

THEMESCENE

December 2017

In this issue we:

*Finish our survey of sleuthing
Fictional detectives: the media
With Steven Cross*



*Branch into notaphily
A stroll to the bank
With David Roseveare*



*Get pastoral
'Capability' Brown
With Wendy Buckle*



As well as catch up on information from BTA meetings and competitions, and all the usual features

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 34, No.4. Whole Number 129

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THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

A philatelic version by Sue Thatcher



The



and the



when they are both full grown



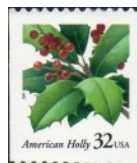
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THEMESCENE

Vol.34, No.4, Whole Number 129

DECEMBER 2017

THEMESCENE

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Association of British
Philatelic Societies
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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

Christmas is coming, when traditionally the TV channels are full of nostalgic repeats. So if your choice is a good murder mystery turn to page 112 for a reminder of screen detectives. If you'd rather look ahead to spring flowers and summer warmth then our article on Capability Brown (page 119) might suggest places to visit. Our other major feature in this issue is on the stamp designer Pierrette Lambert (page 115) whose name was, I confess, new to me. But what a talented and prolific artist!

This year the BTA overhauled our competitions, and what a resounding success they were. Thanks to everyone who took part (page 128), your input was a great advertisement for the Association. We have put scans of some of the entries on our website: <http://www.britishthematic.org.uk/examples-of-exhibits-bta-competitions.htm>

On page 143 is the BTA Programme for 2018. You will see there is going to be a lot happening, starting with a members meeting at Stampex on February 17th. Do try and come along, and bring a few sheets to show. These meetings are always very informal and relaxed. April 14th is a big date, with guest speaker Birthe King, an international judge, talking about the very popular 'Open' category of competition. In October will be our "Fun With Philately" weekend, held every other year. If you've been before you know what to expect: good company, good food and drink, lots of laughter and relaxation - oh yes, and speakers and displays! If you haven't been before we'd love to see you, on your own or with a partner. I can promise you an enjoyable time. Booking form and full details on pages 139 - 141.

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome to people who have joined since the last issue of *Themescene*:

David Currie Belfast

Christian Schunk Obing, Germany


We hope you enjoy the magazine and benefit from membership of the Association.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

With this copy of the magazine comes your renewal letter. As previously announced, this year your Committee has taken the decision for the first time to offer the option of an "electronic-only access to *Themescene*" rate of subscription. It will be £15.00 per year irrespective of where in the world you live. You will not receive a printed copy of *Themescene*, but like all members you will be able to access the full text of the magazine via our website: www.britishthematic.org.uk/themescene-issues.htm

For this you will need a password. If you do not have one go to www.britishthematic.org.uk/users/index.php and click on "Sign up".

We are well aware that many people like to sit down with a "real" magazine to browse through; but equally those living overseas have to pay a subscription reflecting high postage rates, and may prefer to keep costs down by choosing the electronic option.

The choice is yours, just choose your option on the renewal form. Thank you. . 

H VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg

It's November and it's cold. And the rain is beating down on my window. Not the ideal gardening weather but good for philately! Even I don't venture out when it is wet and cold, so the stamp collection gets a bit of long overdue attention!

And this got me thinking about the 2017 stamp 'season' and the many and various events I had the pleasure of attending. And, at this point, I should apologise to those UK members who live North of Warwickshire. I hope to venture further North in 2018! The postcard fair at the National Motorcycle Museum is always a well-attended event with lots of traders and hundreds of postcard enthusiasts trying to spend some money! Swinpex is always a pleasure. No worries about parking and with lots of dealers I can usually find something to buy that I can't afford! The opening of the Postal Museum in London was fun and I hope it continues to flourish. It has lots for everybody and I particularly enjoyed its Mail Rail ride.

I always have mixed feelings about Stampex: it has some great exhibits to see but few people seem to bother looking at them. It has lots of traders but the vast majority do not cater for the Thematic collector. But it is a great place to hunt for those hard-to-find items and to meet friends and fellow enthusiasts. But the highlight of the year for me was Ardingly: lots of traders and much, much more encouraging were lots of entries to the BTA competitions! It was a real pleasure to see so many quality exhibits covering not just the Thematic discipline but Open and Postcard as well.

Next year I hope to be more adventurous. The York fair is building a good reputation so I must go and check it out and it is some time since I've been to Perth so I also hope to get to Scotex in 2018. And I hope to see even more entries to the BTA competitions at Ardingly in 2018, so next year should be even more fun than this year.

And now the rain has eased off a bit but it is still cold and now it is getting dark, so time to check out what I've bought this year. But before I do may I wish you all a very

Merry Christmas and good hunting in the New Year for those illusive and hopefully not too expensive items. 📖



Owen Green won this year's Franceska Rapkin Memorial Bowl, awarded for the best entry in Themescene the previous year. Unfortunately we were unable to present it to him at the AGM so Barry (left) met Owen at his place of work to officially hand it over.

FICTIONAL DETECTIVES: THE ARRIVAL OF THE MEDIA

Steven Cross continues the story of sleuthing

From its earliest days, the mass media played an important role in the popular perception of the detective. The gentler breed - The Saint, The Falcon, Mr Moto - were hugely popular in the Thirties, but their hardboiled descendants came to define the role during the film noir movement from the Forties in classic movies such as *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) and *The Big Sleep* (1946). Later on, films would introduce the "lone wolf" detective, the anti-authority maverick who shot and drove his way through movies such as *Bullitt* (1968), *The French Connection* and *Dirty Harry* (both 1971).

The Pink Panther is a series of comedy films featuring an inept French police detective. The role was originated by Peter Sellers with the films directed Blake Edwards, with theme music composed by Henry Mancini. In the films, the Pink Panther is a large and valuable pink diamond with a flaw at its centre, which is said to resemble a leaping pink panther. The phrase was used for all the subsequent films in the series, even when the jewel did not figure in the plot. It appeared in six of the eleven films.

The stamps issued by Dominica (1996) which also had the pink panther in the background, Guernsey (1996) and Israel (1995) feature Sellers, and he was also on the set of five which celebrated British Films. The Pink Panther was on a number Belgian stamps.

