

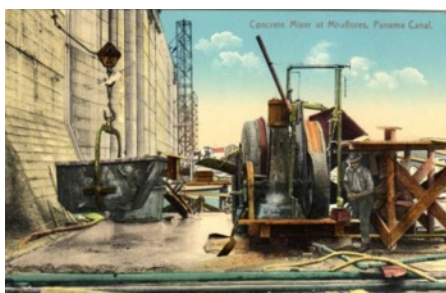
THEMESCENE

September 2016

In this issue we:

Admire engineering:

The Panama Canal
With Chris Wheeler
and
Peruvian Railways
With Ray Ireson



Catch up with new postal systems

Velopost
With Wendy Buckle



Admire an insect

Devil's Darning Needle
With Neil Pearce



Revisit meetings and exhibitions

World Stamp Show NY2016
BTA AGM and display



BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 33, No.3. Whole Number 124

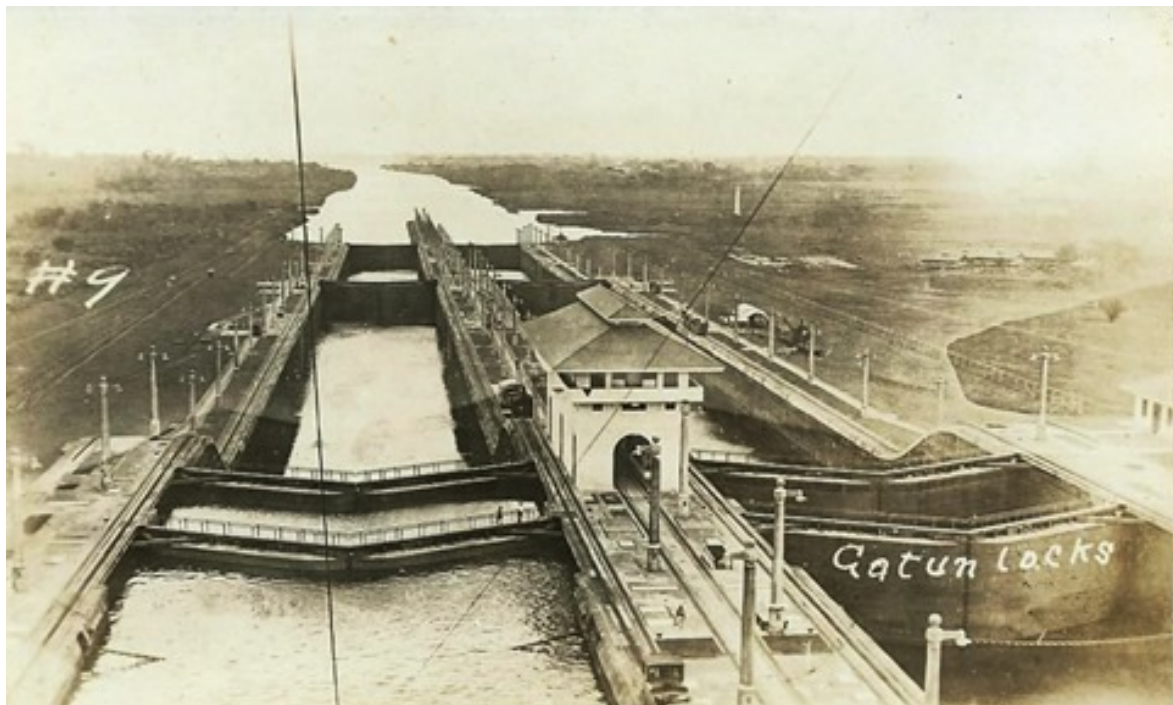
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THE STORY OF THE PANAMA CANAL, page 76



Concrete mixer at Milaflores Locks



Gatun Locks on completion

THEMESCENE

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle


We have a wide selection of subjects in this issue, from feats of engineering to natural history, via the unlikely topic of a precursor to spam mail. It includes an article on page 80 on what is described as a “private post operator”, a term stamp collectors have always ascribed to postal operators outside the official mail delivery system of their country. Not discussed in the article is the whole question of what constitutes “private” in the UK now Royal Mail itself is fully privatised. I’m sure there must be a better term. And I suspect that purists could also debate whether these operators issue ‘stamps’ or ‘labels’. I am happy to receive comments on this! We also have a report on the biggest stamp exhibition in 2016, in New York (page 86). We were delighted while there to recruit three new members. Welcome to them and all those who have joined the BTA so far this year:

Mr. J. Armstrong	Berwick	Mr. K. Bruce	Peterhead
Dr. G. Cook	New Mills	Mrs. B. Davies	Chepstow
Mr. L. Fisher	Israel	Ms. D.R. Hamman	Venice, Florida
Mr. & Mrs. T. Harris	Loughborough	Mr. J. Hayward	New York
Prof. A. Millington	Cheltenham	Ms. M. White	Shrivenham
Ms. A.L. Morgenstern	Pinkneyville, Illinois		

We have more BTA and thematic meetings scheduled for this year (page 106). If you are planning to go to Autumn Stampex on the Saturday (17th) then do try and come along to our joint meeting with the British Postmark Society. It will be for 2 hours from 12.30pm, so there will be plenty of time either side of that to browse the dealers and perhaps look at the competition entries. Even better - if you have material of interest to postmark collectors please bring it along.

I’m very much looking forward to the BTA Weekend starting on 30th September. If you have been before you will know it is going to be fun and relaxed, as a much social occasion as collecting event. If you are thinking of going but haven’t booked yet please contact Anne Stammers at annies1@btopenworld.com.

And finally this year we have the chance to see one of the world’s great ‘Scouting’ collections, presented by Hallvard Slettebø at the Royal Philatelic Society London on 27th October. While not a BTA event, all members have kindly been invited to attend by the ‘Royal’. The room will be open between 1pm and 6pm.

A final reminder about our competitions this year. Full details and application form are on page 107. If you’ve been inspired by anything you’ve seen this year, maybe a fellow club member or a visiting speaker, why not have a go yourself? The Fosbery competition is a fun competition, with no rules apart from requiring 16 "portrait" sheets, in protectors. The entry should tell a story but can include ephemera such as photos, newspaper cuttings and cigarette cards, in addition to stamp type material, so you really have free rein to do what you want. It will be judged by visitors to the Ardingly exhibition. The BTA Cup is intended to be a stepping stone towards entry into a National Thematic competition at Stampex or York. 32 sheets to fill 2 frames are required and the entries will be judged by a qualified thematic judge. Why not have a go? 

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg

Time to Deliver

This is an exciting time for me and no, I'm not talking about the Olympics that are taking place as I write this! So much is happening and so much is hoped for over the next few months. STAMPEX in September is always a joy with plenty to see, friends to meet and dealers keen to relieve you of your hard earned money! Perhaps at last I may find that illusive item that I've been searching for! Here in Cheltenham our local club starts its new season in September and I'm looking forward to seeing the visiting presenters (some from the BTA!) over the next eight months. But shortly after that in early October will be the BTA's weekend in Oxford. Again, a fun time with many friends and colleagues who hope to see and hear more about our exciting hobby.

But for me, despite these highlights over the next few months, my excitement is centred on my retirement in October with all the fears and hope that this milestone will bring. One of the many things I hope to do in the next few months is to write those articles I've promised various editors and to start writing up my collection. It's time to deliver on those promises I made to myself – well, that's the intent! I must admit I did open the wardrobe door that holds my collection and I was nearly overwhelmed by the amount of 'stuff' I have collected over the past 50 years. It does need sorting out. I have so many items just left in the packets I bought them in that it will take ages to put them into stock books and label them up. At least then I can see what I have (but I don't feel too guilty as I expect my wife has her wardrobe full of quilting material in a similar state!). So, in many ways I am hoping for a wet and windy winter so that the garden will not distract me from my task. I am looking forward to the time ahead, to tidying up my collection, to writing those articles, to have more time to have fun with my collection. As I ponder these thoughts I am reminded of a quote from that great South African golfer Gary Player "Simply by making the effort to start something, you will be miles ahead of almost everyone else." I think it is time for me to deliver! 📖

Barry displayed some of his material - presumably written up! - at a recent BTA meeting at Worpex, showing some of his postcard collection on Parachuting:



THE STORY OF THE PANAMA CANAL

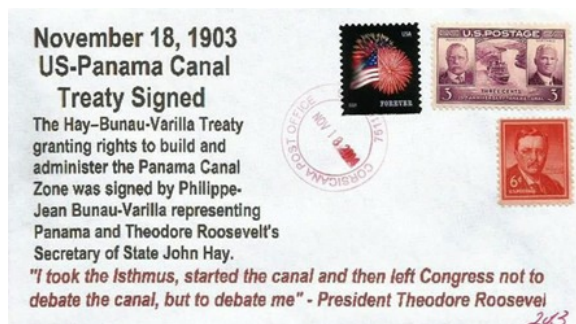
Chris Wheeler gets digging

This article was inspired by Egypt's Suez Canal issue from 2014, a set of three se-tenant stamps marking the commencement of the ten mile Canal widening project started that year. Somehow the stamps were designed and issued showing the Panama rather than the Suez Canal. On the day of issue the error was noticed and all stamps were withdrawn (*fig 1*), a correct replacement set being released later in the year.

