

THEMESCENE

December 2013

In this issue we:

Engage the little grey cells

Bobby Fischer: greatest ever chess player?

With Charles Oppenheim

Add visual interest

Telling a story: postcards are a plus!

With Jim Etherington

Think about agriculture

Farmers in the Developing World

With Barry Floyd

Go back to the beginning

How I Started: travelling is better than arriving

With Jeff Dugdale



We wish all our readers a happy Christmas

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 30, No.4. Whole Number 113

£2.50

www.brit-thematic-assoc.com

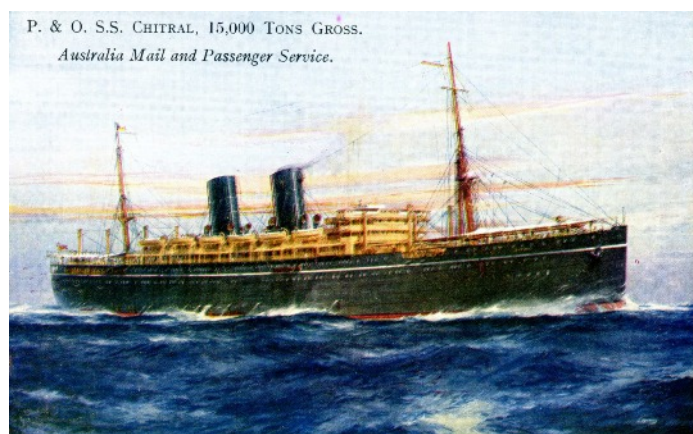
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Fig 1 "Game of the century"



Fig 2 1958 Tournament in Portoroz



Telling a story: postcards are a plus! Page 131
Fig 1 S.S. Chitral before conversion to an Armed Merchant Cruiser



Fig 2 The first card in the Photochrom published "Britain Prepared" series depicting members of the B.E.F. Each card bears the statement 'Passed by Press and Censorship Bureau'.

THEMESCENE

Vol.30, No.4, Whole Number 113

DECEMBER 2013

THEMESCENE

Journal of the
British Thematic Association
which is a member of the
Association of British
Philatelic Societies

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

As you can see, *Thamescene* has finally moved to a colour cover. Improvements in technology now mean we can afford this, although sadly, at least for the time being, the inside pages will remain black and white. Ideally this is a good way to attract advertisers, but in the mean time it gives me the chance, at last, to do better justice to some of the illustrations accompanying articles, as well as showing off the 'New Issues' feature.


Next year we reach a milestone: the BTA will celebrate its 30th birthday. You will see from your Programme, included with this issue, that we have a major presence planned at Spring Stampex, and we need your help. On page 139 is an invitation to all members to display one or two frames. This is not competitive, it's a chance for you to show off your pages in whatever style you like to write them up. Unfortunately we have to charge, but we are only passing on the costs incurred to us in hiring the frames. This is a great chance to show collectors just what theme-based collecting is all about. And to make a visit to Stampex even more worthwhile the BTA will be having a members' meeting on the Friday (page 139) with as guest speaker the internationally renowned exhibitor Jørgen Jørgensen.

Other BTA events are planned throughout the year. For some time now we have been getting requests from members living in the North for a regional meeting at a location geographically more convenient for them. Well at last one is arranged (page 124).

We will also be running another BTA Fun With Philately Weekend (page 158). Its success in 2012 is proven by how quickly bookings are coming in. I urge you to let Anne Stammers know as soon as possible if you want to book, in case we have to increase the number of room reservations. The format is slightly changed from last time in response to feedback from attendees: there will be one fewer speaker and more time for members' displays, with - as before - the emphasis on the whole thing being relaxed and friendly. Competitive philately will not be mentioned! It's all about collecting and sharing enjoyment.

And on that subject it's fair to say most readers of this magazine don't go in for philatelic competitions, but a few do. Anyone applying for the next big UK International, London 2015 Europhilex, will have been startled to discover that the organisers have teamed up with the European Championships for Thematic Philately at Essen, so that all entries will be displayed in Germany, and only the winners of each class be displayed in London. This is fully explained on page 147.

Looking ahead to 2014, do we have any members out there who collect a 'celebrations' theme? If so, please would you consider sending me a piece on 'birthdays', to chime in nicely with our celebration year. And on the subject of articles, in March this year we started a new regular feature "How I Started", in which a member explained how it all began. While for most of us it was a fairly straight track leading to our current specific theme, for Jeff Dugdale it simply opened up more and more possibilities (page 141). Every reader of this magazine collects for a reason, and I would love to publish your story in this feature. About 400 words and one or two illustrations would be perfect.

As I write this in early November the days are wet and the evenings getting dark early, far too miserable to go out but the perfect excuse to work on my stamp collection. May Christmas bring you those philatelic gifts you are hoping for. 

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

John Hayward

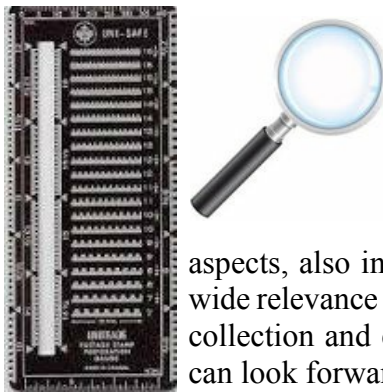
I only had one response to my request in the September issue of *Themescene* to identify if at all possible the contents of the black ring binder in the BTA's archives. Unfortunately, that response did not supply the answer. Subsequent discussions may however have found a possible answer. The binder apparently may have belonged to the late Margaret Shaida, our previous Editor, who collected Famous Women including Marie Curie, who is depicted on some of the slides in the binder. That is as near as I have been able to get to an answer. We are unlikely ever know for certain though.

Our printed Programme for 2014 accompanies this issue of *Themescene*. We are making arrangements to hold a general thematics meeting on Saturday 5th July 2014 at Wakefield in conjunction with the Yorkshire Philatelic Federation Convention. Some details have still to be decided, but it will be all about thematics and open to the public as well as to BTA members. This will provide a welcome opportunity for all our members in Yorkshire and nearby to attend a BTA meeting. So please put the date in your diary now. Full details of the meeting will appear later on the BTA website and in the March 2014 edition of *Themescene*.




We are also hoping to hold a members' meeting some time in April next year together with one of our affiliated thematic societies, but at the time of writing this President's Page arrangements (venue, content etc) had still to be finalised, so it could not appear in the printed programme. Once we have got the arrangements sorted out we will place them on the website and mention them in March 2014 edition of *Themescene*.

In September I ran a "basics of philately" evening for the members of my local stamp club, mainly because several of the newer members had requested something along those lines as a lot of philatelic aspects appeared to be taken for granted by the more experienced members at the club's bi-monthly meetings. I concentrated in particular on watermarks, perforations and postal markings, and it has occurred to me subsequently that I could write a series of articles for *Themescene* on such aspects, also including different forms of printing, papers etc, as these have wide relevance to thematic collecting, and can add so much more scope to your collection and enhance your enjoyment. So, Madam Editor and readers you can look forward to the first article in this series in the March 2014 edition of *Themescene*.



It is late October as I write this, but may I end by wishing all of you a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous 2014.

Enjoy your collecting. 

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

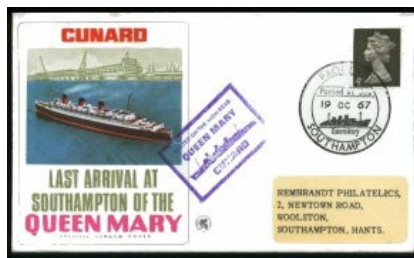
Simon Moorcroft

As the nights draw in and the cold weather starts to bite, now is the perfect time to get out the collection and begin thinking about what to do with your new material and how to write up those few more sheets that you have been meaning to do for months. For me, a recent display to a local society provided the impetus to write up some of my material, most of which had been languishing in a drawer for years! For me there is nothing better than a deadline to make progress on these things!

Writing up material, displaying to societies and entering competitions are for me some of the most enjoyable aspects of this hobby. Although at times I kick myself for deciding to embark on these tasks, when it is all completed I do get an enormous sense of satisfaction and pleasure which makes it all worthwhile.

I was struck, at the recent display I gave on how to start and develop a theme-based collection, at the level of interest in this area of collecting, and in particular how amazed the audience were at the theme-based stories that can be illustrated with philatelic material. I showed how I had developed my own collection, from an accumulation of stamps showing Winston Churchill, into a collection which illustrates not only his life but also the times in which he lived and the major events which shaped his life or which he was involved in.

I do feel though that you can listen to, or see, a hundred examples of how to develop a theme and still be vexed at how to do it with your own collection. That is why at the talk I gave I spent as much time as possible going through other themes and how one could develop those. These included how to develop a collection of postcards of the Queen Mary into a broader story about the ship. The advice I gave was to think about eight pages with a separate aspect of the ship and her story for each page. For example: 1) Cunard and the company's maritime heritage; 2) conception and construction; 3) life onboard; 4) the crew; 5) famous passengers; 6) World War II; 7) decline; 8) retirement and preservation.



Immediately the outline of the Queen Mary's story is in place and one can then build a collection around the story. My advice is always keep it simple and, initially at least, follow a logical and sequential structure.

Since the last edition of *Themescene* we have had our annual competitions, held at the Sussex Federation Convention in October. It was superbly organised, very well attended with an excellent selection of dealers. It proved a perfect location for staging our competitions and we will be returning there again next year. Thanks are due to our Patron, Brian Sole, for all his hard work in making sure the competitions were a success.

