket club meeting, from a 1907 postcard from W.G. Grace to the London County Cricket Club, but also an illustrated postcard showing W.G. Grace, with his signature. Julian went on to show some humorous postcards on a cricket theme and a number of illustrated cards showing various cricket celebrities such as Frank Woolley, Jack Hobbs, and the 1930 Australian touring team. 1935 crash mail with an illustrated cricket bat on the envelope, and POW mail that talked about cricket in the camp also featured in Julian's presentation. Lastly he showed us some early stamps and some covers on a cricketing theme, the first one being from Cape Verde Island in 1962, a lovely postcard featuring Gary Sobers which was also signed, and some stamps and covers from the 1968 England tour of the West Indies. A lovely presentation on a popular topic. Thank you Julian.

Our February meeting featured Geoff Blackwell showing *Photography, photographers and postage stamps*. Geoff started his talk with a brief overview of the early history of photography, drawing our attention to the parallel development of photography and stamps. Prior to 1839 there were no postage stamps, and no photographs (at least in the public domain). Then in that year both Louis Daguerre and Henry Fox Talbot announced they

had developed a photographic process (the word 'photography' was first coined by Sir John Herschel in that year). The Penny Black was issued in 1840, and the world's first photographic studio was set up that year. Indeed Alfred Swaine Taylor sent a proposed stamp design to Rowland Hill via "photogenic art".

Photography inventors feature on stamps but, as Geoff pointed out, some of the issuing countries are not always well thought of. A Wallis & Futuna stamp showed a photograph of a view from a window by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce and the Comoro Islands featured Louis Daguerre, unfortunately with the wrong sort of camera. The first 'reputable' stamp was France 1939 - which has a date error, but error of fact not a nice philatelic error.

Photography was employed quite early in philately. The USA 1980 set portraying head-and-shoulder portraits of presidents was based on daguerreotypes; and the mail carried by balloon during the Siege of Paris was the first use of 'micro-photography'. Later on, as we know, British definitive designs were based on portraits. The 'Downey Head' was short-lived, but Dorothy Wilding and Arnold Machin leave huge philatelic legacies.

This report does not begin to do justice to the wealth of information and stories Geoff covered in his talk. He is a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, and as one BTA member remarked afterwards "What a marvellous display we were treated to this evening! To my mind it ticked all the boxes for extensive research on a very interesting subject, well selected images and an excellent explanation". 📖



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# BTA NEWS

## BTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 10 JUNE 2023

Please note that the **location** and **timing** of our AGM has had to change this year. It will still be held at Swinpex, which for this year at least will be held at the Grange Leisure & Community Centre, Grange Drive, Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon, SN3 4JY.

The meeting will start at 13.00. The formal part of the AGM will be followed by our guest speaker Les Ashton-Smith showing *Philatelic Firsts*.

Swinpex itself will be open from 10.00 to 15.00.

## BTA RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND 2024

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

The event will be held at our usual venue of voco Oxford Spires Hotel. Plans are well advanced and the programme and booking form will be published in June *Thamescene*.


# OBITUARY: GRAHAME BOUTLE FRPSL

Members may recall that at the AGM in June 2022 our immediate past Examiner/Auditor Grahame Boutle was made an Honorary member of BTA in recognition of fulfilling that role from 2008 until 2019. It is now my sad duty to report his death at the age of 89 on 22 January 2023 after a short illness.



In 2008 I was still rather new to the BTA Accounts when our existing Examiner retired and so was delighted when Grahame volunteered. Given his professional experience publishing the final accounts of BP it was not surprising that he had some suggestions as to how I could improve the appearance of what I produced.

His “Home” Philatelic Society was Bromley & Beckenham where he was Auditor/Examiner and Competitions Secretary and had served as President on three occasions. He was also active within Kent Federation having served as Secretary and President as well as acting as Treasurer of the British Air Mail Society for many years.

He had a wide-ranging thematic collection on the Oil industry, having worked with BP around the world; he had a collection of Australian airmails; and perhaps was best known for his “Black Borders” collection of Postal History which with ephemera ventured into what has now become the “Open” class. PW. 



# EXHIBITING PAGE

## NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS IN THE UK

Competitive exhibitions will be held during 2023 at:  
Perth, 14th - 15th April (Entry deadline now passed).  
York Stamp Fair, 21st - 22nd July. Entry deadline 1st June.

