

THEMESCENE

December 2015

In this issue we:

Complete our exploration

Amundsen's North East Passage pt.3

With Richard Hindle

Admire an institution

The Salvation Army

With Chris Wheeler



Chase fire-breathing monsters

Dragons Den

With Barry Floyd



Celebrate Christmas

Who was Good King Wenceslas?

With Raymond Ireson



And look forward to summer

Aloha!

With Neil Pearce

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 32, No.4. Whole Number 121

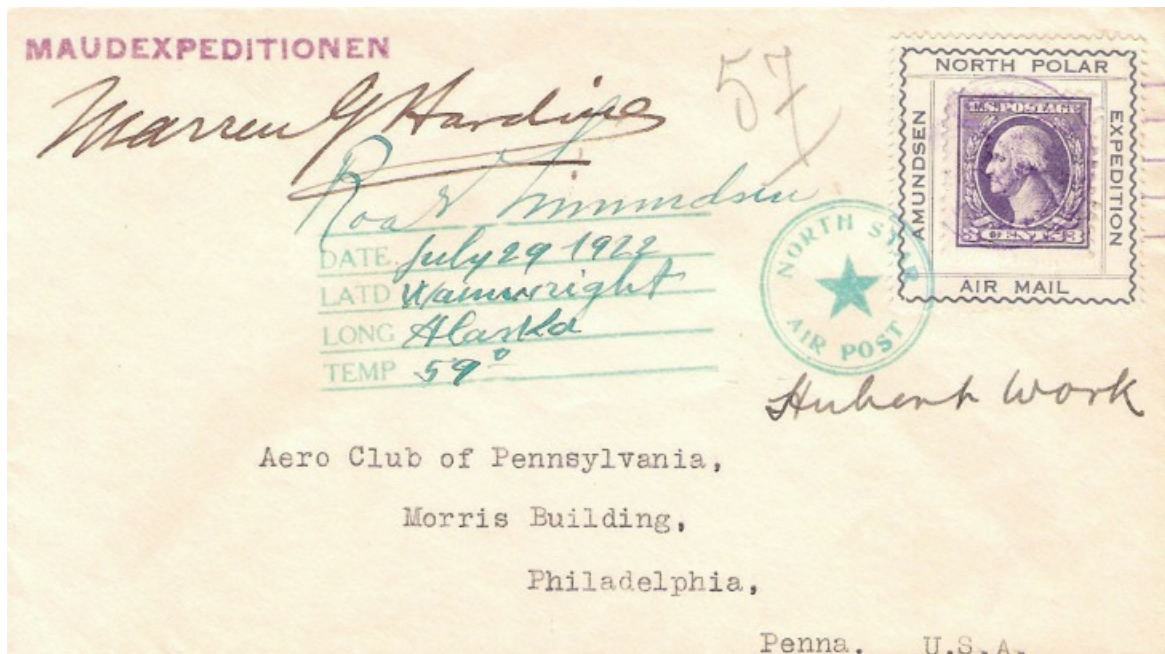
£2.50

www.britishthematic.org.uk

Amundsen's Northeast Passage, page 114



*Flown cover with all four definitives.
The 1 & 2c have the "ARI MAIL" error*



Flown cover signed by Warren G. Harding, President of the United States

THEMESCENE

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DECEMBER 2015

THEMESCENE

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

I was delighted to see from the Membership Page (112) that we have recruited 14 new people this year. This is excellent, it demonstrates a real interest in and enjoyment of 'pictorial' collecting. And I'm glad to say that we have a very full Programme for 2016 (page 143) so I do hope we can meet as many members as possible during the year. If you are a new member who has not yet joined one of our events do come along and introduce yourself. We are a very friendly bunch and you will be made most welcome. There will be meetings in Worcester, Swindon and London, and the BTA will have tables at Farnborough and Ardingly; plus of course our major event of the year: the BTA Residential Weekend. We hope there is something for everyone here, do please come along and support your Association.

Our Librarian Ron Backhouse does a sterling job listing the many thematic articles which appear in the philatelic press (and indeed elsewhere). Please have a look at page 138 for an explanation of the service offered to members. If you have not availed yourself of this service before do drop Ron a letter or email, you may be surprised at what we have on your subject.

The BTA is a generalist organisation, which means you can find articles in *Themescene* on almost anything. The last five years have seen features on *The Odyssey*, Captain Cook, lifeboats, The King James Bible, World War II, fruit, the Galapagos Islands, vanilla, the Merchant Navy, chess, farming, Nazca Lines, UN Year of Light, shirts, cars, bicycles, climate change, dragons, sweepstakes, Magna Carta, aircraft, Salvation Army, Sigmund Freud and King Wenceslas. This approach is the complete opposite of our affiliated societies and the American Topical Association Study Units (all 51 of them) where members of these receive publications packed with information solely about their own interest. I like to think there is room for both: we all want to add to our knowledge in our own field, but reading more widely is like going to a local club meeting where the speaker could be showing anything at all, which you hope will be interesting and widen your general philatelic knowledge.

And a thought to finish with. I recently attended the annual Stuart Rossiter Trust Lecture. While it was dedicated to postal history (that being the subject matter of the Trust) I was struck by the speaker Ben Palmer quoting Einstein: "Logic takes you from A to B. Imagination takes you everywhere". If that is true of postal history how much more true is it of thematic and open? Without imagination you could hardly start a collection, let alone pursue it down the byways of your story. So let's congratulate ourselves we have

something in common with Einstein!

Christmas will be fast approaching by the time you read this, so may I and the BTA Committee wish you all a very happy Christmas and successful collecting new year. 📖



CHAIRMAN


Barry Stagg

IS THERE A FUTURE FOR PHILATELY?

It seems to me that every time I meet a fellow philatelist the topic of the future of the hobby comes up. Falling club membership, closing clubs and specialist shops and an ageing collecting population all seem to suggest that the hobby is in decline. Adding the attraction of social media and the Internet in general it does seem to many that the hobby is destined for the dustbin of history. I think they are very wrong. I agree with all the above observations but the hobby is going through a change, a huge change, and we need to recognise that and act accordingly. And the blame game is not the way to go. Yes, we all have busy lives, we all have pressures on our time, and younger people seem to prefer ‘talking’ on social media but these should be seen as opportunities to exploit not complain about.

I am sure you have heard of YouTube. Of the hundreds of millions (and I do mean that) of short videos on YouTube how many have ‘Philatelic’ in the title? – just under 5000. This compares to over four million on nail care and over 22 Million for hair care!! If we want to get to those under 30 then we must go to them! Should we not be producing short ‘films’ to promote our hobby and let others see the joys and challenge of philately from the comfort of their own homes? As an example, the Royal has started showing their 5pm talks on the web. It does enable me, living in Cheltenham, to watch the presentation without the need for a 100 mile round trip! Can we copy that idea and put some of our thematic presentations, or short extracts from them, on to YouTube? Or, take some of the more successful articles in *Themescene* and make a short video of them? The list of opportunities is endless.

Much as I enjoy searching through dealers stock I am resigned to the knowledge that, outside stamp fairs, I must go to on-line auction sites to get my material. Times have changed. Yes, you must be careful, and yes there are unscrupulous people out there, but most want to trade with you and want you to come back. In the 10 years I have bought and sold on auction sites (over 1000 items) I recall just two that have not gone well.

