

# THEMESCENE

June 2020

*In this issue we:*

*Go into the history of an Oxford beauty*

**Connections: Nuneham Park House**

*With Anne Stammers*

*Get in a tangle with special issues*

**Orchid Conferences**

*With Mark Humfrey*

*Enjoy some tasty treats*

**Malay Festive Foods**

*With Barry Floyd*

*Look at how things are commemorated*

**UK special commemorative covers.**

**A Philatelic perspective on COVID-19**

*And analyse the themes we all collect*



**BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION**

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# BTA NEWS

## THE AMERICAN TOPICAL ASSOCIATION REVIEWS *THEMESCENE*

The BTA is affiliated to the ATA as a Chapter. Its magazine *Topical Time* carries a regular review of Chapter publications. The March/April edition features December *Themescene*. Introducing a detailed overview of every article it says “Entertaining read! There are articles for both beginners and experts and I love it!”. The May/June edition, featuring March *Themescene*, says “This is always a delightful read for me.”. So thank you to all the contributors - your work is clearly appreciated.

## LONDON 2020

London 2020 has been postponed until 19 - 26 February 2022. Exhibitors have been informed that their entries will be automatically accepted for the event on the new dates. The only exceptions to this are the Youth Class (which is affected by age restrictions) and the Literature Class. The BTA has an interest in the latter! We have entered *Themescene* in the Literature Class, and submitted copies of each issue of 2019. Unlike the other classes copies of the literature had to be with the organisers by March, so in effect they are ready for judging. The current arrangements are that the jury will convene in London immediately before Autumn Stampex this year. Stampex organisers have offered to provide a reading room as part of the exhibition and the results will be announced during the show. Should the present restrictions on travel still be in place on these dates then there is a back-up plan to defer the exhibition until December 2020. This will be held at the headquarters of the Royal Philatelic Society London at Abchurch Lane, London.

## HELP FOR RESEARCHERS

The ‘Resources’ section of the BTA website has been widened recently to include help for those wishing to undertake some research (and with no end to lockdown in sight (at least for society meetings) when better than the present to do a bit of investigation).



Check out the ‘Research and Further Information’ tab for help on how to undertake research, major philatelic libraries, a few full text resources and links to relevant websites.

🔄 This does not pretend to be comprehensive. Please email [Wendy Buckle](mailto:Wendy.Buckle@btasociety.org) to suggest other pages which could be added.

# THEMESCENE

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JUNE 2020

## THEMESCENE

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### Editor:

Wendy Buckle  
87 Victoria Road  
Bournemouth, BH1 4RS

### Advertising Manager:

Mike Blackman  
45 Kenwood Drive  
Beckenham, Kent, BR3 6QY

### Printer and Distributor:

Printing for Pleasure  
Elder House, The Street,  
Chattisham, Ipswich  
Suffolk IP8 3QE

### Website:

[www.britishthematic.org.uk](http://www.britishthematic.org.uk)

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# EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

As Barry has discussed on the next page, so much of our hobby has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it will be some time before we can get a full picture of the damage done. So many events have had to be cancelled, but at least a few philatelic souvenirs planned long before the outbreak did manage to get produced (page 40). And it has turned many of us into tech experts! Details of available presentations can be found in the Chairman's Page and our regular column on exhibiting (page 57). Three months ago I had never heard of Zoom, now it's the only thing in my diary. Inevitably the pandemic has a philatelic side to it, which will undoubtedly grow, but on page 54 you will find a round-up of items found to date (mid-May as I write this).

One effect of the wholesale cancellation of meetings (including our AGM, new date not yet set) is a need on my part to find extra copy for *Themescene*, as there are no meetings to report on. Can you help? I'm extremely grateful to those who have written articles, but I need more! There you are at home, with unexpected time on your hands, how about putting something together? I don't mind how long or short, I don't mind how many or few the illustrations, but I really, really could do with them. Many of you collect subjects rarely if ever covered in this magazine - why not publicise your interest? This seems particularly pertinent since a review of our members' interests (page 62) shows aspects of science being rated the most popular, yet they are the subjects less often written about in these pages. At the very least, if you have written-up pages with philatelic items and blocks of text just send me a few scans: I can separate text and stamp etc and turn it into an article. If you would like to know more please [email me](#). Thank you!