The small screen, too, has helped to shape our understanding of the detective, not only with adaptations of novels but with a slew of made-for-TV versions. In the Seventies, American television produced a detective for everyone. It gave us Columbo, who looks like Marlowe and thinks like Poirot, together with a string of "differently abled" detectives: Longstreet, who is blind; Ironside, who is a wheelchair-user; and Frank Cannon, who simply appears to have eaten all the pies. In the UK, the trend was towards ethnicity and regionalism. So we watched Shoestring, the Bristol-based radio detective; Van Der Valk, the Dutch detective; and David Yip as The Chinese Detective. Guinea-Bissau gave us Columbo in 2011 with several images of the crumple coated LAPD homicide detective played by Peter Falk.

The Number 1 Ladies Detective Agency is a series by Alexander McCall-Smith set in Gaborone, Botswana. In 2008 this country produced a commemorative featuring Mma Precious Ramotswe.

In the UK Inspector Morse is a phenomenon. Working in Oxford with his side-kick Lewis, and written by Colin Dexter, the UK issue of 1995 cleverly has Morse reflected in the wing of the classic red Jaguar that he drives.

Ruth Rendell wrote psychological crime novels, amongst them a series of Inspector Wexford, whose photograph has appeared on first day covers, and the name Rendell magnified under a hand glass postmark.

Police and detectives, lawyers and forensic experts, lowly constables and lofty superintendents of both genders proliferate. Partnerships, the lone individual, the world-weary with every social problem fighting their own demons, have been examined. They have every kind of human frailty, every weakness and flaw. Old favourites return: Poirot and Miss Marple have had many reincarnations, with the Central African Republic celebrating Christie's 125th anniversary. Others are given a new modern twist like Sherlock. Every type of crime has been explored and dark personality exposed.

It is also no surprise that with the rise of Japanese anime cartoons, they would soon be producing a detective. Case Closed, known as Detective Conan is a manga series written and illustrated by Gosho Aoyama. The series has been serialized in Shogakukan's *Weekly Shōnen Sunday* since January 19, 1994, and has been collected into 81 tankōbon volumes. In the first instalment, the story follows Jimmy Kudo, an amateur detective who transformed into a child while investigating the Black Organization.



Scandinavian noir or Scandinavian crime fiction, also called Nordic noir, is a genre comprising crime fiction written in Scandinavia with certain common characteristics, typically in a realistic style with a dark, morally complex mood. The novels are often of the police procedural subgenre, focusing on the monotonous, day-to-day work of police, though not always involving the simultaneous investigation of several crimes. Examples include *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and its

sequels by Stieg Larsson, and Henning Mankell's Kurt Wallander detective series.

Some critics attribute the genre's success to a distinctive and appealing style, “realistic, simple and precise...and stripped of unnecessary words”. Their protagonists are typically detectives worn down by cares and far from simply heroic.

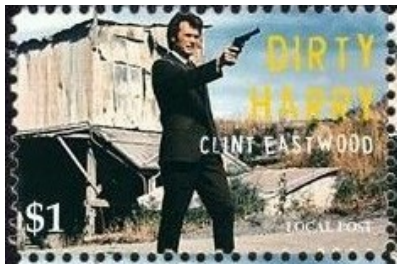
The works also owe something to Scandinavia’s political system where the apparent equality, social justice, and liberalism of the Nordic model is seen to cover up dark secrets and hidden hatreds. Stieg Larsson’s *Millennium* trilogy, for example, deals with misogyny and rape, while Henning Mankell’s *Faceless Killers* focuses on the failures of multiculturalism.

In 2010 Sweden released a miniature sheet of six authors: Mankell, Marklund, Nesser, Larssen, Sjewell and Wahloo. Such authors are now at the leading edge of detective writing. Their stories are eagerly anticipated, their detectives are flawed and emotional. TV adores the characters and people shiver in anticipation of the Danish and Swedish accents.



The appetite for crime appears to have few limits, the demand unquenchable. Crimes become more bizarre, violent and unique as writers search for a different ‘angle’ on the proceedings. Every country and every generation have their new favourites. Producers and TV search willingly for ways to meet this insistence on being entertained. A new hero will emerge at some point and go on to be celebrated in any number of ways, surely one of which will be their representation on philatelic material. 📖

For previous articles by Steven Cross on this theme see *Themescene* June 2014 for the birth of the detective, and June 2016 for the ‘golden age’ of detectives.



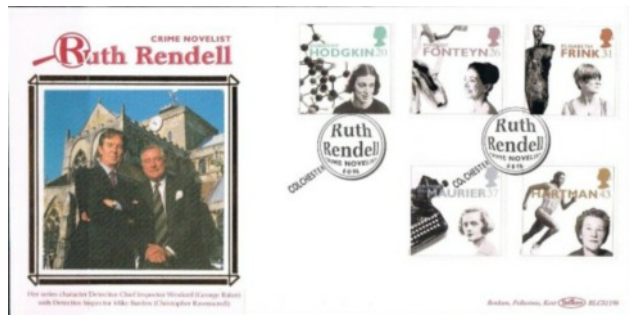
Dirty Harry



Peter Sellers and the Pink Panther



Peter Falk as Columbo



A STROLL TO THE BANK: A MARRIAGE OF PHILATELY AND NOTAPHILY

David Roseveare goes for a walk

The idea for this article came from an invitation to view an exhibition of paintings using a number of mediums, stamps and banknotes at the headquarters of the Bank of France, Paris, in November 2014. It featured the work of Pierrette Lambert, a designer of over 1300 stamps and more than 30 banknotes for France and other countries. Pierrette was born in 1928 at Orches, a small village in the Vienne department of France, her parents both being teachers. The exhibition included a number of personal items, including a childhood sketchbook containing many drawings of flowers, her favourite subject. She was always top for drawing and would decorate the classroom and write short stories for the other pupils. She later attended courses at nearby Chatellerault where her parents worked, and entered the College of Arts at Poitiers. Then came the war and the tragedy of the German Occupation. Her father Arsène, who had served in the army during the First World War, and her brother Jean, a student of mathematics at Poitiers, were members of the Resistance. Sadly they were arrested by the Gestapo in February 1944 and deported to the Death Camps – they never returned. Pierrette was only fifteen years old at the time.