It only remains for me to thank you once again for supporting the BTA this year. Without you this organisation would not exist. We have an exciting programme of events lined up next year to celebrate our 30th anniversary, including our major display at Spring Stampex along with a special meeting on the Friday of the Show. These will be very special events and I would urge all of you to get involved and come along.

May I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and peaceful New Year. 📖

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S PAGE

Peter Denly

Ordinary members	170	
Family members	14	
Junior members	2	
Society members	13	
Overseas members	13	
Overseas Society members	2	
Honorary members	3	
Total number of members	217	(at 27 th October 2013)

New Members joining since the September 2013 issue

Mr. S. Cross of Hailsham

Mr. M Banthorpe of Hitchin

Deaths advised since the September 2013 issue


None

We are delighted to welcome two new members and hope that they will find their membership rewarding, with access to check lists and advice some of which can be found on the website.

Included with your copy of the December *Themescene* will be found the form for the renewal of membership for the coming year, and we are pleased to confirm that the subscription has been held at the same price as in the previous few years. As the cost of postage is now not so very different to the cost of using PayPal, should you wish to pay by this convenient means, the form explains the procedure for renewing your subscription. As ever costs are rising and postage is becoming quite a concern. It would ease the strain on the Association's finances if members would kindly pay their subscription as promptly as possible, in order to avoid us having to send reminders in the post.

The 'philatelic season' is now well under way with some good stamp fairs on offer. A number of societies have been visited by speakers, from our published list, with reports of some potential new members. At this time of year many programme secretaries are looking for speakers for the coming year and members who enjoy both collecting thematics and seeing others display could usefully recommend our 'services' in this area.

With Open Class in mind I have been acquiring miscellaneous items for my thematic display which has sparked good interest with audiences. For example, included in the section on aircraft carriers I now show a sheet of American food stamps with the USS Hornet as part of the design. Not a wise choice for the designers as the vessel was sunk just twelve months after coming into service (on the other hand maybe a fitting memorial).

Recently, a number of emails sent to members have been rejected, so **I take this opportunity to remind members**, that when making changes to addresses whether **postal or email** please be sure to inform the Membership Secretary, which amongst other things will ensure your copy of *Themescene* is delivered correctly. 

BOBBY FISCHER – THE GREATEST EVER CHESS PLAYER?

Charles Oppenheim pays tribute

Bobby Fischer (March 9, 1943 – January 17, 2008) was arguably the most famous ever chess World Chess Champion, reigning from 1972 to 1975. A young chess prodigy (though by no means the youngest player in history to achieve that soubriquet), he first hit the headlines when in 1956, aged 13, he won a famous brilliant game that involved a queen sacrifice with black against Donald Byrne, a much older chess master, at the Rosenwald Trophy Tournament. Noted chess columnist Hans Kmoch called the game “The Game of the Century” (20th century of course). The final position from that game is shown in a sheetlet issued by Aruba (fig 1, inside front cover). Despite this sensational win, he only reached 8th place in the Tournament. Starting at age 14, he played in eight US chess championships, winning every one; he won the 1963 event with 11 wins, no draws and no losses – a so-called perfect score and extremely rare in all competitive chess.

He first played outside the USA in the 1958 Interzonal Tournament in Portoroz in the then Yugoslavia. A special postmark was issued for this event (fig 2, inside front cover). An Interzonal was at that time one of the stages in the process to become a challenger for the World Chess Championship, and he had qualified for it by virtue of having just won the US Championship. He achieved 5th place in the Interzonal, which was enough to take him to the next stage of the World Championship process, the Candidates Tournament held in Bled, Zagreb and Belgrade during October 1959. Special postmarks were also issued for this event (fig 3). However, he did not do well enough in this tournament to progress further. A rare example of his autograph on a philatelic cover comes from this event (fig 3a).

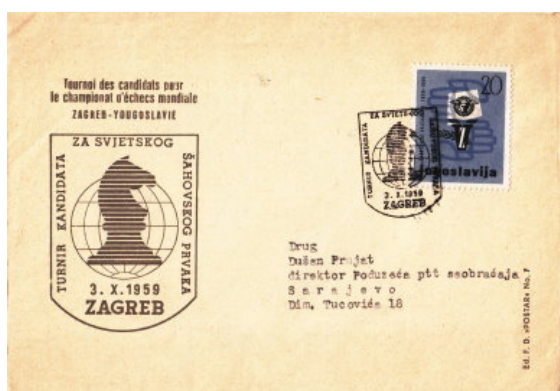


Fig 3



Fig 3a

In the early 1970s he became one of the most dominant players in chess history. He started off with an excellent unbeaten result in the USSR versus the Rest of the World chess match (which the USSR narrowly won, despite Fischer's excellent result). This event was recorded on a postmark (fig 4). He followed this up with winning performances at events in Yugoslavia and Argentina, as well as at the Chess Olympics in Siegen where he played for the USA. This event was recorded on both special postmarks and a special registration label (fig 5).



Fig 4



Fig 5

He then won the 1970 Interzonal Tournament by a record $3\frac{1}{2}$ -point margin, winning in this period an incredible 20 games on the trot, including the last few games of the 1970 Interzonal, followed by two unprecedented 6–0 wins in the subsequent Candidates Matches. At this point in 1971, his fame had spread far beyond the chess fraternity, and non-chess players became excited by his progress. One reason was that in the early 1970's the Cold War was still at its height. For decades, the Soviet Union had supplied the World Chess Champions, and their hold on the title seemed unbreakable. Here, for the first time, was someone from outside the Soviet Union who might be able to break the mould: a US citizen with strong anti-communist views and who had famously (and it is now thought correctly) accused Soviet players of collusion in major events, as they agreed quick draws amongst themselves to save their energies for non-Soviet opponents.

So the scene was set for the epic World Championship match 11 July – 3 September 1972 in Reykjavik, Iceland between Fischer and the then reigning world champion, Boris Spassky from the USSR. The world held its breath as Fischer lost the first two games; the first when he played a risky pawn-grab in a drawn endgame, the second when he refused to play the game in a dispute over playing conditions. So he was 0-2 down in a 24 game match. Fischer should by rights then have forfeited the entire match, but Spassky, not wanting to win by default, yielded to Fischer's demands to move the next game to a back room, away from the cameras whose presence had upset Fischer. After that game, the match was moved back to the stage and proceeded without further serious incident. Fischer won seven of the next 19 games, losing only one and drawing eleven, to win the match $12\frac{1}{2}$ – $8\frac{1}{2}$ and become the 11th World Chess Champion.



The match received front-page media coverage around the world. I remember the headlines in UK national papers after he had won and the fact it was the top news item on radio and TV – probably the first and only time chess has been headline news. The match was celebrated in stamps issued by Iceland (which also issued postmarks and registration labels – left). Images based on photos taken at the match have since appeared on stamps issued by many more countries (figs 7 & 8 over).

Following his victory, Fischer became a celebrity. Upon his return to New York, he was cheered by thousands of fans. He was offered



Left fig 7

Above fig 8

numerous product endorsement offers, all of which he declined. Membership of the U.S. Chess Federation doubled in 1972 and continued to rise in the years that followed. His image has appeared on innumerable stamps ever since, often purely “philatelic” items from countries which wouldn’t know a chess set if they tripped over one (figs 9 & 10).



Fig 9



Fig 10

The rest of Fischer’s life story is a bit of an anti-climax. He played no competitive chess whilst he held the title (World Chess Champions get a three year term of office before they have to face a challenger), and then in 1975, he declined to defend his title when he could not reach agreement with FIDE (the World Chess Federation) over the conditions for the match. His challenger, Anatoly Karpov (left), became World Chess Champion by default, and remained as champion on and off between 1975 and 1999. Karpov, incidentally, owns probably the world’s best chess philatelic collection, but don’t get the impression I am jealous of his chess skill or his ability to buy the rarest items. Not at all ...



But back to Bobby Fischer. He became a recluse and did not play competitive chess again until 1992, when he played a so-called “revenge” rematch against Spassky, which he won. The match was held in Yugoslavia, which issued stamps for the event (fig 12 over). However, at that time any economic activity with Yugoslavia was banned under a United Nations



Fig 12

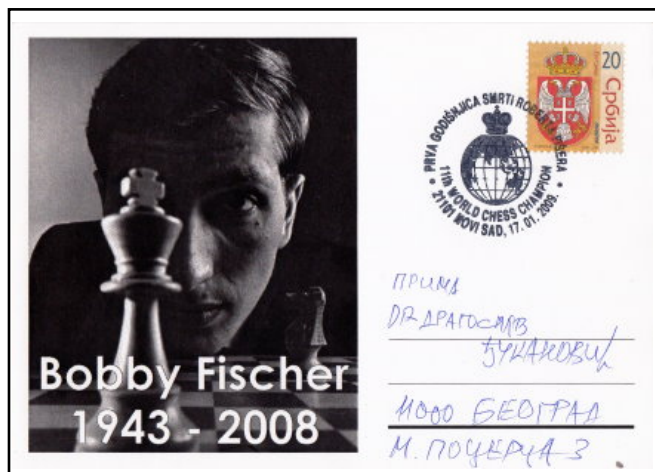


Fig 13

embargo. This led to a conflict with the U.S. Government, which was also seeking tax from Fischer on his match winnings. Fischer never returned to his native country. After his match with Spassky, Fischer ended his competitive career, but he proposed a new timing system for competitive games. His idea, called the “Fischer timing system”, is now standard at many levels of chess competitions.