We like to acknowledge the work put into articles by our contributors, and each year we award the Francesca Rapkin Memorial Bowl to the person who in the opinion of the Committee has written the best article in *Themescene* the previous year. This year the award goes to Jeff Dugdale for his article "Inspired by ..." published in December 2019. Voting was close with three articles getting joint second place: Barry Floyd *250th anniversary of first voyage of Captain Cook*, Chris Wheeler *Life, work and influence of the artist Gustav Klimt* and Wendy Buckle *Do you like Kipling?*

If you have not yet paid your BTA subscription for 2020 you will find a reminder slip with this issue. Understandably the post is a little erratic at present, but if you are able to pay, ideally by PayPal or bank transfer if possible as outlined on the renewal slip, we would be most grateful.

As I write this we are being told that the final phase of release from lockdown will probably come into force in July. I really hope this means Autumn Stampex will go ahead; the latest information we have on it is on page 58.

*Continued on next page*

# CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

Barry Stagg

**T**hey say you should be careful what you wish for. In my last Chairman's article I was expressing a view that I did not have much time to work on my collection as the winter had been so mild and that I was hoping for worse weather so that I could devote more time to the stamps and less to the garden. That worked out well! The spring weather is exceptionally mild and, far more importantly, we have COVID-19 to contend with! I'm allowed to walk the dog in the morning and to spend an hour on my allotment, otherwise I'm at home along with millions of other people. And I've still not started updating my collection!

One of the hats I wear is being the membership secretary for the ABPS. The last few weeks have been a depressing time as a number of clubs have reported losing treasurers or secretaries to COVID-19. The absence of stamp and postcard fairs and shows due to COVID-19 is bound to have an impact on most, if not all, dealers and I fear many will not financially survive. The main, if not only, monthly postcard magazine in the UK, *Picture Postcard Monthly*, has already closed as they can't take the financial loss. A big loss to postcard collectors and dealers alike.

I try to remain positive for the philatelic community but it is getting harder to do so. The UK may be better off than the vast majority of the world but philately is an international hobby with collectors and dealers all over the world. As I write this Stampex in the autumn is still on and the BTA is still planning for it to go ahead. Don't forget that **the 20<sup>th</sup> July is the final date for applications to enter Stampex** this year.


One positive thing that has come out of this enforced time at home is that a number of philatelists have taken to producing [YouTube](#) videos covering some aspect of philately. Graham Winters, the chairman of the ABPS, has produced a few (try searching for "Graham Winters ABPS Youtube"). He admits they are far from professional but you might glean some useful information. There are dozens, if not hundreds, of other YouTube videos on philately. Have a look. You might find something that interests you.

I hope that by the time that you read this a way forward for getting out of the lockdown is in sight and that Stampex is still going ahead. I do hope so. So I shall end on a positive note by saying that I am looking forward to seeing you and lots of Thematic, Postcard or Open Philately exhibits at Stampex in a few months' time.

Keep safe. 

## **Editorial** *Continued from previous page*

Looking further ahead, the details and booking form for our next Residential Weekend are on pages 69-71. It's not until March 2021; if you want to book, the only payment at this stage is a £25 deposit, which is refundable. You have nothing to lose - why not register your interest and give yourself something to look forward to.

Finally: pub quizzes have taken on an important role in the social life of communities these days (though without the pub, obviously). Why not try your hand at the one in this issue? It may be on the Just4Kids page (66) but I for one couldn't answer many of the questions without looking at the stamp clues. Good luck! 

