

THEMESCENE

June 2023

In this issue we:

Review Tolkein books and films

Collecting Hobbits. Part 1

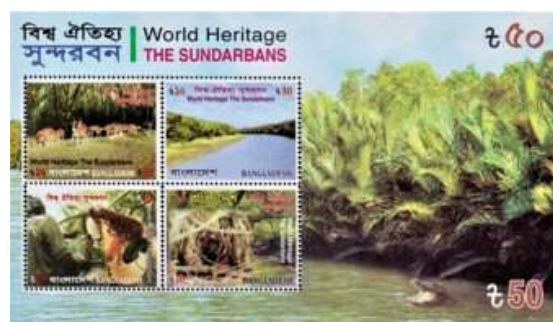
With William Silvester



Revisit a nature reserve

Enchanting Sundarbans. Part 2

With M. Lokeswara Rao



Consider competitions

The appeal of one-page competitions

With David Walker

Plus Results of the 2023 one-page virtual competition

Plus all the usual features

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 40, No.2. Whole Number 151

www.britishthematic.org.uk

THE RISE AND DEMISE OF THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, ST MARTIN'S LE GRAND

INTRODUCTION: In 1829 Lonsdale's new General Post Office (GPO) opened in St Martin's Le Grand. Designed by Robert Smirke in the Greek Revival style, the purpose-built edifice was the communications hub for Great Britain and the British Empire. It housed a large public office, the administrative functions of the department and sorting offices for inland and foreign mail. Despite several attempts to increase space, the building was in use for just 81 years before closed in 1910.



1809, Pub. Parson & Co. Lithography, pub. method of bus. One of a set of 16 cards showing coaching routes, based on an engraving by the artist John Christian Moggie, 2410-96.

← The General Post Office was 380 feet long and 80 feet wide. Originally it had two floors and a large yard at the side and back. Each evening crowds would gather to witness the despatch of mail coaches to all parts of the country. The last mail coach left in 1846.

In 1874 the Central Telegraph Office (CTO), known as GPO West, opened opposite the original building in 1875 GPO North opened to the right of the CTO. This allowed the administrative departments to move out of the Central Post Office, now known as GPO East.



1906, 101/26, Pub. Frederick Herberich, Pro. Anthony, p. 1. Lonsdale covered the inside back of posters.



Before 1914 (shown in Google) Pub. R.R. L&F lithography on back but made to identify publisher: Pro. Anthony, an.

Technical postcard information is in italics and appears below each postcard. Descriptions are in bold letters, and in this order: year; publisher (Pub.); scheme; printing process (Proc.); paper used (Paper); or material (Mat.); other information, all with line divided (with) unless stated.

↓ When the Parcel Post was inaugurated in 1883 the General Post Office was once again placed under increased pressure. Although mail coaches had been superseded by the railways, in 1887 horse-drawn coaches once again used the yard at GPO East, as parcels were cheaper to carry by road than by rail. Moreover, a new direct one mile away in Farringdon Road gradually took over all the parcel traffic.



Carte 1925; 144; hsk. 3L - Lons & Long. Bought by this firm for company and shown to Long 1910 of G.P.O. Pro. Anthony, an.

↓ In 1903, a new London Chief Post Office (with larger sorting offices) was opened in King Edward Street, at the rear of GPO North. GPO East, now considered obsolete, was closed. The building was demolished in 1912. The only part retained was an iron capital from the garrison, which was placed in Lloyd Park, Walthamstow. It now stands outside Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow.



Carte 2021; 28; Pub. an name on card, probably a local lithography business in 1911 (Walthamstow); Pro. Anthony, an.

THEMESCENE

Vol. 40, No. 2 Whole Number 151

JUNE 2023

THEMESCENE

Journal of the
British Thematic Association
which is a member of the
Association of British
Philatelic Societies
ISSN 0268-2508

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

It's June, which means it's the BTA AGM. Meeting papers will be found on page 51 - it would be helpful if you could bring this copy of *Themescene* with you on the day. The title of guest speaker Les Ashton-Smith's talk is *Philatelic Firsts* showing items which (according to Les) "start from the 1950's, the first time the stamp was not made of paper or had major non-paper elements. It includes metallics, plastics, stone, first '3D' stamps and even a playable stamp. Some are well known but hopefully there will be some surprises for the members". The meeting will be held as usual at Swinpex, where we normally get a good attendance, but please be aware: timing and venue have changed - see opposite.

Every year we award the Franceska Rapkin Memorial Bowl to the author of the best article published in *Themescene* the previous year, as voted for by the Committee. This year's winner, by the very closest of margins, was Charles Oppenheim with *Joseph Sloper, patents and perfins*. Second was Norman Hunter with *Alfons Mucha (1860 - 1939)*, and third David Walker with *The Brontë Sisters*. Thank you to them and all our contributors for making this magazine what it is.

This issue has quite a bit of information and comment on competitions. This is not for everyone of course, but if you would like to take part in our annual one-frame competitions you will find details and application form on page 66, and following that on page 70 is the full programme plus booking form for our 2024 residential weekend. It will have the usual mix of guest speakers and member displays, all very informal and relaxed, and we very much look forward to seeing you there.

The ABPS Award of Merit is awarded annually to individuals who have given outstanding voluntary service to British philately at local, regional and/or specialist society level. 'Outstanding voluntary service' covers work to advance philately carried out on a voluntary basis over a considerable period of time. This year one of the two recipients is our long-serving Secretary Anne Stammers, nominated by ourselves and her local society Henley & District. Those of you who have attended our events will have met Anne, and know her to be an indefatigable organiser. She was presented with her award by Barry Stagg at a Henley Philatelic Society meeting in May. 📖




Anne, Barry and Ian King,
Chairman of Henley P.S.

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg

A recent assertion by a philatelic colleague of mine that all stamp collectors are ‘lonely people’, doing their ‘thing’ in isolation and silence, did give me something to think about during a long car journey. I came up with the conclusion that nothing could be further from the truth. I believe I have a wide web of philatelic friends and contacts who help me improve my collections, provide a sounding board for new ideas and keep an eye open for new items that may be of interest to me.

For instance, I have a postcard dealer who regularly attends a nearby stamp and postcard fair, who knows my interest in postcards with daffodils on them. He invariably brings a few with him for me to see. Several BTA colleagues know my interests (and I know theirs) and I receive (and send) information on items in auctions that I come across. I believe many of you have similar arrangements. My family members will often tell me about articles on my collecting topics, and when I talk to stamp clubs I often get told about events or people who could be weaved into my thematic story. Only a few weeks ago I was talking to a librarian who kindly spent some time searching out a few articles for me, plus a few more she thought might be of interest. She did not have to do it, but she shared my desire to find an answer to a question. Based on this I don’t believe philately is a lonely hobby. It can be if you want it to be but most of us are social animals and enjoy company. Getting out and about and seeing like-minded people at stamp and postcard fairs is all part of the enjoyment of the hobby. In my view anyway!

And talking about stamp and postcards fairs Midpex (1 July) and York (21-22 July) will soon be upon us. If you are going, I hope you find something of interest, and perhaps more importantly, somebody of interest to talk to! Good hunting. 