After the initial shock of their deaths her mother enrolled Pierrette for an extensive course at the school of drawing “Ecole de Dessin et d’Arts Appliqués du Commerce et à L’Industrie”, in Paris, where she discovered the art of miniature painting on ivory as well as all the other disciplines of design. In 1957 she presented her first exhibition at the Ror Volmar Gallery in Paris followed by another at Chatellerault. It was at there that her work was noticed by a visitor, Henri Guitard, a director of the Bank of France. She was asked to produce a portfolio of her drawings for scrutiny which were accepted, and thus started a design career of over 40 years for the bank. Her love of stamp design was enhanced by her attendance at the Ecole Estienne in Paris where many of the stamp artists were taught their trade. On completion she was then able to add stamps to her banknote qualification.



Pierrette’s first banknote was issued in 1962, a 50 franc value of France featuring the dramatist Jean Racine. Her first stamp designs appeared in the same year, for Saint Pierre et Miquelon, the subject being flowers. This was followed by the Chateau d’Amboise for France in the following year, this issue being engraved by one of the leading artists Robert Cami. Later she designed two more French notes, the five francs Pasteur in 1966 and the 200 franc Montesquieu in 1980, the latter being engraved by the stamp artists Jacques Jubert and Claude Durrens. The design of a note was mostly undertaken by a single artist but for the engraving of the printing plates two engravers were sometimes employed, one responsible for the front of the note and the other for the reverse side. This was done to deter forgery. Her work for the overseas territories included many African States, Madagascar, the French Antilles and the Comoros Islands.

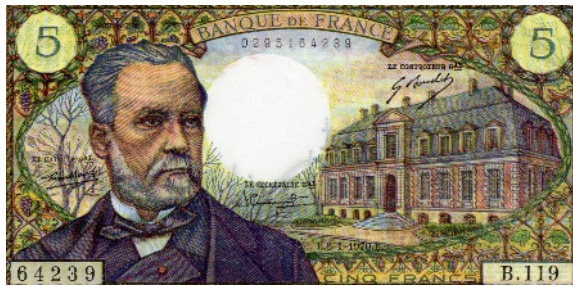
THE STAMPS



THE BANKNOTES



Racine



Pasteur



Montesquieu



Most of her stamp designs were printed by photogravure, her subject matter perfectly suiting the process; a range of very colourful stamps, the process less expensive to produce than the recess (taille-douce) method.

She received many awards for her stamps. They included the Grand-Prix of Philatelic Art on no less than eight occasions as well as the Philatelic Music Circle award for her creations for Monaco: Bach and Handel in 1986 and two years later Mozart and Berlioz. These four stamps were recess printed, the last two being engraved by Pierre Albuissou whose talent was brought to the attention of the authorities by Pierrette.



Also for Monaco she produced many floral designs for the annual Monte Carlo Flower Show, her first set being issued for the 1973 event.

The only banknote designed by Pierrette for the French Pacific Territories appeared in 1985, the 10,000 CFP franc being the common currency of Polynesia, New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna, but she designed many colourful stamps for the group.

The Madagascan banknote issued in 1998 was an example from her final series of six for that country. She did submit trials for the series of Euro notes but was unsuccessful, the contract being awarded to the Austrian Robert Kalina. Her stamp designing career ceased in 1999.

Last year I attended another exhibition of her work at the “Olympe de Gouges” gallery in Paris where I saw a lot more of her work. She is now 89 years old and sadly she lost the sight in one eye in 1994 but this impediment did not detract from the quality of the work. Both exhibitions were flawless, oils and watercolours in bright colours displayed in subdued light. I was aware that a number of French stamp artists, past and present, also created banknotes but I did not realise the sheer number and quality that they produced. Pierrette was the first lady to have her name on her stamps and also on a coin issued in 1976 for the Central African States. 📖



References

Dessinateurs et Graveurs de Timbre-Poste, Musee Postal, Paris 1976.

Dans le Sillage de la Miniature Pierrette Lambert 2004.

Les Quatre Saisons Pierrette Lambert; Galerie Olympe de Gouges 2016.

I have a copy of Pierrette’s first exhibition catalogue at the Ror Volmar Gallery in my collection; it was obtained from the Frick Reference Library in New York but it cannot be reproduced here because of copyright restrictions.

‘CAPABILITY’ BROWN: 300 YEARS OF LANDSCAPE GARDENS

Wendy Buckle enjoys the countryside

In 2016 Royal Mail issued a set of eight stamps on Landscape Gardens, marking the 300th anniversary of the birth of Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown (c.1716 - 1783). This was a man who became successful not only because of his visionary approach to landscape, but also his skills as artist, engineer and businessman.

Born and raised in Northumberland, at the age of sixteen he was apprenticed to the head gardener at Sir William Loraine's kitchen garden at Kirkharle Hall. At the end of his apprenticeship he moved south and gained his first landscape commission: for a new lake in the park at Kiddington Hall, Oxfordshire. In 1741 Brown joined Lord Cobham's gardening staff as undergardener at Stowe, Buckinghamshire, where he worked under William Kent, himself an influential landscape architect. In 1742 he was officially appointed as the Head Gardener, earning £25 a year. He designed the ‘Grecian Valley’ which enabled visitors to walk along a series of snaking paths which opened up views of temples and follies as well as trees, plants and lakes. Brown remained head gardener at Stowe until 1751, but even while still employed there he was allowed to accept freelance commission work. His success led in 1764 to his appointment as King George III's Master Gardener at Hampton Court Palace, succeeding John Greening. In 1767 he bought an estate for himself at Fenstanton in Huntingdonshire from the Earl of Northampton and was appointed



High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire for 1770, although his son Lance carried out most of the duties.

It is estimated that Brown was responsible for planning the landscape of over 250 gardens surrounding country houses and estates in Britain. Although some of them have not survived those that have constitute some of the finest gardens in the UK, including Longleat, Alnwick Castle and Blenheim Palace; and one at least got mega coverage on television as the fictional ‘Downton Abbey’, or more accurately Highclere Castle.

Against a backdrop of great social and political change, Brown capitalised on the aspirations of the wealthy, producing parklands offering privacy, sufficient grounds within which to hunt, and enough space for architectural features and follies that would demonstrate a landowner's power and status. In today's more egalitarian society the many rather than the few can enjoy his creations. 📖

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Reference

McTernan, C. (2016) ‘The very capable Brown’. *National Trust Magazine*.

JOINT MEETING: BTA AND RAILWAY PHILATELIC GROUP

Stampex 16 September 2017

This was the first time the two societies had held a joint meeting, but an interest in railways was clearly demonstrated by several BTA members showing relative material.