According to a 2013 report there are nearly 60 million philatelists worldwide! And growing. China has a third of all philatelists and India is growing as well as a philatelic centre. In the West philately has a ‘nerdy’ reputation amongst the young, yet in China it is seen as a sign of culture and prosperity! The philatelic population is changing, not dying. In this country we need to make sure that philately, and thematic collecting in particular, is out there for all to see. We need to ensure that the young can find us so that when their lives are ‘less busy’ they can join us in one of the world’s greatest adventures, thematic collecting. 

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S PAGE

Peter Denly

Current membership

Ordinary members	151
Family members	15
Society members	14
Overseas members	15
Overseas Society members	1
Honorary members	4

Total number of members **200** (at 7th November 2015)

New Members joining since the September 2014 issue

Miss V. Beeken of Durham	Miss J. Fairweather of Sheringham
Mr. K. Miller of Bushey	Mr. J. Sawkins of Balerno, Edinburgh
Mr. D. Sumpter of Crawley Down	

Deaths advised since the September 2014 issue

Mr. F. Kiddle RDP


We are delighted to welcome five new members and hope that they will find their membership rewarding. In the last twelve months recruitment has seen 14 new members joining, some through personal contact, with most others accessing the Association through the website.

Included with your copy of the December *Themescene* will be found a notice concerning the renewal of membership for the coming year. We are pleased to advise that it not been necessary to increase the cost of subscription so the rate remains the same as last year, as under:

UK Members and family membership	£18
Euro Area Members and family membership	£22
All other areas Overseas	£24
Overseas Societies	£25
Affiliated organisations	£20

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 remittance form explains the procedure for renewing your subscription by this means.

Members may be aware that the BTA website is currently undergoing reconstruction and is due to be launched at the end of November this year, which will provide a fresh new look. The site being replaced shows subscription rates which are now some years out of date, so if in doubt please use the information provided on this page when selecting your rate of payment.

Recently, some 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. 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The views expressed in these letters may not necessarily be those of the Editorial Board.

DISPLAYING TO SPECIAL-INTEREST GROUPS

From Janet Nelson

In response to your editorial comment in this September *Themescene*, I should like to report on a recent successful presentation by members of the Hereford & Mid-Wales Philatelic Society to the Ross-on-Wye Men's Supper Club, their wives and guests; an audience totalling nearly 60.

After the meal, John Setchfield introduced "The Stories Stamps Tell" with a thematic display of the life and achievements of Roland Hill, incorporating an explanation of some basic philatelic terms to an intrigued audience.

BTA member Nick Nelson followed with a brief history of Ifni, a little known but fascinating 20th century Spanish colony. Fellow BTA member Janet Nelson then proved that philately doesn't have to be solemn with her display based on Stephen Clarke's humorous history "1000 Years of Annoying the French".

John Davies concluded with a display of Jamaican stamps emphasising the role played by Jamaican Forces in the two World Wars.

As in a Philatelic Society meeting the audience were then invited to view the displays at



close quarters and ask questions. This proved so popular that the owner of the hotel venue wondered whether he would ever reclaim his dining room! We received a substantial number of comments on how they now regarded "stamp collecting" in a new light, as well as from several people who admitted arriving expecting to be bored but leaving having been absolutely enthralled!

CALLING PALEONTOLOGY COLLECTORS

From Michael Kogan

My name is Michael Kogan, philatelist from Germany, member of American Topical Association (ATA) and Biophilately study unit of ATA.

I hold Associate Editors role at Paleontology division of Biophilately Journal: www.biophilately.org/associateeditors.html where I publish list of new stamps and other philatelic object related to Paleontology subject, collect or write some articles. Moreover I have my own website: www.paleophilatelie.eu/ where I also list all stamps related to the subject: www.paleophilatelie.eu/year/current.html

I just wonder if there is somebody at your association who is looking for the same topic and with whom we can cooperate and exchange some information about new and old releases.

Michael's email is: admin@paleophilatelie.eu

AMUNDSEN'S NORTHEAST PASSAGE EXPEDITION 1918-23. PART 3: NORTH STAR AIR POST MAIL

Richard A. Hindle finishes the story

Introduction

When Amundsen turned his attention to a trans-polar flight, a little known philatelic aspect was created involving flown covers with special Assistance Collars affixed.

Origins of the covers

Amundsen went to New York to buy the Junkers F-13. It developed engine problems and landed in Philadelphia. Whilst waiting for a replacement, it is probably where he met Major Joseph A. Steinmetz, who was President of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania, Chairman of the Aeronautic Division of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and a pioneer of aero philately. Undoubtedly, he suggested the aeroplanes carry mail to offset some of the cost of a Trans-Polar flight.

Steinmetz used various addresses on the covers he prepared. Covers are either addressed to himself, The Aero Club of Pennsylvania or the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. However, in all cases they were sent to the Morris Building in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

In addition to Steinmetz, it appears several other individuals were also very interested in the polar flight. These included Miss Harriet C. Wirth and Mr. Henry Woodhouse. Covers are addressed to Woodhouse's address at 280 Madison Avenue, New York. Woodhouse was particularly active in preparing covers and sent them to many of his friends and acquaintances.

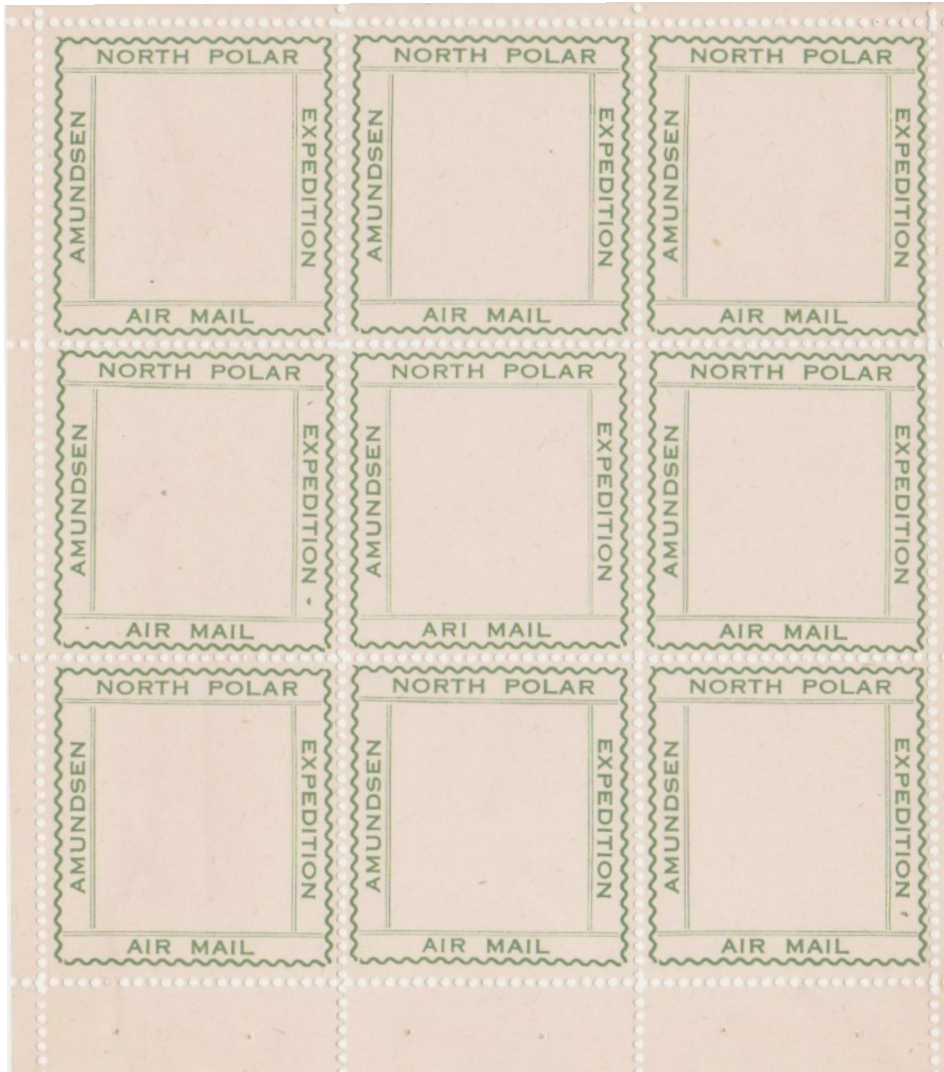
Probably over 75% of the flown covers were generated in this manner.