BTA AGM

Swinpex, Saturday 10th June at 13.00

Please note change of venue and time

**Studio meeting room
Grange Leisure & Community Centre, Stratton St Margaret,
Swindon SN3 4JY**

With guest speaker Les Ashton-Smith on *Philatelic firsts*

COLLECTING HOBBITS. PART 1

William Silvester

The oft told story goes that Professor J. R. R. Tolkien was in his Oxford University office marking School Certificate papers when he came across a blank page. Inspired, he wrote the words, "In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit." Thus began his book titled *The Hobbit or There and Back Again* that he wrote sometime between 1929 and 1936 in Oxford. There is some doubt as to the precise composition dates as the beginnings of the story were first told by Tolkien to his children.

He finished the tale in late 1932, with some editing and changes in the years following, and passed the manuscript to several friends, including C. S. Lewis, author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and Elaine Griffiths a student of Tolkien's. From Griffiths the manuscript went to Susan Dagnall, who worked for the publisher George Allen & Unwin who published the book in September 1937 on the recommendation of Unwin's son who had read the manuscript and given it a glowing review. The book was awarded a \$250 New York Herald Tribune prize for best juvenile fiction and nominated for the Carnegie Medal.

The tale is about a hobbit named Bilbo Baggins who is recruited by the wizard Gandalf the Grey to go with a company of 13 dwarves to help reclaim their ancient home in the Lonely Mountain and the treasure therein which was guarded by the dragon Smaug the Golden. Bilbo signed up as the companion's 'burglar' and despite his size and lack of knowledge about things outside of the Shire his initiative, common sense and courage proved to be a significant asset to the group. During the trek to the Lonely Mountain he manages to save the dwarves from goblins, spiders and wood elves. Upon reaching the mountain Bilbo finds the treasure, tricks Smaug into disclosing his weak spot, and by thwarting Thorin's greed establishes peace between elves, humans and dwarves.

As the average hobbit is between two to four feet tall (61cm - 122cm) such an adventure was no small thing. Not only are they not very tall but, for the most part, hobbits are not given to adventures of any sort, much preferring to stay at home in the Shire, in comfortable homes with well stocked larders. Sturdy of build with short legs, long fingers, pointed ears, curly hair on the top of their heads and on their large, flat feet, a hobbit's favourite pastime is eating.

Our protagonist, Bilbo Baggins, and later his nephew, Frodo, seemed to have inherited an adventurous itch that when all was said and done they could not ignore.

Wanting to build on the popularity of *The Hobbit* his publishers persuaded Tolkien to begin work on a sequel. In response he sent them several stories he had previously written along with a draft of *The Silmarillion*. His publishers were not interested, they wanted more hobbits. So, Tolkien started the sequel in December 1937 and in time it developed into *The Lord of the Rings*.

Eventually future editions of *The Hobbit* had to be revised to correspond with the events in *The Lord of the Rings*. For example, in the original version of *The Hobbit*, the ring simply made its wearer invisible, only taking on sinister powers in the subsequent books. Also, the first edition has Gollum willingly betting his magic ring on the riddle game but by the second edition Gollum is distraught about losing the ring and more

aggressive towards Bilbo. The discrepancies are addressed when Bilbo addresses the Council of Elrond and explains that his original version was not completely truthful while the revision contained the actual facts.

Royal Mail issued the Magical Worlds of Children's Literature stamps featuring characters from popular children's books on 21 July 1998. The set of five stamps was designed by Peter Malone, the first set of stamps he designed for Royal Mail. The issue marks the centenaries of the death of Lewis Carroll and the birth of C. S. Lewis. The designs feature characters from their books, celebrating the wealth of British fantasy literature enjoyed by children of all ages.

The stamp of interest to Tolkien collectors is the first in the set, a 20p value (basic inland second class letter rate) depicting Bilbo Baggins and Smaug the dragon from *The Hobbit* (Fig. 1).

A set of souvenir postal cards (PHQ cards) was made available featuring each of the images with a gold border. An extra card was required as it was noticed after printing that 'Tolkien' was spelt incorrectly as 'Tolkein' on the left side of *The Hobbit* card (Fig. 2).

Earlier philately featuring hobbits was issued by Great Britain for the 100th anniversary of the birth of J.R.R. Tolkien with a Royal Mail Prestige Stamp Book that was issued on 27 October 1992. Titled *Tolkien, The Centenary, 1892-1992* it included 26 stamps - 14 x 24p, 8 x 18p, 2 x 39p, 1 x 1st class, 1 x 2nd class in four stamp panes. All of the definitives feature the Machin portrait of Queen Elizabeth II. The booklet sold for £6.00 and was lithographically printed by The House of Questa.

The cover shows Tolkien's monogram, an Elven inscription in the One Ring and Mount Doom in the background. The Tolkien book is profusely illustrated with scenes from Tolkien's Middle-earth. A portrait of Professor Tolkien appears on the inside front cover. There are numerous quotes from Tolkien's published works and from his letters to Milton Waldman (publisher), W. H. Auden, and Father Christmas letters to his children and a 'Riddle of the Runes' competition on both sides of the back cover. The pane of interest to hobbit collectors is the first in the stamp book captioned "The first edition of *The Hobbit* appeared in 1937" and shows the map of King Thrór of Durin's Folk with the route to the Lonely Mountain and the cover of *The Hobbit* first edition drawn by Tolkien (Fig. 3).

The 50th anniversary of the publication of the first volume of *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* was commemorated by Royal Mail with a block of ten se-tenant stamps on 26 February 2004. "The images offer a rare glimpse of how the author imagined the places he created," said Mike Dalton, head of external relations at Royal Mail.

The stamps were launched by the author's daughter, Miss Priscilla Mary Anne Reuel Tolkien (18 June 1929 – 28 February 2022), at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. "I am delighted that Royal Mail have chosen to honour my father's work with this stamp issue" she said. "They have done a splendid job in reproducing his original artwork on the stamps, giving many people the first opportunity to view scenes from *The Lord of the Rings* as he imagined them himself".

The stamps were issued in panes of 30, sheets of 60 with gutter margin, designed by HGV Design using drawings done by J.R.R. Tolkien. The rarely seen images were reproduced by permission of the J. R. R. Tolkien Estate and The Bodleian Library, Oxford.



Fig. 1: GB Bilbo Baggins and Smaug



Fig. 2: PHQ card with incorrect spelling 'Tolkein'



Fig. 3: Thoror's map and the cover of the first edition of The Hobbit

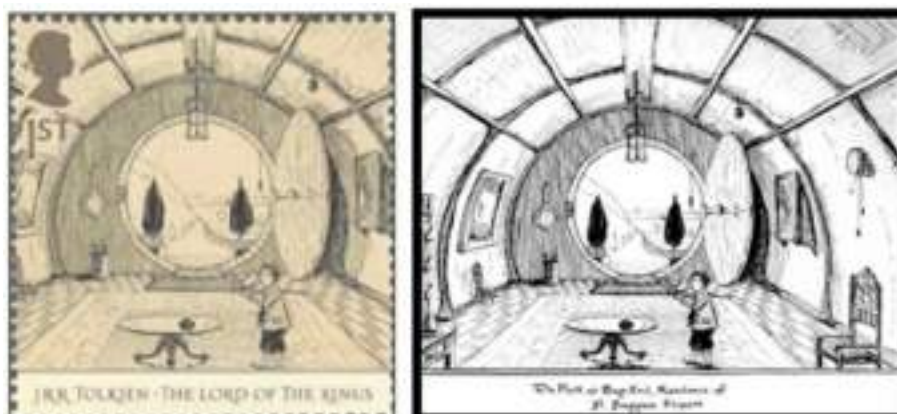


Fig. 4: The Hall at Bag-End, Residence of B. Baggins Esquire

The Lord of the Rings 50th Anniversary stamps feature a series of paintings and sketches created by J.R.R. Tolkien while he was writing *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien was always modest about his abilities as an artist: although a handful of his illustrations were featured in *The Hobbit*, the author described himself as “rather crushed” by comments from one critic that the images “show no reflection of his literary talent and imagination”, adding: “all the more so because I entirely agree with him.”

