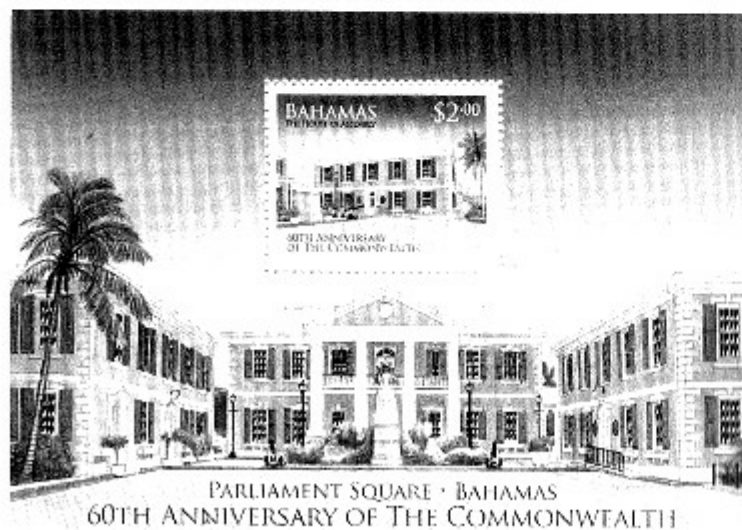
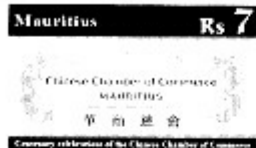


NEW ISSUES

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THEMESCENE

Vol.27, No.3, Whole Number 100

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CONTENTS

REGULAR COLUMNS

Committee members	82
Editorial <i>Wendy Buckle</i>	83
President's Page <i>John Hayward</i>	84
Chairman's Page <i>Richard Wheeler</i>	85
Membership Secretary <i>Peter Denly</i>	87
Publicity Officer <i>Simon Moorcroft</i>	88
Letters to the Editor	89
BTA News	115
Here and There	116
Group News	117
New Issues	IFC, 118C
Handstamp Special	118
Just4 Kids <i>Lise Whittle</i>	119

SPECIAL FEATURES

London 2010: general report	90
BTA meeting	92
FIP Thematic Seminar	94
London Landmarks <i>Derek Connell</i>	97
Mary Jane Seacole <i>Denis Horgan</i>	99
Rev. Harris Isaacs of South Africa <i>Rabbi Zaiden</i>	102
One Theme – Many Themes <i>Trevor Fray</i>	105
Minutes of the 2010 AGM	108
From Rocks to Riches	113

ADVERTISERS

Gärtner	OBC
Stamp Insurance Services	86
Thematic-Club International	115
Tony Bray	96

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LONDON 2010

Wendy Buckle reports

The whole event took place the week after the election, when deals were being struck (or not) between political parties, and the large TV screens in the refreshment area showing 24 hour news services proved something of a magnet. Meanwhile the first ever attempt to hold an International and change the displays over halfway through proved very successful, with 1250 frames exchanged in 6 hours; volunteers here and on the Information Stand worked extremely hard all week. Overseas events organisers were watching with interest, so I'm proud to report the Brits pulled it off. It will be interesting to see the extent to which this initiative is copied.

The BTA had arranged to share a stand with the Alba Stamp Group and the Bicycle Stamps Club. A big thank-you is due to those members of the three organisations who between them staffed the table for the full eight days. The stand proved to be very well sited, near the upper level entrance, and there was constant passing trade all week, and with several new members signed up the financial outlay proved a good investment.

There were dealers on three floors, who were very busy right from Day One (when there was a £10 admission charge). There were dealers and stamp-issuing authorities from all over the world as well as major auction houses. Over 48,000 visitors attended over the eight days.

THEMATIC EXHIBITS

Results from BTA members were:

Exhibitor	Title	Description
Jorgen Jorgensen Denmark	Fisheries - from food gathering to feeding the world	Development of fisheries from around 10,000 years ago to the present day. Large Gold. 95 points.
Sheila Foster United Kingdom	The Rose	Cultivation of the rose and its place in culture. Gold. 93 points.
Peter Suhadolc Slovenia	Conquest of the Unprofitable World	The history of mountaineering. Large Vermeil. 87 points.
Glenn Morgan United Kingdom	Through the Letter Box	Evolution, history and importance of traditional letter boxes. Large Vermeil. 87 points.
John Hayward United Kingdom	The Iron Steed	Evolution of the motor-cycle. Large Vermeil. 85 points.
Roger Swindells United Kingdom	A Glimpse into the World of Beer	Evolution of brewing and the production of beer. Large Silver. 77 points.