The general rules for competing at national exhibitions will be found on the [ABPS website](#). There is plenty of scope for pictorial collectors: classes include Thematic, Open, Picture Postcard, Cinderella, Ephemera and Maximaphily. If you are a first-time entrant you will find the rules provide a lot of guidance about the process and advice on preparing your exhibit. A competitive entry may be 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 8 frames, each made up of 16 standard display sheets or equivalent. No pre-qualification is needed for 1-5 frames. Non-competitive entries are also very welcome.

With no competitive exhibitions at Stampex this year, those wishing to qualify for international exhibitions must do so via the competitions at Perth or York. The rules state: "Qualification for FIP and FEPA Exhibitions

To be eligible to apply to show an exhibit of five frames at an FIP or FEPA exhibition an exhibit must have been awarded at least 75 points and a Vermeil medal at a National Exhibition in a recognized FIP Class within the five years prior to the application."

The next International exhibition in the UK will be [Europhilex](#) in 2025 (see "Here and There" next page) so this is your opportunity to qualify for that.

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# HERE AND THERE

## MAJOR INTERNATIONAL FAIR AND EXHIBITION IN THE UK

It has been announced that a major international stamp fair and exhibition will be held in the UK in 2025: EuroPhilEx 2025 will be held at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, from 8 to 11 May 2025. There will be “a large number of dealers” and the event will include an auction and the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists ceremony.

Full details will be found at its [website](#).

For those interested in the exhibits there will be over 3,000 frames covering all F.I.P. Classes (which of course includes Thematic, Open and Picture Postcard).

## VIRTUAL STAMPEX 4TH - 6TH MAY 2023

Timed to celebrate King Charles III Coronation weekend and the anniversary of the first postage stamp, Virtual Stampex 2023 will run for 72 hours with over 50 dealer booths, an exhibiting experience and Stampex Talks. There will be a “philatelic matchmaking tool” to allow people to meet and video chat with collectors with similar interests, or find a dealer with relevant material. There will be live philatelic roundtables for panel discussions, collector clinics and the chance to meet big philatelic names in an informal setting.

For full details go to the Stampex [website](#).

## YOUTUBE STAMP CHANNELS

FEPA - The Federation of European Philatelic Associations - have set up on their website a page of links to YouTube channels featuring philatelic talks and displays. Go to the [website](#).

It covers much more than pictorial collecting, but don't we all have other interests?

*In late 2022 various philatelic awards were handed out:*



### REMEMBERING JOHN LENNON

Motivgruppe Musik, the Philatelic Music Study Group, awarded its Yehudi Menuhin Trophy for the most popular music stamp of 2021 to the United Nations Postal Administration issue honouring John Lennon. The presentation was made - of course - at the Imagine Circle in Central Park, New York. Three stamps plus a miniature sheet show portraits of Lennon at different times in his life.

## BEST MAXIMUM CARD WORLD COMPETITION

The F.I.P. Maximaphily Commission awarded first place to Poland for The Honey Bee, part of the “Beneficial Insects” set. Second was Romania with The Winter Falcon, and third Spain with The Alcazar of Segovia.



# BTA PROGRAMME 2023

- 07 March  
19.00 for 19.30
- Zoom meeting**  
Michele Bresso  
*Exploring industrial, wartime and social communication through typewriter philately*  
Examines the significance of typewriters in history, culture and technology; an invention which changed the way the world communicated when it appeared on the commercial scene in the late 1800s.
- 18 April  
19.00 for 19.30
- Zoom meeting**  
Les Ashton-Smith  
*Marie Curie*  
A look at the life and work of the pioneering physicist and chemist Marie Curie, the first woman to win a Nobel Prize.
- 10 June  
13.00
- Annual General Meeting and guest speaker Les Ashton-Smith**  
*Philatelic Firsts*  
At Swinpex, Grange Leisure & Community Centre, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon SN3 4JY.  
Please note change of time and change of location.
- 30 September
- Members' meeting at Stampex**  
Guest speaker: George Henshilwood  
*Having fun with numbers*  
Business Design Centre, Islington
- October
- BTA One-Frame Competitions**  
At South of England Stamp Fair & Sussex Convention  
Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL.  
BTA Table

*Please note:*

Our Zoom programme will feature a talk every month in 2023 except October. Please check our website under [Events - BTA Zoom Presentations - Upcoming Programme](#) for the latest updates and descriptions of the talks.

*Looking ahead:*

Our next residential weekend will be held at voco Oxford Spires Hotel from 14 - 16 April 2024.

# Just4Kids by Lise Whittle

www.stampactive.co.uk

Have you seen the film or heard of the book called 'Around The World In 80 Days' by Jules Verne? In the story, in the 1870s a man called Phileas Fogg makes a £20,000 bet with some of his snobby club members that he can travel around the world in 80 days by train and ship. He has lots of adventures along the way - and I won't spoil the story by telling you the ending, but it is very exciting!