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

## **HOW I STARTED: AN UNFORTUNATE ERROR**

From Keith Lloyd *by email*

On page 22 of John Hayward's article in March *Themescene* he illustrates one of China's "unit" stamps (or NVI stamps as such stamps are now generally called in the UK) and says that it is "overprinted for Hunan". This is not correct. The two characters in the right hand column of the overprint read xinan literally meaning "West South", but in English we would say South West. The Gibbons catalogue lists the stamp on the last page of the "COMMUNIST CHINA / Issues from 1937" section. The stamp is SW58 and is said to be overprinted at Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province, a long way from Hunan Province. The basic stamp was also overprinted in Xi'an for use in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia border area (SG NW47) but as far as I have spotted it was not overprinted for use in Hunan.

John Hayward also illustrates a Chinese postal stationery postcard (inside the back cover) issued in 2009 for the Year of the Ox. I was initially puzzled by this as it appears to have the indicium (depicting an ox) in the top left of the picture side of the card whereas one would expect it to be near the top right of the address side. I now suspect that a picture of the indicium has been superimposed on the picture of the motorcycle. Is this correct?

*Reply from John Hayward:*

China Unit Issue - You are quite right and thank you for spotting the error. The illustration of the overprinted Unit issue was taken from my International Thematic Exhibit which was wrongly described for the two stamps concerned. The philatelic descriptions should have been transposed and I am very grateful to you for putting me right. What is so surprising is that the two stamps had been wrongly described in my exhibit from 1998 to 2015 in several International Exhibitions without being spotted by the Judges - including in China in 1999!

China Postal Stationery - The illustration in *Themescene* is also taken from my International Thematic Exhibit, where it is a rule requirement that if the reverse side of postal stationery is shown, then the imprinted stamp on the front is shown alongside to show that it is postal stationery - hence the copy of the imprinted stamp at the left.

Many Thanks.

## **JAFFA GATE & THE TOWER OF DAVID: A LOOK AT MAXIMUM CARDS**

From Chris Wheeler *by email*

What a humble title for an exceptional article by Paulo Duek. His simple but precise explanation of the three components of a truly acceptable maximum card in a professional Thematic Competition is to be highly commended. How easy it is to be non-compliant and lose marks. Thank you, Paulo!

## **HELP WANTED**

From Lawrence Fisher *by email*

Is there anyone in our club who collects nuclear energy? I am looking for a good philatelic item that shoes the devastation that a nuclear blast will make.

If you can help, please [email Lawrence](mailto:Lawrence).

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

## COLLECTING ACROSS THEMES

From Peter Wood *by email*

March *Themescene* contained an article on this year's celebrations for the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the *Mayflower*. This made me look into my collection on Ireland and the Irish, where I include this postcard issued by Guinness Exports Ltd. One item can fit in several subjects!



## MAYFLOWER 400 CELEBRATIONS

From David Roseveare *by email*

Plymouth City Council have made the decision of cancelling all events in the city for the whole of June due to the coronavirus epidemic. Sadly, we won't be holding our event at the Guildhall, as reported in March *Themescene*. Over two years work has been wasted and there is no way ahead. My colleagues on the Plymouth Philatelic Society had worked exceptionally hard in promoting the event: especially as we lost two members of the organising committee en route.

After all is 'done and dusted' there needs to be searching questions on how our hobby at local level is run, especially when the majority of serious collectors are over seventy years old.

Sorry to bring bad news, we did our best.

# CONNECTIONS: THEMESCENE STORIES REVISITED VIA NUNEHAM PARK HOUSE

*Anne Stammers*

While re-reading the 2019 issues of *Themescene*, as committee members were voting for the Francesca Rapkin Memorial Bowl, I saw Jeff Dugdale's article on Lillie Langtry (March 2019 page 9) and it reminded me of Nuneham Park House where I was fortunate to work when it was Rothmans International conference centre.