The overall winner of the thematic section was Joshua Magier with Land Cultivation from the Beginning of Agriculture to the Present Time, which received a Large Gold with 97 points.

The top exhibits stood out by the wide range of philatelic material and the ingenuity with which they were worked into the story. They demonstrated a breadth of knowledge of their subject as well as inventiveness in the way a story can be told.

Layout is very important, and it can be a challenge to balance a page with disparate shapes. The use of double sheets can help, and one exhibit used one and a third size sheets throughout (so a

row of three of these equalled four stand sheets) although I must admit I wasn't convinced of the need for this.

Most people viewing the frames – and there were plenty every day – can never aspire to the top level, but that need not detract from the enjoyment of looking at them. You can, like me, ignore the competitive element completely and just enjoy the stories.



BTA MEETING AT LONDON 2010

Wendy Buckle reports on a very successful meeting

In keeping with the huge numbers of people through the doors of the Business Design Centre, numbers at meetings were very high. The BTA had nearly 50 people attending, who were welcomed by Richard Wheeler. Besides our guest speaker, a particular welcome was extended to Dr. Damian Läge, FIP Commissioner for Thematic Philately.

The meeting opened with members' displays. Due to the high number of people who had brought material they were given only 90 seconds to speak (in theory anyway, I don't think anyone had brought a stopwatch). BTA members and non-members showed up to 12 sheets:

- ❖ Peter Wood suggested some ideas to illustrate a person who has not appeared on a stamp. From his "Irish" collection he showed meter marks, slogans, tickets to talks and other items.
- ❖ Anne Stammers explained how a collection can grow from a starting-point of stamps only, with "A Child's Guide to Nature".
- ❖ Derek Connell, after unabashedly advertising the sale of a *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* supplement featuring his articles on London, showed London Landmarks (and see page 97).
- ❖ Les Stanway showed Light Railways.
- ❖ Ian Paton showed some mouth-watering sheets from his gold-medal winning exhibition "An American Panorama" on what he terms 'historical philately' illustrating events in USA history.
- ❖ Noel Shepherd of the Guild of St. Gabriel showed pages on the *Song of Songs* from the Bible; a Book which he suggested, perhaps tongue-in-cheek, may appeal to the young more than most.
- ❖ David Copper displayed The Salvation Army, concentrating on those who had served with military forces from the Boer War onwards.
- ❖ Ron Backhouse selected from his "Anyone for Tennis" a study of Wimbledon postmarks from 1958 to 1964. These were from both the main post office and a mobile post office at the Tennis Championships.
- ❖ Lesley Marley brought along sheets from her exhibit "A Whale's Tale". She encouraged us to read and learn about our own subject, giving as one example a Japanese stamp which also featured in a miniature sheet, a postcard and a lottery card.

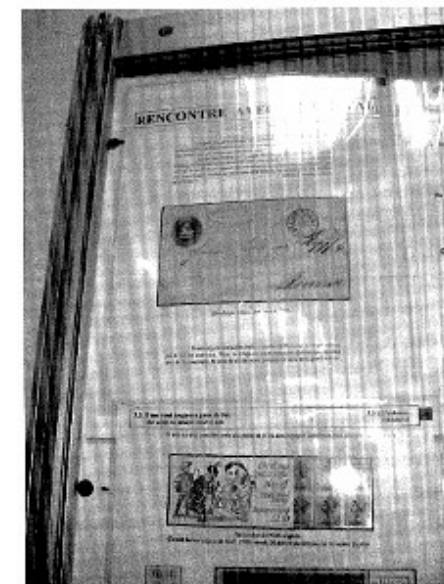
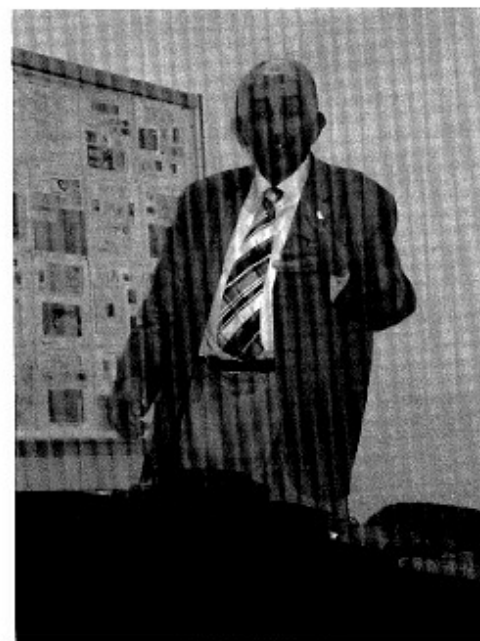
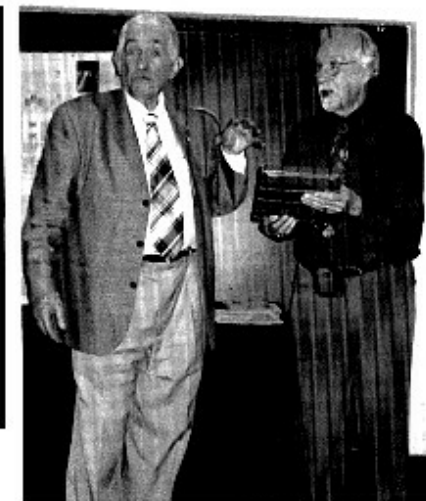
It was a real pleasure to hear such a rich variety of speakers, some of whom would not normally be able to attend a BTA meeting.