“Assistance Collars”

The “Assistance Collars” were printed in green, red, purple and brown with AMUNDSEN / NORTH POLAR / EXPEDITION / AIR MAIL, which allowed sufficient space within the box to affix a stamp. The colours were chosen to match the 1c, 2c, 3c and 4c definitive stamps. The colour of 3c stamp, according to the Gibbons Stamps of the World Catalogue 2010 is violet. (As I am colour-blind and have great difficulty with colours and shades, I couldn't possibly comment!).

It is believed the Collars were prepared by Steinmetz. The appropriate postage was needed on each cover carried. In addition, the item required to have at least one Assistance Collar as proof it had been carried on the flight.

The labels were printed in blocks of 9 (3 x 3). The centre label in each sheet contains the error “ARI MAIL” instead of “AIR MAIL” .



*Sheetlet of the 1c Green Assistance labels.
The centre label has the "ARI MAIL" spelling mistake*

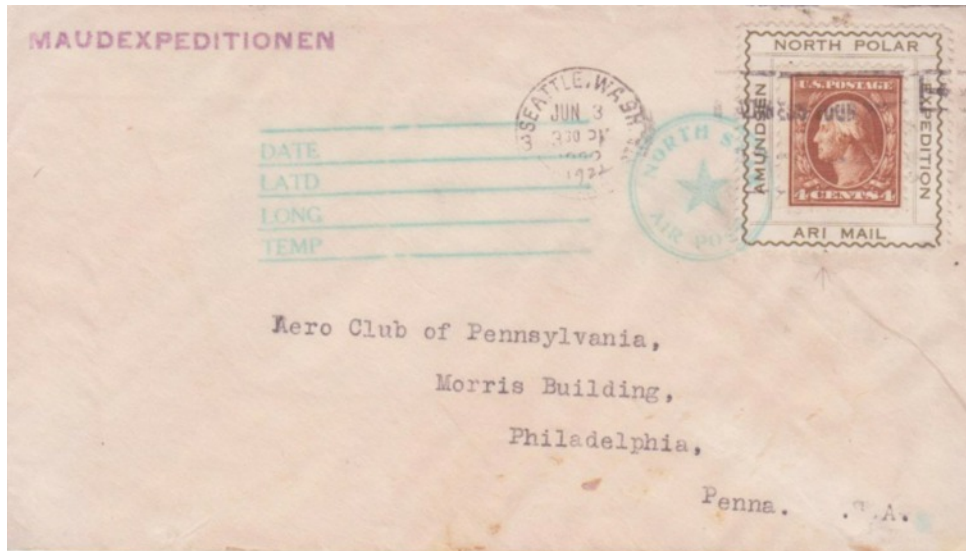
Flown Covers

All the covers are philatelic. They were prepared by philatelists for philatelists. The covers are relatively scarce and are known posted from Seattle, Washington State; Nome, Point Barrow and Wainwright (Kotzebue Sound), Alaska in 1922. The envelopes have a handstamped MAUDEXPEDITIONEN in either the top or bottom left hand corner.

The stamps are cancelled with a double ring NORTH STAR AIR POST with spaces to the left to record a signature, the date, latitude, longitude and temperature. The Seattle covers are left blank. Most of the Alaskan covers have the information inserted. The space for longitude, where used, is indicated by the name of the town.

The covers postmarked Seattle were carried by the Junkers F13 *Elisabeth* on proving flights. At the time of the intended Polar flight the F13 held the record for the longest flight, having remained airborne for 32 hours.

The 1c and 2c stamps are the most commonly seen. Those with 3c & 4c stamps are rare and were, in fact, in Alaska with Amundsen and the other members of the expedition. The Brown 4c Assistance Collars with the misspelt variety is shown on the next page. Covers with all four labels used correctly, again, are very rare (see inside front cover).



4c on cover with the ARI MAIL variety, possibly unique

William Benfield recorded 25 flown covers posted in July 1922 from Nome, Wainwright (in Kotzebue Sound) and Point Barrow (all in Alaska) have been recorded and one from Wainwright in July 1923. Since then at least six covers signed by Warren G. Harding, President of the USA (see inside front cover) ; Hubert Work, Postmaster General and Roald Amundsen have come to light. It is not known who persuaded Harding and Work to add their signatures. 📖

Acknowledgements

An earlier version of this article was first published in *Scandinavian Contact*, the Journal of the Scandinavian Philatelic Society. My thanks to Steve Allen (SA), Rolf Scharning (RS), Hal Vogel (HV) and Peter Hellberg for both their help and the generous sharing of information new to me, also allowing me to use their material for illustrative purposes, translations of Norwegian and also providing the information from the *Scandinavian Contact*, March 2008, pp. 166-69. The illustrations are from my collection unless otherwise indicated by the above initials.

Since then Dr. William Benfield's (WB) research papers have come to my attention and this much revised article must give him due credit for all his hard work. He studied some 600 cards and his records, now updated, forms the basis of the article.

References

- Benfield, W. R. *The "Maud" Expedition of 1918-25*
- Howgego, R. J. (2006) *The Encyclopedia of Exploration Vol. 3* Where passages have been copied verbatim, it is with the kind permission of the author.
- Nansen, F. (1898) *Farthest North*
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THE SALVATION ARMY

Chris Wheeler salutes an invaluable institution

Earlier this year I was asked to put together some philatelic material for a talk to the Wednesday Club of the Salvation Army in Bournemouth. After a quick search on eBay, I became intrigued by the number of postal administrations that had commemorated the work of the Salvation Army over the years, and by the spread of philatelic material covering not only postage stamps, but slogans, meter marks, postal cancellations, first day, souvenir and commemorative covers, as well as a host of concessionary War material. The request from the Bournemouth Citadel did me a favour, as I was able to enjoy collecting examples of this material for their display. This article illustrates some of the material I put together.



First a little about the Founder and his Army. General Booth was born in Nottingham on 10th April 1829. He married Catherine Mumford in 1855. They were a formidable pair. He trained as a Methodist Minister, however he became disillusioned and in 1865 he established The Christian Mission in the East End of London, preaching the theory of Christian values, but with the practicality of deep humanitarian support to those in need. The movement quickly spread throughout the United Kingdom and within a few years Officers were departing as missionaries to countries all over the world. From running leper colonies at the request of the Government in Indonesia to managing hospitals, hostels, schools and shelters all over Europe, the Army was there to assist those in need.

A close example is from nearby in the Isle of Man, where two lady Officers arrived in 1883 and set about their work with great enthusiasm. Within months it was reported in *The War Cry*: “both at Douglas and Ramsey, great men have come down like little children beneath the power of God. At Ramsey the Hallelujah lassies report that as they are visiting the homes of the fishermen’s wives, they find that the arrow of conviction has got well into their hearts. They hope soon to have a brass band of converted drunkards”. Four commemorative stamps were released by the Isle of Man a century later to mark the Army’s achievements there, and on the 26p value was the earlier work of Thomas Bridson with the leper colonies in Java.