After he had given up the world championship by default, Fischer lived in Hungary, Germany, the Philippines, Japan, and Iceland at various times. During this time he made increasingly anti-American and anti-Semitic statements. Incidentally, Fischer had a Jewish mother, and in Jewish law therefore is considered to be a Jew. After his U.S. passport was revoked over the Yugoslavia sanctions issue, he was detained by the Japanese authorities for nine months between 2004 and 2005 under threat of deportation to the USA. In March 2005, however, Iceland (which had benefited greatly in all sorts of ways from the 1972 match) granted him full citizenship. The Japanese authorities then released Fischer to Iceland, where he lived as a recluse until his death in 2008. Following his death, Serbia issued special postmarks commemorating his life (figs 13 & 14), and a Bobby Fischer Memorial Chess Tournament was held in Senta, Serbia, in 2009 (fig 15).

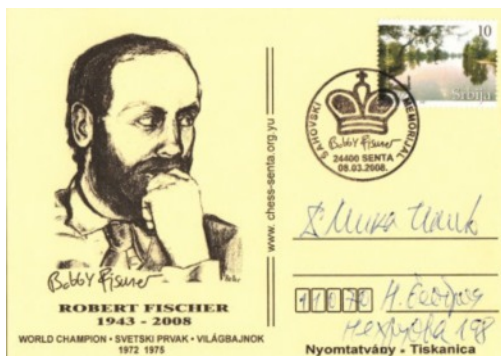



Fig 14



Fig 15

Bibliography

There are two good books about Fischer’s life, both by Frank Brady. Batsford published *Bobby Fischer*, in 1973; it covers his life up until he became World Champion and includes records of some of his key games. *Endgame*, published by Constable in 2011, is a straight biography without any chess games included, and covers his entire life all the way to his lonely reclusive death in Iceland. Fischer himself wrote a book, entitled *My 60 Memorable Games* (which modestly enough includes some of his losses), a book that is regarded as a classic text by many chess players. All three books are available through Amazon. 

TELLING A STORY: POSTCARDS ARE A PLUS!

Jim Etherington is led down a new path

The purpose of this article is to describe why and how a thematic collector has integrated postcards into his collection and club displays. To support this discussion a number of postcards are illustrated and the reason for their inclusion explained.

Why might postcards be included in a thematic collection? Like many thematic collectors I have come to view postcards as a useful and illustrative adjunct to my collecting interests. Some purist might raise their hands in horror and exclaim such items have no place in a philatelic exhibit. However it is my contention, while fully acknowledging postcards are inadmissible for thematic competition purposes, that the inclusion of postcards can greatly enhance and extend a themed philatelic collection.

For a long time now I have been developing the story of 1940 from a British perspective. Many aspects of the story can easily be told using the wealth of available philatelic material. However on occasions postcards can be introduced into the collection to either elaborate or extend a particular aspect of the story or in some instances provide the opportunity to introduce a topic that would have otherwise had to be omitted due to the absence of relevant philatelic items.

Before continuing I must emphasise I am a newcomer to postcard collecting and this should be borne in mind by any reader who is an 'expert' in this field. I have not researched the availability of cards, rather have come across relevant cards in dealers boxes and then trawled the Internet looking for examples in the same series or by the same artist. One restriction I have placed upon myself is that the postcards used must be closely contemporaneous with the events being described. I consider it a bonus if the card is postally used in 1940 and the message is relevant to my story.

My first excursion into actively seeking out postcards to help illustrate my story of 1940 was prompted by a decision to find images of all the ships, mainly cruise liners, requisitioned by the Admiralty and hurriedly converted into Armed Merchant Cruisers. Many were commissioned during the first six months of the war and immediately went into service either as members of the Northern Patrol or as Atlantic convoy escorts. One such ship was the S.S. *Chitral* (fig 1 inside front cover). Built by A Stephen & Sons Ltd, Glasgow, for the P & O Steam Navigation Co Ltd, she was launched in 1925. Requisitioned by the Admiralty in August 1939 and commissioned in October the same year, H.M.S. *Chitral* served with the Northern Patrol from that date until February 1941 when she transferred to Atlantic convoy duties.

The British Expeditionary Force is an important aspect of the 1940 story, and there is a considerable amount of postal history including Field Post Office datestamps, Post Office instructional cachets and military postal stationery available to give an account of its presence in France. Unfortunately there is only one stamp from Grenada / Grenadines bearing an image of the B.E.F., a column of light tanks being observed by a lone Frenchman with his donkey. This paucity of illustrative items can be addressed by the introduction of postcards. A numbered series of sepia postcards entitled 'Britain Prepared' (fig 2, inside front cover) includes twelve cards (nos. 13 to 24 of the series) depicting various photo images of the B.E.F.

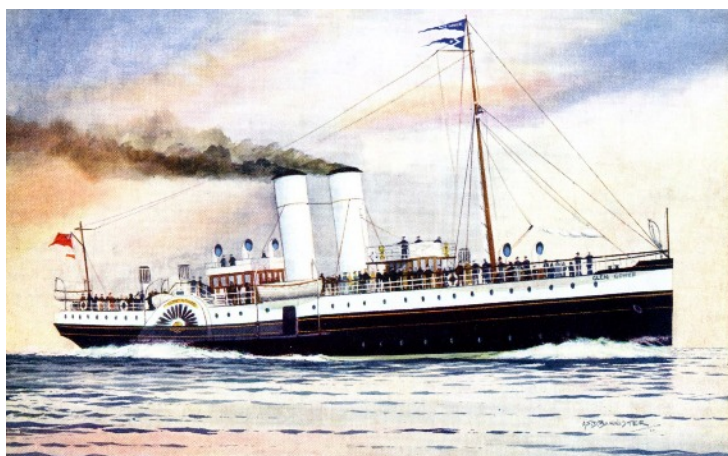
taken soon after its arrival in France. The first, entitled “Here we are again”, records the arrival of British troops in France. Others include images of a military vehicle being unloaded from a ship, Bren gun carriers passing through a French village, a Military Policeman directing traffic and a line of prone soldiers having their feet examined.

The remaining cards in this series include images of Royal Navy ships (nos. 1-12) and R.A.F. aircraft (nos. 25-38). Although entitled “Britain Prepared” the aircraft depicted, apart from the Spitfire and Hurricane, indicate just how unprepared Britain was at the beginning of the war. Include are the outdated, and by 1940, obsolete Overstrands, Harrows and Wellesleys. By introducing these cards into the collection this point can be forcefully made.

Staying with the B.E.F. theme I recently discovered a very colourful series of French cards, ‘Les Editions Militaires Illustrées’. Using paintings by the French illustrator Maurice Toussaint and entitled ‘Armée Britannique’ the subjects include uniformed ‘Infanterie’, ‘Artillerie’, ‘Officers Généraux’, ‘Highlander’ (resplendent in kilt) and ‘Aviateurs’. Toussaint (1882-1974) was an acknowledged authority on military uniforms having published books on the French armies of the Ancien Regime and the First and Second Republics. Hence this group of cards provide an excellent source to illustrate the uniforms and kit worn members of the B.E.F.



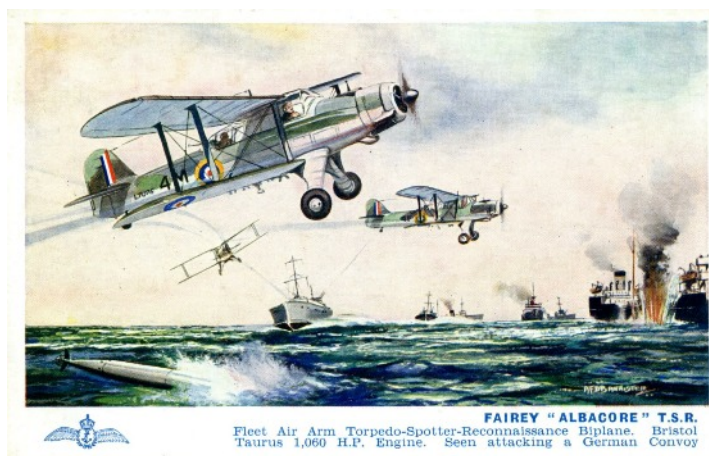
A painting entitled ‘Armée Anglaise – Infanterie – Tenue de Campagne’ by Mauri(ce) Toussaint dated 1939 provides an excellent image of members of the B.E.F. in France during 1939-40.



The SS Glen Gower as it appeared prior to the outbreak of war

Two or three stamps depict the evacuation from the Dunkirk beaches of elements of the B.E.F. A few of the ‘small ships’ that braved the Channel crossing also appear on stamps, but these may be added to by using postcards produced by Salmon’s showing the work of illustrator A.F.D. Bannister. Bannister had painted pictures of a number of pleasure boats, including the SS *Glen Gower*, that were subsequently requisitioned by the Admiralty at the outbreak of the war. Previously engaged on excursions and cross channel trips the *Glen Gower* was converted to a minesweeper and attached to the 8th Flotilla on the Tyne. She undertook three trips to Dunkirk and according to Admiralty records transported a total of 1,235 men back to England.