Sue Thatcher. BTA

Railways are an important element in her collection on the “Industrial Revolution”, starting with the development of the static steam engine and then steam locomotion, with pioneers such as James Watt, George Stephenson and Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Stamps and covers were shown, plus documents from the Birmingham and Gloucester, the Eastern Counties, the Taff Vale, Vale of Rheidol and Talyllyn Railways.

John Hayward. BTA

From his new collection on the most northerly railway line in the world, the Iron Ore Line, from Kiruna to Narvik, which opened in 1903, John told the stories of the workmen, many of them Irish navvies, who built the line. There were many deaths during its construction, including during a cholera outbreak in 1901. Workmen were employed 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, building on permafrost. While it was built to carry iron ore freight trains, it was also an efficient means of carrying mail, the alternative being by sea.

John Bathard. RPG


With Stampex celebrating the 175th anniversary of Hungary’s first postage stamp, John showed a few pages from his thematic collection on the history of Hungarian railways. His display starts in 1864/5 when the government reconstituted a bankrupt railway as the Magyar Északi Vasut, the Hungarian Northern Railway, continuing its projected construction to Salgótarján and developing collieries and steelworks in the area. In 1869 the government founded the Magyar Király Allamvasutak to operate the nationalised railway.

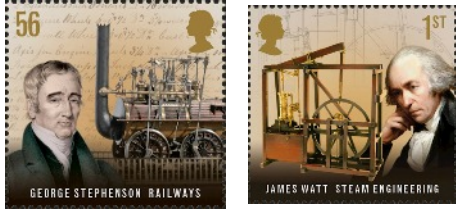
Brian Sole. BTA

“Wish You Were Here: by train to tourist resorts for the sun and sea” is a collection inspired by railway poster stamps issued as promotional items in conjunction with mapping competitions for the *Children’s Newspaper* in 1935 and 1936. The tour took us along the South and South West coasts (with a detour to Canterbury), to the North East and East coasts, and the Isle of Man and Jersey. Luggage labels and slogans were shown as well as stamps.

Lesley Marley. BTA

Lesley’s home town is Havant, on the south coast, and she showed a display on railways of Havant and Hayling Island. The first station at Havant was built in 1847 by the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, but a dispute with the London and South West Railway over access to the tracks resulted in the “Great Battle of Havant”. Despite lurid stories, in

fact the only damage or injury was a torn jacket owned by a railway official. A variety of material was shown, with illustrations of several stations and halts. Perhaps predictably, the line to Hayling Island was closed by the Beeching cuts in 1963. 



Railway pioneers



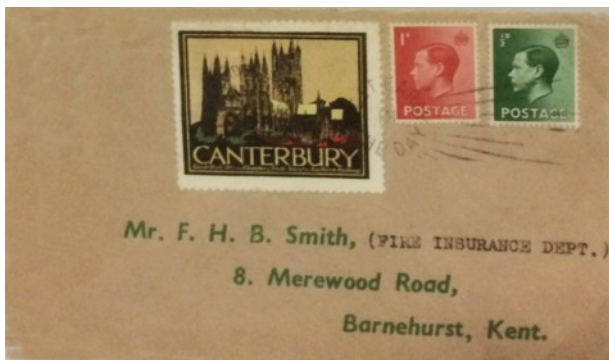
2-4-0 operating on the Tisza district



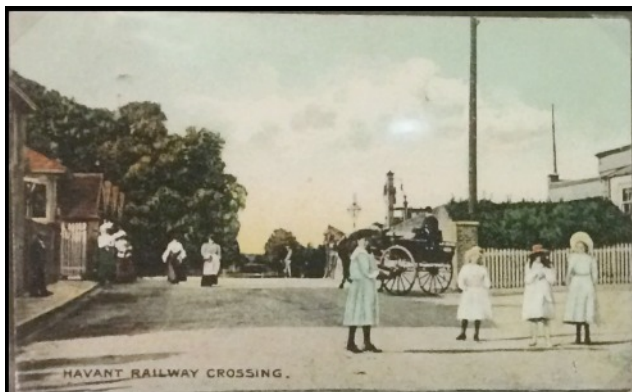
Monument to workers on the Iron Ore Line



MAV 114 Class in Hungary



Canterbury railway poster stamp



Havant Railway Crossing



Lesley displaying

HERE AND THERE

EPHEMERA EXHIBITS AT STAMPEX

The ABPS Exhibitions and International Committee, in association with the Ephemera Society, is inviting exhibits of ephemera to be entered at Spring Stampex, 14th – 17th February 2018.

‘Ephemera’ covers a vast range of printed and written items designed for a specific purpose – from beer mats to greetings cards and from pamphlets to train tickets. It provides fascinating insights into cultural trends over the centuries and generates much interest among collectors.

Exhibitors of ephemera can enter competitively so that their exhibits will be judged according to the competition rules, or they can enter non-competitively. This will be an experiment and the results will be evaluated afterwards so that the Committee can draw on the experience for planning future events.

For further information and an application form please go to the ABPS website www.abps.org.uk and click on “Exhibiting” “Spring Stampex 2018”.

QUERY CORNER

We have had an enquiry to the BTA website about the Hewison cartoon on the back of this GB booklet. Mr Rainer Schindwolf would like to know “What’s the story behind this cartoon?”.

I know the cartoonist is William “Bill” Hewison, and I believe the character is Don Quixote, but why the armadillo? If you can help, please email him at rainer@schindwolf.de

Thank you.



JUST FOR KIDS: QUIZ ANSWERS

See page 134

1. Moon jellyfish / Common starfish / Sea anemone / Bass / Thornback ray / Octopus / Mussel / Grey seal / Shore crab / Common sun star (10 points)
2. Turtle, crab, dolphin, seahorse (4 points)

(You get 1 point for each correct answer of the following:)

3. Africa. 4. French. 5. Shells, 6. Eight. 7. Three. 8. Sea otters.

POSTCARD JOTTINGS

HISTORY OF THE POSTCARD

The Royal Mail website has a number of features on it of interest to pictorial collectors. A recent addition is a feature on the history of postcards. Beginning with the introduction of the halfpenny rate card in 1870 it illustrates seventeen pre-World War II cards with a very informative accompanying text.