But he went on to create a range of drawings, illustrations, maps and sketches as he told the story of Frodo and Sam’s quest, many as pictorial aids as he wrote his expansive story, and some for his own pleasure.

Many of the images are cropped from the original drawings and only one features a hobbit. The rather lengthy title for this scene of Bag-End was ‘The Hall at Bag-End, Residence of B. Baggins Esquire’ first published in the first edition of *The Hobbit*, 1937 in Chapter 11 *On the Doorstep* (Fig. 4).

The Hobbit later became a film series consisting of three fantasy adventure films directed by Peter Jackson. The three films are *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (2012), *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* (2013), and *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies* (2014).

The Hobbit was originally planned as a two-part film, but Jackson later confirmed plans for a third film, turning his adaptation into a trilogy. *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies* would make extensive use of the appendices that Tolkien wrote to expand the story of Middle-earth (published in the back of *The Return of the King*). The titular ‘Five Armies’ are Elves, Dwarves, Goblins, Men and Eagles. The films also take place sixty years before the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings*.

New Zealand Post issued an overabundance of philatelic material to commemorate the premiere of *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* on 1 November 2012. The issue consisted of six single stamps, printed in sheets of ten, six souvenir sheets, a strip of six self-adhesive stamps, a booklet of self adhesive stamps in a pane of ten, a pack of singles and a strip, six maximum cards, and first day covers. The scenes on the stamps were taken from the films with the singles generally showing a single character and the souvenir sheets depicting the character with a background scene from the film. The maximum cards depicted different scenes with the same characters (Figs 5 - 6).

With the introduction of a stamp featuring Gollum, it should be noted that he is also a hobbit. Originally named Sméagol he derived the name Gollum from his peculiar, choking cough. He came into possession of the One Ring when he killed his friend, Déagol, who had recently found it. Over time he used the ring for malicious purposes until his family eventually had enough of him and banished him from the family. The effect of being in possession of the One Ring deformed his body, twisted his mind and gave him an extensive life span. His obsession with ‘my precious’, as he called the ring, eventually led to his death.

A year later New Zealand Post issued stamps to commemorate the premiere of *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* on 1 November 2013. The issue consisted of six single stamps, printed in sheets of ten, six souvenir sheets, a strip of six self-adhesive stamps, a booklet of self adhesive stamps in a pane of ten, six maximum cards and first day covers. As before, the scenes on the stamps were taken from the film with the singles generally showing a single character and the souvenir sheets depicting the character with a background scene from the film.



Fig. 5: Bilbo Baggins reading the burglar contract

Fig. 6: Gollum trading riddles with Bilbo



Fig. 7: FDC self-adhesive stamps with cachet showing Bilbo holding the map to Erebor.

There is only one stamp from the set depicting a hobbit, the \$2.10 showing Bilbo in the canopy of Greenwood as he attempts to ascertain the position of the now lost company (Fig. 7). Shown on a first day cover, the stamp with Bilbo is fourth from the left. 📖

To be concluded in September Themescene

TOLKIEN PHILATELIC SOCIETY

If reading this article has awakened an interest in beginning or continuing to collect J.R.R. Tolkien on stamps, you should know that several Tolkien on Stamps collectors have formed the Tolkein Philatelic Society. Membership is free. TPS is solely online with a [website](#) which anyone can access.

and the journal *Middle-earth Musings* (now in its second issue) and in time, a Collector's Handbook. In addition to the stamps shown above, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* films postage stamps issued by New Zealand Post, Isle of Man, Portugal and others will also be included. In the hope that you are interested in joining the Tolkein Philatelic Society please contact [William Silvester](mailto:wgsil60@gmail.com) at wgsil60@gmail.com

ENCHANTING SUNDARBANS ON STAMPS ... SAVE THE SUNDARBANS. PART 2

M. Lokeswara Rao

Birds

In 2011 Bangladesh released a sheet of twelve stamps entitled the “Magnificent Birds of the Sundarbans World Heritage” (Fig 1). It shows the Masked Finfoot (*Heliopais personata*), Lesser Adjutant (*Leptoptilos javanicus*), White-bellied Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*), Dusky Eagle-Owl (*Bubo coromandus*), Brown-winged Kingfisher (*Pelargopsis amauroptera*), Ruddy Kingfisher (*Halcyon coromanda*), Blue-eared Kingfisher (*Alcedo meninting*), Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*), Collared Kingfisher (*Todiramphus chloris*), Orange-breasted Green Pigeon (*Treron bicinctus*), Malayan Night Heron (*Gorsachius melanolophus*) and Mangrove Pitta (*Pitta megarhyncha*).

The Black-capped Kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*) is a tree Kingfisher mainly found in coastal and mangrove habitats, but can sometimes be found far inland (Fig 2). The nest is a tunnel in an earth bank. The Collared Kingfisher (*Todiramphus chloris*) or Mangrove Kingfisher is a medium-sized Kingfisher belonging to the family Halcyonidae (Fig 3). It is most commonly found in coastal areas, particularly in mangrove swamps. The Brown-winged Kingfisher (*Pelargopsis amauroptera*) is found in India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand (Fig 4). Its natural habitat is subtropical or tropical mangrove forests. In India, it has been mainly seen from the Sundarbans region and has even been sighted further South near Chilika Lake. IUCN lists them as Near Threatened. The Ruddy Kingfisher (*Halcyon coromanda*) is a medium-sized tree kingfisher which is widely distributed in East and Southeast Asia (Fig 5). Ruddy Kingfishers inhabit forested areas from the temperate to tropical zones, often in thick jungles and rainforests.

The Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) is a wader in the large family Scolopacidae (Fig 6). This is the largest wader in its range at 50 – 60 cm in length, with a 89 – 106 cm wingspan and a body weight of 410 – 1,360 grams. The familiar call from which the bird gets its name is a loud “curloo-oo”. IUCN lists them as Near Threatened.

The Masked Finfoot (*Heliopais personatus*) is an aquatic bird from the fresh and brackish wetlands of the Eastern Indian Sub-Continent, Indochina, Malaysia and Indonesia (Fig 7). It is an underwater specialist with a long neck, a striking sharp beak and lobed feet which are green. It is adept out of water and will forage on the banks as well. They are very secretive. IUCN lists them as Endangered. The Lesser Adjutant Stork (*Leptoptilos javanicus*) is a large wading bird in the stork family Ciconiidae (Fig 8). In India, they are mainly distributed in the Eastern States of Assam, West Bengal and Bihar. It stalks around wetlands feeding mainly on fish, frogs, reptiles and large invertebrates. They may also take small birds and rodents, particularly during the breeding season. They are solitary except during the breeding season when they form loose colonies. IUCN lists them as Vulnerable.