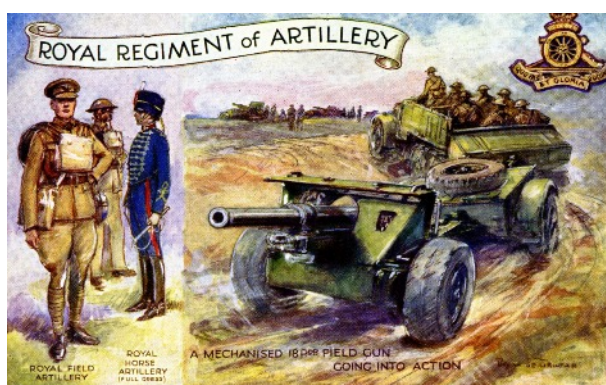
Little is known about Bannister, but according to the date that often accompanied his signature on the postcards he was producing artwork for Salmon's for a period spanning the late 1930s to the early 1950s. During the war period his subjects included Royal Navy warships and a large number of Allied aircraft. In the absence of relevant philatelic items some of these can be used 'to fill the gap'. A good example of this is his depiction of Fleet Air Arm Fairey Albacores attacking German shipping (below). During March 1940 No 826 Squadron took delivery of the first Albacores to enter service. Following the fall of France Albacores of the Fleet Air Arm and Coastal Command frequently attacked German merchant ships that regularly sailed along the French coast.



Bannister's dramatic image of a torpedo attack by Fairey Albacore against German merchant shipping

A third series of relevant cards I have recently come across are based on paintings by Bryan de Grineau and produced by Valentine's. Born Charles William Grineau in 1883, this artist made his name during the inter-war years producing illustrations for *Motor* and other automobile

magazines, mainly of racing cars. From the outbreak of war he worked as a war artist, many of his sketches appearing in *Illustrated London News*. To date I have found three cards, 'Royal Regiment of Artillery', 'Royal Air Force' and 'Fleet Air Arm', all designed in a similar format with uniformed figures to the left of a typical scenario of their activities. The first of these is ideal for illustrating Britain's preparations for defence against German invasion.



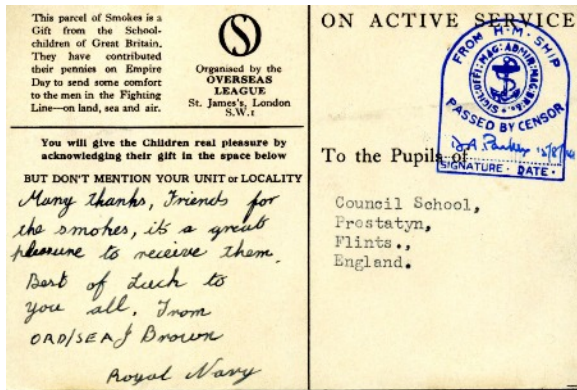
The 'Royal Regiment of Artillery' as portrayed by Bryan de Grineau. Unfortunately the work is not dated, but the gun and vehicle is indicative of the war period.

Two further series of postcards being found useful to add illustrative detail to the collection and provide opportunities to extend the story are entitled 'London Under Fire' and 'Heroic Deeds of the War'. The

Blitz may be evidenced philatelically using covers bearing explanatory cachets such as 'Damaged by Enemy Action' or 'Delayed by Enemy Action'. Pictorial images of the devastation caused by enemy bombing are less easy to find, although some Commonwealth countries, notably St Helena, have more recently issued stamps relating to the London Blitz. The 'London under Fire' cards produced by Photochrom Co Ltd graphically record the after effects of bombing and include images entitled 'The G.P.O. from Newgate Street' (over), 'Looking down Ludgate Hill' and 'St Paul's Cathedral from Cannon Street'.



'The G.P.O. from Newgate Street' is typical of the 'London under Fire' series of cards produced by Photochrom.



Other people among those portrayed in the 'Heroic Deeds of the War' series are Cobben Kain, Mary Cornish and John Hannah. The reverse side of the 'Heroic Deeds of the War' card is a seaman thanking children of Prostatyn Council School for their gift of cigarettes.

Even more difficult, if not impossible, to illustrate without the aid of postcards are the individual feats of heroism performed during 1940. As the title suggests the 'Heroic Deeds of the War' series provide such illustrations. Produced for the Overseas League for members of the armed forces to acknowledge receipt of cigarette parcels, these cards include a portrait of the person, the scene of their heroism and text giving a brief account of the heroic deed. The card illustrated above records the action of Section Leader (Special Constabulary) Brandon Moss, G.C.,

The text reads:-

'In the great Air Raid on Coventry, November 1940, Special Constable Brandon Moss led a rescue party to free people trapped under a demolished house. When conditions became critical, he continued working alone, and succeeded in saving three people. He then led a rescue party to another demolished building and although the workers became exhausted after many hours, he continued on throughout the night, with falling beams and debris around him. – For this bravery and fortitude he was awarded the George Cross.'

Finally postcards recording the changing role of women during the war help support and extend this aspect of the story. A numbered series published by Raphael Tuck & Sons Ltd entitled 'With the W.A.A.F.' show clearly women within the armed forces taking over the roles previously undertaken by their male colleagues. Card 1 shows members of the WAAF,



together with their male instructor 'Learning about the undercarriage of a Hurricane'. A second, Card 3, shows three WAAF 'Flight mechanics checking valve timing', this time not under a man's watchful eye.

On considering what I have just written I am left in quandary. I was going to conclude with the caveat that when mounting your collection the arrangement of material is your choice, but for display purposes I was going to suggest that perhaps one should guard against an over use of postcards in what is primarily a philatelic display. However the writing of this article has drawn my attention to the large number of postcards so far accumulated, leaving me wondering whether I should develop a parallel collection, still telling the same story of 1940, but using exclusively postcards. Hum! 📖

Card No 1 of the 'With the W.A.A.F.' series entitled 'Learning about the undercarriage of a Hurricane'

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FARMERS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Barry Floyd surveys subsistence farming

Collectors of the broad theme of 'Agriculture on Stamps' may wish to differentiate between commercial farming in developed countries and subsistence farming in developing or 'Third World' countries. To narrow the selection of stamps still further, they may focus upon the farmers themselves: men and women engaged in a variety of agricultural activities from the tending of ground and tree crops to animal husbandry.

A small selection of stamps from tropical locations in the African and Asian continents follows; many others featuring cultivators may be viewed in S.G. catalogues with a view to enhancing personal collections, displaying at clubs or entering thematic competitions.

Africa

This Sierra Leone stamp (fig 1, inside back page) shows a young woman gathering a crop of onions. As other featured stamps will show, many subsistence farmers are women. She is wearing a highly coloured long skirt and matching head tie. This issue also publicizes the Freedom from Hunger campaign mounted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The fruit of the oil palm tree (*Elaeis guineensis*) provides a basic cooking oil for family meals, and it is also traded as a commercial crop for sale within producing countries of West Africa and for export. As its botanical name indicates, it is a tree native to West Africa but is now widely grown in South East Asia as a plantation crop with high yields. The 30f Togo stamp (fig 2, inside back page) shows a group of farmers prodding collected fruit with long sticks in the first stage of extracting oil from the nuts. The 40f stamp shows a farmer continuing the process of oil separation, using a small container. Note his bold striped shirt. The 85f stamp shows a bunch oil palm fruit being weighed for sale, probably in a local market. The woman appears to be supervising the weigh-in and, in some African societies, it is the women who plan, plant and harvest the crop, with the assistance of males in the village.

Another FAO stamp marking World Food Day, this Benin stamp (fig 3, inside back page) starkly illustrates the hazards of crop failure due to a poor rainy season, plant diseases, predators and other checks to the anticipated harvest. A sequence of bad years can only lead to severe malnutrition and starvation among vulnerable children, the sick and the aged. The emaciated child in the stamp is seen clutching a bowl of maize (corn on the cob) but she will have difficulty in eating it.

Turning to the Central African Republic, a young woman is depicted harvesting maize (fig 4, inside back page), a crop originally from Mesoamerica and grown as early as 2000 BC, but introduced to Africa by European adventurers and traders in the 16th century onwards. Today maize or corn provides a staple food in the diet of many Africans both in the countryside and in towns. This is another FAO commemorative stamp.

The British East African states of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika have issued numerous agriculturally-related stamps, some of them to mark Freedom From Hunger days (fig 5, inside back page). Here an elderly man is stripping the husk off a long thin cob of maize.

The Tanzanian stamp (over) is a reminder of the dominant role of animal husbandry among many African farmers. The Masai of Kenya are featured in the stamp, brave herders unafraid



of tackling lions who attempt to attack their herds. It is their custom to drink fresh blood from their animals, without harming them, and the illustration depicts three herdsmen in the act of tapping blood from the shoulder of a young calf.

In Southern Africa, the 'Black Homeland' state of Bophutatswana was created in 1977, only to be re-united with the Republic of South Africa in 1994. The stamp is part of an Easter issue, hence the biblical quotation. It again illustrates the role of livestock in the farming activities of African societies. Here a capped shepherd is cradling a lamb.



Marking Conservation Year in 1972 Zambia issued four stamps, two of which are featured. The importance of forestry or tree farming is noted in the 10n stamp, with the danger of forest fires destroying valuable timber. The 25n shows again the important staple of maize, with a smiling woman farmer set amidst a healthy head-high crop of corn.



Asia

Turning to Asia, the island state of Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, is noted for a variety of tree, bush and ground crops. In the 19th century seeds of the rubber trees were smuggled into South East Asia from the Amazon region of South America. Tapping of the trees is illustrated in the George V 2c stamp, with a woman worker slicing into the bark of the tree, allowing latex to drip into a collecting bowl.

Another important export crop is that of tea; the tender top leaves of the plantation bushes are being plucked in this 20c George VI stamp, again by a fully-dressed woman, to be dried and packed for overseas shipment.