After viewing we moved on to the 'main event': four frames by Michel Abram from his gold-medal winning display on "The Horse". This was a return visit, Michel having entertained us at Basildon in 2007. John Hayward gamely introduced him in his native language – French - while Michel gave his entire talk in English. He concentrated on showing how a collection can gain good marks. The introductory page should give a bibliography, and all rare items should be marked: something Michel said he did not agree with: the judge should be experienced enough to recognize rarity. He offered some useful tips:

- A cover must indicate its relationship to the subject, for example all early covers were transmitted by horse, but to be used in his exhibit a cover must carry a relevant cachet.
- The study of a single stamp is an important feature as it indicated philatelic knowledge.
- Maxicards are acceptable because maximaphily is accepted at F.I.P. level, but the cards must follow their rules [see http://www.maximaphily.info/Articles/What%20is%20MAXIMAPHILY%20I_.pdf for an explanation of stamp, card and postmark].

Michel drew attention to some particularly fine items in his display. There was a Mulready with a horse advertisement; a ballon monte franked First Regiment of Cavalry, a mark used for 5 days only in 1870; an item of USA mail San Francisco to New York taking the overland route rather than via Panama; and a Netherlands cover carried by canal boat.

After time for members to admire such a beautiful display at close quarters Brian Sole gave a vote of thanks for a talk with lots of information and laced with a sense of humour. Richard Wheeler then presented Michel with a Beswick pottery foal, and in return Michel presented the BTA with a book on bees thematic collecting.



FIP THEMATIC SEMINAR AT LONDON 2010

Anne Stammers reports

On Tuesday May 11 Jonas Hällström opened the well attended FIP meeting on Thematic Philately. After welcoming everyone to the seminar he introduced his co-presenter and colleague Christine Earle.

Jonas' thematic collections were Sailing Ships and also Military Topics and it was this that would be used to illustrate his presentation.

Jonas began with a short history of Thematic Collecting going back to the first generation of Thematic Exhibits in the 1920's when pre-printed stamp albums for Animal stamps were produced in Sweden.

In the 1950's the second generation of Thematic Collectors started designing their own pages for their collections, but only stamps were included.

In the 1970's and 80's the third generation saw mixed philatelic material being used, including cancellations, and postal stationery with text relevant to the display being included. During this time a Thematic Exhibit reached the Large Gold award in an International Thematic class and thus Thematics began to be thought of as 'real' philately.

With the fourth generation collectors became inspired to develop or 'own' their 'thematic collecting' with exhibitions worthy of gaining an International Grand Prix. The FIP is actively encouraging the distribution of knowledge and experience to all collectors whether or not they wish to exhibit.

Many collectors think that there are far too many rules in Thematic exhibiting / collecting and Jonas stressed that there were only five basic rules

1. Concept of the Exhibit (Plan)
2. Selection of Material based on the philatelic qualification
3. Selection of material based on the thematic qualification
4. Selection of Material based on philatelic range, quality and rarity
5. The Presentation of the exhibit.

Appropriate items must be chosen to show the thematic facts but priority should be given to the philatelic and postal aspects. Pages should be simple, tasteful and well balanced with added philatelic and thematic information to that provided by the material and which shows the level of the subject and research by the exhibitor. Jonas showed some examples and how he finds A3 pages give him more scope to show material that may not always fit onto A4 and for the creativity needed for a really good display. He stressed that it is necessary to follow your story line through the exhibit. Innovation is required throughout the theme to give a new aspect and approach to the subject. Jonas then showed part of his exhibit to explain some of the points that he had raised.

Chris Earle then spoke about the Elements of Exhibiting using her collection on 'World War II from a Woman's Perspective', which is written as a diary and illustrates the development of a theme for FIP Rules.