Services carried out by the Army were tailored to the needs of each country’s community. In Indonesia it was running the leper colonies, in the central African countries it was a wide range of community and social services, in the USA it was religious services through camps and retreat centres, in Australia it was community welfare. Many of these activities have been commemorated by their host countries on their stamps and postcards.

During both World Wars the Salvation Army was on hand to provide front line help to the troops. This ranged from mobile food kitchens, the famous doughnut making, and the provision of well equipped writing rooms for letters home to be written and dispatched.

The Salvation Army has its distinct uniform and insignia, recognisable all over the world. Many countries have incorporated these features into their stamp designs.



Christian music is the lifeblood of the Salvation Army, used for their services and for fundraising. Wearing their distinctive army uniforms and with their flag flying, playing music on the streets is a familiar sight, and one that has frequently been represented on stamps. The two stylised stamps issued by Great Britain in 1965 to mark the Salvation Army's centenary were designed to illustrate the Sunday afternoon street corner Band, and their distinctive military-style uniform. Not only was this issue delayed by an overtime ban, but the some of the sheets of stamps had constant flaws. The 3d value has a flaw in the Queen's diadem, row 16 stamp 6, and the 1s 6d has an "extra pearl" in the Queen's diadem, row 17 stamp 1.




Air Mail "On Active Service" cover with concessionary rate, cancelled by the Air Force Service carrying logos of the Salvation Army, Australian Comforts Fund and the YMCA

Due to the privileged status of the Salvation Army many countries granted freepost or reduced charge concessions from time to time, particularly for its inter-office mail. Marked "C.A.O." or "On Active Service", and suitably inscribed, the mail was transported favourably.

Because of its diverse distribution and activities, most years now have an event somewhere in the world to commemorate. 1983 and 1987 marked the Centenary of the Salvation Army in South Africa, and the Golden Jubilee of the organisation in the Philippines.

As well as Salvation Army Generals and Territorial Commanders, many Officers have also featured on stamps, illustrating the esteem and appreciation of the countries in which they have served for their humanitarian achievements.

The catch phrase “Thank God for the Salvos” is the Australians’ way of appreciating the respect the Salvation Army has earned since its arrival there in 1880. It is celebrated both as a religious movement and for its extensive community services which have included children’s homes; family and childcare centres; emergency accommodation; and hostels for handicapped, homeless and senior citizens. It also still runs very effective missing persons bureaux. Below is an example of a Victorian Revenue stamp with a Salvation Army perfin, even the Army had to protect itself from internal fraud and theft!

In conclusion, perhaps one of the most unusual items of philatelic interest resulted from the appointment of the Salvation Army to administer one of the Post Offices in Vryheid, Natal, South Africa. Issued with its own franking stamps of either “P.O. SALVATION” or “SALVATION”, the district encompassed many homesteads, kraals, the local hospital, a YMCA Camp and its own Base there. 



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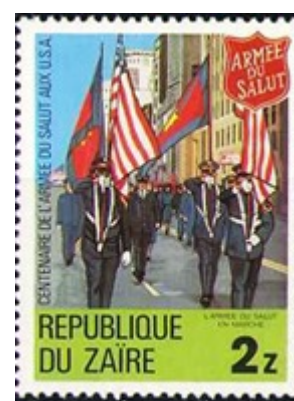
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Othilie Topping (1865-1931) known as the "Slum Sister General". The stamp shows her tending a sick bedridden woman.

DRAGON'S DEN

Barry Floyd meets mythical beasts

Dragons are legendary, mythical creatures which have been a feature of the cultural history of many different countries around the world for many thousands of years. Their imagery and portrayal have ranged from fire-breathing monsters lurking in dark corners, to scaly sea-dwelling serpents, to huge winged creatures with long, often pointed tails.

It is unclear where the idea of dragons came from but it is often attributed to the discovery of dinosaur remains. The unearthing of these often giant skeletons may have led to images of magnificent and terrifying beasts, and these assumptions may have been confirmed when exotic creatures such as the Komodo dragon were first viewed. Early maps sometimes feature crude images or the words 'Here be dragons' in areas of unexplored lands.

There are two differing global traditions: European dragons, derived from old folk tales, and ultimately related to Greek and Middle Eastern mythologies, and Chinese and East Asian dragons. The European creatures are often perceived as evil and dangerous. With the spread of Christianity came stories of fearsome dragons being defeated by brave knights often while rescuing a beautiful maiden, an allegorical take on the embodiment of all things good (the knight) vanquishing the Devil as represented as a dragon. However this was not always the case, sometimes their powers were described as useful, even protective.

On the other hand, the dragons featured in the folklore of Chinese, Japanese and other Asian cultures are generally well respected and regarded as beneficial, spiritual, even sacred. In China depictions of dragons can be found in artefacts dating back to the 16th century BC. They are the highest ranking animal in the Chinese animal hierarchy, and are strongly associated with the emperor, hence power and majesty. Japan has dragon myths going back to the 7th century and later adopted Chinese and Indian dragons. Only in the Philippines does a rather different story of dragons unfold, as related shortly.

However they are viewed, dragons continue to intrigue people to the present day, witness their appearance in popular culture: books, films and television.

Jersey Post issued a set of six stamps in January 2015 featuring dragons, relevant to collectors of folk tales and related cultural events (see inside back cover). This article tells their story.

Beowulf, featured on the 46p Jersey set, is an old English epic poem composed by an anonymous Anglo-Saxon writer between the 8th and early 11th centuries. It describes the adventures of the hero Beowulf in Scandinavia as he comes to the aid of the king of the Danes. He meets and slays the monster Grendel and later, after a bitter struggle, the monster's mother. Beowulf then becomes a king himself. But fifty years later he is forced to confront an angry dragon which, driven from its cave due to a stolen golden cup, proceeds to burn everything in its sight. Asking his warriors to stand to one side, Beowulf descends to attack the dragon, However the battle goes against him, and his men fearing for their lives flee into the woods. One however comes to his aid and together they slay the dragon. However Beowulf is fatally wounded in the process and his body is later ritually buried in a large tumulus or mound, visible from the sea.

St. George is the patron saint of England, as he is of many other countries around Europe. The earliest documented mention of the saint in England comes from the Venerable Bede (c.673 – 735AD) and he is also cited in the ninth century liturgy used at Durham Cathedral. By some, St. George's death in 303AD is celebrated every year on April 23, although it is not an official national holiday in England.



Among the many exploits of the saint, such as leading crusaders into battle, there is a persistent legend (particularly strong in Spain) which features St. George slaying a dragon to save a princess. The story tells of vicious attacks by a dragon which terrifies the local population in the Kingdom of Catalo-

nia. In efforts to appease the monster two lambs are offered daily to try and satisfy its hunger. But when the supply of lambs becomes exhausted they decide to send a human being together with a single lamb. The human is drawn by lots but when he is devoured by the dragon his family survivors receive compensation from the king's treasury. Legend then suggests that it was decided to offer a princess of royal blood to the creature in the hope it would show some sort of pity to the fair maiden. The knight Jorge, accompanied by the princess, eventually killed the monster.