## Have your own adventure!

You probably have lots of stamps in your collection - count out 80 stamps and look up where the countries are on a world map. Then put them in order and work out how you would travel around the World and visit all the countries shown on your stamps.

Which way around the world will you choose to go? The stamps don't all have to be from different countries, it's fine to have several stamps from the same country if you want - it's your collection, so you can choose.

## Decide where you are going to start.





Maybe London? Then to Europe? Maybe France, or Spain?



Then maybe we'll go on to Egypt in Africa to see the pyramids. After that to India in Asia and see some elephants. How about riding on a train in Vietnam?



Then maybe Japan. And we simply must go to Australia



Next we'll fly cross the Pacific Ocean to United States of America in North America. Maybe we'll watch a soccer game!



Then maybe we'll go to the Turks and Caicos Islands in the Caribbean. And after that we'll go way down south all the way to the Falkland Islands to see the sheep. Next we'll go way up north to Iceland to see the puffins.



After that a trip to Ireland.



And then finally  
back home!



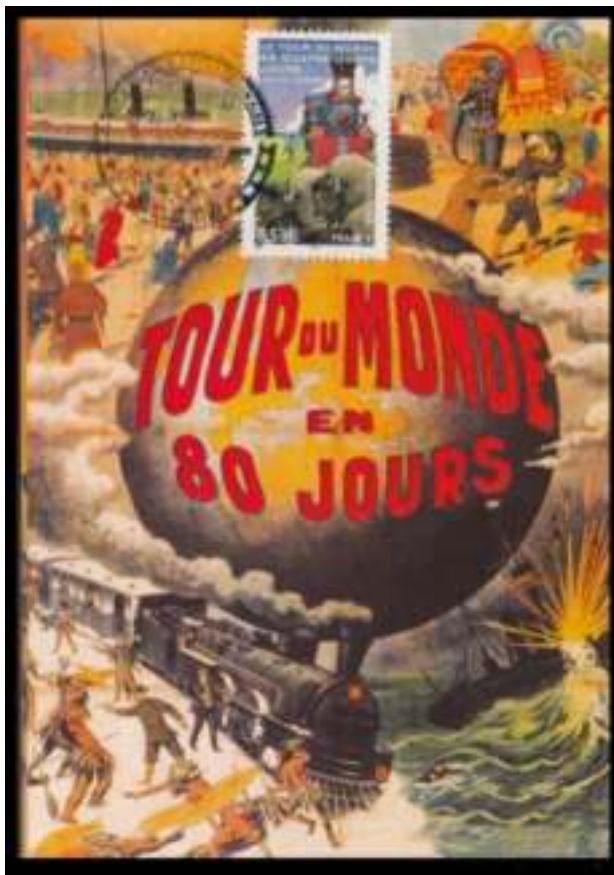
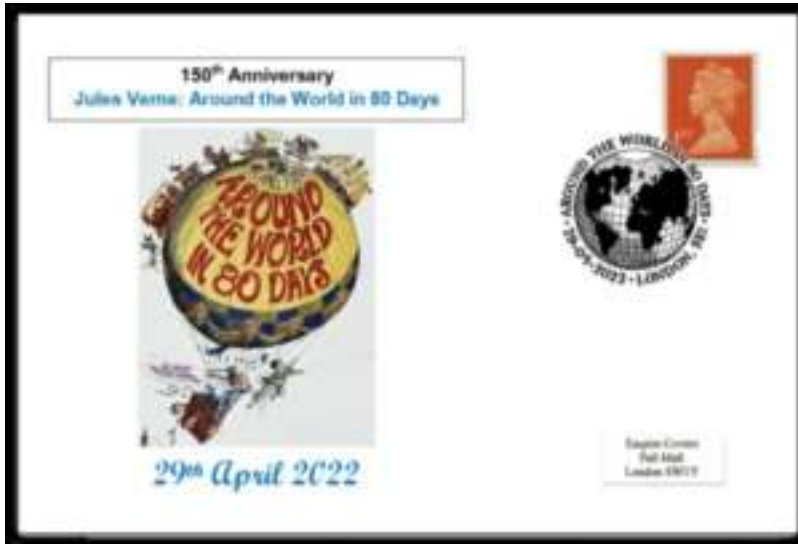
Where will YOU go on your  
trip Around The World In  
80 Stamps?



*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**

*Around the World in Eighty Days* was Jules Verne's 11<sup>th</sup> book, first published in 1872.





**HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III WILL BE CROWNED ON 6<sup>th</sup> MAY**