Fig 1: Bangladesh 2011 Magnificent Birds of the Sundarbans



Fig 2: Black-capped Kingfisher



Fig 3: Collared Kingfisher



Fig 4: Brown-winged Kingfisher



Fig 5: Ruddy Kingfisher



Fig 6: Eurasian Curlew



Fig 7: Masked Finfoot



Fig 8: Lesser Adjutant Stork



Fig 9: Osprey



Fig 10: Changeable Hawk-eagle



Fig 11: Lesser Yellownappe



Figs 12 - 13: Red Junglefowl



The Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) is a diurnal fish-eating bird of prey (Fig 9). It is a large raptor that tolerates a wide variety of habitats, nesting in any location near a body of water providing an adequate food supply. The Changeable Hawk-eagle or Crested Hawk-eagle (*Nisaetus cirrhatus*) is a relatively slender forest eagle with some sub-species being dimorphic giving it the name “changeable” (Fig 10). It keeps a sharp lookout perched on some high trees standing near a forest clearing.

The Lesser Yellownape (*Picus chlorophus*) (Fig 11) is a woodpecker native to India and is a jungle species which nests in a tree-hole, laying two to four white eggs.

The Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*) is thought to be ancestral to the domestic chicken. It was first domesticated at least 5000 years ago in Asia, then taken around the world (Fig 12-13). Flight in these birds is almost purely confined to reaching their roosting areas at sunset in trees or to escape from immediate danger through the day.

The Rose Ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) is a gregarious tropical Afro-Asian parakeet species that has an extremely large range (Fig 14). It is one of the few parrot species that has successfully adapted to living in disturbed habitats. It has withstood the onslaught of urbanisation and deforestation. As a popular pet species, escaped birds have colonised a number of cities around the world.

The Mangrove Pitta (*Pitta megarhyncha*) is a species of passerine bird in the Pittidae family native to Southeast Asia and South Asia (Fig 15). Its range extends from India to Malaysia and Indonesia. It is found in mangrove and nipa palm forests where it feeds on crustaceans, molluscs and insects. Its call, sometimes rendered as “wieuw-wieuw”, is sung from a high perch on a mangrove tree. IUCN lists them as Near Threatened.

Loten’s Sunbird or Long Billed Sunbird (*Cinnyris lotenius*) is endemic to the Peninsular of India and Sri Lanka (Fig 16). Its long bill distinguishes it from the similar purple sunbird that is found in the same areas. Like other sunbirds, it feeds on small insects and builds characteristic hanging nests.

The Way of Life in the Sunderbans

Millions of people in both India and Bangladesh depend on the Sundarban Ecosystem for their livelihood and sustenance through fishing, collection of honey and fuelwood /timber. The rivers and creeks of the Sunderbans are an incredible repository of fish and prawns. The soil of this region is not very fertile and periodically gets submerged by salt water. A large number of the Sunderbans population are engaged in fisheries and allied activities. The collecting of fish seeds and adults, especially of the Giant Tiger Prawn (*Panaeus monodon*), is one of the main sources of income for the coastal fisher folk, who have been making and mending their own nets for generations (Fig 17). It is an enjoyable and productive pastime. Prawn seed is collected from the rivers flowing in the southern part of the region (Fig 18).

The “Pala” is a form of musical folk art, rendered by a singer (“gayaka”) accompanied by a band of four to five persons (Fig 19). One plays on a drum (“mridanga”) while the others play musical instruments like cymbals etc. The “Pala” singer describes episodes from mythology. “Bonbibi” or the “Lady of the Forest” is a guardian spirit of the forests venerated by both Hindu and Muslim residents of the Sunderbans (Fig 20). She is also known as “Bandevis” and “Banadurga”. She is called upon or prayed to mostly by the honey-collectors and wood-cutters before they enter the forests, for protection against attacks from the tigers.

In a bid to reduce human-tiger conflict, polypropylene net-fencing has been erected over an area of 90 kms in the Sunderbans (Fig 21). The straying of Royal Bengal Tigers

into villages around the Sundarbans forest has seen a dramatic decline after the erection of net-fencing on the forest-village inter-face. Sundarbans tiger attacks were documented as early as the 1600s, and legend has it that tigers every year claimed hundreds of lives. It is generally believed that this predator only attacks people from behind, so workers in the mangrove forests started wearing masks on the backs of their heads (Fig 22). This trick seems to have worked and tiger attacks have substantially reduced.

Interest in wildlife is a major factor behind tourists visiting the Sundarbans, and more than 250,000 domestic and international tourists visited the Sundarbans in the 2018-19 fiscal year. But uncontrolled tourism is leading to overcrowding, pollution, littering and a massive increase in mechanised vessels (Fig 23). The noise of the vessels causes disturbance in the habitat of several species. Tourist boats with overnight stay facilities criss-cross the rivers and creeks during the day and anchor in the middle of the river away from reserved forests at sundown.

Climate Change and Save The Sundarbans

Due to climate change the Sundarbans face several challenges. With rising sea levels, islands are disappearing and the increasing salinity in the water and soil has severely threatened the health of mangrove forests and the quality of soil and crops (Fig 24). A 2007 report by UNESCO *Case Studies on Climate Change and World Heritage* stated that an anthropogenic 45-centimetre (18 in) rise in sea level, likely by the end of the 21st century according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), combined with other forms of anthropogenic stress on the Sundarbans, could lead to the destruction of 75% of the Sundarbans mangroves. Already, Lohachara Island and South Talpatti Island have disappeared under the sea, and Ghoramara Island is half submerged. In the Sundarbans, the rise is much more because of the subsidence of land. While the 2019 IPCC report says the sea level is rising by 3.6 mm every year, the delta is subsiding by 2.9 mm every year. The climate crisis has been taking a heavy toll on mangrove and local marine ecology in the Sundarbans, as it has in small island nations in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The Sundari tree (from which Sundarban derives its name) is getting wiped out because there is not enough fresh water available, and rising sea level is increasing salinity, especially in the delta. Additionally, there have been serious disturbances to hydrological parameters and change in fishing patterns, resulting in disastrous consequences for fishermen. Frequent cyclones and an erratic monsoon rain pattern are damaging ecology and humanity.

The Sundarbans has always been like a mother to Bangladesh, protecting the country from the onslaught of cyclones and tidal surges (Fig 25). It not only acts as a shield from natural disasters, but also protects the biodiversity and geological features of the region and the livelihood of the people. The Sundarbans are under threat from both natural and man-made causes. The fact that the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the official advisor on natural World Heritage, has recommended that the Sundarbans be classified as a 'World Heritage in Danger' should worry us all. Loss of the mangrove forest will result in the loss of the protective biological shield against cyclones and tsunamis. This may put the surrounding coastal communities at high risk. Community-based tourism can be encouraged as an alternative livelihood measure. While this may be a positive step for the community towards sustenance, to save the Sundarbans we need to leave it alone, without any human intervention. The only thing the government can do is to minimise human intervention. This includes preventing people from polluting the nearby areas, refraining from disturbing the animals and birds,



Fig 14: Rose-ringed Parakeet



Fig 15: Mangrove Pitta



Fig 16: Loten's Sunbird



Fig 17: Net making



Fig 19: Pala musicians



Fig 21: Tiger fence



Fig 18: Prawn seed collecting



Fig 20: Bonbibi



Fig 22: Mask wearing



Fig 23: Tourist boat



Fig 24: 2008 Bangladesh World Heritage Save Tiger Protect Mother-Like Sundarbans



Fig 25: 2008 Bangladesh World Heritage The Sundarbans

discouraging boats to carry goods, prohibiting polluting the rivers with harmful substances or even the air, so that plants remain unharmed. People should play a positive role in conserving the mangrove forest, keeping in mind that if we save the Sundarbans, then it will save us too. 📖

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THE BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION
Account for the year ended 31 December 2022