The house was built in the 1750s in the Palladian style for the 1st Earl of Harcourt (fig 1). The Earl, in line with others of the time, liked his land, which went down to the River Thames, to have sweeping views from the house with neoclassical structures and garden ornaments. In 1756 he decided the village that was situated in the grounds spoiled the view and had it pulled down, witnessed by Oliver Goldsmith (fig 2) and rebuilt on either side of the London Road (now the main A4074 road between Oxford and Reading) (fig 3). One inhabitant refused to move and there is a statue to her in the grounds. The cottages are still inhabited.

In 1764 Earl Harcourt knocked down the estate's medieval church and replaced it with the Neoclassical All Saint's Church, with its magnificent Italian interior that can be seen today (fig 4).

As a young man the future 2nd Earl, George Simon rebelled against his father's ideas, had nothing to do with Court life, and with a very different taste for the gardens, liking the thoughts of the French philosopher Rousseau (fig 5). While his father was away in 1771 he created an informal flower garden with the help of William Mason, poet and gardener, possibly unintentionally creating the first informal flower garden (fig 6). Eminent garden historian Mavis Batey thought it "without precedent in garden history". He inherited the house in 1777 and immediately asked Capability Brown (*Themescene* December 2017 page 119) to landscape the grounds, to include a statue of Rousseau, and to improve the house interior. The beautiful curved central staircase is said to have been designed by him. In the grounds he created a series of views over water meadows to the Spires of Oxford (fig 7). It was to be one of Brown's last commissions. The Carfax Conduit was removed from the centre of Oxford and presented to the 2nd Earl and is still in the grounds.

In the 1830's when Edward Harcourt, Archbishop of York, lived at Nuneham, he destroyed the flower garden and most of the statues. He bought extra land and had a Pinetum Botanical garden planted. In 1963 this became the Harcourt Arboretum and part of the University of Oxford Botanical Gardens. In spring the rhododendron and azalea blossom draws locals to visit along with the bluebell woodland (fig 8). In autumn it is renowned for the amazing colours, which can be seen from the A4074.

King George III and Queen Charlotte visited the house and in 1841 Queen Victoria stayed there and she thought the grounds were 'a most lovely place'. Lewis Carroll (The Revd. Charles Dodgson) used them as a setting for 'Alice through the Looking Glass' (*Themescene* December 2016 page 118) (fig 9) and the real Alice (Alice Liddell) said that most of his stories were told to them on river expeditions to Nuneham and Godstow.



Jerome K Jerome, of *Three Men in a Boat* fame, thought the grounds ‘well worth a visit and very beautiful’. In the 1980’s part of them were covered in maroon Fritillaria in the spring.

In 1942 the house was requisitioned by the RAF and used as a Central Interpretation Unit for air surveillance photography and in later years the gardeners would sometimes come across some of the photographic plates. The iconic Spitfires were used for this important photographic activity (fig 10).

In 1948 the house was sold to the University of Oxford, and in the 1980’s after much renovation was let to Rothmans International for use as a residential conference centre. It was Edward VII and Lillie Langtry who were reputed to have stayed at Nuneham, that gave the conference centre its notable four poster bedrooms (fig 11). It was said they were able to reach each other by going over the (wooden) roof. To their delight, Conference Organisers were always given these rooms,. The delegates were also fortunate to be able to use what had been the rose terraces (fig 12) for evening barbeques, giving great views over the grounds to the river.

In the late 1980’s staff were delighted when John Thaw and Colin Dexter came to Nuneham for lunch, to film *Morse* (*Themescene* December page 112 (fig 13). (Never having seen this TV series I wondered what all the fuss was about and later became a fan). The episode filmed there was when a body was found in a chapel, this being the church in the grounds.

The concerts for ‘Music at Oxford’ when people bought their picnics, purchased champagne and wine, and listened to an orchestra, started in the grounds during the late 1980’s, and when the conference centre closed these moved to the banks of the river at Radley for a short time.