The presentation of the exhibit should make people stop to have a look at it. Christine uses some 'over-size' pages i.e. A3 + one third, (3 to a frame) which enable wide covers to be correctly shown. The text should be clear and concise on a well balanced page, with, for example, the primary thematic text in bold, the supporting text in standard and the philatelic text in italics (and the day in a different type face).

Christine stressed that the Title sets the Concept and a separate title page includes a précis of the story, including a mention that it is (maybe) only part of the whole story.

The Plan (table of contents) must show the development of the story, which needs a beginning, middle and end. The new Plans now have descriptive sentences rather than just 'bullet points' e.g. "Private Battles – Ordinary people face extraordinary situations". And there are also the sub-chapters that need to be included with numbering e.g. 1.1 etc.

The title of the exhibit should not be on every page.

To exhibit, detailed research is needed and therefore one needs to read, read and read and visit exhibitions to see how different approaches to writing up work and how they make an exhibit 'stand out'.

Innovation plays a very important role in award winning exhibits and this was shown in Christine's exhibit by writing up the diary extracts using the first person.

Philatelic knowledge is as equally important as subject knowledge and this was illustrated by the inclusion of De La Rue's printing of New Zealand 'Blitz Perforations' on the orange 2d when their printing works was virtually destroyed by enemy action.

Condition and rarity are taken into consideration and here we saw some mail that had been 'saved' from the sea.

Inappropriate material should not be included in an exhibit, but can, of course, be included in a collection and used in a display; and these include Fantasy issues and privately produced material. There should be as many different types of philatelic (postal) material as possible in an exhibit – perfins, meter marks, postal stationery etc – too numerous to list here! And if possible include some rarer items.

Damien then took a question and answer session and was asked:

- If Innovation was so important how can an exhibit be newly innovative if exhibited for several years, even when it is continually being re-written and the same jurors keep seeing it? The reply was that the marks for innovation were likely to lessen.
- It was also queried as to the use of material accepted in the Social Philately Class – the acceptance of this material in the Thematic Class was still unclear at the present time and best left out.



¹ This material has been mentioned in previous issues of *Themescene* and is featured at the workshops run by the BTA.

MARY JANE SEACOLE

Denis Horgan gives us the story behind the set of stamps issued by Jamaica in 2005 to commemorate the 200th birth of Mary Seacole (SG 1095 – 1098)

At the time of Mary's birth her father was a serving British Army officer, and her mother was running what was described as a boarding house in Kingston Jamaica. It was also in part an early version of a nursing home catering for the care of members of the army



and their wives should they be taken ill. Her mother had a good reputation as a 'doctress' and nurse. She attended to the medical care of officers and men of the local army and naval bases on the island where over the years a number of different brigades of infantry and other service units were posted. I assume that she was an unqualified doctor, but the service medical teams were fully supportive of her activities. She in fact used to make up most of her medicines and brews in a folk medicine manner, and of course her homemade concoctions were in the main for the treatment of tropical diseases, and had been tried and tested over a great many

years.

Due to her mother's round the clock nursing commitments, in Mary's early years she was placed in the care of an elderly neighbour who was already caring for her own grandchildren. Mary was however in daily contact with her own mother and by the age of twelve was assisting her mother with the nursing of patients. Her mother also trained her in the art of creating medicines from the local herbs and plant saps. Eventually Mary began making up her own creations which she tested out on herself.



Probably due to her father's postings, Mary started to travel at a young age. She visited Cuba, Panama and other West Indian Islands, also making two trips to Britain. At every opportunity she went out of her way to study local nursing and medical treatment, thus she was to become in demand for her nursing and doctoring techniques in many lands, and her knowledge and treatment of tropical diseases was second to none. She had vast knowledge in the treatment of cholera, typhoid, malaria and yellow fever, and at one time when she herself was struck down by cholera, she cured herself. Although devoted to nursing, to help pay her way for medical supplies and her own needs, like her mother she used to set up a 'boarding

house' as a base, from which she also ran a store for the benefit of the community.

In November 1836 Mary married Edwin Horatio Hamilton Seacole who was the godson of none other than Admiral Horatio Nelson. Her husband was much older than her, and had become a patient after several doctors had failed to provide adequate treatment for him. More out of pity than love she agreed to marry him. Although very frail he assisted her in looking after the store, and she nursed him until 1844 when he died. Mary kept in touch with many ex-patients and also friends made during her travels.

Learning of the outbreak of the Crimea War in which several of the army brigades in which she had many old friends



were now engaged, Mary set about clearing up her commitments in Central America and the West Indies, then at her own expense made her way to England to volunteer her services in Crimea.