In Ceylon the staple food crop is padi rice. In this stamp three women are seen harvesting the heads of grain with hand sickles, a tiring and back-breaking task for inexperienced workers. The grain has to be separated from the husk by winnowing before it can be boiled and consumed.



The former Royal Kingdom of Laos, later the Democratic Republic of Laos, has published numerous issues featuring crop cultivators. The two stamps from 1957 show women farmers processing rice for domestic consumption. The 5k stamp illustrates a local method of drying rice in a heated pot while the 16k stamp shows a method of winnowing, with the grain being tossed into the air from a large hand-held woven plate and the husk then blown away in the wind.

The 3k stamp shows a young girl assisting with harvesting a maize crop, the cobs being placed in a basket across her back, The 63k stamp bears an illustration of two young, happy and healthy-looking girls, holding between them a large freshly-caught fish. Fish often provide a useful protein addition to staple foodstuffs.



In 1982 an issue of four Papua New Guinea stamps focused upon Food and Nutrition. The 10t stamp included here emphasizes the importance of eating healthy foods. A mother is showing her young son some of the foodstuffs she will be feeding him. She is handling a root crop, probably yam, while a variety of fruits and other items, including fish, are shown in the background.

In conclusion, we trust this brief review of farmers in the tropics may encourage other collectors to consider pursuing the theme. It can be expanded further by featuring, e.g. styles of clothing worn by men and women, their simple hand-operated tools and animals used to assist them in their labours. The role of young children in assisting their parents in the herding of animals, tending of crops, gathering in the harvest and food processing is another promising line of enquiry. In sum, it is fortunate that a full and busy rural life in the tropics is well represented on stamps. 📖



BTA NEWS

MEMBERS CHANCE TO DISPLAY AT SPRING STAMPEX 2014

As part of our 30th Anniversary celebrations, the BTA has been invited to show a display of up to 50 faces at Spring Stampex 19th to 22nd February 2014.

Each “face” will be a 16 page (23 x 29.5cm including protective cover) display by a BTA member on a subject of their choice illustrated as a thematic, open or postcard display. Members may display a maximum of two faces of sixteen and it is hoped that members displaying will come from those who will do so for the first time as well as those who regularly display or exhibit. Each “face” will cost £12 to display. There are no rules, so members have the freedom and time to think of their subject and get their display into shape.

The BTA hopes to show the general philatelic world our members’ wide interests and our inclusion of the “Open” and “Postcard” categories. This could be your first step to exhibiting or entering the Fosbery Trophy competition for Open Class philately as well as a chance to focus on your collection and develop your theme. Take advantage of this opportunity to display at the UK’s most prestigious philatelic show.

Please indicate if you would like to display at Spring Stampex 2014, by contacting Gerald Lovell, BTA Displays Organiser by December 15th stating your name and the number of displays you would like to show, their title and whether they are thematic, open or postcard displays. Contact details are under ‘Committee’ on page 122.

Please monitor the BTA website for any further information. Arrangements for acceptance and collection of displays, payment etc. will be provided nearer the event. It is recommended that you insure your entry.

BTA MEMBERS’ MEETING 21ST FEBRUARY 2014

Business Design Centre, Islington, London N1.

The British Thematic Association will be holding a members’ meeting to celebrate its 30th Birthday at the Business Design Centre, Islington, London N1, during Spring Stampex, from 1430 to 1700 hrs on Friday 21st February 2014. The meeting will comprise a presentation by a guest speaker and displays by members, so bring along up to ten sheets on any thematic subject to display and talk about for no more than five minutes. The programme for the afternoon will be:-

1430-1520 hrs Guest Speaker – Jørgen Jørgensen, “Fisheries”

1520-1700 hrs Members’ Displays

Jørgen Jørgensen is from Denmark and speaks very good English. He is well known internationally as a thematic judge and exhibitor having been awarded large gold medals for his Fishing and Fisheries exhibits. Jørgen’s display will focus on the thematic treatment of an exhibit and how to collect more of the “cheap points”. Members should note that they do not have to display if they do not wish to. There will be a charge of £5 per person to help defray the costs of hiring the room.

21st February 2014 -
Put this date in your diary now

REPORT ON THE BTA AUCTION, AUGUST 2013

The BTA ran an auction this summer in response to a direct request by members. The Committee were very supportive of the idea, with the proviso that results were analysed to give us the evidence on which to make a decision as to whether it should be a regular event. Ten members contributed a total of 433 lots, of whom one provided 300 lots. Catalogues were sent to all members, either by email or when an email address was not available, by post. There were 14 bidders for 35 lots. Only one lot received more than one bid. Total receipts were £201.50 from which payments to vendors was £160.20, leaving a gross profit of £41.30. Production of hardcopy auction catalogues, posting of catalogues, posting to successful bidders and returns to vendors were £127.46. To this should be added the annual insurance premium of £23.20, the total expense therefore being £150.66. The total loss for Auction was £109.16.

These figures suggest that an auction is not viable. If 300 lots had not been received from one member the auction would not have gone ahead. The diverse collecting interests among thematic collectors makes it very difficult to offer material of interest to any individual collector. What stopped people taking part was a lack of material suitable for them. Regretfully therefore the Committee has accepted the recommendation of the Auctioneer that we should not hold another auction.



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HOW I STARTED: TRAVELLING BETTER THAN ARRIVING?

Jeff Dugdale takes a long and winding road

Thematic collecting has appealed to me since I returned to philately some twenty years ago when family circumstances permitted me more funds than I had had for some time.

Though perhaps regarded by some collectors of classic stamps, such as King George VI Commonwealth or the British Machins, as a relatively light style of collecting, thematics attracts me because of the variety it offers, because of its associated research demands and because it permits me a linking of hobbies.

As an English teacher I had always been interested in literature, so collecting British writers seemed a good and easy starting point, especially as I had continued to collect British issues, mint and on FDC, even when funds were low; so all I had to do was relocate from one set of albums to another. But it was not enough for me just to move some pages around, as I wanted to contextualise the stamps by supplying a substantial amount of related information beside them. In the early 1990s pre-internet this was a real labour of love, as it meant going to my books, for example *Everyman's Dictionary of Literary Biography*, and carefully typing out the text I wanted, often verbatim, on to an album page or on to paper which I then stuck on. Though this was a really slow process it did permit me scope to edit and abbreviate which provided some sense of ownership of the text on the album page.



My GB stamps celebrating Shakespeare in 1964 were the first to be transferred to a new collection. But in the next eleven years Britain honoured only six further authors.

Since Britain has honoured very few of its authors relative to the richness of our literature this task was completed within a reasonable period of time and gave me a model for what is, twenty years later, a series of collections of the literature, theatre, cinema and folklore of the Western World and beyond.

What then? I chose the literature of France essentially because, unlike the British, the French have celebrated so many of their authors on stamps. Although, because of my reading I could recognise the names of British authors easily, knowing whether the portrait on a French stamp was of a writer, a scientist, a statesman or soldier etc was a completely different challenge, and this was when the journey of my thematic collecting really began.

Firstly I spent hours scouring the France pages of catalogues and making lengthy lists of possible subjects by cross-checking names with reference works like *Everyman's Dictionary of European Writers*. Then, with a wants lists

created, I had to find dealers to supply these and write to them by snail mail. Oh so very different from today when one can click on the image of a stamp on a website: ordered in minutes and delivered in days!

When the stamps did arrive I returned to my reference works and began to type up text, by now on my very first home computer, an Amstrad, which had only two or three fonts, a small green screen and no mouse, but word processing was still a major improvement on manual typewriters as you yourselves will know. Because I was combining two hobbies I was not particularly concerned about the conventions of philatelic presentation, and many of my album pages were to have merely one or two stamps for an author, accompanied by perhaps 500 words, quite unlike the normal “writing up” where a page would have only short captions alongside philatelic media.

That in fact was the custom I deliberately wanted to depart from. I had spent so many faithful nights at my local philatelic society looking at colleagues’ presentations of say Iceland, or New Zealand or Egypt, page after page with year passing year being the only rationale. How relatively unchallenging compared with what I wanted to do as a thematic presenter. I was in fact creating an encyclopaedia of French literature, illustrated by stamps instead of drawings or photos.



USSR 1959 Alexander Griboyedov and a scene from his 1824 drama Woe from Wit (Gore ot Una).



Monaco 1970 celebrating French writer Alphonse de Lamartine with a scene from his 1820 collections of lyrics Méditations Poétique

And this has been the approach I have sustained for the collections which followed, of the literature of Germany, Italy, Spain, Russia, India, Ireland and the United States etc.

Thematic collecting has therefore proved so educational and stimulating. How else would I have read about the lives and creative wealth of a host of writers obscure to me but famous in their own countries. There is no way I would have looked up their life stories without such a purpose and end product, and so would have missed out on the detail of so many amazing life stories and remained ignorant about their works as illustrated in this article.

When these collections were largely done (for the moment at least), by-products easily suggested themselves, such as collecting related theatre, cinema and actors, and specialisms like genres of writing such as detective, science fiction and children’s literature. Finding out about such European writers as The Grimm Brothers, Charles Perrault and Hans Christian Anderson then suggested researching the stories represented on fairy and folk tale stamps (inside back page). This led me back to Norse and Classical legends, which in turn took me towards opera, ballet and musicals, since some of these were based on folk tales, such as Sigurd who is Siegfried in Wagner’s Ring Cycle.