The Bakunawa or Bakonawa dragon, shown on the 62p stamp, is of Philippine mythology. It is a giant sea-serpent with a circular lake-sized mouth, a red tongue, two sets of irregularly-shaped wings and whiskers and gills along its sides. Tales about the Bakunawa associate it with eclipses of the heavenly bodies; the dragon is thought for example to rise from the ocean and attempt to swallow the moon. Ancient Filipinos in response would go outside with their pots and pans to make a noise to scare the monster into spitting out the moon. Other villagers would play soft sounds on their musical instruments, trusting that the dragon would fall into a deep sleep. But while called a 'moon-eater' it had the more sinister name of 'man eater'. The story goes that Bakunawa fell in love with, and had an affair with a human girl, and on hearing of this the head of her tribe took revenge and burned down their hut. Incensed, the dragon attempted to devour many of the heavenly bodies, thus threatening mankind. The supreme being Bathala intervened and sent it far away from its home. But even today current eclipses are a sign of Bakunawa trying to return to its home and its human ties.

Dragons played a major role in Greek mythology, of which the Colchian Dragon features on the 70p stamp. This features in the story of Jason and the Argonauts as they sought the Golden Fleece of a ram, located in a sacred grove and hanging from an old oak tree in a deep thicket. Various writers, including Ovid and Apollonius Rhodius tell of the encounter. The fleece was closely guarded by the Colchian Dragon, variously described as a restless monster 'far surpassing in length and breadth a ship of fifty oars'. Some said it had a sheath of horrific scales, rolled into interminable coils. Jason and the Argonauts were accompanied by Medea, who offered to charm the monster by singing to it. The

dragon was enchanted by her song, relaxed its body and its poison fangs. Medea sprinkled its eyes with a magic potion to induce a deep sleep, allowing Jason to grab the Fleece. Together they brought the treasured prize home to Greece.



Chinese dragons (82p stamp) have long been an important part of Chinese culture. They can take many animal-like forms including fish or turtles, but are most commonly depicted with a snake-like body but with four legs and a large fire-breathing head. They traditionally symbolise power, with control over heavy rain, floods, even typhoons, but they also serve as a symbol of strength and good luck for worthy individuals. Outstanding people are compared to dragons, while under-achievers can be likened to worms. In former days the Emperor of China used the dragon to indicate his power and strength over his people. A five-clawed beast represented the Emperor, while nobles and ministers were assigned three- or four-clawed dragons.

In Chinese culture today, whether in the homeland or in the Chinese diaspora world-wide, it is common to celebrate Chinese New Year with dragon dances and to feast to commemorate the great traditions of an ancient civilization.

The Welsh Dragon, or *Y Ddraig Goch* ('red dragon', 91p stamp) appears on the national flag of Wales and serves as a symbol of all things Welsh for many public and private institutions. Archaeological evidence indicates that the dragon may have evolved as a Romano-British national symbol. The oldest recorded mention of dragons in the country is from 829 AD, where it offers an account of the bitter struggles between red and white monsters. A red dragon is popularly supposed to have been the battle standard of King Arthur, son of Uther Pendragon or 'Dragon's Head', and of other Celtic leaders. Later, the coat of arms of the Tudor monarch Henry VII showed the Welsh red dragon together with an English white lion, supporting the royal coat of arms.

The Jersey miniature sheet does indeed pay due homage to a truly remarkable legend. 📖

BTA ANNUAL COMPETITIONS

Brian Sole reports on the event held at Ardingly on 10th October

BTA Cup (32 sheets judged to Thematic Philately National rules)

Jeff Dugdale “Mythology Explains” Vermeil level. WINNER

Whilst ‘science’ has been a feature of life for most people in the West for around the last 500 years, starting with the writings of people like Da Vinci, Copernicus and Galileo, humans have existed for something like 70,000 years. Early societies needed a rationale for natural phenomena such as thunder, lightening and earthquakes, for the cycle of day and night and warm and cool seasons. This display examined mythologies from across the world starting with creation myths.

Dr Mehmet Guney “Metallurgical Industry”. Large Silver level.

“Metallurgical Industry” is the art and material science of making pure metals and alloys from mineral ores. The display covered the physical and chemical behaviour of metallic elements, their intermediate compounds and their alloys, and the technology of metals: the way in which science is applied to their industrial uses.

Both entries demonstrated a wide knowledge of the theme and were written up very clearly, if a little over-written. They both utilised mainly stamps to tell their stories.

John Fosbery Thematic Trophy (Open to anybody who has never won an award at a National Exhibition and required 16 sheets in protectors, with no other rules.)

Ernie Clayton	WINNER - It is about a bike
Janet Nelson	RUNNER UP - The Hydrological Cycle
Gerald Lovell	Silverstone
Jean-Pierre Frossard	A philatelic exploration of land snails.
Len Stanway	The Whyte Notation Development of the Steam Locomotive
Peter Kirk	Cricket – The Ashes
Peter Kirk	Rabbits.

The Organisers of the Sussex Federation Stamp Fair provided BTA with frames in a prominent position on the first floor. It was very pleasing to hear so many complimentary remarks about each of the entries. This led to almost 50 visitors voting for their favourite and a runner up. The final result was very close with two marks separating the first four entries and 2nd place votes deciding the outcome.

“It is about a bike” was the winner. The entry was written up neatly and included 19th century membership cards, with photos, and GB privately printed postal stationery for the Cyclist Touring Club, formed in 1878.

“The Hydrological Cycle” was an ingenious entry with the 16 sheets, all written up landscape, not portrait, with the pages inter-linking. Wide arrows in a circular format directed viewers from cloud and atmosphere at the top down to ground water storage and oceans and back up through evaporation, deviating via plants and animals, to the atmosphere. I counted stamps and covers from over 60 countries.

“Silverstone” attracted Formula 1 motor-racing fans with First Day Covers signed by famous names, not normally accepted by judges under FIP rules. (For a flavour of this subject see ‘How I Started’ on page 130).

“A philatelic exploration of land snails” was surprisingly detailed in the life and habits of snails and very well written up. It began with snail origins and anatomy, covered classification and habitat, and then widened out into non-scientific topics including snails in cuisine, snail trivia, and - of course - snail mail.

“The Whyte Notation – Development of the steam engine” proved very popular with the railway buffs. I knew nothing about the subject before the day, but two or three visitors expanded on the information on the 16 pages to me! ‘The Whyte Notation’ is a system of classifying steam locomotives by wheel arrangement. The notation counts the number of leading wheels, then the number of driving wheels, and finally the number of trailing wheels. The display covered rigid-framed steam locomotive arrangements and articulated steam locomotive arrangements. The entry was voted the best by four visitors but another seven voted the entry runner-up.

“Cricket – The Ashes” was another popular entry in view of England’s success in the latest Test series against Australia, a contest that has gone on since 1877. The display included some famous cricketers such as W. G. Grace, Don Bradman and Len Hutton, and then looked at some of the modern test matches, finishing with the 2010-11 series in Australia. That gained six votes for runner-up.

Sadly “Rabbits” did not prove to be such a popular entry but it was against some strong opposition. Some very attractive stamps and covers were shown, including some which feature in children’s books. Who doesn’t know Peter Rabbit? Not surprisingly, given their rapid reproduction rate, they have often been symbols of fertility or rebirth and have long been associated with Spring and Easter.



Fosbery winner and runner up



The Hydrological Cycle part 2



BTA Cup winner. Norwegian myth: Balder's funeral



BTA Cup runner-up. The steel industry.



WHO WAS GOOD KING WENCESLAS?