Today the house and grounds are the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University Global Retreat Centre, and the public can visit when they have their annual Day of Peace and Retreat. 📖



*Fig 1: Nuneham Park House from an old postcard*



*Fig 2: Oliver Goldsmith. Eire 1974*



*Fig 3: the relocated Nuneham Courtney village*



*Fig 4: neo-classical church.  
Source: Wikimedia Commons*



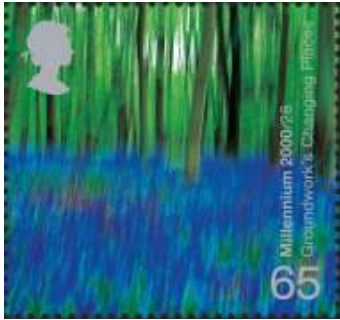
*Fig 5: Jean-Jacques Rousseau. France 1956*



*Fig 6: flower garden.  
GB 1983*



*Fig 7: The spires of Oxford. From an old postcard*



*Fig 8: Bluebell wood.  
GB 2000*



*Fig 9: Tweedledum and  
Tweedledee. From Alice  
Through the Looking Glass.  
GB 1993*



*Fig 10: Spitfire.  
Jersey 1975*



*Fig 11: A four poster bed at Nuneham*



*Fig 13: Inspector Morse.  
GB 2005*



*Fig 12: The Rose Terraces*

# ORCHID CONFERENCES

*Mark Humfrey*

**I**n collecting the topic of Orchids it is important to have themes that you can draw on to tell a story. One of the themes is conferences about orchids. This article is about some of these conferences that are regional and others that are global.

## **First Great International Horticultural Exhibition**

In 1959 Argentina hosted the first exhibition of this type in Buenos Aires. In many ways this set the standard, in a philatelic sense, as there was a stamp issue to celebrate this event. Just one stamp given No. 941 by Stanley Gibbons. Approximately 3,000,000 stamps were produced and issued on 23 May to coincide with the exhibition's opening.


In such a large print run some errors crept into the production. In Kuert-Schel, an old catalogue of Argentina, the errors were K-S type 1 and type 2. The current catalogue of Argentina is GJ Tomo 1 & 2 published in 2019. These are known as the island in the Southern Pacific variety and the island in the Northern Pacific variety (fig 1). A very attractive first day of issue card was produced (fig 2). This practice has continued as a philatelic aspect of conferences right up until the present day.

## **The 1975 World Orchid Conference**

This was held in the Palmengarten, Frankfurt, during April 1975, the theme being 'Orchids for everyone'. Unfortunately the German postal services could not agree on a design and ended up without a commemorative stamp to issue. The official covers produced were with cancelled to order Equatorial Guinea stamps that are now difficult to locate. The only official image, of an abstract Paphiopedilum, appears on the metermark of the exhibition mail (fig 3) and the cancellation design, No.77, in Peggy Aldrich's catalogue of orchid cancels for Germany. The cancellation on the 'Sonderblatt' (fig 4) does at least feature a German stamp! The other version of the official cover is simply five CTO stamps stuck on a card (fig 5). This exhibition was a philatelic shambles!

## **The 1993 World Orchid Conference**

This conference was held in Glasgow. It was 'awarded' the show because of the reputation of the Glasgow Botanic Gardens, which has an extensive orchid collection, and because the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre was able to offer controlled environmental conditions. It was a success with over 20,000 visitors. The philatelic element was published on 19 Jan 1993 with a release date set for 16 March by the Post Office, chosen as it was just five days before Mothers Day. An example of the official advertising card from Post Office counters is shown (fig 6). The whole range of material was produced by the Post Office including PHQ cards, Official First Day Covers and of course the stamps. This series famously contains one of the few modern errors. It was on the 33p stamp, printed with Cylinders 1A1B1C1D1E1F Dots (fig 7). Located in position 10/6 it was missing 1991 and the Copyright logo. The stamps were printed by Harrison & Sons for the Post Office. This is an example of the printers own presentation card for this issue (fig 8).

This theme within an Orchid collection of stamps normally grows as exhibitions come and go. I was looking forward to seeing the 2020 issues from Taiwan but the conference has been cancelled, and so the next instalment of errors will have to wait until it is safe to meet in large numbers again. Perhaps the stamps will be issued and then overprinted later with the correct date and issued again! 