Introduction

The practicality of linking the Pacific to the Atlantic was investigated in the mid-1800s. William Kennish from the Isle of Man was one of the first to chart the eventual route (*fig 2*). Turning this into reality was accelerated on completion of the Suez Canal in 1879. Ferdinand de Lesseps was commissioned by the Columbian government to survey and build it. Sadly, due to the enormous death toll from Malaria and Yellow Fever, reaching 22,000 by 1889, the project was abandoned. However the Californian gold rush, military problems with Cuba and Columbia's refusal to restart the project gave impetus for USA to intervene, which it did by encouraging the Panamanian Revolt, which led to independence from Columbia and the establishment of the Canal Zone within the new country of Panama in 1903 under USA control (*fig 3*).

On November 6, 1903, Philippe Bunau-Varilla, as Panama's ambassador to the United States, signed the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty, granting rights to the United States to build and indefinitely administer the Panama Canal Zone and its defences (*left*).



President Theodore Roosevelt drove the project forward replacing civil with military control after his visit in 1906. Major infrastructure with new towns, hospitals, railway and equipment enabled the project to continue. In spite of massive landslips, supply and communication problems, the canal was completed in late 1913 and opened in 1914.

During the 1930s an additional set of larger locks was installed. In 1976 a Treaty outlining a twenty year phased transfer of the Canal Zone and Canal to the country of Panama was signed, Panama taking full possession on 1 January 2000. Construction of a third set of locks started in 2007 and is underway.

Key People

Stamps commemorating the many people involved in the building have been issued, among them were President Theodore Roosevelt; Justo Arosomena of the Panama State, who had liaised with the Colombian Government for the construction of the Canal; Vasco Núñez de Balboa who is credited with the discovery of the Pacific Ocean and whose name was used for the new town constructed at the Pacific end of the canal; John Wallace, Chief Engineer from 1904 to 1905; John Stevens, Chief Engineer from 1905 to 1907; Army Major George Goethals who then took over the project in 1907; Colonel William Gorgas who was appointed as chief sanitation and disease control officer; Gaillard who managed the construction of the locks; and Rafael Nunez, President of Columbia from 1881 to 1884, who gave approval for



Fig 1. Egypt's error and withdrawn stamp set, showing the Panama Canal in Egypt



Fig 2. William Kennish

People associated with the Canal



Roosevelt and Arosomena



Balbao



Wallace



Stevens



Goethals



Gorgas



Gaillard



Nunez



West Indian labour



Fig 3. Map of Central America with the location of the Canal

commencement of the Canal in 1881. Finally tribute is made to the West Indian workers themselves.

Structure of the Canal

At the Pacific end, inside the Balboa breakwaters are the Miraflores locks, constructed of concrete on deep solid floor slabs. Near the Pacific end, about eight miles of channel had to be cut through the mountain. It was a mammoth task, hampered by landslides. Huge steam shovels were used to move the rock into railway trucks for disposal. The railway lines were constantly relocated as work progressed. At the Atlantic end of the canal, water from the Chagres River feeding the canal had to be dammed, with spillways for use during the rainy season, and locks built into the structure for the ships to pass through back down to sea level, the Gatun Dam and Gatun Locks (*see inside front cover*).



Steam shovels



Gangs moving the railway tracks

The First Attempt

The first attempt at building the canal, by the French in 1880, had to be abandoned due to the enormous death rate from disease, mainly Malaria and Yellow Fever. Before the second attempt was made William Gorgas was appointed to install proper sanitation, build an effective hospital and manage sickness among the workers. He did an excellent job.



Gorgas and his hospital



Malaria



Yellow Fever

The Opening, 1914

On 10 October 1913 President Woodrow Wilson remotely detonated the dyke which would allow water into the Culebra Cut. On 7 January 1914 the old crane boat *Alexandre La Valley* made the first complete transit of the canal. Workers were laid off, the equipment and villages dismantled, Gorgas went to the gold mines in South Africa and Colonel Goethals became the first Canal Zone Governor. Due to World War I the grand celebration planned for the official opening on 15 August 1914 was cancelled and *SS Ancon* made the first official transit unceremoniously.

The Ships

The early ships transiting the canal were relatively small, some were cargo sailing ships, many mechanically propelled. Today huge oil, container and cruise vessels make the journey through.



S S Ancon



1977 Treaty



The Transfer Treaty

On 7 September 1977 President Carter and General Torrijos of Panama signed the Treaty passing control of the Canal from USA, which it had held since 1903, to Panama.

The Future

The widening of the canal and building of additional locks is a massive on-going project, all in an effort to satisfy the daily increase in tonnage. Neighbouring Nicaragua is now surveying a rival sea level route through its country, with no need for locks, funded by Chinese Companies.

And here we have the Egypt stamp set correcting the error which triggered this article, lush vegetation now replaced by desert. 📖



VELOPOST: ONE SERVICE - MULTIPLE THEMES

Wendy Buckle gets on her bike


Since 2004 private post operators in the UK have been licensed by a regulator to either collect and distribute mail, then pass it to Royal Mail for final delivery, known as Downstream Access, or deliver mail themselves, known as End-to-End Delivery. Mail delivered by End-to-End Delivery bears an indicium with a 'CL' licence number, either printed directly or on a label affixed to the envelope.

One such company is Velopost (<https://velopostuk.wordpress.com/>), based in Bristol, which delivers mail in Bristol, Bath and Edinburgh, having the indicium CL 127. It started in 2011 and issues its own self-adhesive stamps featuring bridges of the areas it serves. The price for a small letter is currently 42p, large letter 63p and packet 90p. There is a "national letter rate", i.e. from Bath to Bristol and vice-versa, for 49p. (All prices include VAT).

Stamps are normally ordered over the phone or by email, and mail collected by Velopost by prior arrangement; but Bristol now also has six sites, including the Tourism Office, where you can buy your stamps and post them in special Velopost letter boxes. This way a service which started for businesses and organisations can now offer its services to the public. Organisations include The Royal West of England Academy, St. George Health Centre, Sirona Care and Health and Bristol City Council. Each of these has its own 'stamp', and a corporate price can be offered for volume of items over 15,000 per annum. And for everyone at Christmas there is a special Santa post stamp.

Velopost prides itself on its 'Green' credentials. Mail within each city is delivered by bicycle, and mail between Bristol and Bath is sent via electric vehicle. So these stamps (more properly known as labels) can be collected for several themes: bridges, bicycles, postal systems, the various organisations, and environmental issues.

This is by no means the only 'green' courier service. Lists have been published in *GSM*, some with titles obviously vaunting their environmental credentials, but not all of them are still in operation; and perhaps more relevantly for us, those that are don't necessarily produce such enterprising stamps.

However there are other areas of privatised post collecting that do offer material for thematic collectors, namely Tourist stamps, Railway Letter stamps, Island stamps, and Christmas charity posts. If any reader collects these, other UK private post services, or modern private post stamps overseas (such as the German Citipost services) I would be pleased to feature them in a future issue of *Themescene*. They all make attractive thematic issues and may possibly be a way to attract new thematic collectors. 

References

Holman, J. British Private Posts. *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. Various articles December 2010 - January 2016.

I am indebted to Chris Wheeler for alerting me to Velopost, and for providing all the stamp illustrations.