In each of the associated areas, study and discovery has been absolutely absorbing and the coming of broadband Internet has made the exercise so much easier and

enjoyable. Today when I have a new author or legend stamp I can simply type a few words into a search engine like Google, or an online encyclopedia like Wikipedia, and within seconds have at my finger tips so much information to cut and paste and then edit onto a potential album page. In addition sometimes I will find the identical colour illustration to that used in the stamp design which I can place beside the stamp itself.

On acquiring stamps such as these a traditional country collector is likely to write them up with number and caption copied from a catalogue, whereas the imperative to a thematic collector like me is to find out details about the legend or author's life and what else he has written.



So for example with one of the two 1997 Iceland Europa stamps, whose theme was folk tales. All I had to work with on the design of the stamp is the caption in Icelandic "Surtla í Blálandseyjum" with an image on the right of an unpleasant-looking woman and children cowering at her approach. My Gibbons catalogue tells me that the words translate as "Surtla at Blandlandseyjar", referencing someone at a location. If I put these words into a general search I get nothing, so I have to delve into websites which specialise in Scandinavian legend, where eventually I learn that Surtla is a giantess told by her shape-shifting sister to kill the two children of the King. But she is blind and the children escape and eventually trick Surtla into falling over the edge of a cliff to her death. The King is reunited with his children and the wicked sister put to death. This story appears on my album page so giving the stamp some real meaning.

That sort of approach to unrecognisable legends is often enough, but I sometimes email philatelic bureaux around the world and ask for details that went with stamps when they were first issued. More often than not I get a positive and helpful reply. Sometimes though I have to delve deeper, as with the 1997 Europa legend stamp for Bosnia and Herzegovina which shows a man praying on a carpet in a ravine and the



words "Ajvatovica". Using this as my starting point I eventually came across a university scholar in Bosnia called Dejan Dimitrijevic who was most helpful and provided me with an account of the legend - in French - which I was able to translate with the help of a school colleague, and so learned about the legend which inspired the stamp. It tells of two Turkish brothers who came to the town of Prusac which had no water, so every day for 40 days one of them, called Ajvaz, walked up into the mountains and made his early morning prayer. On the fortieth day he dreamt that two rams threw themselves at each other. When he awoke the rock had split in two and the water poured down in abundance to everyone's benefit.

Although this kind of research can be frustrating when one runs into a *cul de sac*, the challenge can be quite fascinating, and a real sense of achievement gained when the stamp comes to life on the page having finally been

contextualised.


A classic example of this challenge met and realised over the course of a year or more is the Finnish souvenir sheet celebrating the opening in 1993 of the Helsinki Opera House. This first came to my notice when in August 2006 I acquired a lengthy Opera stamps checklist from the American Topical Association. Having started on Mozart, for whose operas there are lots of stamps, I noted that under Finland there was the reference “October 08, 1993 Scott 927d - *The Magic Flute*”. When I consulted my Gibbons *Stamps of the World* I could not find this stamp, but the clue was in the “d” code which indicated it was from a miniature sheet.



When I studied the stamps there was only one (top left) which could be for *The Magic Flute*. None of the others were easy to identify, and there were no captions on the stamps to provide guidance. In January 2007, having posted a query on a German Study Circle website, I learned that one of the stamps depicted the famous (?) Finnish opera *Pohjalaisia (The Ostrobothnians)* written by Leevi Madetoja in the 1920s. Presumably that was the stamp bottom left. I was able to find out a little about its plot from surfing the Net. [Now listed in Gibbons as SG MS1339 - Ed].

And that was a dead end for me until September 2007, when my wife was searching e-Bay for Opera stamps for me, and we came across a Finnish dealer selling the miniature sheet. We contacted him and he was able to tell us from his catalogues that the other two stamps represented the classic ballet *Giselle* by Adolphe Adam (1841) which has to be the stamp top right, and the controversial 1912 Debussy ballet *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* whose first presentations featured sensual performances by Nijinsky.

So my journey today is so different from how it was in the early 1990s when I set out, and perhaps I feel a little, as my title suggests, that the fun and excitement is in the travelling, as once I have arrived at the finished page or collection there is little else to do, apart from waiting to display on one night at my local stamp club or write about the subject as I have done from time to time in various stamp magazines.

Thematic collecting - telling the story behind the stamp and sometimes telling stories with stamps - seems to me so much more enjoyable and fulfilling than accumulating every stamp for a single country. This is so much so that I would encourage any young collector to take that route with regard to their own particular interests and get double the fun. 



Some subsequent GB ‘literature’ issues

BTA ANNUAL COMPETITIONS

For the first time these were displayed at the South of England Stamp Fair and Sussex Convention, by kind invitation of the Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies. It proved to be an excellent choice of venue, with more entries in each category than in recent years, and lots of visitors all day, helped by the prime location we were given, right in front of the doors as you entered the competition room.

The Fosbery Cup (One frame of sixteen sheets) is chosen by popular vote. It has always been primarily thematic, but with absolutely no rules we encourage 'Open' category entries as well, and it was pleasing to see an Open entry come second: *To Goslar with love*, a series of letters from a young lady to her beloved in Goslar Brunswick, in 1866-67, by Frank Simpson. But the clear winner was the neat and attractive *The Diamond Pipeline* by Stephen Dixon, on the extraction and production of diamonds.



Other entries were:

Jeff Dugdale	The history of early Britain
David Hague	William the Conqueror
Ian Keel	The Red Cross and the Red Crescent
Aubrey Sheena	Water Skiing
Frank Simpson	The King's German Legion: Chelsea Pensioners

The BTA Cup is rather tougher, being 32 sheets (two frames) judged to National standards. There were three entries:

Third was Malcolm Hawkins with *'Taube' in other words 'Dove'* a look at their natural history, their 'homes' (dovecots) and designs of stylised doves.

Second was Jeff Dugdale with *The International Space Station* about the development of the international space station from 1998 to 2013. From the political background and the first components launched in 1958 it showed the various Soyuz rockets and featured some of the astronauts. The Columbia disaster of 2003, when the shuttle disintegrated on earth's re-entry, caused a three year hiatus in operations. The final sheets showed the current status of the programme.

The winner co-incidentally also featured doves. *The Dove and the Olive Branch: symbols of peace* by Grace Davies explained how the symbol goes right back to the Old Testament, when Noah released a dove from the Ark. When it returned with an olive branch he knew



the waters were receding. The display covered the symbols meanings, their use in relation to war, the United Nations, Picasso's picture *La Colombe* which was adopted as the emblem for the World Peace Congress in 1949, and the United Nations. The story comes right up to date with peace movements.

Protection of children



Women victims of the Ravensbruck Concentration Camp. The postmark features a dove and "For a world without war". East Germany 1959

The Friends of Thematica Healey & Wise Salver is an inter-federation competition of three entries of 16 sheets per Federation, won this year by Kent Federation.

Kent Federation		Total 233 marks
Erica Banks	St. George	75
Graham Boutle	Men under the sea	81
Michael Thompson	The story of archery	77
Sussex Federation		Total 213 marks
Grace Davies	Towards United Nations	85
Angela Reilly	London life through the centuries	69
David Sumpter	The apple: a small fruit in a big world	59
Surrey Federation		Total 211 points
F Sole	A glimpse at the world of insurance	70
B Sole	British summertime	66
David Wiskin	Christopher Columbus	75

Thanks are due to all the entrants in each of the competitions for helping to make it such an engaging event. 📖

EXHIBITING PAGE

The Organisers of London 2015 and the European Championship of Thematic Philately (ECTP) to be held in Essen in 2015 published the following Press Release in October 2015:-

LONDON 2015 TEAMS UP WITH THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THEMATIC PHILATELY

Official Press Release

The Organisers of London 2015 EUROPHILEX and the European Championship for Thematic Philately (ECTP) have agreed to work together to create a **joint exhibition** in May 2015. This international co-operation is a new departure in the world of exhibitions.

The ECTP will be held in Essen on 7-9 May 2015, and LONDON 2015 EUROPHILEX will take place at the Business Design Centre, Islington on 13-16 May 2015.

To maximise the opportunities for exhibitors, ECTP will be the thematic arm of London 2015. All thematic exhibits will be shown and judged in Essen to the same international standards as in London and they will be awarded London 2015 medals. The winning exhibits in each of the nine thematic groups will be displayed in London but will not be judged again. They will also be eligible to be considered for the Grand Prix awards.

Entries for thematic exhibits will be sent to ECTP and processed there. Further details can be found on the ECTP website from November 2013 [www.ectp.de]. This exciting development has the full support of the Federation of European Philatelic Associations (FEPA), which has given patronage to both London 2015 and ECTP. Both shows will also have FIP recognition.

London 2015 Chairman Bill Hedley said, 'We are delighted to be able to work with our colleagues in Essen to produce a first-class European show. This new approach will benefit exhibitors and will help to secure the future of competitive philately in Europe.'

For further details about LONDON 2015, go to www.london2015.net

This surprising move does have its pros and cons, and also poses some as yet unresolved questions for potential exhibitors. On the plus side it does appear that all applicants for the Thematic Class at London 2015 will get their entry exhibited at the ECPT because that exhibition has previously always accommodated every application for an entry. Applicants will want to be certain of this though and that their application will be successful at the selection stage. Their entry however may not be exhibited at London 2015 unless they win their thematic category. It is not clear whether the entries in second and third places in their thematic category will be exhibited at London 2015. If only the winner of a thematic category is to be displayed at London 2015 this would discriminate unfairly against thematics as entries in all the other classes will be displayed whether or not they are winners.