<http://gallery.royalmailgroup.com/historyofpostcards>

Other articles on the site include *350 Years of Mail Order* (who knew the first recorded mail order catalogue was in 1667!) and *Father's Day*: nine historic Father's Day cards.

J. SALMON LTD TO CEASE PRODUCTION

J Salmon, Britain's oldest postcard publisher, is to stop production at the end of this year, with its remaining stock being sold off during 2018. In 1880 Joseph Salmon, a London bookseller, acquired a stationer's shop and printing business in Sevenoaks. He continued with this business until 1890 when he published a collection of twelve black and white scenes of the town. In 1911 Joseph's son (also called Joseph) commissioned the artist A. R. Quinton to produce first a calendar, and then postcards, for the firm. In all, he produced 2,300 scenes of British life for them up until his death in 1934. They are instantly recognisable with their distinctive softly coloured, highly detailed watercolours. Salmon also commissioned the artist Reg Maurice (who often worked under the pseudonym Vera Paterson), to produce comic cards. He was one of a number of artists who provided comic cards during and after World War I.

Salmon have had to respond to today's market, where the number of postcards sold each year in the UK has slumped from around twenty million 25 years ago to about five million today.

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EXHIBITING PAGE: AUTUMN STAMPEX COMPETITIONS

The Pictorial Classes featured eight Open and four Thematic entries, with BTA members doing particularly well.

Congratulations to BTA members:

OPEN PHILATELY

John Davis	<p>The Story of Niuafu'ou and its Tin Can (Canoe) mail service The story of the origins of Niuafu'ou, its geographical location, history and discovery; plus the development and commemoration of its Tin Can (Canoe) Mail Service from its inception in 1882 until its demise in 1983.</p>	128 sheets	Large Gold
Peter Wood	<p>The Road to Independence: Ireland from Act of Union to Irish Free State The Easter Rising of 1916 and War of Independence which followed reflect the failure of Britain to grant a measure of Home Rule to Ireland. The background of nineteenth century Ireland under the Union is shown including significant personalities.</p>	128 sheets	Large Gold

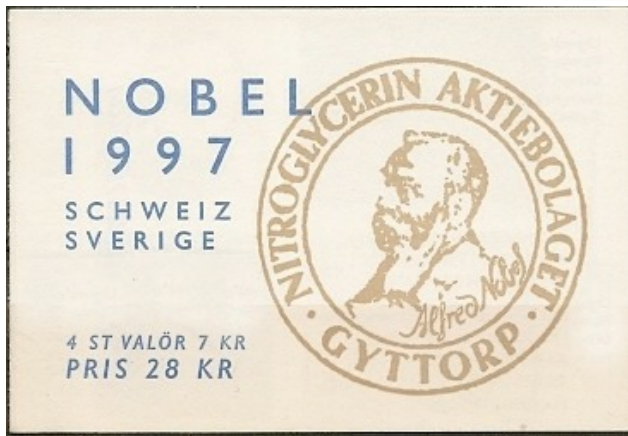
THEMATIC PHILATELY

Grace Davies	<p>The Dove and Oliver Branch: symbols of hope and peace There are many peace symbols, but the best known are the dove and olive branch. The exhibit shows how they came to be symbols which have been adopted worldwide. The particular influences in this were the story of Noah from the Bible, and from the artist Picasso.</p>	32 sheets	Gold
Peter Weir	<p>The Wounded Soldier in the Great War A study of military medicine following the progress and care of the wounded during World War I, from the Front 'down the line' by a combination of people and transport until they reached a location where treatment for their injuries could take place.</p>	16 sheets	Vermeil

BTA COMPETITIONS page 128. THEMATIC CLASS



“Other” side of the stamp:
Latvia banknote 1920



Alfred Nobel



Every kind
of story



Anti-smoking
campaign

PICTURE POSTCARD CLASS



People on Anglo-Egyptian Sudan



Franco-British Exhibition



Failed Expedition



The Lincoln Imp

BTA COMPETITIONS 2017

Your Committee decided to make some changes to our competitions this year to better reflect the current areas of interest of the BTA. We also revamped the rules to make every competition a 16 page entry. Having rethought the whole thing, we were delighted when we received twelve entries overall, far more than for many years. The competitions were on show at the South of England Stamp Fair on 14th October, where they were judged by our Chairman Barry Stagg. Our thanks are due to the organisers and volunteers of the Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies who as always made us most welcome and could not have been more helpful over the mounting and dismounting of the displays. It was pleasing that the entries attracted a lot of interest and positive comments, a real advertisement for pictorial collecting.

THEMATIC CLASS FOR THE BTA CUP

Wayne Cox	The 'other' side of the stamp	Vermeil 77 points
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The vast majority of stamps have nothing on the reverse apart from gum (except perhaps hinge adhesion!). This exhibit however looks at what some countries have done to utilise the back. It covers customer information, postal authority use, the printing process, security, and times of crisis.

Steven Cross	Every kind of story: the plays and history of William Shakespeare	Large silver 70 points
--------------	---	---------------------------

William Shakespeare first came to prominence in 1590 as part of a leading actor company, when he began his ten histories, ten tragedies and seventeen comedies. The display presents the plays and sonnets in chronological order, identifying the significant events that featured in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods and influenced his life.

Grace Davies	Alfred Nobel and his legacy	Large vermeil 82 points
--------------	-----------------------------	----------------------------

Alfred Nobel (1833 - 1896) was a Swedish scientist, businessman and inventor, who left a large fortune for the establishment of five prizes to be distributed annually for the benefit of mankind. This display covers Nobel's life story, travels and death; and looks at the early Nobel prizes.

Kenneth Taylor	The anti-smoking campaign	Large silver 72 points
----------------	---------------------------	---------------------------

In 1603 one of the first acts of King James I of England was to raise the import duty on tobacco from 2d per pound to 6 shillings ten pence per pound. The following year he published a pamphlet *Counterblaste to Tobacco*. Starting with King, the very first anti-smoking campaigner, the exhibit shows how over the years the campaign has grown.

OPEN CLASS FOR THE JOHN FOSBERY TROPHY

Wendy Buckle The firm of John Dickinson, papermaker Large vermeil
83 points

John Dickinson bought his first paper mill in 1809 and by 1829 owned five mills. His particular relevance to the stamp collector is his invention of silk-thread paper, used for the Mulreadys and other early postal stationery. The display covers this plus later Dickinson stationery including Basildon Bond.