Bath: Poultney Bridge



*Large letter rate for:
Bristol: Clifton Suspension
Bridge*



*Edinburgh: Forth
Bridge*



*Companies and organisations in Bristol
Royal West of England Academy*



Bristol City Council



Bath Santa post



Postbox and postman



THE DRAGONFLY: DEVIL'S DARNING NEEDLE

Neil Pearce debunks a nickname

The title of this short essay is an interesting vernacular name for an intriguing little insect. However it has a rather sinister sound, suggesting something a bit evil. Other nicknames for the dragonfly, such as 'ear poker' and 'eye cutter', are also disrespectful, implying an ability to inflict injury. Quite why it has acquired this reputation is not altogether clear, although an unattractive appearance – large multi-faceted eyes and elongated body – when compared with other winged insects such as butterflies, may be partly responsible. They are also powerful predators, attacking midges, mosquitoes, flies, bees, ants and other small insects.

Despite their compromising appearance dragonflies are to be found in Art Nouveau, especially in jewellery designs, and they feature as decorative motifs on fabrics and home furnishings.

Dragonflies are also imaged favourably in some other countries around the world. In Japan for example they are viewed as symbols of happiness, courage and strength, appearing often in art and literature. For some North American Natives they represented swiftness and activity and were featured on rock art and pottery. In the contemporary United States the pursuit of dragonflies as a hobby, like bird-watching, is known as 'oding' from the Latin name of the dragonfly order: Odonata. Oding is popular in Texas where 225 different species of odanates have been observed.

Worldwide some 5,680 different species of dragonfly have been identified. They are usually found around lakes, ponds, streams, pools, marshes and other wetlands, since their larvae are aquatic and much of the life cycle (three to five years) is spent in this form, as naiads. But once they emerge as adult winged insects, normally surviving from five to six months, their aggressive instincts increase and prey find it difficult to escape their clutches. Dragonflies are among the fastest flying insects in the world; adults can achieve speeds of up to 34 miles per hour.



The appearance of dragonflies on stamps has been limited. In 1977, two years following the successful North Vietnam war against the South, the new Socialist Republic of Vietnam issued a set of eight dragonfly stamps, five of which are shown above. The first of two 12xu values depicts a *Crocothemis servilia*, with characteristic large head, long body and two pairs of strong transparent wings, set against an orange background. The second 12xu stamp shows an *Ictinogomphus clavatus* against a blue background. The 20xu stamp illustrates a *Rhinocypha fenestrella* with rather darker wings. The 30xu stamp shows a *Neurothmis tullia* with bi-coloured wings. The 50xu stamp depicts another *Neurothmis*, sub *fulvia*, in full flight like others in the series.

In 1988, eleven years after the Vietnam set, Poland issued six dragonfly stamps, three of which are shown. The low value 10zt stamp shows an *Anax imperator* a fairly common species in the Northern Hemisphere and known by its common name as the Emperor. The vertical 15zt stamp shows a *Calopteryx splendens* or Banded Agrion. The 30zt stamp illustrates a *Sympetrum pedemontanum* with banded wingtips.



Someone considering dragonflies as a collectible theme will find only a few sets of stamps depicting ‘the devil’s darning needle’; however the theme can be widened to include mayflies - their morphologically similar ‘cousins’ – ladybirds and flying beetles. Fear not – eyes and ears will not be at risk! 📖

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BEGGING LETTERS

Barry Floyd reckons there is nothing new under the sun

Those of us who use computers regularly for correspondence will be familiar with entries which appear in the Spam / Junk box. There we face a choice: to recognise it and open it or identify a spam message and delete it.

Among the clever yet invariably fraudulent messages are begging letters, in which the creators - with varying degrees of literary ability - make a pleading case for financial assistance in one form or another.

While the use of computers has undoubtedly encouraged the flow of such sob stories, we may take note that begging letters are a time-honoured form of devious solicitation, with a history going back over many hundreds of years in Great Britain.

Through the 17th and 18th centuries it appears there were legions of writers, armed with no more than pen, paper and a credible sob story who set about sending their sham petitions to targeted members of the rich upper classes and other distinguished individuals. Royalty, politicians, the clergy, landed gentry and famous public figures were all considered worthy of receiving importuning messages which were frequently repeated, until, sooner or later, a response might appear, ideally conceding to the requested sum.

While itinerant rogues were numerous, a more polished 'white-collar' con man was to emerge. A good example was Henry Perfect, the son of a Leicestershire clergyman who addressed letters to such notables as the Duchess of Beaufort, the Earl of Clarendon and Lord Littleton, as well as to a score of bishops and other honourables. His letters were written either as a bereaved wife or an impoverished cleric. He kept a book of his accounts and over two years earned an imposing £488 before his trickery was detected. As an indication of how the practice of importuning was loathed, Perfect was sentenced to seven years in Botany Bay.

A public spotlight was focused on the ruses of Perfect and his associates, practising upon the charitable rich, when the London Mendicity Society was formed. Participants were invited to send in all the begging letters they had received. By the early 1830's some 28,000 such letters had been forwarded "from persons of rank and influence". In its most successful year the Society prosecuted 42 writers of soliciting epistles, though this was only a small return on the time and effort it extended.

Despite the Society's efforts to expose the culprits it is believed that, in London alone in the late 1830's, there were at least 250 professional begging-letter writers. The most successful were set up in fashionable lodging houses, employing clerks and other support staff, and were generally living a comfortable life with incomes equivalent to those of legitimate professions. It is thought around a thousand begging letters were sent out daily.



The advent of Uniform Penny Post in 1840 and the introduction of letter boxes probably doubled the number of fraudulent letters in circulation, with the result that London underwent an invisible crime wave.

Among those duped at this time was the distinguished author Charles Dickens. While in his stories he was a good friend of the deserving poor, he was nevertheless incensed when he discovered he

had made several contributions to a man who was later found to be in good health and far from impoverished circumstances. “He is one of the most shameless frauds and impositions of this time” declared Dickens, recalling the flood of pathetic appeals which had come to his home. “In his idleness, his mendacity and the immeasurable harm he does ... he is far more worthy of Norfolk Island than three-fourths of the worst characters who are sent there”.

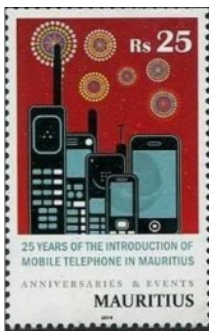
We may note here the similarity in spelling of mendicity and mendacity in describing the regrettable experiences of Charles Dickens and Londoners at large. While the terms may have become almost synonymous in meaning, there is a subtle distinction. Mendicity refers to a person who begs, while mendacity refers to dishonesty: a fraudulent and unscrupulous individual.



While the countrywide use of the penny post after 1840 undoubtedly assisted the work of mendacious scoundrels, it also engendered the growth of a more lowly breed of ‘screevers’: those who made a living by supplying ‘slums’ (letters), ‘fakements’ (petitions) and other bogus material to professional cadgers.

Screevers were often those who had fallen by the wayside, exiles from respectable society: failed clerks, teachers and lawyers for example. Acting as amanuensis to the less literate cadger, they might produce a petition requesting charitable aid - complete with forged signatures from other supporters - or a more elaborate masterpiece, a long literary document composed in their best curlicue style of writing.

Reverting to the present day, the proliferation of electronic devices and accompanying social media: Google, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube et al, has - like the use of computers - enabled the creators of pleading sob stories to perpetuate their crafty petitions. However the main difference today is that such begging letters invariably appear no longer in hard copy or hand-written form. They are therefore less detectable than the literary screeds which the Mendicity Society was able to record in the 19th century.



While the general public should continue to be alert to the devious devices of tricksters, intent of gaining funds under false pretences from charity-minded individuals, we should perhaps acknowledge that the enmity once voiced towards ‘shameless frauds’ has of late been giving way to a reappraisal of the literary skills of the progenitors of pleading letters and an insightful appreciation of the circumstances which led them to pursue their illegitimate careers. As recorded earlier, some were ‘reduced gentlemen’ who had failed in other professions and were occupying an uneasy position in society. It took in fact a fair measure of verbal ability to compose those requests for financial assistance most suited to impress their recipients.