2021	INCOME		2022
2,804	Subscriptions		2,866
28	Other income (incl. interest and donations)		32
<u>2,832</u>			<u>2,898</u>
	EXPENDITURE		
1,651	"Themescene" - Printing and distribution expenses	1,823	
-520	less : Advertising Income (and donation in 2021)	-345	1,478
0	Meetings (incl. Zoom)		101
0	BTA Cup costs	162	
0	Less : Entry fees	-70	92
0	London 2022 Award	299	
0	less : Donations	-299	0
0	Weekend deficit	293	
0	funded from W/E reserve	-293	0
82	Publicity		50
137	Web Site		137
144	Insurance		144
207	Affiliations		207
10	Administration expenses		9
26	Bank charges (incl. Paypal fees)		123
<u>1,737</u>			<u>2,340</u>
1,095	Surplus		558
<u>2,832</u>			<u>2,898</u>
	<u>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021</u>		
	Accumulated fund		
11,795	Balance at 1.1.2022	12,890	
1,095	add : Surplus for the year	558	13,448
1,492	Weekend Events Reserve/Deposits		1,049
<u>14,382</u>			<u>14,497</u>
	Represented by:		
4,890	Cash at Bank: Deposit Account		4,890
9,919	Current Account		10,287
14,809			15,177
-357	less: Subscriptions Received in advance		-630
-70	less: Amounts due or Received in advance		-50
<u>14,382</u>			<u>14,497</u>

Hon Treasurer, P.J.Wood

P.J. Wood
14 March 2023

Examiners report.

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

Hon. Examiner, B. Turner.


Brian Turner. 12 April 2023

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION: 40th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Barry Stagg

As I am sure many of you know the BTA celebrates its 40th 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 



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BTA ONE-PAGE VIRTUAL COMPETITION 2023

Report by Andrew Millington

This year's competition closed on 31st January and our two judges waved their 'wands of experience' over the 36 entries from seven countries. Before we announce the full results; the Association would like to thank the judges for their time and sharing their expertise with entrants, and the people who put together entries for this year's competition. Without entrants the judges would have nothing to judge, and without the judges entrants would have no guidance on how to improve their exhibits as they start on the road to exhibiting.

Both judges commented on how much they enjoyed assessing such a wide variety of entries, including a number of subjects new to them. However while there were some really excellent entries it was noticeable that 17 of the adult entries received an Opal award; which under the rules constitute "an exhibit which failed to meet all or many of the [required] elements". Rule 6 lays out what these requirements are: "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". All of these entries can very easily get a better award just by adding a little variety to the entry: something to think about next time the competition is run.

Congratulations are in order to Paulo Vispi from Italy, the winner of the best exhibit by a non-BTA member in this year's competition; and Wayne Cox, the winner of the best exhibit for a BTA member for the second year in a row: their exhibits can be found on the inside front cover and outside back cover pages. 

PALMARES

THEMATIC - CULTURE

James Dickinson	BEST IN CLASS Death of Doyle's Detective	Ruby
Fran Adams	The Golden Hat of Schifferstadt	Ruby
Augusto Zavala	The Incas Chess Players	Emerald
Debasish Das	Talking Eyes	Emerald
Thomas Oguntke	Give Peace a Chance	Emerald
Debasish Das	Secret History of Mongolia	Opal
M Gurudath Kamath	Fragrant Stamps of India (2019)	Opal
Prashanth Shet	Musical Instruments of Wandering Minstrels	Opal
Praveen Ganeshan	Madurai Meenakshi Temple	Opal
Radhika Shet	Diwali	Opal
Shadev Sharma	Textile Philately	Opal
Vidya Kishore Baglodi	Mahaparinirvana of Buddha (India) 2007	Opal

THEMATIC - NATURE

Mark Humfrey	BEST IN CLASS Postal use of Orchids in Polar locations	Emerald
Siri Sharma	Rosacea - A Thorny Beauty	Emerald
Bhavana Kishore Baglodi	The Dwindling Population of Tigers in India	Opal
Kishore K Baglodi	Sparrow	Opal
Paula Cleary	Owls	Opal
Ramani Srinivasan	Globetrotters without visas	Opal

THEMATIC - TECHNOLOGY

Kannappan Shannugam	BEST IN CLASS The Nobel Couple	Ruby
Kannappan Shannugam	The World is Against Malaria	Emerald
Hansraj Alva	Solar System	Opal

OPEN

Paolo Vispi	BEST IN CLASS Canticle of the Sun	Diamond
Fran Adams	Charon	Ruby
Salvatore Picconi	An Ancient Love Song from Sardinia	Ruby
Salvatore Picconi	Mario Tiddia: a Sardinian footballer	Ruby
Alistair Watson	New Zealand's Dolphin - Cephalorynchua hectori	Emerald
Ramani Srinivasan	Butterflies: Charismatic Ambassadors	Emerald
Bhavana Kishore Baglodi	Railway Philately through Bookmarks	Opal
Devershi Bhagat	Indian Covid-19 Vaccines saved Mankind	Opal
Praveen Shastry	Red Cross Society	Opal
Selvanambi Balasundaram	India's stepwells - a panacea for water crisis	Opal
Steve Gerrard	Personalised Police Stamps	Opal

POSTCARD

Wayne Cox	BEST IN CLASS Rise and demise of the GPO	Diamond
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YOUTH

S Krithikka (Age 11)	The X-Ray Man	Emerald
Apeksha Shet (Age 16)	Fauna	Opal
B Shruthikka (Age 13)	Father of Tamil Printing in India	Opal



Class winners:

Above: The Nobel couple. Kannappan Shannugam. Thematic - Technology class.

Below: The X-Ray man. .S Krithikka. Youth class.



THE APPEAL OF ONE-PAGE STAMP EXHIBITS

David Walker

Collecting stamps on narrow themes / topics is an appealing branch of stamp collecting. In my case I particularly enjoy themes related to my other interests where very few stamps were issued, as it can be fun tracking them down. Two societies that am a member of which cater for this type of collecting are the American Topical Association and the British Thematic Association.

Thematic and Topical collecting are not the same thing. The FIP Thematic Commission defines thematic collecting as “collecting stamps and other philatelic items that illustrate a theme . . . The term “theme” has a dynamic meaning implying the personal elaboration by the collector, who develops a full story around it” (1). The website of the American Topical Association says that “Topical collectors concentrate on specific topics and themes represented by the stamps. Some collectors concentrate on the subject depicted in stamps, other are interested in stamps of specific color, stamps illustrated in a particular style or even stamps designed by a specific artist” (2). The manual of the American Philatelic Society gives a tighter definition: “Topical exhibits are composed of a variety of philatelic items, the design of which illustrates a specific topic or subject. If you choose to present a topical exhibit, it would show as many philatelic items as possible with the image of the particular subject or group of subjects that is the focus of your exhibit” (3).

In my collections a topical one would be on slide rules, only stamps showing a slide rule feature. For the Brontë sisters it is thematic because includes not just stamps depicting them but a wider theme to show other issues associated with their life and work and also 19th century postcards of the area where they lived.


The ATA invite both members and non-members to submit to their annual “My One Page” virtual non-competitive exhibition. It is quite informal apart from some basic presentation guidelines. It is worth browsing the ATA 2021 / 22 stamp exhibits as that illustrates the wide variety of topics that interest collectors, from animals, plants, art, science, technology, history etc. The current year is at www.ataexhibits.com/, with links to exhibits from the two previous years.