John Davis Venice: a voyage through the Grand Canal and Silver
into St. Mark's Basin 65 points

The voyage takes us from Marco Polo Airport on the Venetian mainland to the Piazzale Roma; on to the Rialto and Salute; S. Mark's Square; the Bridge of Sighs; and on to the Arsenale. Important buildings are featured and the display ends with a warning of threats to Venice: the Mafia and the threat of flooding.

Jim Gray The game of golf Large silver
70 points

As early as the fifteenth century the Scots played a game resembling modern golf. By 1457 it had become so popular that the Scottish Parliament banned the game because they felt it was interfering with archery practice needed for military defence. The display gives a brief history of the development of golf, covering equipment, associations, competitions and the popularity of the sport.

David Sumpter British trees in danger Silver bronze
61 points

Several British trees, or trees that are now considered native to Britain, are in danger due to an upsurge in diseases and pests. One theory is that due to climate change and increased all-round annual temperatures these diseases and pests can easily survive our winters and infect our trees much earlier in their growth. The display features those species most at risk: ash, horse chestnut, sweet chestnut, elm, juniper, larch, beech, pines, plane and lime (linden).



PICTURE POSTCARD COMPETITION FOR THE BRIAN SOLE TROPHY

F. B. Coates The Franco-British Exhibition 1908 Large silver
73 points

This very colourful display showed some of the highlights of the Exhibition, from the Main Entrance, the Machinery Hall, the Mountain Scenic Railway, the Bandstand and the “Flip-Flap” fairground ride. Pavilions featured included the Franco-British, Ceylonese, Irish, and Indian Palace.

Stephen Dixon The people of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan Large vermeil
83 points

The display features some of the people of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan Condominium (1898 - 1956), their lives, activities, occupations and place of abode. Many of the scenes were taken by local photographers, printed in either Europe or Cairo, with some photographically produced in Sudan.

Jim Etherington A failed expedition: the BEF in France Large vermeil
1939 - 1940 84 points

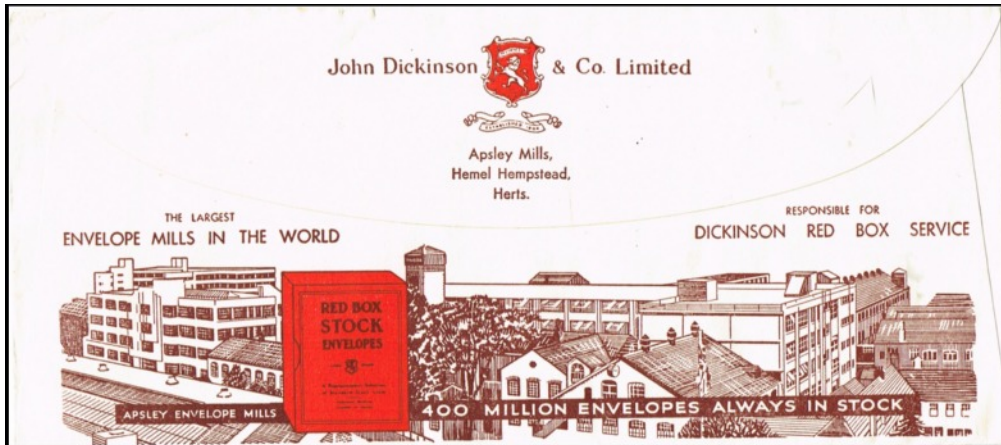
Troops from the British Expeditionary Force arrived in France in 1939, and moved to the French-Belgian border. Aspects of this early period of the war were shown, including a visit of King George VI, and the arrival of the Advanced Air Striking Force. Things got serious with the advance of German forces through the Benelux countries, ending in the evacuation of BEF troops at Dunkirk.

David Sumpter Lincoln: an ancient Cathedral City Large silver
71 points

Many aspects of Lincoln’s history were shown by old postcards. Naturally the display began with the Cathedral, showing both the exterior and interior and some of its early nineteenth century art. Other major buildings included the Castle, the Abbey and the City gates. Agriculture and industry were covered, including the City’s markets and fairs; and streets and waterways also featured.



OPEN CLASS



John Dickinson: papermaker



Venice



British trees in danger



Game of golf

TC NEWS no. 28

Titbits of interest

TC News is an occasional publication by the FIP Thematic Philately Commission. As well as articles specifically about the Commission the magazine always features some articles of general interest. A digest of these is given here. The full text plus can be found at www.fipthematicphilately.org/

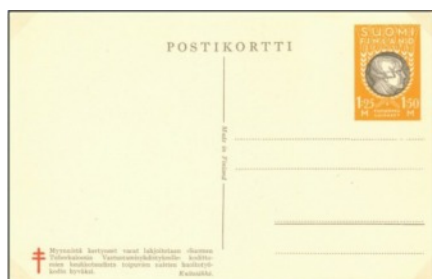
THE GOLDEN EAR SEMI-POSTAL STATIONERY CARDS OF FINLAND

By Jari Majander

The Golden Ear stationery cards are possibly unique among the stationery issues of Finland. They are semi-postal, the proceeds from the sales of the stationery going to a charity that supported recovery of patients suffering from tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis was a scourge of the early twentieth century in Finland, killing about half of all those infected. From 1928 Aili Sarkkila, who herself had recovered from tuberculosis, had been assisting others suffering from lung diseases, such as pneumothorax. She founded a charity society in Orivesi, in the province of Western Finland, and started making decorations for charity sales. The most famous ornament - the gold-plated ear of wheat - became a symbol of this fund-raising activity. Rehabilitation centres for women recovering from the disease were known as the Golden Ear Homes.

In 1935 the Finnish Government authorized the raising of funds through the use of postal stationery. The publisher of the stationery was responsible for all manufacturing costs. The postal fees of the stationery had to be credited to the Finnish Post and profit on sales would be given to the Golden Ear Society.



The printed stamp on the card featured the head of Ellen Svinhufvud, patron of the fund-raising movement, and wife of the third President of Finland. Both stationery cards and envelopes were authorised, intended as postal items for both domestic and international use. The cards eventually had as high as 1.50 Mk surcharge for the charity. They were printed by the Bank of Finland, in the two domestic languages of Finland: Finnish and Swedish.