Dr Melechi, a sociologist at the University of York, has summarised the current perception of the final days of the classical begging-letter writer (1):

“It is a rose-tinted obituary for a singularly ingenious career, an elegy for those literary Fagins who had contrived to rob the rich without ever leaving their lodgings”

(1) Melechi, A. “The great Victorian letter swindle” *BBC History Magazine* July 2014, pp. 57-59.

A NEWBIE IN NEW YORK

Wendy Buckle goes to World Stamp Show NY2016

It was a series of 'firsts' for me: first visit to New York, first visit to a major 'international' outside Europe, and first time international exhibitor. I had no idea what to expect. This was America. They do things Big there. If you found London 2010 impressive then consider these statistics from WSS: 150 dealers; 16 rooms hosting daily lectures, seminars and meetings (well over 200 events held); 74 philatelic society booths representing 88 different societies. Plus of course the exhibits: 4,857 frames of exhibits, of which 4,146 were competitive. These included 424 frames of Thematic, 67 Open, and two new classes: 25 frames of Modern Philately of the Past 25 Years, and 45 frames of First Day Covers.

The whole thing kicked off with an impressive opening ceremony. The MC, with his international audience in mind, explained to us that any American cultural or sporting event started with the Presentation of Colours, and so the US flag was marched in, and the Star Spangled Banner sung beautifully by a member of the US Marines. The show was held during New York Fleet Week and because of that the ceremony had a naval theme. Speakers included one Vice-Admiral and a retired Admiral, but I must say their theme of American naval



(specifically submarine) power seemed to have only a light connection with philately. However they were followed by James Cochrane of the US Postal Service who really did reach out to his audience and talked enthusiastically about the hobby. A senior official of the US Post who in the past had been a philatelist. Royal Mail take note. After three more speakers the

ribbon was officially cut and the Show opened.

As I said, it was big, but well spaced out. However unlike the London internationals there was no central information point, and while everyone was friendly and wanted to help, they often didn't have the answer you were after. I must say that not everything went smoothly, and there was poor planning in places affecting exhibitors. Some exhibits were split by a wide aisle, spoiling the visual impact of the pages and flow of the story. A few entries had pages put up in the wrong sequence, and not all were corrected. The frames were numbered but names of exhibitors and titles of entries were omitted, and there was confusion over frame sizes. Then when the results were announced there was a shortage of 'Gold' pennants denoting the award given, resulting in the temporary use of plain card.

But if you were not an exhibitor you could enjoy the really good aspects of the Show. The exhibits were adjacent to the trade stands, with plenty of space to browse. Similarly the trade area was arranged with wide aisles making wandering round easy and comfortable. Specialist society stands had plenty of prominence, gaining good exposure. A very useful App was available to download to phone or tablet allowing you to search for information on dealers, worldwide post offices, auctions, meetings, societies and exhibits, plus a floor map. There



was a very large area for juniors, and adjacent to it a large area for new adult collectors, both well staffed with plenty of activities on offer. Plenty of space was provided to sit, chat or eat and drink. (Mind you, the floor space was so huge you needed to plan trips to cafe or restroom carefully or risk wearing yourself out with the daily hike!). The United States Post stand seemed the most popular, with long queues all day; even longer than the queue for the Court of Honour, which included some stunning displays, not least “Stamps that Changed the World”: registration sheets of the

Penny Black (plate 1, before hardening), and the Twopenny Blue (plate 3). These unique items came from the Postal Museum. (Their transport to the USA made newspaper headlines in the UK, a rare example of good publicity for our hobby).

A DAY OF THEMATICS

Friday was Topicals Day, organised by the American Topical Association. It was chaired by Jack Denys, outgoing President of the ATA, who explained that the original idea for the “Informal Gathering of Leaders and Members of Worldwide Thematic Associations” came from the BTA (we had contacted them a few months previously asking whether there would be the opportunity for a joint meeting). Those present were invited to introduce themselves. The audience consisted of four from Belgium, one from Canada, one from Israel, twelve from the USA and five from the UK. Seven of those present were BTA members, and it was a great opportunity to meet in person members who until now I had only had email dealings with. What’s more we picked up three new members that day. Jack invited comments on the state of thematics in each country, starting with the ATA. This has around 3,000 members, and by that point they had recruited 60 new members at the Show. (Wow!) But like many societies they struggle to retain members. They organise an annual exhibition, the National Topical Stamp Show, which is held in a different part of the USA each year.

New Zealand’s organisation is ThemeNZ: the Association for Thematic and Open Collectors. Interesting that like the BTA they have embraced Open philately (a discipline that originated in Australia and New Zealand). They have around 40 members and produce four newsletters per year.

The Israeli society has around 350 members, producing a quarterly magazine with a monthly Internet version based around a specific theme.

Belgium of course has the problem of two languages, so it has two organisations. As with so many societies membership is dropping due to age, and it is difficult to recruit new members. They produce a quarterly magazine and offer coaching for exhibitors.

Our Chairman then outlined the BTA situation: with a membership of around 200 and new recruits hoped for from our revamped website, we are enthusiastically embracing Open and Postcard collecting, seeing a clear synergy with thematics. Postcards are a strong collecting area in Europe and the UK. Barry stressed that while we cover exhibiting we do not focus on that, with the majority of our members happy as collectors.

These briefings set off a general discussion on wider collaboration, and on how to attract new members, especially youth. It seems we all have the same issues to grapple with.

Following this the ATA had invited Damien Läge to give a presentation at their Worldwide Thematic association meeting (*next page*).

DEVELOPING YOUR STORY: THE KEY CONCEPT OF THEMATIC PHILATELY

Report on a presentation by Damian Läge at World Stamp Show NY2016

Damian's alternative title was *Swan Biography: thoughts about a difficult theme*. Many people know Damian's exhibit on birds *Fascinated in Feathers* but here he used a more recent exhibit of his to illustrate the points he considers most important when trying to put together a new exhibit. As he pointed out, the challenge for anyone is to turn a topic into an exhibit.



Pages were shown here with a variety of types of material, some of it rare, and he explained why each item was relevant. In doing so he demonstrated research into the history of place names. Such variety does indicate that Swans are a good topic to exhibit. But beware of being boring! 80% of stamps showing swans illustrate them on water. So you need to be ingenious; an example here was a tête-bêche pair which appeared to show a swan looking at its image in the water.

An enterprising plan is one way to lift what otherwise may be a pedestrian topic. The plan can be based on science, or you could let your imagination run free and come up with something quite original; an approach which could lift an exhibit from nice to outstanding. The Swan for instance does not have to start with its scientific classification. How about starting with Hans Christian Anderson's *The Ugly Duckling*, point out that is just a fairy story, then move on to the true story of the swan. A well thought-out plan can tell the story in an original way. The first 'swan' stamp was Western Australia 1854. How do you integrate that in your story in an interesting way? Well black swans are indigenous only to Australia, so our European swans, hearing of the fabled black swan, but not knowing whether to believe in such a beast, undertake this hazardous journey to look for them. The plan can bring disparate parts of a story together.

Finally, a few tips. One suggestion for making sure your material perfectly matches your write-up: list all your items and write the text to ensure you bring in your good material. Exploit the material to its best advantage, for example by using the actual wording on a meter mark or slogan as part of your text. Working closely with text and material will show up any gaps in the material - do you need to look for new items because a specific aspect is not covered?

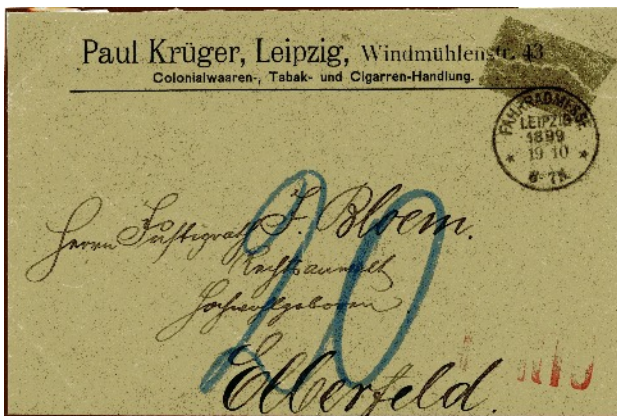
Sitting listening to Damien it all sounded so easy, but of course it is not. What he demonstrated was his phenomenal philatelic knowledge, his dedication to research, and his imagination and flair. It was an inspiring talk, even if I do think I can never emulate him.