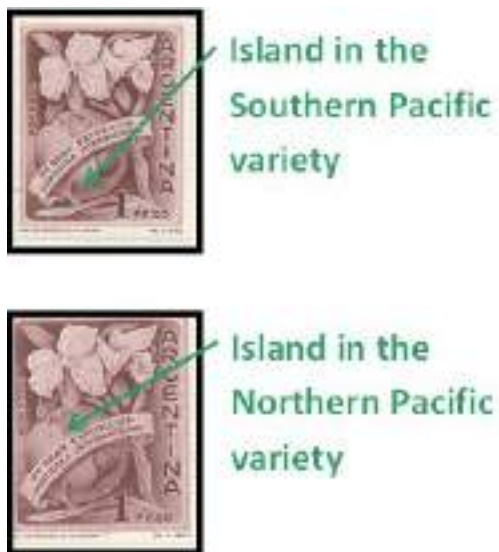


Fig 1: 1959 Argentina varieties



Fig 2: Argentina first day of issue card



Fig 3: 1975 Germany meter mark



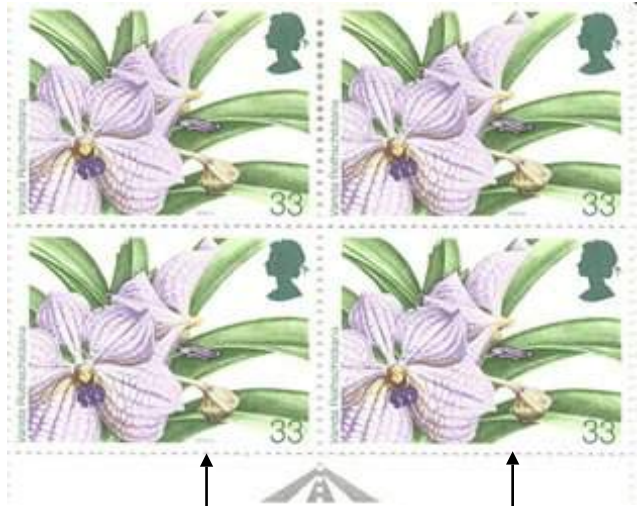
Fig 5: Equatorial Guinea



Fig 4: cancellation for 1975 conference



Fig 6: Advertising card



Logo and copyright No logo or copyright

Fig 7: Error of missing statement



Fig 8: Harrison & Son presentation card

# GROUP NEWS:

## COMMEMORATIVE COVERS PRODUCED BY TWO OF OUR AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

### ALBA STAMP GROUP: THE DECLARATION OF ARBROATH

The Declaration of Arbroath is the name usually given to a letter, dated 6 April 1320 at Arbroath, written by Scottish barons and addressed to Pope John XXII. It constituted King Robert I's response to his excommunication for disobeying the Pope's demand in 1317 for a truce in the First War of Scottish Independence. The letter asserted the antiquity of the independence of the Kingdom of Scotland, denouncing English attempts to subjugate it.

Generally believed to have been written in Arbroath Abbey by Bernard of Kilwinning (or of Linton), then Chancellor of Scotland and Abbot of Arbroath, and sealed by fifty-one magnates and nobles, the letter is the sole survivor of three created at the time. The others were a letter from the King of the Scots, Robert I, and a letter from four Scottish bishops which all made similar points. The Declaration was intended to assert Scotland's status as an independent, sovereign state and defend Scotland's right to use military action when unjustly attacked.

Submitted in Latin, the Declaration was little known until the late 17th century and is not mentioned by any of Scotland's major 16th century historians. In the 1680s the Latin text was printed for the first time and translated into English in the wake of the Glorious Revolution, after which time it was sometimes described as a declaration of independence. [Extracted from Wikipedia].