On arrival in London in September 1854 all attempts by Mary to have herself recruited as a nurse, for service in the Crimea, were frustrated. She was unable to secure an interview with any senior government official or senior members of the War Office. By this time Florence Nightingale had been persuaded by a very influential personal friend to apply to take charge of a party of nurses, as such a move would be of great value to her personal standing in society. Of course she volunteered on the condition that she would be head of nursing and arrived in Constantinople (now known as Istanbul) in early November 1854.

Before she departed Britain, Mary had approached Nightingale asking to be allowed to join the group of nurses but despite her numerous letters illustrating her nursing abilities from doctors and senior army officers, Nightingale dismissed Mary out of hand on the grounds that she did not want a person like her in contact with her group of nurses. It was quite obvious that her reasons were based on colour prejudice. Mary made other attempts, and on one occasion was interviewed by a panel of white women, when although another party of nurses were being recruited Mary was again rejected, purely of ground of colour and race.



Not to be beaten, Mary teamed up with Thomas Day, a relative of her late husband, and they purchased medical equipment and other supplies, paying their own way to Constantinople where they arrived in February 1855. Florence Nightingale was based at a military hospital at Scutari some miles from Constantinople on the east (Asian side) of the Bosphorus Straits. At that time any sick or injured persons in the Crimea were initially attended by service medical orderlies and doctors, before being shipped across the Black Sea to the military hospitals in Turkey. Mary made her way to Scutari, where again she offered her services to Nightingale but her offer was again flatly refused, although Mary was allowed to remain the night in hospital quarters. Mary then made her way over the Black Sea to Balaklava where she met up with her partner Thomas Day and set about finding a site for a 'boarding house' and general store. With her time divided between care of the sick and wounded and sorting the stores and provisions at the chosen building site about two miles from Balaklava the building of the British Hotel commenced.



By mid-March 1855, Mary used to make her way to the battlefield on horseback for the purpose of attending the casualties, then on the 9th April the allies launched an all-out assault on Sebastopol, but after nine days they halted operations having sustained a great many casualties whilst having failed to obtain a strategic advantage. A very busy period for Mary. It was only after the termination of this nine day assault that Florence Nightingale visited Balaklava for the first time to visit military field hospitals (but of course not including Mary's establishment). Nightingale fell ill with Crimea fever and very soon returned to Constantinople. Although Mary did herself frequently suffer from various afflictions, she treated herself and never once let up from her nursing commitments. She became generally known as 'Mother' Seacole.



Between the 6th and 17th June there were further heavy bombardments of Sebastopol, ending in allied retreat. Mary continued to attend the casualties both on the battlefield and at the field hospital. By summer 1855 the building of the British Hotel had been completed, and Mary also began to treat men of all ranks from her own 'surgery'. After the battle of Tchernaya, Mary treated French, Sardinian and Russian casualties without fear or favour. In the following weeks and months there were a number of further battles fought, resulting in very heavy casualties. In December Mary celebrated Christmas with her patients and service friends, and being a hotel and not a hospital there was no ban on alcohol. This was later criticised in a letter written by Nightingale as Mary running a 'bawdy house'. Mary was very active in her care of the sick and wounded during the whole of her time in the Crimea when there were even more casualties from sickness than from the bullet. Fortunately her own medicines were very superior and she had a very high success rate in saving lives.

The armistice was signed on the 30th March 1856 and the troops commenced to leave the Crimea. Mary stayed on with her partner running their provision store and Mary continuing with her nursing as and when required. Finally Mary and her partner returned to England and in July 1856 intended to set up a store in Aldershot. Unfortunately due to considerable financial losses in Crimea due to theft of their various goods, both Mary and Thomas Day were now facing bankruptcy proceedings. The media having learned of this started up an appeal for funds for Mother Seacole, the heroine of the Crimea, due to her impoverished state after having helped so many British servicemen.



Mary eventually received a commendation from Queen Victoria, also the French Legion of Honour, the British Crimea Medal and bar, and the Turkish Medjidie. She also later received the Jamaican Order of Merit.

There were several festivities held to raise money for Mary, all very well attended, particularly by members of the services whom she had nursed back to health. One person in particular never appeared, and that was the Nightingale person who herself was acclaimed the heroine of the Crimea, but although she may have been the 'lady of the lamp' Mary was without a doubt the Mother figure with the healing hands.



In 1857, Mary wrote a short autobiography entitled *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands*. She had taken up residence in London, where she died at her home at 3 Cambridge Street, Paddington, on the 17th May 1881 and in accordance with her wishes she was buried in the Catholic cemetery in Kensal Rise. [-]