PICTURES FROM AN EXHIBITION (see page 93)



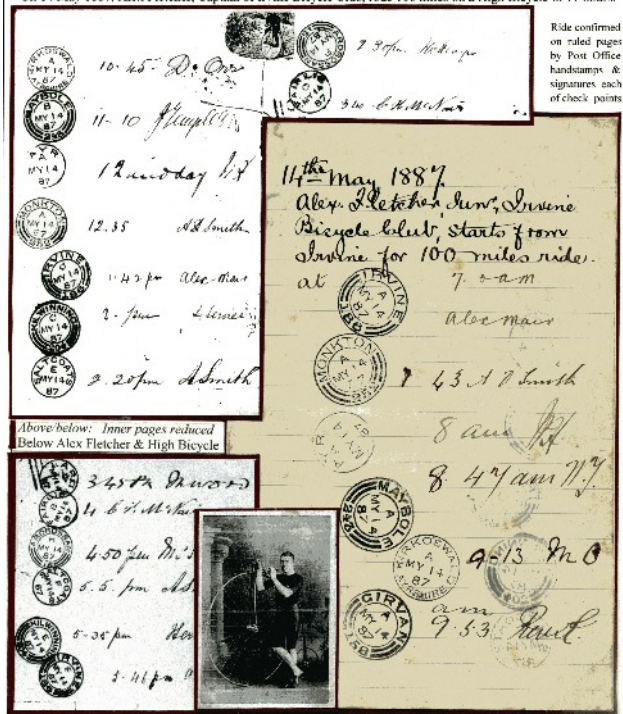
Lesley, Wendy and Peter with their medals



Cover postmarked "FAHRRADMESSE LEIPZIG 19.10 1899" (Cycle Exhibition)
 PORTO in red = Postage and "20" in blue = 20pf (minimum rate)

From: Go By Cycle!

4.3 ROAD RACING Reliability Trials
 On 14 May 1887, Alex Fletcher, Captain of Irvine Bicycle Club, rode 100 miles on a High Bicycle in 11 hours.



Record of Time Trial by Alex Fletcher, Captain of Irvine Bicycle Club on 14 May 1887
 He rode 100 miles on the Penny Farthing cycle in 11 hours.



Kirkpatrick Macmillan early bicycle c, 1840

From: Twinkle twinkle little star



*26p value of the set commemorating 200 years of British Astronomy
Detail of the same stamp showing William Herschel's drawing of the Milky Way*



1901 stamp of Victoria with the Southern Cross constellation

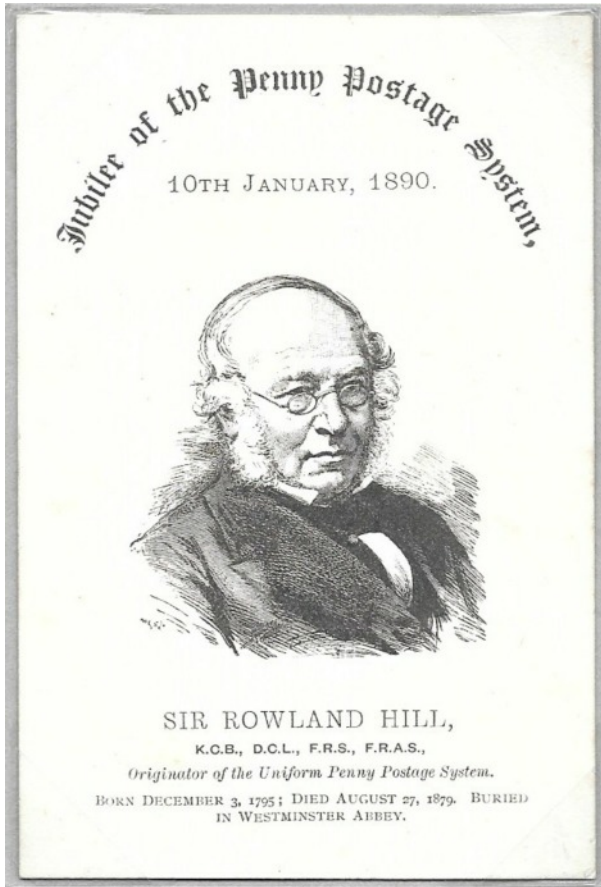


From The Jewish Homeland:

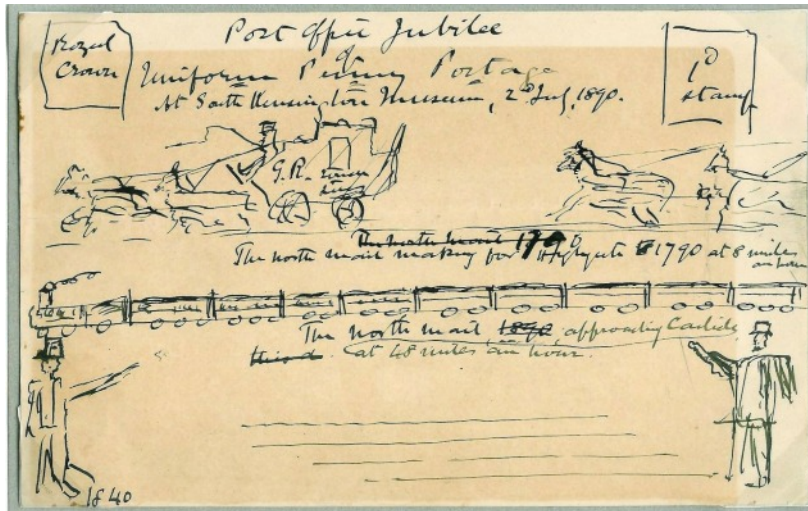
Sent by US Secretary of State Daniel Webster in 1843. Carries red, circular postmark, "Washington City D. C. May 9" with straight line "Free" handstamp. In the USA, a Secretary of State is entitled to free postage provided that his signature appears on the letter, as this does.

The relevance to this exhibit is that Daniel Webster coined the legal term in warfare known as a preemptive strike. This means that if you know you are going to be attacked and your chances of survival are small, you are in your right to strike first. This is very relevant in many situations today.

From: A Jubilee Reminiscence



*Inscribed at the top:
 "Engraved for the Corporation invitation card in connection with the Postage Jubilee 1890"
 Design of a Penny Black with the letters J, L, added (Jubilee London).
 The design was the centrepiece of the Guildhall invitation.
 Die proof on stout paper*



John Baines sketch of design for commemorative postal stationery



John receiving his award

POSTAL SCENES OF NEW YORK



*Magnificent post boxes at:
Grand Central Station*

Chrysler Centre



James A. Farley Post Office Building, with the inscription "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."



United States Postal Inspection Service, the law enforcement arm of the US postal service

**Minutes of the 25th Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 11th June 2016
at Swinpep, at St Joseph's Roman Catholic College, Ocotol Way, Swindon SN3 3LR**

Present: There were 17 members present

The Chairman, Barry Stagg, welcomed everyone to the 25th Annual General Meeting.

1) Apologies: Peter Denly. Michael Blackman, Charles Oppenheim. Peter Weir, Jean Alexander, Crawford Alexander.

2) Minutes of the 24th Annual General Meeting held on 13th June 2015

These had been published in Themescene September 2015 and were circulated at this meeting. It was agreed that they were a correct record of the meeting.

3) Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4) Chairman's report

"I know I said this last year but I must start by saying thank you to all the members of the committee. You all do a great job and give up a lot of your time to ensure that the BTA stays afloat. I'm not going to name anybody as I risk missing somebody out so I will just say a personal thank you from me to all the committee members for all your hard work and dedication to the BTA and for making my job so easy.

I receive many magazines every month and many go straight in the bin! But I always look forward to reading Themescene. Throughout the last year I have always found something inside that is interesting and informative. So thank you to all those who contributed articles and letters, and thank you to our editor, Wendy, for her efforts in ensuring the magazine gets put together and published on time.

I make no apologies for thanking all those who have been involved in the work to update our website. It was great to see it go live a few months ago and I am sure it will develop over time to be an important asset to thematic collectors around the world.