Raymond Ireson explodes the myth of the king and the peasant

Who of you is not familiar with the popular carol *Good King Wenceslas*? But how many of you know the story behind that carol? The words of the carol tell us that the eponymous King was looking out of his castle and saw a poor man foraging for firewood in the forest. In an act of Christian charity Wenceslas decided to spread the Christmas cheer and set off with his page, into the cold and dark, to make sure the poor wretch enjoyed himself to the full.

But who was the real-life inspiration for the saintly monarch, and was Good King Wenceslas as good as the carol would have us believe? Firstly, you can discard the narrative from the carol since it was invented by the Victorian caroler J. M. Neale in 1853. But Wenceslas did exist, although he was a duke, not a king. Born c.907 AD in Stochov near Prague (now in the Czech Republic) he was ruler of the principality of Bohemia. He was raised as a Christian by his grandmother Saint Ludmilla. His mother, Drahomira, was a pagan and ruthlessly ambitious. She had Ludmilla murdered in 921 and then ruled as Regent herself. In 924 or 925 Wenceslas assumed government for himself and had Drahomira exiled.

As a mark of his Christian upbringing it is said that Wenceslas took a vow of virginity, and that German missionary priests, seeking to make Bohemia Christian, enjoyed his whole-hearted support. In 929, faced with the threat of invasions from Magyars and Saxons, Wenceslas submitted to the East Frankish King Henry I. In 935 a group of nobles allied to Wenceslas' younger brother Boleslav plotted to kill him. They waylaid him on the way to mass and hacked him to death at the church door.

Almost as soon as he was buried there came reports of miracles taking place at Wenceslas' tomb. Boleslav, who had succeeded his elder brother as Duke, had Wenceslas' remains disinterred and removed to the Church of Saint Vitus in Prague. The church became a popular pilgrimage site in medieval times and eventually a cathedral. Wenceslas himself was canonized and made patron saint of Bohemia. 📖



The carol



Statue and painting of the Saint



ALOHA!

Neil Pearce looks ahead to summertime

Any *Themescene* readers who have been fortunate enough to visit the mid-Pacific Hawaiian islands will remember well the first word of greeting offered to newcomers: Aloha! While considered the English equivalent of ‘hello’ there is a stronger feel to it, implying a warm welcome to a colourful tropical homeland considered by many to be an earthly paradise. On departing this Eden the endearing word may also be heard in departure lounges and at shipping terminals.

‘Aloha’ has Polynesian roots and, in its broadest sense, it also means affection, compassion, mercy and peace. While clearly originating in Hawaii, now the 50th American State, the word of greeting is now commonly heard on the American mainland, with returning servicemen and tourists willing carriers of the expression.



Many visitors to the Islands as well as its fortunate residents have been attracted to the stylish, exotic Hawaiian or Aloha shirts which are sold widely throughout the archipelago and exported to many countries. These distinctive shirts made their first appearance in 1904, the creation of a Japanese immigrant to Honolulu. In muted colours, they were adorned with Polynesian generic motifs: quilt and tapa designs and simple floral patterns. Modifications to the traditional designs appeared in the 1930's. Brightly coloured contemporary Aloha shirts also reflect historic designs but may include such elements as cars, drinks, sports team logos, all arranged in similar patterns to those of the classic Hawaiian shirt. The five shirts reproduced in the 32c stamps issued in 2012 (see inside back cover) are attractive illustrations of traditional tropical motifs. The stamps appeared in a pressure-sensitive adhesive booklet of ten, offset printed, and in four colours: black, cyan, magenta and yellow.

Aloha shirts are invariably short-sleeved and collared, with a pocket over the left chest preserving the printed pattern. They usually have buttons and the hem is straight since the shirt is intended to be worn outside the trouser waist. After a lobbying campaign by the Hawaiian Fashion Guild in 1965 the shirts were accepted as formal enough to wear in business and even in government, except for the most official occasions. Considering the tropical setting of the islands the Aloha shirts have sensibly replaced coats and ties of earlier introduced attire. What began as an effort to have at least one day a week (an Aloha Friday) in Hawaiian dress eventually succeeded in covering all working days. As the idea spread to the American mainland, and eventually around the world, the ‘Thank God It’s Friday’ concept in casual clothing has caught on, so we here in the U.K. should ultimately be grateful to the sartorial aspirations of the Hawaiians!

Thematic collectors of stamps illustrating clothing styles will welcome this short American set to their collections and, by going online, they may wish to make a personal purchase of an Aloha shirt, to wear on whatever day summer appears in 2016. 📖

BTA NEWS

BTA WEBSITE

As some of you will be aware, our website badly needed updating. We are now delighted to announce that by the end of the year a completely new site should be launched at www.britishthematic.org.uk We are very grateful to the ABPS Small Grants Committee for their support in helping us achieve such a splendid new resource, which will showcase both the BTA and the best in thematic collecting.

BTA PROMOTION AT NEW YORK WORLD STAMP SHOW 2016

Several BTA members are planning to attend this major International. We have approached the American Topical Association who are hoping to arrange a meeting between various thematic associations including the BTA. Further details will be published in March *Themescene*. If you are planning to go to New York please contact the BTA Committee via the Editor (wendybuckle@btinternet.com) so that we can ensure you are included in the arrangements.



BTA WEEKEND 30 September - 02 October 2016

We are pleased to announce the return of this popular event; full details and booking form can be found on pages 140 - 142 of this magazine. While the basic format remains the same we have made a few improvements in the light of feedback:

- We will be using a slightly larger room, meaning frames can be spread out for better viewing, and socialising will be more comfortable.
- There will be a BTA member present to greet people at the hotel from the Friday morning onwards.
- Providing roadworks don't cause problems we can collect delegates from Oxford Railway Station. Just let us know time of arrival.
- The programme has three guest speakers and four Members' sessions. This seems to be the balance most people want. While we have suggested themes for Members' sessions you don't have to stick to them! Bring what you want.

If you have not come to one of these events do please consider it. You will see from the booking form that we offer a day delegate rate if you would just like to join in for part of the time. Prices for full delegates have been kept at 2014 rates.

If you would like to know more before committing please contact either Anne Stammers: annies1@btopenworld.com or Wendy Buckle: wendybuckle@btinternet.com .

THEMESCENE BINDERS FOR SALE

Attractive A5 binders in dark blue in which to neatly file your back run of *Themescenes*. Formerly costing £2.50 we are now offering these for sale at the bargain price of £1.00 plus postage and packing. UK p&p is £2.80 for up to and including five binders, or contact us to arrange to collect your order from any BTA event this year post free (see the Programme on page 143). Orders, with cheque made out to the British Thematic Association, should be sent to Barry Stagg, 1 Naunton Way, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 7BQ. Email Barry if you have any questions on bastagg@btinternet.com

HOW I STARTED

Gerald Lovell went back to his roots

If you are born in the village of Silverstone, Northamptonshire and a stamp collector there is a strong chance that you may put together a thematic collection on motor racing. Well, after many youthful years collecting almost anything including GB new issues I thought I would take the plunge. Realising my early collecting was only a stepping stone I put together two thematic collections; firstly on Sir Winston Churchill and then motor racing. Churchill was the first step because he is an interesting subject and there was so much material available. The introduction to motor racing was precipitated while on a family holiday in Swanage, Dorset. Arriving late on the beach to find our pitch, the only spot was adjacent to the venue for the Punch and Judy Show. With two young girls eager to settle I lost the battle to relocate. Three shows later and seeing the Punch and Judy man approaching, I decided to escape and go to the local park that hosted the Dorset Show. To my surprise there was a philatelic dealer hiding in a corner of the tent. Rummaging through his stock I found a 1969 DDA franked Silverstone cover for the British Grand Prix at a very modest cost. I did not know the cover existed and it opened my imagination.