Exhibitors will not apparently obtain a judge's critique in front of their exhibit unless they go to the ECPT. Most exhibitors at the ECPT in previous years have taken their own exhibits to the ECPT in Essen because there has not been a UK Commissioner to take them, but in 2015 they will not have to accompany their exhibits. So if you plan to visit the ECPT you

would be saved the expense of an extra day putting your exhibit in the frames one day beforehand.

There ought to be some saving in frame fees, certainly for those contemplating entering both exhibitions, but this is not absolutely clear as yet. At present London 2015 is charging £44.00 per 16 sheet frame whereas the ECPT has charged 25/30 Euros per 12 sheet frame (around £35 for a 16 sheet frame). Which charging rate is going to apply and how are 16 sheets per frame going to be displayed in 12 sheet frames?

Of great concern is whether any sort of precedent is being set. Could this idea be picked up by other FIP/FEPA events? In a year when the ECTP or equivalent exhibition for another philatelic class is held, will thematics again or that class be moved out to an alternative event? If this idea proves popular it may be the thin end of the wedge for thematic exhibitors who would then never get the chance to exhibit internationally. The BTA will have to give this matter serious thought.

We will keep you posted on the latest developments on London 2015 and the ECPT via the BTA website and *Themescene*.

SPRING STAMPEX 19th - 22nd February 2014, Business Design Centre, Islington

Application forms and full details are available on the ABPS website ('Exhibitions' tab, then click on 'National Exhibitions').

Closing date for application forms is 2nd January 2014. All FIP classes will be represented, plus the non-FIP classes of Postcards and Cinderellas.

FIP THEMATIC COMMISSION

Regular competitors will be well acquainted with their website at:

<http://www.fipthematicphilately.org/>. If this is a site you don't often visit do have a look at their 'Seminars' page (click on 'Seminar Papers' on left-hand navigation bar). It is regularly updated with papers presented at meetings (six added in 2013), and the most recent addition is by BTA member Peter Suhadolc on rarity and condition in thematic exhibits.

BTA 30th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

Meeting at Spring Stampex, see page 139

Your chance to show off your collection, see page 139

Members' meeting in the North, see page 124

BTA Fun With Philately Weekend in Oxford, see page 158

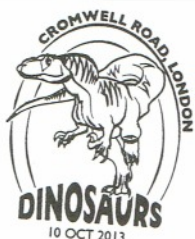
And a full programme of events throughout the year, details on the Programme enclosed with this issue

HANDSTAMP SPECIAL

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

For a free sample copy, write to:

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



BOOK REVIEWS

Hogarth, David

An illustrated guide to walking and climbing on stamps

2013. 66 pages, colour illustrations. Soft cover, spiral bound.

The Guide aims to provide a listing of all stamps with climbing or walking themes. Postal stationery is not included, but it is stated that could provide another large collection. A few postmarks and Cinderellas are shown but no other philatelic elements that one would seek out for a Thematic rather than subject collection - it does what it says in the title - lists and illustrates stamps on the subject *as included in the author's collection.* (my emphasis). Over 370 stamps are listed.

The use of the author's own collection may be thought a weakness as he admits he has had to work within self-imposed rules - no stamps simply of mountains or mountain areas, no other mountain activities, no walking as a sporting discipline or where it is part of employment, no Disney or cartoon characters and selectivity within scout, guide and youth organisation issues. In practice these 'rules' are not adhered to and attractive stamps of mountains and alpine flowers appear - no complaint as many stamp collectors would like these.

The problem perhaps comes as each collector is likely to make his own decisions on these matters and certainly one can expect that anyone taking a thematic approach would be likely to include material from these excluded areas.

As one who has spent many hours turning the pages of the SG Simplified looking at every picture and every description in every country to look for connections to my subject I can see what a timesaver this could be for someone wanting to begin the subject and get off to a quick start acquiring material. The fact that every item listed is illustrated is useful because sometimes the connection to the subject is not very apparent from the description in the standard catalogues alone.

Anyone wanting to take a Thematic approach could use the illustrations to identify stamps which show, for example, climbing equipment, differing types of terrain or different reasons for climbing.

The stamps illustrated naturally include many other subjects and so anyone wanting to bring walking, climbing or mountains into their own theme would be well advised to look through the illustrations.

I do think that the numbering system adopted is somewhat problematical, stamps are simply numbered from 1 upwards *within each chapter*. The description then informs on which plate the illustration appears - although illustrations are not in strictly numerical order on the plates. The plates are not headed with the chapter to which they belong which could be quickly remedied by a purchaser armed with pen or pencil!

So from the descriptions I can tell the literature collector that Chapter 2 stamp 41 commemorates a Japanese who was both Poet and Mountaineer. This way round tells me it is shown as number 41 on Plate 7. Easy-peasy I don't look at any of the other number 41s.

However when I want to tell a collector of "Waterfalls" that there is a picture of "abseiling at the Tan Rattana waterfall", I must stress it is picture 78 on plate 10, because picture 78 on plate 16 concerns Romanian scouts !

Despite these minor quibbles this is an attractive publication that certainly "does what it says in the title" and will be a great help to anyone wishing to collect or find out about stamps relating to this theme itself or see if there are items here that relate to their own topic.

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO WALKING & CLIMBING ON STAMPS

David Hogarth



2012

Distribution details

Cost - £12 sterling, 14 Euros, \$18.50
Postage and Packing - UK (2nd class) £2.30
Europe £4.00, 4.80 Euros
Rest of the World £6.50, \$10.00

Total Cost (for single book)

UK £14.30, Europe 18.80 Euro, RoW
\$25.00

Payment by Paypal

(djh720@btinternet.com) or by sterling
cheque drawn on a UK bank.

Orders to David Hogarth,
12 Moyness Park Drive,
Blaigowrie,
Perthshire PH10 6LX,
United Kingdom

Tel: 01250 875467

Email : djh720@btinternet.com

GROUP NEWS

ASTRO STAMP SPACE SOCIETY



The ASSS society is the place for all those who collect space stamps, postcards, covers or signed autographs from astronauts, not to mention astrophilatelic memorabilia or just enthusiasts for the Space hobby.

In January 2014 the Society will produce its 100th edition of *Orbit*, the official journal of ASSS. It has been issued quarterly since 1988, making this year their 'silver anniversary'. All past issues of *Orbit* are now available in their entirety for free public access, apart from the most recent twelve which are for members only. For more details visit their web page at

<http://www.astrospacestampsociety.com/Orbit/orbit%20magazine10.html> or contact the Editor Jeff Dugdale: JeffOrbitEd@aol.com



JUST4KIDS *By Lise Whittle*

(Adult members - 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 this, please enlarge each page to A4 size - enlarge to 141% - Thank you.)

WHAT IS STAMP ACTIVE?

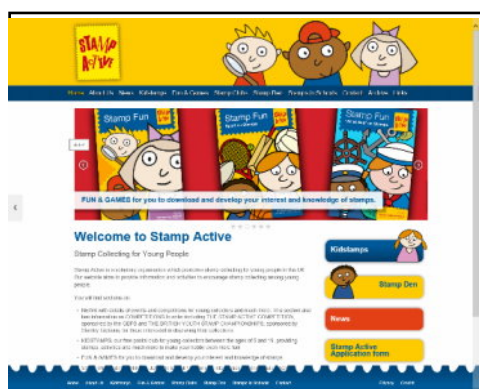
Is it the name of a new Sports Centre or a gym where you go round stamping your feet to get fit?

No! Stamp Active is a voluntary organization which promotes stamp collecting for young people in the UK.

AND HERE'S SOME GREAT NEWS! STAMP ACTIVE HAS A BRAND NEW WEBSITE FOR YOUNG STAMP COLLECTORS AT www.stampactive.co.uk

Yes, this brand new website has only just been opened, so make sure you take a look at it. There's lots of information about stamp collecting, with tips and advice about how to put your stamps into a collection, a fun and games section, short film and cartoon clips, news about junior competitions, where to see stamp exhibitions, how to get free stamps sent to you, downloadable activity sheets, and much much more.

Type www.stampactive.co.uk in your computer search engine, or google 'stamp active' and it will lead you to the website. This is what you will find;

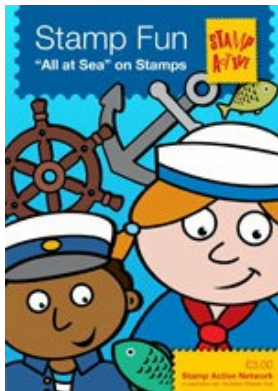


HOME PAGE:

When you arrive at the website, you will find yourself on the 'HOME' page, where you can read about all the different sections on the site. There is a moving screen in the top half which shows you clips from some of the sections. You can click on any of the sections along the top or on the right hand side.

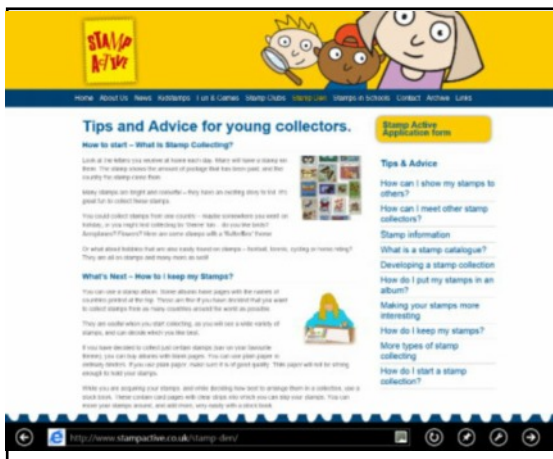
FUN AND GAMES is a great section, there are downloadable activity sheets you can print off, and if you click on the names on the right you can see other young people's stamp collections, such as 'Birds And Their Habitats' by Holly Mayhew, and 'Aspects of China' by Rachel Foster.