I must congratulate all the BTA members who have entered competitions over the past 12 months and won medals. There are too many to name individually but I thank you all for showing the UK and world that Thematic collecting in the UK is alive and kicking. And may I also thank the dozens of BTA members who give talks to philatelic clubs throughout the country, again, this helps to keep thematic collecting in the forefront of our hobby.

And finally, may I thank all of you, the membership, for your continued support of the BTA. Without you there would be no BTA. So please let any member of the committee know if you have any suggestions on how to improve the BTA, or contact our editor if you have an article that you feel others will enjoy".

I look forward to another interesting and busy Philatelic year as the Chairman of the BTA. The Chairman was thanked for his report and it was *agreed unanimously*.

5) Treasurer's report

Results for 2015

The 2015 outturn was a SURPLUS of some £967 as compared to £539 last year. A number of members were generous in giving donations totaling £800 towards the costs of establishing the new website and we received an ABPS grant of £390.

Year on Year Analysis by item.

INCOME

With increased rates subscription income was higher by £462. Sales income was however lower by £61 primarily as a result of the cessation of CD sales

EXPENDITURE

Leaving aside the new website costs expenditure was lower by £204, despite the costs involved with the International, where we were grateful for the Bicycle Stamp Club and Masonic Stamp Club sharing

Themescene costs were reduced by £340 – the Editor seems to have kept members happy. Admin costs/Officers expenses were down by £120. It should perhaps go on record that justifiable travel expenses to attend committee meetings are not being claimed.

Looking Ahead to 2016

Subscriptions appear to be about £300 lower than 2015. I assume the autumn committee meeting will take place at the residential weekend which gives a saving and with no other meeting planned we should show a substantial surplus again in 2016.

Thanks are due to our examiner Graeme Boutle.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for his report which was *agreed unanimously*.

6) Election of Officers

Chairman Barry Stagg, Vice Chairman Jim Etherington, Secretary Anne Stammers, Treasurer Peter Wood. Wendy Buckle proposed and John Hayward seconded that they be elected 'en bloc'. This was *agreed unanimously*.

7) Election of Committee Members

There were no nominations for committee. Jim Etherington proposed and Owen Green seconded that the committee, as shown on the Agenda and including Jon Matthias, be re-elected 'en bloc'. *Agreed unanimously*.

8) Ratification of the Librarian & Examiner

John Hayward proposed that the positions of Ron Backhouse (Librarian) and Grahame Boutle (Examiner) should be ratified, seconded by Brian Sole and *agreed unanimously*.

10) Any Other Business

a) Gerald Lovell, displays organizer, reported that he had been asked by the Guild of St Gabriel if the BTA would do another joint meeting with them at Chelsea. Agreed in principle but avoiding the date of of the Chelsea Flower Show (which causes travel problems).

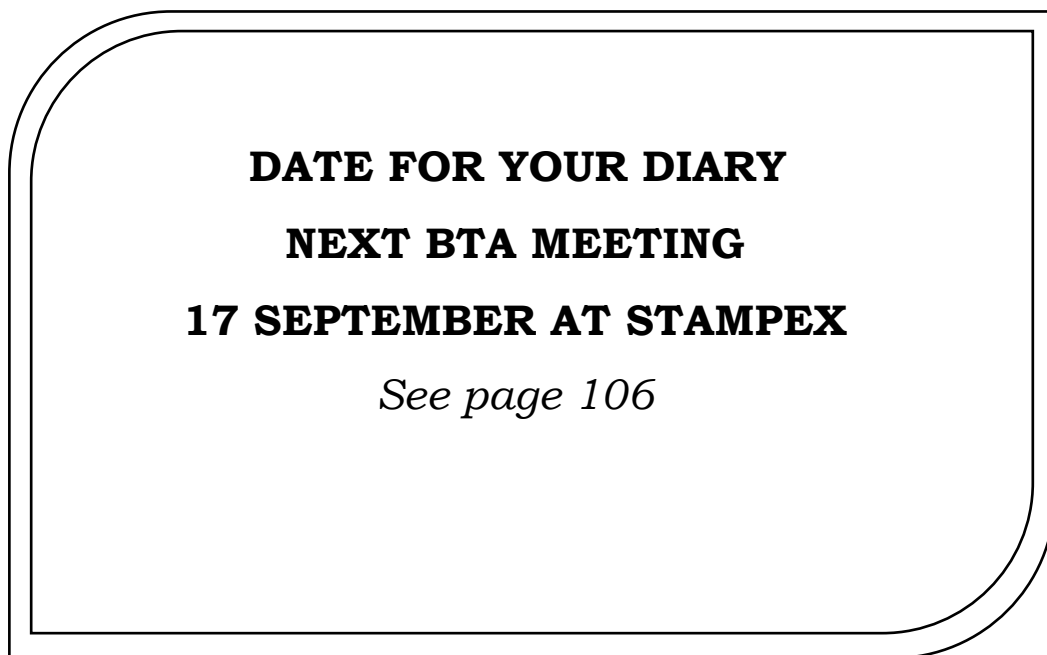
b) Stock of material to be sold. It was queried as to whether this could be done through the website, in principle not a problem but photos/scans would need to be taken and then be put onto the site with price etc. Alternatively, could it be advertised on the website as a list? Committee to look into it.

c) Website – John Hayward had looked at this and thought a very good job had been done and he thanked everyone who had been involved for all their work.

d) The Chairman realised that, although it was in his notes, he omitted to mention his thanks, and that of the committee, to our anonymous donor(s) and to ABPS for their generous donation and grant towards the cost of the new website. Without this help the website would not now be in operation. Thank you.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 3.05p.m.

As Stephen Cross, winner of the Francesca Rapkin bowl in 2015, was unexpectedly unable to attend the AGM to give his display 'Fictional Detectives' Jim Etherington kindly showed his display 'The BEF in France 1939-1940'. Our thanks to him for stepping in to give a very interesting display.



1940: A DESPERATE YEAR FOR BRITAIN

Report of the display by Jim Etherington

This selection of material from Jim's gold-medal winning exhibit told the story of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in France. When war was declared an advance party of the BEF immediately sailed for France, landing in Cherbourg and moving to the Belgian border. The Royal Air Force sent the Advance Air Strike force and the Air Component of the BEF to operate reconnaissance flights. At this date, while Belgium and Holland were still neutral, any British pilot shot down over those countries would be interred for the duration of the war.


What followed was the 'phoney war' when there were no major military operations on the Western Front. One of the things needed to combat boredom by the troops was an efficient postal service. In the early days the RAF had its own postal arrangements, flying the post to Abingdon, from where it went into the civilian system. This meant RAF post reached home quicker than army post, so after one month all RAF mail went through the military postal system. A previously unrecorded cover from the RAF at Perpignan (where they were based for training due to the exceptionally cold winter in the north) was shown.

Mail was usually censored by an officer in the unit, with occasional examples of a second censor at base. While 'honour envelopes', where the sender signed a declaration confirming the contents of the letter did not reveal military information, were not normally censored, a few picked up censorship marks as a check. Field Service Postcards were a quick way of informing those at home that you were OK, by deleting as appropriate from a selection of pre-printed sentences. There was also occasional use of the telegraph system. A page of 'silks' were also shown, something not solely related to World War I.

Much organisation at home went into sending parcels of gifts to the troops; usually enclosed was a preprinted card which the recipient could return, recording their thanks. How times change: one provider was the Overseas League Tobacco Fund!

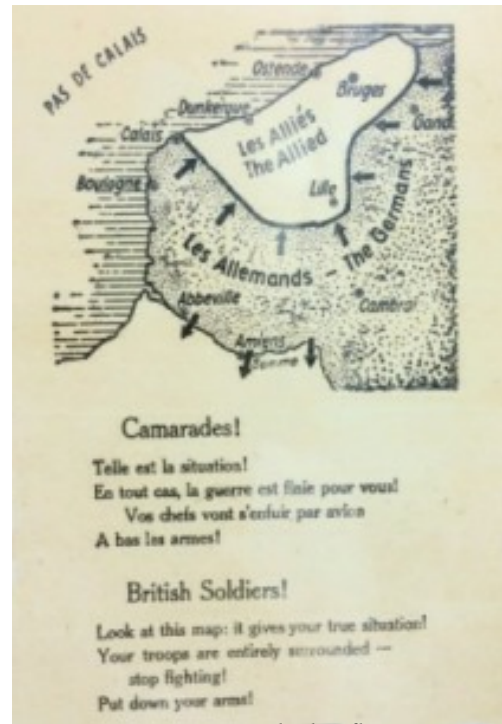
The latter part of the display dealt with Dunkirk. A propaganda leaflet dropped by the Luftwaffe was shown which encouraged British and French troops to surrender. We all know the story of the 'small ships' which heroically rescued the troops from the beach; many of them ferried troops to destroyers waiting offshore, and one French hospital ship was involved. Once back in the UK troops were entitled to free postage so they could inform their family they were safe. The Salvation Army handed out postcards the troops could quickly fill out; an example from Margate was shown. French troops had the same facility to get messages back to their families in France.