The BTA one-page virtual competition is a more formal one, open to members and non-members, and where judges provide useful feedback on the various aspects including presentation and content. The 2023 entries are on the website at www.britishthematic.org.uk/bta-one-page-virtual-competition-2023.htm with links to the previous years.

The virtual exhibits were partly prompted by Covid lockdown allowing enthusiasts to continue to their share their interests. One-page and multi-page exhibits have been established for many years at philately meetings where actual stamps / covers etc are presented; I have no experience of these. The virtual form is more versatile in some respects to make the best use of one page as crops / reductions of say first day covers or large stamp sheets are permitted. Non-philatelic items are often permitted in an exhibit,

and the A4 format allowed a scan at natural size of a 5 inch slide rule to be added and in my radiolaria and diatom exhibits, photomicrographs of specimens.

It is enjoyable preparing a one page exhibit - deciding what examples to include, presentation, text commentary etc. All can vary widely as the ATA exhibits show. My own design skills are limited so those on the next two pages are rather conventional in presentation - some very creative approaches can be admired on the ATA website.

Examples of my one page exhibits follow. 

A shorter version of this article was first published on the [Mic-UK website](#).

References

- (1) <https://thematicphilately.f-i-p.ch/about/>
- (2) <https://americantopical.org/>
- (3) <https://stamps.org/Portals/0/Judging-Topical-Exhibits.pdf>



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The Brontë Sisters

David W Walker, West Yorkshire, England. (Email micscape@vtnhwld.com)

The novels of the Brontë sisters since publication under their pseudonyms have become classics of English literature. I live a few miles from the village of Haworth where the sisters lived for most of their life so the thematic was of local interest. The number of stamp issues with a Brontë theme are few.



In 1980 Great Britain issued a set of four stamps on the theme 'Famous People' designed by Barbara Brown (above). Emily and Charlotte feature with scenes from their novels, *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*. Elizabeth Gaskell (right above) also featured in the set who wrote a biography of Charlotte.



In 2005 Great Britain issued a set of six stamps to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Charlotte's death in 1855 and feature scenes from *Jane Eyre*. The stamps feature lithographs by the well-known Portuguese born artist Paula Rego. The distinctive designs can be better appreciated and understood in the artist's book *Jane Eyre 2003* where 23 lithographs are presented full page, each with an accompanying description by the artist.

The full set are shown on a Westminster Collection cover featuring a 25 2001 coin from Guernsey (left, 17% of natural size). One face features Queen Victoria who was on the throne at the latter part of the sisters' lives. The portrait of Charlotte is based on that by George Richmond and was commissioned by Charlotte's publisher George Smith for her father. Another coin cover (2001, below left, 25%) by the same publisher features a one crown coin for Gibraltar with a detailed engraving of Anne, Emily and Charlotte derived from the group portrait by their brother Branwell.



In 2010 Belgium issued a set of five stamps showing literary figures associated with Brussels, Belgium including Charlotte (above centre). She and Emily attended the Pensionnat Héger in Brussels to improve their French and other languages. In 2015 the British Indian Ocean Territory (above right) issued four stamps on the theme of 'Famous Authors Anniversaries' including Charlotte. Her stamp shows the scene when *Jane Eyre* first meets Mr. Rochester.

As the popularity of the sisters' novels increased and their true identities became widely known, Haworth and the surrounding moors became increasingly popular as a place for tourists to visit. Photography was becoming well established as the second half of the 19th century progressed and postcards of the area became available.

Unsurprisingly, the parsonage was a popular subject. Their father Patrick was the curate at Haworth church. The postcard shown was taken after 1861 when the extension on the right was added ('The Parsonage, Haworth' no. 7007, Publisher, Walker Scott, Bradford. 25%). Although there are few stamp issues to collect, there are a wealth of covers and postcards in add to a thematic collection on the sisters.



To see this on the ATA website go to www.ataexhibits.com/the-bronte-sisters/

Glass Jewels of the Sea – Diatoms
 David W. Walker, UK (email: microscope@rnhworld.com)

In the world's oceans and many freshwater habitats there feature a wide variety of microscopic plankton. One of the major groups are the single-celled diatoms which have exquisitely sculptured shells made of silica i.e. glass. Diatoms are algae and their vast numbers in the ocean have an important role via photosynthesis in capturing dissolved carbon dioxide.

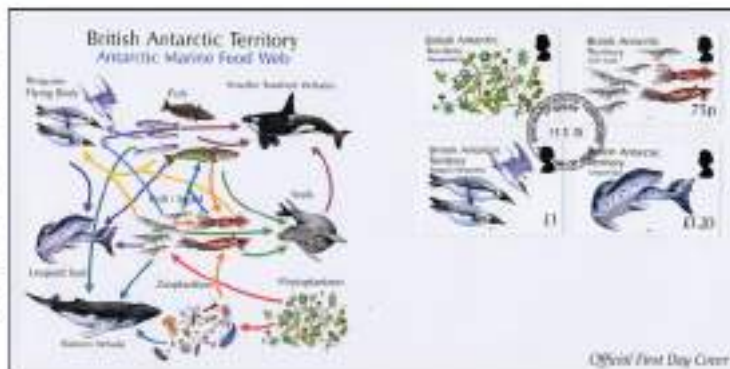
The shells have a structure akin to the old pill boxes where the smaller half closely fitted with the other half.

As an amateur microscopist who enjoys studying and photographing prepared slides of diatoms both modern and 19th century, collecting diatoms as a philately thematic complements this hobby.

Above, right, Germany 2015, an issue in the 'Microwelten' ('microworld') series, an attractive postmark depicting a diatom accompanies this example.



Above, all 215% actual size. Left, the Portuguese issue (1958) illustrates a species that form colonies. Middle, the Macedonia example (2010) shows a species with an intricate twist of the shell. Right (1984), a species with a very distinctive shape. Right. The cover (2014, 60% actual size) illustrates the important role that phytoplankton (including diatoms) form in the food web for larger organisms.



Left, 2016 (117% actual size), design credited to S. Beauford. The diatoms have slightly raised inking, providing a 3D impression to each species. Right. From the 19th century onwards diatoms were intensely studied by microscopists, their very fine detail were used as optical tests as objective designs improved. They were also manipulated under a microscope to make attractive patterns such as this example by J. A. Long who lived a few miles from the author's home in West Yorkshire in the north of England. Image taken by the author using a microscope, magnification ca. 30x.



Acknowledgement. Thank you to Mark B. Edlund who has compiled and presented thematic on diatoms and who helped me to build my own collection.

To see this on the ATA website go to:
www.ataexhibits.com/glass-jewels-of-the-sea-diatoms/

ZOOMING ALONG

Michele Bresso *Exploring industrial, wartime and social communication through typewriter philately.* 7th March

Our BTA member and good ATA friend Michele Bresso gave a presentation on the topic of typewriter philately. And what an interesting and fun topic that was. Michele started by telling us that typewriters feature on many philatelic items other than stamps such as the selvedge on sheets, poster stamps, Maxicards, postcards and a variety of ephemera to name but a few. Michele said she that got inspiration for the topic from her mother's old Royal portable typewriter and that gave her the idea to collect old typewriters featured on philatelic items.

Members and guests were surprised to learn that the first typewriter to feature was on a 1935 Turkish stamp. Peter Mitterhoffer developed early typewriters with an early wooden version shown on a Maxicard. Apparently the QUERTY keyboard layout goes back to 1873, invented by Mr C. Latham Soles who sold his patent to Remington. Michele showed a postcard from the Paris Exposition of 1900 illustrating an early demonstration of a typewriter.