This chance encounter was the catalyst for me to start the search to expand my new theme. Thirty years later I have a fine collection on the motor racing theme and the fundraising DDA (Disable Driver Association) sponsored cover also gave me the idea of generating autographed Silverstone covers. The sale of the covers has raised £130,000 for charities from Silverstone village hall to national and international charities. Willing signatories number over 80 and include Fangio, Sir Jackie Stewart, Ayrton Senna and even Mick Jagger. Like many collectors I have most of the obvious material,

it is increasingly hard and expensive to get those rare cherished items. We are all in the same position. It is like a game of rummy; do we stick with what we have in the hope that one piece will soon come along or throw away everything and start afresh? Philately, like life, is a gamble! 📖



*Signed by
Ayrton Senna*

MY FAVOURITE ITEM

Barry Stagg finds a favourite postcard

As many of you know I collect on a theme of parachuting, both philatelic and postcards. The one man who did more than anybody to show that parachuting was a viable military technique was the German General Kurt Student. I spent years trying to find a postcard of him and eventually bought this one a few months ago. Largely unknown to most parachutists it was his imagination and dedication that convinced the



German High Command to use his parachute forces in the Battle of Holland in May 1940, in the taking of the key Belgian fort of Eben Emael and the attack on Crete in 1941. His losses in Crete were so high that he was not allowed to use his parachute forces again and they spent the rest of the war fighting on the ground. General Student was awarded the Knight's Cross in May 1940 and in 1943 he was awarded the Oak Leaves to go with his Knight's Cross.

The picture on the postcard is dated between May 1940 and 1943 as he is not wearing his 'Oak Leaves' (they would have been placed just above his Knight's Cross). The postcard has a divided back, is numbered C/1636 and is unused but has an unused stamp stuck on it. Interestingly the postcard is thin, no doubt reflecting the shortage of paper during the war. It is also signed but I cannot read the inscription. The postcard is one of the highlights of my postcard collection. 📖

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Astro Space Stamp Society

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

Web: www.astrospacestampsociety.com

Bicycle Stamp Club

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

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

Bird Stamp Society

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

Email: tony.statham@sky.com

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

Captain Cook Society

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

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

Concorde Study Circle

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

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

Glasgow Thematic Society

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

Guild of St. Gabriel

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

Masonic Philatelic Club

Mr. P. Nason, 3 Van Dyck Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 4QD Email: pnason@aol.com

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

Scout and Guide Stamp Club

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

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

Ship Stamp Society

Mr. R. E. Robertson, 17 Whitehall Road, Northburn Park, Cramlington,
Northumberland, NE23 3QW

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

West of England Thematic Society

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

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

EXHIBITING PAGES

EXHIBITION RESULTS

At the Singapore 2015 World Stamp Exhibition BTA members Tono Putranto got gold with *Journey of an old king from Serengeti* and Chairman Barry Stagg got Vermeil with *Parachuting Through the Ages*. Singapore had 41 thematic entries.

At Autumn Stampex BTA members John Davis got Gold for his 8 frame Open entry *The story of Niuafu 'ou and its Tin Can(Canoe) Mail service* and David Wiskin received a Large Vermeil in the thematic class for *Shackleton*. Congratulations to all of them.

THEMATIC PHILATELY COMMISSION WEBSITE

This had temporarily disappeared from our screens earlier in the year, but is now up and running again at www.fipthematicphilately.org/, kindly sponsored by Mike Rhodes, FIP Thematic Philately Delegate for Australia.

EXHIBITING PICTURE POSTCARDS

FEPA (Federation of European Philatelic Associations) have issued draft Regulations and Guidelines for the introduction of a Picture Postcard Class at international competitions. There are also guidelines for Judging a Picture Postcard competition. This document is on the ABPS website at:

http://www.abps.org.uk/Exhibiting/Downloads/Draft_FEPA_Picture_Postcard_Regulations_and_Guidelines.pdf

LONDON 2020. 02 May 2020 - 09 May 2020.

London 2015 still feels a very recent event, but plans have already started for London 2020. It has a website at <http://www.london2020.co/> As at 2010 and 2015 it will be held at the Business Design Centre, Islington. It will be a full international exhibition with competitive classes in Traditional, Postal History, Thematic, Revenue, Postal Stationery. Aerophilately, Open, Literature and Youth. As with 2010, in order to show as many exhibits as possible exhibits will be swapped on Tuesday 5th May.



FUTURE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

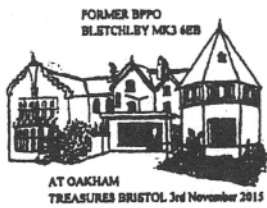
28 May - 04 June 2016	World Stamp Show, New York	http://www.ny2016.org/
August 2016	Bangkok 2016	
21 - 26 October 2016	Philataipei 2016 World Stamp Exhibition, Taipei	http://taipei2016.post.gov.tw/post/taipei2016/en/
24 - 28 May 2017	Finlandia, Tampere	http://finlandia2017.fi/

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



OBITUARY:

FRANCIS E. KIDDLE RDP. Hon.FRPSL

23 July 1942 - 21 October 2015

Francis was a long serving member of the British Thematic Association and was the winner of the BTA Cup at THEMATICA 2001 with “The Goat”. His philatelic interests extended beyond Thematic Philately to include as well Traditional, Postal History, Revenues, Philatelic Literature and Cinderella.

Francis was actively involved in organised philately in the UK and at International level. He had been a Council Member of the Royal Philatelic Society London since 1977 and was its President from 1994-1996. He signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists at Chichester in 1995.

His earliest National involvement was with the British Philatelic Federation (BPF) which was the governing body of British Philately prior to the formation of ABPS in 1994. Francis was a member of the BPF Council and the BPF Executive Committee from 1982, Chairman of both from 1986 to 1990 and BPF Vice-President in 1991. In addition, at various times, he was Chairman of the Awards and Exhibition Committees and a member of the Publications, Accreditation, International and Executive Group & Finance committees.

Francis served on many FIP International Exhibition Juries, including *Philexfrance '89*, London's *Stamp World '90* (Assistant Secretary), *Genova '92*, a World Exhibition of Thematic Philately (Secretary to the Jury). Singapore *World Stamp Exhibition 1995* (a Vice-President). *Pacific 97*, *Italia 98* and Singapore *World Stamp Championship 2004*. At *London 2010* and again at *London 2015 Europhilex*, Francis was President of the Jury.

His many other offices included Honorary Librarian RPSL 1979-1994; Chairman British Philatelic Trust 1996-2005; Chairman FIP Philatelic Literature Commission 2000-2008 and Chairman FIP Revenue Commission 2008-2015. Francis was a committee member of the Cinderella Stamp Club in 1975 and remained involved until his death. At various times he had acted as Auctioneer, Packet Secretary and as Chairman of the Cinderella Stamp Club. His Secretarial duties with National Stamp Exhibitions began in 1978 and continued to the end in many capacities.

Personal Awards included Royal Mail Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001; National Postal Museum at the Smithsonian, Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006; Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Philatelic Society London in 2009 and The Liechtenstein Award in 2012.