All parts of the Golden Ear stationery cards can be used to develop a theme in a thematic exhibit. Obviously they can feature in a collection on tuberculosis. The Svinhufvud family were much involved in Finnish politics, so the stationery is suitable for telling the history of Finland in the early 20th century. The illustrations on the back feature Finnish national motifs extolling nature, rural scenery and country life, and feature quotes from the *Kalevala*, Finland's great work of epic poetry.

The stationery ceased being valid for postage on 15 June 1940, when postage rates were raised. They are still easy to find today, cheaper mint than used. Although privately printed, because they were authorised by the Finnish Post, who collected the postage rate part of the charge, they will be acceptable within thematic exhibiting rules.




MY STRATEGY FOR THEMATIC EXHIBITING

By Yukio Onuma

In 2004 the author obtained a Gold Medal for his three frame exhibit *L. v. Beethoven - His life in a historical Context* at his national championship. Nine years later, at Brasiliana 2013, he received a Large Gold for his eight-frame exhibit on the same subject. This article outlines his approach to improving his exhibit, under the headings Strategy, Information Gathering, Analyses of Strengths and Weaknesses and Tactics. The article demonstrates what any exhibitor already knows: it requires a lot of hard work and there are no easy answers. But it also shows what can be achieved if you are prepared to think, analyse, research and hunt for material (and, to be honest, to spend serious money). Do all of this and you can transform your exhibit. [Tip of the day - really listen to the judges but don't argue with them, it isn't worth it]. The article is packed with detailed advice, and for serious exhibitors is well worth reading. For the rest of us you can enjoy the exhibit at http://beethoven-philately.com/index_E.html.

THE MODERN SO-CALLED SPANISH "ARTISTS PROOFS"

By Paco Piniella

These are not proofs in the correct sense of the term since they were printed after the design and printing preparation had been completed, and were sold purely for profit. They can be equated with the French Epreuve de Luxe sheets. No-one is saying you can't collect them, indeed they are often very attractive, but don't include them in competitions. 

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Just4Kids by Lise Whittle

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

Under The Sea!

Let's go for a swim under the sea!

Is there an Aquarium near to where you live, such as 'Sea Life'? Sea Life Aquariums are fantastic family attractions with enormous tanks full of stunning marine fish and creatures and their habitats. Maybe an adult in your family could take you to visit one. Sometimes you can walk through a glass tunnel with the fish swimming above you, to really feel you're 'under the sea'!

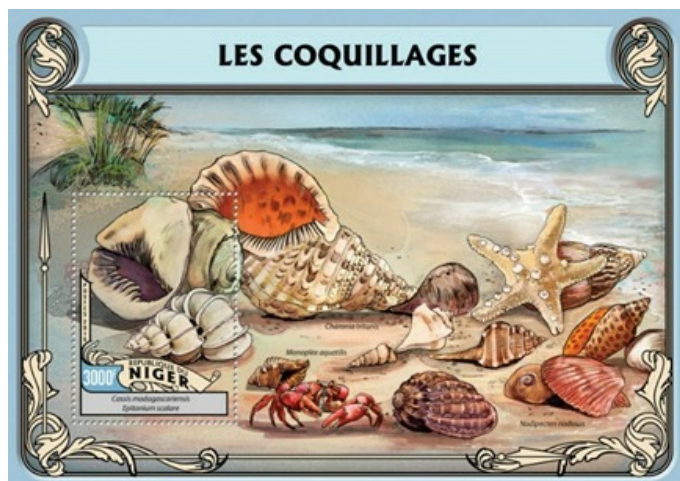


Have a go at this quiz about sea creatures.

GB Sealife of the British Coast stamps, 2007.

1. These creatures all live under the sea. How many can you name? (Look closely at the stamp and it tells you what each creature's name is.)





3. Here is a miniature stamp sheet from Niger. Where is Niger? _____
4. What is the main language spoken in Niger? _____
5. What do you think 'Les Coquillages' means? _____



6. How many legs does this octopus have?

7. How many hearts does an octopus have?

8. What sea mammal is shown on this stamp from Canada?

Here's a fact about them - did you know that to stop them drifting apart when they snooze in the water, they often sleep holding paws! How cute is that? And if you are thinking that maybe one of them has taken a bite out of the left hand side of this stamp, you're wrong! Actually it is half of a maple tree leaf which is the national symbol of Canada.



ANSWERS ON PAGE 123

Write and tell us about your favourite sealife stamps! Write to:
Just4Kids c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth BH1 4RS
 Find out more about stamp collecting at www.stampactive.co.uk



MAIL RAIL AND THE POSTAL MUSEUM

Wendy Buckle goes underground

Britain's new Postal Museum has not received an overwhelming vote of confidence from the philatelic press, so my expectations were not that high when I visited it a few weeks ago. To say I was pleasantly surprised is an understatement; I absolutely loved it. The jewel in the crown of course is Mail Rail, a ride through the 6.5 miles of old railway tunnels between Paddington Head District Sorting Office and Eastern Head District Sorting Office at Whitechapel, which between 1927 and 2003 were used to distribute mail across London. There were originally eight stations, the largest being at Mount Pleasant, where the Museum is based.

I would not recommend this to claustrophobics: it's a miniature train (2ft narrow gauge)



in a narrow tunnel, but it's great fun. The train stops at various stations to allow high quality audio visual projections telling the story of the Post Office Railway from its early days. Some commentary is provided with infectious enthusiasm by retired post office workers, who clearly loved their jobs. Everything is very carefully thought out and so packed with interest it feels a lot longer

than the twenty minutes it actually takes.

Leaving the train you enter the engineering depot, now laid out as a hands-on museum. You can practice managing the trains, sorting letters in a TPO (be careful, the ground moves like a moving train) or racing against someone else using pneumatic power (hard work). Yes, I tried everything. I'm not a train enthusiast, nor are the friends I went with, but we all had a great time, after which we walked a few yards up the road to the Museum. Of course it is fronted by a cafe and shop, but you can hardly blame them for attracting income. The Museum itself is a delight. It tells the story of the delivery of the mail up to the present. Of course it shows stamps and covers, but much more eye-catchingly it features posters, uniforms (and dressing-up boxes), pillar boxes, mail coaches and mail vans, and is filled throughout with things to do including making a selfie of your crowned self on one of a choice of stamps. The visit finishes with an area for temporary exhibitions, which currently features *Writing Home - Letters as a Lifeline*, a very moving display of correspondence from soldiers, exiles, refugees and others many miles from home.