The Alba Stamp Group has produced the commemorative cover illustrated on page 52 featuring images of the document and the ruins of Arbroath Abbey, franked with a Scottish first class definitive and an Arbroath special handstamp of 06 April. To purchase a cover at £5 each please contact [Graham Mill](#).

### MASONIC PHILATELIC CLUB: 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAILING OF THE MAYFLOWER

A unique cover (see next page) from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the *Mayflower*, has been designed by Ken Elston, Chairman of the Masonic Philatelic Club, following a request by the Provincial Grand Master of Worcestershire, Robert Vaughan.

The front of the cover features an inset painting of Edward Winslow, a Separatist originating from Droitwich, who travelled on the *Mayflower* in 1620. He was one of several senior leaders on the ship and also later at Plymouth Colony. The main image is a painting of the arrival of the *Mayflower* off the coast of the Americas. It also features the Coat of Arms for the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire. The back of the cover shows an illustration of the first meeting between the Pilgrims and the native Americans and features the Festival 2022 Jewel of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire.

For further information and to receive the quarterly historic communication of the Masonic Philatelic Club, email [John Chapman](#), Development Officer; or write to 10 Chantry Drive, Halesowen, West Midlands, B62 9DE, UK



The cost of the covers will be £10.00 plus postage and packaging, UK £2.50, Europe £4.50, rest of world £7.40. To place your order for this unique and historic Cover please complete the form below and send to:

Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire, PGL Offices, 94 Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 0DF, UK

SPECIALS: Full Set Mint Stamps Presentation Packs, Prov. Officers Signed Cover (only 100) plus others, email: [chadjman@gmail.com](mailto:chadjman@gmail.com)

-✂-----

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# CREATING ALBA'S DECLARATION OF ARBROATH COMMEMORATIVE COVER

*Jeff Dugdale*

**M**y lifelong interest in stamps was kindled in the late 1950s when I joined the Arbroath & District Philatelic Society which regularly met in the public library, just a stone's throw from my home. Like so many lads at the time I formed a schoolboy collection buying common stamps in plastic packets from Woolworths and arranging them in my albums.

One of the last things I did before relocating from Arbroath to begin my teaching career in the early 1970s was to take part in my second Arbroath Abbey Pageant as an actor, which also kindled my interest in amateur dramatics.

So when in the middle of 2019 I learned that celebrations were to be held in my home town to mark the 700th Anniversary of the Declaration of Arbroath, I decided I would like to be part of it, though living near Fochabers just over 100 miles to the North made things difficult. The natural thing was to push for a postage stamp to mark the occasion, or at the very least a special handstamp. I learned from the editor of *Stamp Magazine* and from Buckingham Covers that "something" would be done by Royal Mail for the anniversary but they were cagey about telling me anything.

I therefore approached the Alba Stamp Group and asked if they would be interested in this project, as the cost of the special handstamp at around £300 was too big a risk for me alone, but I said I was certain I could sell quite a few covers to members of the Red Lichties Worldwide Facebook site which I had joined some time back.

First of all I asked my wife Eve Archer, an accomplished graphic artist who has designed covers for *Orbit* the space stamp magazine I have edited for the past twenty-five years, if she would design a cover and handstamp, and what you see is the realisation of that suggestion. It was necessary to obtain permissions re intellectual property rights for all the elements on the cover but this was done within a week, everyone concerned being delighted to help.

Then knowing that signed covers would attract a premium I asked on the Red Lichties site for suggestions re 'famous' Arbroathians who might sign the covers. I was intrigued by suggestions that Harry Lauder and Andy Stewart would be good signatures, but I didn't think I could organise them. As it turned out I wrote to the following people and all but two or three immediately said yes. You may have heard of some of them but most are not international celebrities like Lineker or Beckham.