NEWS This is the part to look at to find out about exhibitions and competitions. Read about how Molly Robson (age 7) and Rosie Hargreaves (age 10) designed this year's 1st and 2nd Class Christmas stamps; and find out how Charlotte Rosevear won a real Penny Black stamp in a free competition! Learn about the new stamp activity book called 'All At Sea' featuring a wide range of activities including Islands of the World, Creatures of the Sea, Modern Ships and a Quiz (can be ordered or downloaded).

STAMP DEN is a question and answer section about starting your stamp collection, such as 'How do I put my stamps into an album?' and 'How do I make my stamps more interesting?'



Scroll down to the bottom of the Stamp Den section to watch a cartoon episode called 'Horrid Henry's Stamp Collection', it's very funny



KIDSTAMPS This section tells you about another young stamp collectors club called Kidstamps, and you can download a free form to join and receive free stamps, albums and stamp vouchers.



KIDSTAMPS is free to join, and each young collector receives:

- A starter pack of stamps and accessories
 - Free stamps via the website competitions and newsletters
 - Details of the Stamp Active Competitions and the British Youth Stamp Competitions
 - Members receive four vouchers a year that they can redeem for free stamps and first day covers.
 - Membership of KIDSTAMPS is free, but please enclose a large stamped addressed envelope with your application in order to receive your gift pack.
- Don't forget to download the application form from the website!

STAMPS IN SCHOOLS There is also a section about how to start a stamp club in your school – why not tell your teacher about it.

And there's much more to see on the website – have a look at it yourself.

Then try another young collector's website called Planet Stamp

www.planetstamp.co.uk

Write and tell us what you think! Just4Kids, c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth. BH1 4RS.

A PRIZE WILL BE SENT TO EVERY JUNIOR WHO WRITES IN!

LIBRARY LISTING

If you would like to receive a list of articles on your topic(s), send a stamped SAE to the Librarian (contact details page 122). To assist, he will quote the current postal rates when he sends the list.

If you are interested in borrowing any articles then give him a ring and he will advise how to proceed.

Members asking to borrow books and catalogues are not required to pay the cost of outward posting, only the return cost.

Magazine articles

Authors

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| 6 | Dugdale, J. | Great writer of wrongs [Charles Dickens] | Stamp Magazine 7/2012 |
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Clocks

- | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | | It's about time | Stamp and Coin Mart 5/2012 |
|---|--|-----------------|----------------------------|

Clowns

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|---|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 5 | Shuker, K. | figs of fun clowns | Stamp Magazine 5/2012 |
|---|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|

Composers

- | | | | |
|---|--------------|---|-----------------|
| 3 | De Klerk, M. | Franz Liszt: musical genius and brilliant pianist | ThemNews 6/2012 |
|---|--------------|---|-----------------|

Heraldry

- | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 5 | Keppel, A. | Mane attraction [lion rampant] | Stamp Magazine 7/2012 |
|---|------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|

Medicine

- | | | | |
|---|------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 3 | Dunlop, J. | Medicinal Honey | MediTheme 5/2012 |
| 1 | Dunlop, J. | Red, Blue & White Blood | MediTheme 5/2012 |
| 2 | Sharpe, R. | Foot and Mouth Disease | MediTheme 5/2012 |
| 2 | Kumar, S. | Smallpox: a philatelic obituary | ThemNews 6/2012 |

Olympics

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|---|------------|--|-----------------------|
| 5 | Marren, P. | Olympic ideal? [GB 1948 Olympic Games issue] | Stamp Magazine 8/2012 |
|---|------------|--|-----------------------|

Orchids

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 2 | Marasas, H. | Orchidaceae | ThemNews 6/2012 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------|

St. John

- | | | | |
|---|------------|--|------------------|
| 4 | Barnes, P. | St. John Ambulance Association and The Sovereign Military Order of St. John of Jerusalem | MediTheme 5/2012 |
|---|------------|--|------------------|

Scouts

- 1 Rauschenberger, M. German inflation stamps Scouts Corps Assistance 1923 Scout & Guide Stamp Bulletin 8/2012
- 3 Walker, C. The Warsaw Uprising Scout & Guide Stamp Bulletin 8/2012

Shipping

- 6 Winchester, J. Head of steam [P & O Postal History] Stamp Magazine 8/2012

Space

- 2 Dugdale, J. The Naming of Asteroids Orbit 6/2012

Spectacles

- 4 Hammond, P. Building a spec-tacular collection Stamp and Coin Mart 5/2012

Vikings

- 5 Dugdale, J. Norse to be reckoned with! Stamp Magazine 9/2012

INTRODUCTION TO THEMATIC COLLECTING

Written by Margaret Morris

This 32 page CD-ROM covers the essentials of thematic collecting.

Chapter headings:

- Introduction
- What is Thematic Collecting?
- Choosing the Theme
- Assembling the Material
- Assembling the Information
- Getting it all Together
- Displays and Competitions
- Some Final Thoughts
- Suggested Further Reading
- Contact Addresses
- And Lastly – Meet the Experts!

Format

pdf format on a CD-ROM, size 5,400 KB

Distribution

Available from:

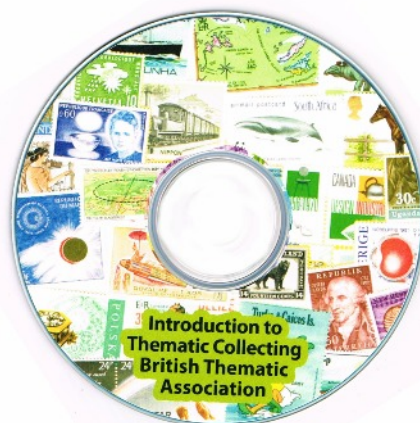
Mrs W. Buckle, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth, BH1 4RS, UK

Email: wendybuckle@btinternet.com

Price inc. postage and packing: UK £2.50; Europe £4.50 (€5.50)

Rest of the World £5.50 (\$8.50)

.Please contact Wendy Buckle for payment details



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BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th October 2014

Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel

Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS

<http://oxford-spires-hotel.four-pillars.co.uk>



COST

Full Delegate

Will include:

2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast; pre-dinner drink both evenings; some wine with dinner; teas and coffees during the sessions

Two people sharing: £220 per person

Single room supplement £50

Day Delegate

Saturday £12.00

Evening meal Saturday (optional) £27.50

Sunday £6.00

All delegates

Sunday lunch Optional extra, payable on the day

TRAVEL

By car: the hotel is easily reached from the A40 to the north, or the M4 to the south. The hotel has free parking.

By train: we are hoping to arrange transport from Didcot or Oxford stations.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

The City of Oxford is easily reached either by bus from the end of the hotel drive, or in good weather by walking along the tow-path. Oxford offers so much, including its colleges, botanical gardens, the Ashmolean Museum, theatres and shops.

If you come by car there are many places of interest within a short drive. (For full details see the web site www.visitoxfordandoxfordshire.com)

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th October 2014

Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel

Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS

<http://oxford-spires-hotel.four-pillars.co.uk>

PROGRAMME

Friday

p.m. Arrival
18.30 Welcome, with Pimms and soft drinks
Members' displays (6 sheets, one minute)
19.30 Dinner; followed by invited display by Michael Blackman
on 'Umbrellas'

Saturday

09.30 Invited display by Margaret Morris
Coffee
11.00 Members displays of latest acquisitions (12 sheets)

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

Saturday afternoon *Your choice:*

Thematic dealer David Griffiths "Thames Themes" will be in attendance.
The BTA will have a table sale offering a wide variety of stamps, covers, meter marks, commemorative cancels etc.

or

Free time to visit Oxford. Thames towpath runs past the hotel.

16.00 Members display of any theme (12 sheets)
19.30 Pre-dinner drink
Dinner followed by a light-hearted quiz and raffle
(*a donation of a raffle prize would be much appreciated*)

Sunday

09.30 Invited display by Jean Alexander on 'Waterfalls
of the World'
Coffee
10.30 Members displays of any theme (12 sheets)
12.45 Lunch (optional, payable on the day)

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th October 2014

Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel

BOOKING FORM

I wish to book

- Rooms based on two people sharing £220 per head
 Single room supplement £50 per head
 Extra bed/breakfast Thursday (cost to be confirmed) Extra bed/breakfast Sunday

Or:

- Day delegate Saturday £12.00 per head Evening meal (Sat)
Day delegate £27.50
 Day delegate Sunday £6.00

Deposit

£25.00 per person (non-refundable)

Or:

Day delegate rate per person

I enclose a cheque for made out to BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Your details

Name.....

Name of partner

Address.....

..... Post code

Telephone number (home)

Telephone number (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

ARTICLES IN THIS EDITION



Fig 1 Harvesting onions



Fig 2 Extracting oil from the oil palm tree



Fig 3 Crop failure



Fig 4 Harvesting maize



Fig 5 Freedom From Hunger

Farmers in the Developing World, page 136



Fairy tales from The Brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault and Hans Christian Andersen
How I Started, page 141

NEW ISSUES

The stamps below are reproduced with the kind assistance of Harry Allan,
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