Michele showed us a small selection of poster stamps in her 170-strong collection, showing typewriters from across the world. It was the Monarch salesmen who, after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, used the fact that they provided 65 typewriters to Western Union to help with the severely damaged communications to the city, in their future advertising. But it was World War I that gave typewriters the huge boost in use. Michele had a stamp showing men on the front line typing reports to be sent back to HQ. She made the point that many social changes were down to the introduction of the typewriter (some are still valid today), and she showed many of these with stamps and other philatelic items. Change such as supporting literacy around the world, the fact that typewriters need no electricity to work, that it gave the blind an ability to communicate with braille typewriters, adapted typewriters for the disabled and those with special educational needs, thereby giving them a voice, to list but a few.

This was a wonderful presentation on a most unusual topic that was presented with Michele's well known enthusiasm and expert knowledge of the subject.

Malcolm Gascoyne *Evolution of the picture postcard and aspects of Edwardian London.* 18th April.

Malcolm Gascoyne gave a wonderful presentation all about postcards. Illustrated throughout, Malcolm took us back to the very beginning of postcards in 1865 when a Prussian, Heinrich von Stephan first suggested the idea (unsuccessfully). A few years later a Dr Emanuel Herrman finally persuaded the Austrian authorities to issue postcards, and the first ones were published in October 1869, with 3 million cards bought in three months!

The British Post Office issued their first postcards (in two sizes) in 1870 and 76 million were sent in the first year. Malcolm had some beautiful illustrations of postcards, and those depicting the Eiffel Tower in 1889 were among the best. In 1894 the British Post Office agreed to permit privately printed postcards, and that plus the introduction of photo-lithographic images in the late 1890s, the standardisation of the postcard size to 5½ by 3½ inches, and the introduction in 1902 of the 'split back' that permitted the address and correspondence to be on the same side, leaving one side completely free for the image, heralded in a surge of postcard sales. Malcolm showed us a range of postcards from this

period (now known as the Golden Age of postcards) in particular depicting scenes of London.

These postcards gave us a glimpse of working people in the Edwardian period, through the photographic images of people going about their business to the information written on the postcards. I personally enjoyed the postcards showing the old coaching inns and the humorous postcards that Malcolm showed. Thank you Malcolm for showing us these postcards and for the glimpse into a bygone age. 📖

Member's Zoom Presentation: September 5th 2023

Would you like to show part of your collection to the BTA?

- All you need is (ideally) six to eight pages.
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EXHIBITING PAGE

UK NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS AT THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Next year, UK Exhibitions are trying something new. It is no longer practical to hold UK exhibitions as part of Stampex, so there is no exhibition as part of Autumn Stampex from 27 - 30 September 2023. Instead, the Royal Philatelic Society London will become the new home of UK qualifying exhibitions in London. It is also intended to continue running exhibitions as part of the York Stamp Fair, which this summer will take place from 21 - 22 July, and there may be other regional events.

The first exhibition at the RPSL will be from Thursday 28 March to Saturday 30 March 2024. Providing it is successful, the intention is to have two exhibitions a year at the RPSL from then on. These events are open to anyone, not just RPSL members, whether as an exhibitor or visitor. There is no admission charge to attend and the standard UK frame fees of £25 per frame will apply. All FIP classes are welcome, including Literature, plus the UK classes of Ephemera and Cinderellas. Judged exhibits will receive certificates and medals, and those receiving 75 marks or above will be qualified for international exhibitions.

150 exhibition frames are available, there will be some dealers' stands, and the members' lounge will be open. Exhibits can be entered through the ABPS website at: www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions from 1 June 2023. For other enquiries please contact Jon Aitchison at jonaitchison.uk@outlook.com or phone 01279 870488.

From: The London Philatelist April 2023 page 171

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HERE AND THERE

ROLL OF DISTINGUISHED PHILATELISTS

The Roll of Distinguished Philatelists is the highest and most prestigious of honours in philately, and is the world's oldest philatelic honour. This year's signing ceremony took place during the IBRA 2023 International Philatelic Exhibition. There are five signatories this year, including Professor Dr. Damian Läge, Switzerland. He became a member of the FIP Commission for Thematic Philately in 1999 and was elected chairman for the period 2004 to 2012. He was the driving force behind the organisation of the FEPA European Championship for Thematic Philately and has acted as jury president at virtually all events since as well as working on many international exhibitions. He has written and lectured on thematic philately very widely and may be best known to many of us via his exhibits: "Australasian Birdlife" being the first Thematic exhibit to receive 97 points in an FIP exhibition (China 1999); first Thematic exhibit to be a candidate for a FIP Grand Prix International (Belgica 2001); first Thematic exhibit to be a candidate for a FIP Grand Prix d'Honneur (Washington 2006 and Bucharest 2016); first Thematic exhibit to win the World Stamp Championship (Budapest 2022).

EUROPA 2023

The theme of this year's Europa issue is 'Peace: the highest value of humanity' and features a common design of interlocking arms, suggesting interlocking hearts, inspired by the Celtic love knot. PostEurop, the trade association which represents European public postal operators, explains that "The design is a visual metaphor for a peacefully integrated, cooperative society in which people embrace each other's culture". PostEurop has 55 members, and most of them will issue a stamp of their own design alongside the common one. Royal Mail, although a member, rarely joins in the Europa themed-issues. (Russia and Belarus are also members but currently suspended). You can search for past Europa stamps by theme on their website at: www.posteurop.org/StampCollections



HIMALAYAN BIRDS ON STAMPS

BTA member M. Lokeswara Rao has recently published this book, which focuses on different philatelic materials issued by Himalayan countries: India, Nepal, Bhutan, China and Pakistan. Almost all the bird stamps released by Nepal and Bhutan are related to Himalayan birds. China has released some bird stamps of the Himalayas. India has released some stamps of birds of the Himalayas and Pakistan too released a few stamps. Many migratory bird stamps of the Himalayas were released by all these countries.

The book uses nearly 500 philatelic items to tell the story about Himalayan birds and its habitat threat, the conservation status of the birds and conservation efforts. For more information contact the author at madirajul@gmail.com

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION 2023 ONE-FRAME COMPETITIONS

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

SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER 2023 10.00am – 4.00pm

Competition categories are:

BTA CUP

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

JOHN FOSBERY TROPHY

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

BRIAN SOLE TROPHY

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

BTA CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS

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

See next page for Rules

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

Closing date for receipt of entry forms: Monday 23rd October

Please send sheets to: Andrew Millington

from Saturday 14th October (or earlier if you notify him) but **no later than Tuesday 24th October or deliver them to the Fair** (first floor) by 10.00 on 28th October. Scanned entries from overseas members (see Rule 3) to be sent by **Tuesday 24th 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.
3. We accept entries from overseas members. These should be sent as scans (300 - 400 dpi, pdf format) to:
competitions@britishthematic.org.uk (deadline as per instructions for this year's competition).
4. 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 Championship 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.
3. Entries will be one frame (16 sheets), regardless of whether the qualifying winning exhibit was one or two frames.
4. A person may only enter one exhibit in The Championship Class.
5. 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 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 2023 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

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.

I am transferring £10 per entry to British Thematic Association, Sort code 40-03-29, Account 71157701 by BACS. Overseas competitors to pay by PayPal: peter.wood95@btinternet.com

Please tick to indicate how your entry will be delivered:

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

Signed.....

Date.....



BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 12th to Sunday 14th April 2024

voco Oxford Spires Hotel

Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS

<https://oxfordspires.vocohotels.com>



COST

Full Delegate

Will include:

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

Two people sharing: £282 per person

With single room supplement £327 per person

There are also a number of other options, including an extra night on the Thursday or Sunday, a day (or half day) delegate rate, and options for meals for those not booking the full package. Please see the booking page for full choices.

TRAVEL

By car: the hotel is easily reached from the A40/A34 to the north, or the M4/A34 to the south. There will be free parking for hotel users.

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

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

The City of Oxford is easily reached either by bus from the end of the hotel drive, or in good weather only a short stroll along the Thames tow-path.

Oxford - 'City of Dreaming Spires' - needs no introduction. But if you want some ideas see the web site <https://www.experienceoxfordshire.org/>

If you are coming by car there are many places which are a short drive away.

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 12th to Sunday 14th April 2024

voco Oxford Spires Hotel

PROGRAMME

Friday

p.m.

18.00

Arrival.

Welcome, with Pimms and soft drinks.

Members' displays (6 sheets, one minute).

19.30

Dinner; followed by invited display by James Podger:
Africa and Islands.

Saturday

09.00

Invited display by Wayne Cox: *Small but perfectly formed: the British lamp letter box.*

Coffee.

11.00

Members' displays: 'One-page story' or 'The most difficult item I ever found'.

12.30

Invited short display by Philip Cant on *Shipping.*

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

Saturday afternoon

Paula Cant Stamps will be present with a selection of stock.

Plus:

Owen Green and Chris Kennedy will demonstrate one or more stereo-zoom microscopes and re-create a version of the *Watson Philatelic Microscope* described by Harold Cheavin in 1913.

Or:

Free time for sightseeing.

16.00

Members displays: 'Latest Acquisitions' or 'The colour blue' (12 sheets).

19.00

Pre-dinner drink. Plus raffle.

19.30

Dinner, followed by optional social gathering at the bar.

Sunday

09.00

Invited display by Paul Leonard: *Exploring forgeries in your collection.*

Coffee.

11.00

Members displays: 'Non-philatelic items which enhance your collection' (12 sheets).

BTA WEEKEND BOOKING FORM

I wish to book:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rooms based on two people sharing | £282 per head |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | With single room supplement | £327 per head |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Thursday | £105 per head;
[plus single room supplement £20] |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Sunday | £105 per head;
[plus single room supplement £20] |

Or:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Evening meal Friday | £48.00 per head (inc. drinks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Day delegate Saturday | £20.00 per head |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Evening meal Saturday | £48.00 per head (inc. drinks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Day delegate Sunday | £10.00 per head |

Deposit

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

Please tick as appropriate (BACS preferred):

I have paid £..... by BACS. Sort code 40-03-29; account number 71157701. Please add your name and '2024 Weekend' in the 'Reference' box.

I enclose a cheque for £..... made out to BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION
Please email Peter Wood and inform him when you have paid.

Your details

Name.....

Name of partner

Address.....

..... Post code

Telephone number (home) Mobile.....

Email.....

Acknowledgement of booking will be sent by email where possible.

Rooms are limited so please send this form (or a photocopy) plus deposit, as soon as possible, to:

Mrs. A. Stammers, 40 St. Helen's Way, Benson, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 6SW

Please do NOT book directly with the hotel. [You will be asked when you book out to pay the hotel direct for any extra rooms booked on top of the full Weekend package, but the BTA will make the booking on your behalf].



BTA PROGRAMME 2023

- 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.
- 17 June
19.00 for 19.30 **Zoom meeting**
Michele Bresso
The history of St. Bernards as rescue dogs
- 08 July
14.30 for 15.00 **Zoom meeting**
Peter Wood
The Irish in America
- 05 September
19.00 for 19.30 **Zoom meeting**
Members' displays
- 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.

THE CORONATION of KING CHARLES III

What is a Coronation?

A Coronation is the ceremony in which a new King or Queen is crowned. The word 'Coronation' comes from the Latin word for crown 'corona'. The new King or Queen promises to rule with justice and mercy in front of court, clergy and other people.

Let's take another look at making a Right Royal Stamp Collection! Try to find a stamp from the reign of each King or Queen ever since stamps were invented. Some stamps were specially produced for a Coronation, so look out for them too.



QUEEN VICTORIA. Queen Victoria had her Coronation way back on 28th June 1838 at Westminster Abbey in London. In 1840 her portrait as Queen was put on the first ever stamps produced. The stamp was known as The Penny Black because, er, it cost one old Penny (1d), and it was black! So it would be a good idea to start your Right Royal Stamp Collection with a stamp showing Queen Victoria. (By the way, most Penny Black Stamps are quite expensive to buy now, but there are lots of other far less expensive Victorian stamps you could collect, such as a Penny Red.)





EDWARD VII (7TH). When Queen Victoria died in 1901 she was aged 82, and she'd been Queen for 64 years! Her eldest son, Edward, was already 60 when he became king. His Coronation was set for 26 June 1902, but only two days beforehand he had to postpone it until 9 August, owing to an attack of appendicitis which required an emergency operation. Edward and his younger brother Alfred were the first royal stamp collectors.



GEORGE V (5th). When Edward died in 1910, his son George became king. The Coronation of Edward and his wife Mary as king and queen took place at Westminster Abbey, on Thursday 22 June 1911. He was given his father's stamp collection. He loved collecting stamps and spent hours looking at his albums and arranging the stamps. And because he was so rich, he could afford to buy lots of very expensive stamps, and he had one of the best collections in the world. In fact, in 1904 he set a new world record when he bought a Two Penny Blue stamp from Mauritius for £1,450. No one had ever spent that much on one stamp before!





EDWARD VIII (8th). When *George V* died in 1936, his eldest son Edward became King Edward VIII (8th), but he was never crowned. When he announced that he wanted to marry a divorced woman, the *Government* told him that he would have to abdicate - that means, give up becoming king. He had to choose, the woman he loved or the throne? No problem, he chose the woman! However, stamps had already been made with Edward's head on them, so you can include him in your Right Royal Collection as 'The King Who Was Never Crowned'.



GEORGE VI (6th). When Edward abdicated at the end of 1936, his brother *George* became king instead. He hadn't expected to become king, and was a bit unsure at first, but he became a good and popular king. The coronation of *George* and his wife *Elizabeth*, as king and queen took place at *Westminster Abbey* on *Wednesday 12 May 1937*. During his reign the *Second World War* broke out, and he was popular because he stayed living in *London* during the bombing raids rather than moving away to somewhere safer, and the people thought he was brave. The palace even got partly bombed in one raid!



ELIZABETH II (2nd) (Elizabeth 1st of Scotland). George V died in 1952. The Coronation of Elizabeth II took place on 2 June 1953 at Westminster Abbey in London. Her father George had also collected stamps, and when he died he left all his stamps to Elizabeth, and she continued to add to his collection. In fact, she had an extremely valuable letter with a block of 10 Penny Black stamps dated on the very first day stamps were used (6th May 1840), it was the largest number of Penny Blacks on one letter on that first day anywhere in the world!



Queen Elizabeth died on 8th September 1952 aged 96. Her eldest son Charles became the next king. The Coronation of King Charles III was held on Saturday 6th May 2023 in Westminster Abbey. So now you can look out for stamps showing King Charles III to add to your Right Royal Collection, and you could go further by finding stamps of any other members of the Royal Family.

If you would like to win a set of Royal stamps, answer this question -

Who will be the next King or Queen after King Charles III?

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.