Following the Dunkirk evacuation, the troopship *RMS Lancastria* was used to evacuate British and French nationals from St Nazaire. On 17th June 1940 she was bombed and sank, resulting in the greatest ever loss of life in the sinking of a British ship in World War II. Exact numbers lost were never known. A cover from a soldier who drowned in this action was shown.

The final item shown married up two pieces of postal history three years apart: a letter marked "return to sender" because the recipient was now a prisoner of war, and that person's repatriation in 1943 in an exchange of wounded prisoners. 



Army Post Office



Propaganda leaflet

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HERE AND THERE

STAMP ACTIVE NETWORK: BILL HART AWARD 2016

Bernie Worsfold from Lancashire has won the Bill Hart Award for outstanding service to Youth Philately in 2016. Bernie has run the School Stamp Club at Heyhouses Primary School in Lytham St Annes for over twenty years. He is now bringing philately to the grandchildren of the children he started stamp collecting at the beginning. He helps in many other ways besides running the stamp club with visits to places and he is often an extra hand around the school including Remembrance Day and talks to classes about his time in the RAF.

Head Teacher, Elizabeth Hodgson, said "Bernie is very popular with the children at the school. He was formerly our "Lollipop Man" and has run the club with great success for many years. He contributes a great deal to the school community. He is a lovely, kind person always willing to do that bit more. The staff and pupils think the world of him." The Bill Hart Award recognises just one person each year who has done a great deal to promote youth philately. Chairman of Stamp Active, John Davies, added, "Bernie is a great example of how an individual's love of stamps can be shared with young people today. He is an outstanding role model."

Information about the Stamp Active Network can be found on their website www.stampactive.co.uk Donations of stamps, particularly of animal stamps or other thematic subjects would be welcomed by the organisers to:

Stamp Active Network, 3 Longfellow Road, Banbury, OX16 9LB

STAMP ACTIVE LAUNCHES "ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL"

Stamp Active, the voluntary group that promotes stamp collecting to children has launched their latest STAMP FUN activity book on the subject of Animals. The new 16 page booklet contains quizzes, pages to assemble stamps from around the world, a word search and much more.

More details can be found in the article on page 104.

STAMP & POSTCARD FESTIVAL, Ayrshire, Scotland

South-West Scotland Philatelic Societies are holding their annual Stamp and Postcard Festival on Saturday 1st October 2016. Members of the public, collectors and non-collectors alike are invited along to a warm welcome at the event being held at Prestwick Community Centre, Caerlaverock Road, PRESTWICK, Ayrshire, KA9 1HR., from 10am to 4pm. Entry is free, refreshments will be available, and there is plenty of free parking. Dealers from across Scotland will be present with their stocks of stamps, postcards and accessories.

Junior collectors are greatly encouraged and there will be an activity room for young collectors, with stamp-related activities, displays and demonstrations. Why not bring the children or grandchildren!

Further details can be obtained on 01294 276990.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THEMATIC PHILATELY

At the time of going to press the 2017 website for this event was not available, but the dates have been confirmed as 11th to 13th May 2017.

PERUVIAN RAILWAYS AND THE WORLD'S FIRST COMMEMORATIVE STAMP

Ray Ireson gets on track

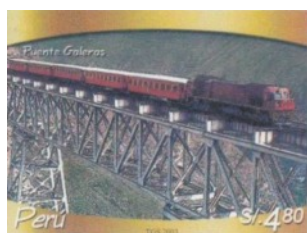
These days the majority of new issues put out by nearly all countries are commemoratives. But the first country to issue a commemorative was Peru in 1871. It takes an enlargement to see the subject properly: a steam train above a coat of arms, and to see a clue to the country of origin: although the word 'Peru' does not appear, at the top is 'Lima' the country's capital. The stamp was printed by the Post Office in Lima on a Lecoq machine from Paris, and was issued on 20 April 1871 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Callao-Lima Railway, the first in Peru. Callao, inscribed on the right-hand side of the stamp, is Lima's port, on the Pacific coast. Chorrillos, inscribed on the left-hand side of the stamp, is a small beach resort on the coast not far from Callao. The distance between Callao and Lima is 14 kilometres. This unassuming little stamp, as well as being a first commemorative, marks the first stage in Peru's railway expansion.



The line opened in 1851. In 1868 the Peruvian Congress opened a tender to extend the railway so that it connected the Andes with the Pacific coast. Four possible routes were surveyed and in January 1870 work began on what was to become known as the Central Trans-Andean Railway. The contract was awarded to an American engineer and investor Henry Meiggs. He in turn employed a Polish engineer Ernest Malinowski to design the route.

Malinowski had attended the National School of Bridges and Roads in Paris.

The first section, connecting the port of Callao and the town of Chilcas located at 3,723 metres above sea level, was completed by 1878. Meiggs died in 1879 and that year the War of the Pacific (with Peru and Bolivia pitted against Chile) broke out. Construction of the railway remained paralysed until 1890.




The second section, which was finished in 1893, extended the line to the town of La Oroya, 222 km from Callao, passing through Galera. The Galera summit tunnel under Mount Meiggs is 4,781 metres above sea level. Galera's railway station was the highest full-gauge railway line in the world when built, and the Galeras Bridge is one of the longest of the 58 bridges on the route. That, together with 69 tunnels, is a testament to the skills of designer and builders. Malinowski died in 1899 having built the

highest altitude railway in the world.

The building of the line continued after his death. The railway was completed in 1908 when it reached the town of Huancayo, becoming 346 kilometres long. A spur line was

added by the Cerro de Pasco Copper Corporation in 1921 from Ticlio to Morococha, to aid transport of materials from its mines to the coast.

The first railway engine was given the name *Callao*. In 1936 the City of Callao celebrated the Centennial of its political existence as an autonomous province with a commemorative set of stamps, including a train. In the early days the line relied mainly on steam engines from the United States, but in the 20th century they switched to diesel models from the United Kingdom. Now operated by the Ferrocarril Central Andino, freight hauled consists principally of minerals from La Oroya, but fuels, cement and food products are also transported.

Tourists lucky enough to travel on this railway are treated to breathtaking scenery. 



GROUP MEMBERS

Alba Stamp Group

Mrs. Elizabeth Nairn, 4 Strenaby Avenue, Burnside, Rutherglen, G73 5DL

Astro Space Stamp Society

Mr. J. Dugdale, Glebe Cottage, Speymouth, Mosstodloch, Fochabers, Moray, IV32 7LE

Web: www.astrospacestampsociety.com

Bicycle Stamp Club

Mr. B. J. Sole, 49 West Carr Lane, Hersham, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 5ER

Web: <http://bicyclestamps.tripod.com/>

Bird Stamp Society

Mr. A. Statham, Ashlyns Lodge, Chesham Road, Berkhamsted, Herts. HP4 2ST

Email: tony.statham@sky.com

Web: <http://www.birdstampsociety.org>

Captain Cook Society

Mr I. A. Peel, 13 Caudry Close, Thornhill, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 0LW.

Web: <http://www.captaincooksociety.com/ccsu1.htm>

Concorde Study Circle

Mr B. L. Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey,

SM5 4PQ. Web: http://www.concorde-jet.com/e_concorde_study_circle.htm

Glasgow Thematic Society

Mrs M. Mathieson, 17 Hairmyers Park, East Kilbride, Glasgow, G75 8SS.

Guild of St. Gabriel

Rev. Derek West, 35 Wallasey Crescent, Ickenham, Middlesex, UB10 8SA.