Due to his wife Máire's interest in Golf, he encouraged her to form a Golf thematic collection but could not resist adding items to the collection himself. He displayed five frames of Golf at *Spring Stampex 2006*, as part of a larger display by members of the British Thematic Association. In his spare time, Francis kept Goats and inevitably a collection on the theme of Goats was formed. Francis had qualified as a National and International judge in Thematic Philately.

Francis's personality and his enormous knowledge of all aspects of philately, helped by a photographic memory, will be greatly missed. Our sincere condolences go to his wife Máire, his sons John and Alan and their families and also his brother, Charles Kiddle.

BS

JUST4KIDS

By Lise Whittle

(Adult members - please photocopy these pages and pass them on to a youngster you know, and perhaps include some stamps to help them.

When you photocopy this, please enlarge each page to A4 size (enlarge to 141%).

Thank you

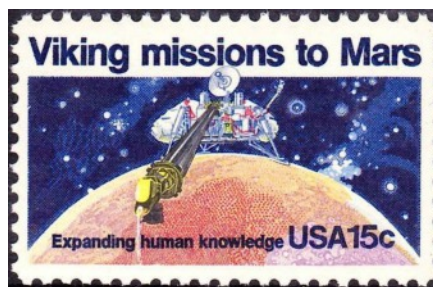
ROCKETING INTO SPACE!

***Space - "the final frontier; to boldly go where no man has been before!" ***
Space is a very popular stamp theme to collect. You will find there are hundreds of space stamps, postmarks and covers available from countries all across the world for you to start your own Space Stamp Collection. There are so many space stamps to choose from, you might find it hard to decide which ones you like best! You might like to collect stamps from our spectacular Solar System. Here is a saying to help you remember the names of the planets in their order closest to the sun;

***My Very Enormous Monster Just
Sucked Up Nine (Planets)***

'My' = Mercury (closest to sun) 'Very' = Venus, 'Enormous' = Earth, 'Monster' = Mars, 'Just' = Jupiter, 'Sucked' = Saturn, 'Up' = Uranus, 'Nine' = Neptune, 'Planets' = Pluto, (we thought Pluto was a planet, but it is now known as a dwarf planet.)

Find a stamp showing each of the planets in the Solar System.



Some stamps show constellations - constellations are groups of stars in the sky forming the shapes of mythological figures, such as these constellations of Leo (the Lion). The stamps are from the Isle of Man and USA.



Your Space Collection will probably include stamps or postmarks showing astronauts and rockets. The rocket stamp is from 'СССР', which country is that?



Perhaps you like Science Fiction stamps about adventures in space



....and Dr Who, or Star Wars stamps. These are all GB stamps.



Write and tell us about YOUR Space Collection! Write to:
 Just4Kids, c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth BH1 4RS.
 For more stamp fun go to the Stamp Active website www.stampactive.co.uk

LIBRARY LISTING

The library has some 3900 articles filed in cartons. Themescene regularly lists brief details of newly added articles.

All articles are listed on computer under topics, eg Sport, War, Medical, and so on, then sub divided into different categories eg Tennis, Football : WW II, Battles : Nurses, Blood and so on.

If you would like to see the articles we have on your topic the Librarian can easily send you a list by email and you can then let him know which ones you would like to see. The Librarian wants to avoid making photocopies but if the number of pages involved are not excessive he will email scans. This also applies to our overseas members. If it is not practical to email lots of scans he is prepared to post our original articles to UK members on the understanding they will be returned without undue delay. When returning the articles they must be accompanied by postage stamps that can be used, to the value he used to send the articles. Cheques are not wanted. These options allow members to see the articles in colour and make their own copies.

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

These procedures make it easy to use the Library and at minimal cost.

If you would like to receive a list of articles on your topic(s), send a stamped sae to the Librarian: Mr. R. Backhouse, 10 Hoe Lane, Ware, Herts, SG12 9NU. Tel: 01920 484974; email: ron@10nis.fsnet.co.uk

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- 4 Floyd, B. Workhorse of the airways Stamp Magazine 6/2014

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- 5 Pendleton, S. Danger in the Antarctic Gibbons Stamp Monthly 2/2014

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- 2 Jaitly, S. Bicycle in Indian Philately ITS Stamp News 9/2013

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Butterflies & Moths on Table
Montain Pt 1 & 2

- 3 Geertsema, H. Beautiful and Threatened (South African) ThemNews 11/2013

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4	Barnes, P.	Say NO to Drugs - YES to Life	MediTheme 11/2013
		Opera	
3	De Klerk, M.	Giuseppe Verdi : National hero through opera	ThemNews 1/2014

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 30th September to Sunday 2nd October 2016

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



COST

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Two people sharing: £220 per person

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Sunday £6.00

All delegates

Sunday lunch Optional extra, payable on the day

TRAVEL

By car: the hotel is easily reached from the A40/A34 to the north, or the M4/A34 to the south. The hotel has free parking.

By train: only a short taxi ride from Oxford Station, but please contact the organisers if you would like to be picked up at the Station.

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 - 'City of Dreaming Spires' - needs no introduction. But if you want some ideas see the web site www.visitoxfordandoxfordshire.com, which also lists places which are a short drive away if you are coming by car.

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 30th September to Sunday 2nd October 2016

Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel

Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS

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

PROGRAMME

Friday

p.m.

18.30

Arrival

Welcome, with Pimms and soft drinks

Members' displays (6 sheets, one minute)

19.30

Dinner; followed by invited display by Paul Leonard *An Introduction to Alice in Wonderland and beyond*

Saturday

09.30

Invited display by Lesley Marley *A Whale's Tale*

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 on a theme, letter A or B (12 sheets)

19.30

Pre-dinner drink

Dinner followed by a light-hearted quiz and raffle

Sunday

09.30

Invited display by Peter Wood *Ireland's Invasion of the World*

Coffee

10.30

Members displays of any theme (12 sheets)

12.45

Lunch (optional, payable on the day)

Themes for members displays are suggestions only, feel free to bring something else

BTA PROGRAMME 2016

- February 17th - 20th **Spring Stampex**
Business Design Centre, Islington
National competitions, all major classes
(No BTA Meeting)
- March 11th - 12th **BTA Table, thematic sales and recruitment drive**
Southern England Stamp Show
Farnborough Leisure Centre
Westmead, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 7LD
[Web: www.southernenglandstampshow.com/](http://www.southernenglandstampshow.com/)
- May 14th **BTA Regional Meeting 2pm - 4pm**
WORPEX (Worcester Philatelic and Postcard Society)
Tudor Grange Academy, Bilford Road, Worcester, WR3 8HN.
Web: <http://worpex.com/worpex-2016/>
- June 11th **Annual General Meeting and guest speaker**
BTA table, thematic sales, and recruitment drive
At: Swinpex, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic College
Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR
- September 17th **Joint Meeting with British Postmark Society. 12.30pm**
Autumn Stampex
Business Design Centre, Islington
National competitions, all major classes
- September 30th -
October 2nd **BTA Residential Weekend**
Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel, Abingdon Road, Oxford,
OX1 4PS
- October 8th **BTA Competitions:**
Fosbery Trophy. 16 sheets. NO RULES
BTA Cup. 32 sheets, judges to National standards.
BTA Regional Meeting (to be confirmed)
At: South of England Stamp Fair
Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL
www.sussexphilately.org.uk/South_of_England_Stamp_Fair.php

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*Jersey Miniature Sheet 2015
46p Grendal (Beowulf Dragon); 56p St. George and the Dragon; 62p Bakunawa
Dragon; 70p Colchian Dragon; 82p Chinese Dragon; 91p Welsh Dragon.*

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Wenceslas Square and statue

Happy Christmas