No, the Museum is not aimed at the serious philatelist or postal historian. It is aimed at the general public, and in that it succeeds magnificently. The day I was there it was well attended by adults and children. I suspect I was the only stamp collector there, but *everyone* seemed to be having a great time. And if you are a serious collector wishing to do research then go upstairs to the Discovery Room where you will have access to the library and archives.

We collectors all grapple with falling membership of stamp clubs and complain that the hobby will die; well this is the best possible way to combat lack of interest. 📖

HANDSTAMP SPECIAL

*Handstamps reprinted on these pages first appeared in the "British Postmark Bulletin"
Published by Royal Mail 185 Farringdon Road, London, EC1A 1AA*

*Please note that the Postmark Bulletin is now available free to all customers. To request
a copy please write to
Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9PB*



DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES

BTA MEETING AT STAMPEX

SATURDAY 17th FEBRUARY at 10.00

Business Design Centre, Islington

Guest display: Sue Thatcher

Dinosaurs, Dynasties and Dark Ages

Plus: please bring along sheets from your own collection on any aspect of British history

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 5th to Sunday 7th October 2018

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, coffees and biscuits or pastries between the sessions.

Two people sharing: £230 per person

Single room supplement £50

There are also a number of other options, including an extra night on the Thursday or Sunday, a day (or half day) delegate rate, and options for meals. Please see the booking page for full choices.

TRAVEL

By car: the hotel is easily reached from the A40/A34 to the north, or the M4/A34 to the south. 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 only a short stroll along the Thames tow-path.

Oxford - 'City of Dreaming Spires' - needs no introduction. But if you want some ideas see the web site www.oxfordcityguide.com. If you are coming by car there are many places which are a short drive away, see www.experienceoxfordshire.org/.

BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 5th to Sunday 7th October 2018

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 Jean Alexander
Stamp Advisory Committee Christmas Lunch Menus

Saturday

09.30 Invited display by John Davies *A Jubilee Reminiscence:
the 1890 Penny Postage Jubilee*
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.

During the lunch period there will be a standing display (not a talk) of Jim Etherington's award-winning *1940: a dangerous year for Britain*

Saturday afternoon *Your choice:*
Thematic dealer David Griffiths "Thames Themes" will be in attendance.
or

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

16.00 Members display on a theme, letter C or D (12 sheets)
19.30 Pre-dinner drink
Dinner followed by a light-hearted quiz and raffle
(donations not required)

Sunday

09.30 Invited display by Barry Stagg *Aspects of postcard
collecting*
Coffee
11.00 Members displays of any theme (12 sheets)
12.45 Lunch (optional)

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



BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

BOOKING FORM

I wish to book:

- Rooms based on two people sharing £230.00 per head
- Single room supplement £50.00 per head
- Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Thursday £99.00 per head;
[plus single room supplement £25]
- Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Sunday £88.00 per head;
[plus single room supplement £25]

Or:

- Day delegate Saturday £15.00 per head
- Evening meal Saturday £37.00 per head (inc. drinks)
- Day delegate Sunday £7.50 per head
- Sunday lunch £14.95 [preorder but pay on the day]

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.....

Collecting interests (a list of attendees' interests will be available at the Weekend)

.....

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

GROUP MEMBERS

Alba Stamp Group

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

Astro Space Stamp Society

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

Web: www.astrospacestampsociety.com

Bicycle Stamp Club

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

Email: brian.sole@btinternet.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. Email: brianasquith@talktalk.net

Glasgow Thematic Society

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

Guild of St. Gabriel

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

Masonic Philatelic Club

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

Email: masonicphilatelicclub@yahoo.co.uk

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

Scout and Guide Stamp Club

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

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

Ship Stamp Society

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

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

West of England Thematic Society

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

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

BTA PROGRAMME 2018

- February 17th **BTA Meeting 10.00 to 12.00**
Guest speaker Sue Thatcher *Dinosaurs, Dynasties and Dark Ages*
Followed by members' displays of 12 sheets on any aspect of British History
At Stampex
Business Design Centre, Islington, London, N1 0QH
- April 14th **Aspects of Pictorial Collecting 10.00 to 15.00**
Morning Guest speaker Birthe King
Afternoon Members 12 sheet displays of 'Open' collections
At Royal Philatelic Society London
41 Devonshire Place, London, W1G 6IY
A small donation towards expenses will be requested on the day.
Please make your own arrangements for lunch. Bring sandwiches or choose from local pubs and restaurants.
- April 21st **BTA Joint Meeting with Glasgow Thematic Society 10.30 to 12.00**
At Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies Congress, Hay Room, Dewars Centre, Glover St, Perth PH2 0TH
- June 9th **Annual General Meeting 14.30**
Guest speaker: Grace Davies *Alfred Nobel and his legacy*
At Swinpex, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic College
Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR
<https://sites.google.com/site/swindonphilatelicsociety/swinpex>
- October 5th to 7th **BTA Weekend**
At Oxford Spires Hotel
See booking form on page 139 for full details
- October 13th **BTA Competitions**
At South of England Stamp Fair
Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL
www.sussexphilately.org.uk/South_of_England_Stamp_Fair.php
Application forms will be published in March Themescene

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Grace Davies, BTA Cup for Thematics



Wendy Buckle, John Fosbery Trophy for Open



Jim Etherington, Brian Sole Cup for Postcards



Steven Cross, BTA Displays Organiser, with all the trophies

The Royal Philatelic Society London (RPSL) will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2019.
For this occasion an international exhibition will be held in Stockholm.
H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden has graciously agreed to be the Patron.



STOCKHOLMIA 2019

29 MAY - 2 JUNE

THE INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY LONDON

The exhibition will comprise philatelic dealers and auction houses from all over the world.
The exhibition will have an extensive philatelic and social program.
Only Fellows and Members of the RPSL will be allowed to exhibit.
The competitive classes will be judged by an international jury appointed by the Council of The RPSL.



STOCKHOLMIA 2019

will be organised at
"Waterfront Congress Centre",
Nils Ericsons Plan 4.
It is Sweden's newest and most
versatile venue for large-scale
meetings and events.



For more information: visit the website stockholmia2019.se or contact Jonas Hällström: jonas@stockholmia2019.se