Masonic Philatelic Club

Mr. K. J. Elston, 21 Copperbeech Close, Harborne, Birmingham, B32 2HT.

Email: masonicphilatelicclub@yahoo.co.uk

Web: <http://www.masonicphilatelicclub.org.uk/>

Scout and Guide Stamp Club

Mr. T. Simister, 1 Falcon Way, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8AY

Web: <http://www.sgsc.org.uk/index.shtml>

Ship Stamp Society

Mr. R. E. Robertson, 17 Whitehall Road, Northburn Park, Cramlington,

Northumberland, NE23 3QW

Web: <http://shipstampsociety.com/>

West of England Thematic Society

Mrs. S. Ellam, 101 Dunraven Drive, Derriford, Plymouth, PL6 6AT

Web: <http://www.wessexpf.org.uk/WETS/>

HANDSTAMP SPECIAL

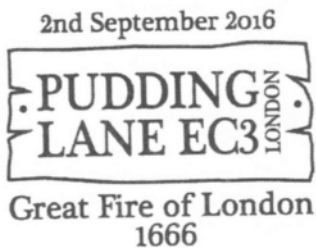
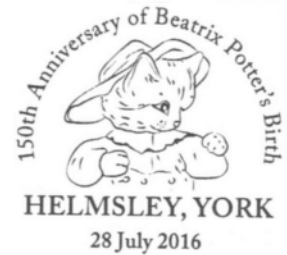
Handstamps reprinted on these pages first appeared in the "British Postmark Bulletin".

For a free sample copy, write to:

British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35 – 50 Rathbone Place, London, W1T 1HQ

Annual subscription £12.25 UK. Subscription address:

Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9PB



Just4Kids by Lise Whittle

(Adult readers, please photocopy these pages and pass them on to a youngster you know, and perhaps include a few nice stamps to encourage them. When you photocopy, please enlarge each page to A4 size - enlarge to 141% - Thank you.)

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL!

Do you like animals?

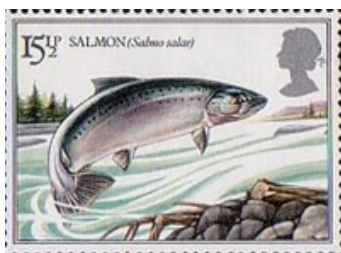
What is your favourite animal?

Would you like a fun new stamp album to help you collect stamps of animals, birds, sea creatures, reptiles, insects, spiders and even extinct creatures?

Stamp Active has launched their latest STAMP FUN activity book on the subject of Animals. This new 16 page book contains quizzes, pages to mount your animal stamps, a word search, stamp collecting facts and information, and much more.



The activity book will be available from the 'Kids Zone' at the **Autumn Stampex exhibition and trade fair at the Design Centre, Islington, London from 14th to 17th September 2016**. The book is given out free to young collectors at the Kids Zone and there will be free activities and goodie bags. There will also be the very popular free kids



auction on Saturday at 2pm where young collectors can use the points they win from the activities to bid for exciting prizes. At the end of the auction, all the kids

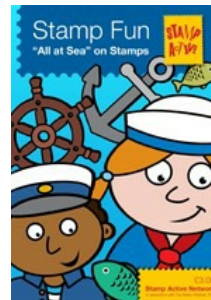


taking part will be entered into a free prize draw for a genuine Penny Black! Any adult who brings a child to Stampex will also be entered into a free prize draw.



But if you can't get to Autumn Stampex, don't worry as you can still get your free Animal Stamp Fun activity book by sending a large A4 size self addressed envelope with a Large Letter stamp attached, to the address at the bottom of the page, The book is free to young collectors, or

£3.00 to adults.



The new book follows on from Stamp Active's other popular STAMP FUN activity books including "Stamp Fun", "Sport on Stamps", "All at Sea" and "Brilliant Britain". You can see these online and download them from the Stamp Active website www.stampactive.com

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Commenting on the launch, Stamp Active Chairman, John Davies said "We are delighted that our Sponsors and Dealer Patrons continue to support us to enable Stamp Active to publish these popular introductions to our hobby. We are particularly grateful for generous support from The Oxford Philatelic Society and The Philatelic Fund".

Write and tell us about YOUR stamp collection, or to get your free stamp album write to;

Just4Kids, c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth BH1 4RS.

For more stamp fun go to the Stamp Active website www.stampactive.co.uk

BTA PROGRAMME 2016

- September 17th **Joint Meeting with British Postmark Society.**
12.30pm 2.30pm. Please bring along a short display of interest to postmark collectors. Each society will display for one hour.
- Autumn Stampex
Business Design Centre, Islington
National competitions, all major classes
- September 30th - **BTA Residential Weekend**
October 2nd Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel, Abingdon Road,
Oxford, OX1 4PS
- It is not too late to book! Please enquire about residential availability. Day delegates are welcome every day.*
All enquiries to Anne Stammers email: annies1@btopenworld.com
- October 8th **BTA Competitions:**
Fosbery Trophy. 16 sheets. NO RULES
BTA Cup. 32 sheets, judges to National standards.
At: South of England Stamp Fair
Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL
www.sussephilately.org.uk/South_of_England_Stamp_Fair.php
- DISPLAY (not BTA)** **“Scouting”** by Hallvard Slettebø
October 27th Royal Philatelic Society, London.
41 Devonshire Place, London, W1H 6JY
DDisplay will be open 1pm to 6pm.
An invitation to all BTA members has been issued by the ‘Royal’ but if you are not a member of the Royal please contact the office at No. 41 (adminsecretary@rpsl.org.uk or 020 7486 1044) to be added to the guest list.

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

2016 COMPETITIONS

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

SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER 2016 10.00am – 4.30pm

The BTA will be showing entries at this exhibition for the **John Fosbery Thematic Trophy** and the British Thematic Association trophy, or **BTA Cup**.

The **John Fosbery** competition is a fun competition. If you dislike the difficult rules of thematic philately, this is the one for you! You will need to enter **16 standard size sheets**, all portrait orientation, on ANY theme, inside clear protectors. There are NO OTHER RULES and NO ENTRY FEE. You can include photos, cigarette cards etc in addition to stamps, to tell a story. Visitors to the exhibition, not judges, choose their favourite exhibit. The entry with the most votes wins.

Alternatively, you may have received a thematic award at club level and want to take it further, perhaps to Federation or even National level. You should enter the **BTA Cup Competition**. This is judged to National Thematic competition rules it requires **32 sheets** (2 frames), any theme, inside protectors. It is an excellent stepping-stone towards entering a higher-level thematic competition. It is sympathetically judged, with instructive and positive feedback which will help you understand the sometimes tricky rules which apply nationally. The entry fee is **£15**.

Please complete the form on the next page and send it to -

Brian Sole,
49 Westcar Lane,
Hersham,
Walton-on-Thames, KT12 5ER

Telephone: 01932 220677; e-mail: brian.sole@btinternet.com

CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ENTRY FORMS:

Friday 23rd September 2016. (Entrants will be advised where to send exhibits).

SHEETS REQUIRED

Monday 26th to Thursday 29th September 2016, but no later.

British Thematic Association Competitions 2016 Entry Form

I wish to enter

A. The 16 sheet JOHN FOSBERY TROPHY Competition (please tick)

OR

B. The 32 sheet BTA CUP competition..... (please tick)

NameTel No.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

E-mail address.....

Title of Entry (A or B).....

Re: entry to the JOHN FOSBERY competition -
I have not won a medal in the Thematic Class of a National or International
Exhibition.

Re: entry to the JOHN FOSBERY or the BTA CUP competitions -
I/We accept that the material is submitted entirely at my/our own risk and I/we
undertake to make my/our own arrangements with regard to the insurance of
the entry whilst it is out of my/our possession; this includes all transit risks,
temporary housing of the entry and its display at Ardingly Showground. I/we
confirm that all information on this form is correct and, if entering the BTA
CUP competition, enclose a remittance of £15, payable to the British
Thematic Association.

Signed.....Date.....



PERUVIAN RAILWAYS, page 100



WORLD STAMP SHOW, page 86



WORLD STAMP SHOW NY2016



Litho printing press used for Confederate stamps and banknotes, 1861



'Inverted Jenny' stamp and real Curtiss Jenny biplane (the right way up!)