The list comprises: Steve Byrne (award winning composer, musician and Scottish Folk Singer of the Year 2019), David Kane (sitcom writer), Karen Cargill (international mezzo-soprano), Norman Bowman (film and TV actor), Dominik Diamond (TV presenter), Darren Burnett (international bowls champion), Mike Weir (formerly MP for Angus), Andy Webster (formerly Hearts footballer), Morris Grassie (respected Scottish artist), Lord Davidson (Labour peer), Lord Forsyth (Tory Peer), Graham Gano (American footballer), Graham Brown (strong man), Graham Brown #2 (popular band leader), Major

Brenda Cooper (Iraq and Afghan veteran), with Billy Kay (writer and broadcaster) also agreeing later on.

I offered the covers at £5 serviced and £10 serviced and signed by the person of choice, and as I write in mid March I have nearly 150 orders, including 20 or so for the same cover on a larger envelope bearing the mini-sheet which Royal Mail finally explained they would be producing. (The mini-sheet costs £4.46 and I am selling the cover at £7).


When I discovered what the mini-sheet looked like I was dismayed as I had wanted to see a stamp with “Declaration of Arbroath” written on it and I made my feelings clear in a letter to *STAMP Magazine*, April 2020 page 28.

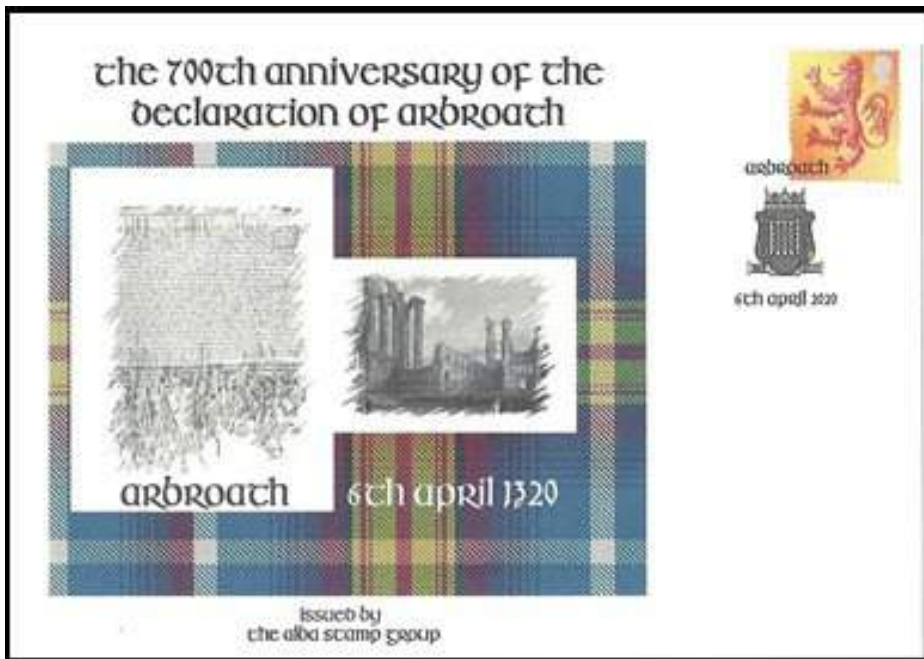
### Creating Alba’s Declaration of Arbroath Commemorative Cover

Notwithstanding all that, Graham Mill, The Treasurer of Alba P.S. (with already some experience of producing covers for other occasions) took on the challenges of organising the handstamp and getting quotes for covers from various printers. 150+ of these covers are now available for sale and I have received my 150 serviced covers.

These will be sent out far and wide, to Red Lichties in The USA, Australia and New Zealand as well as those living on the UK mainland and Europe. There’s a fair bit of admin involved in doing this but there will be profits from my 150 and these will be sent to the Arbroath 2020 Committee who had planned a full programme of celebrations across most of this year.

Of course their endeavours have now come to nothing thanks to the Virus and the committee is now calling itself “Arbroath2020+1” in the hope that they can deliver in a year’s time.

You of course won’t have to wait that long and since you won’t have been able to buy any covers at Coronavirus-hit Scottish Congress you may acquire them by contacting [Graham](#). 





# 700 Declaration of Arbroath

6 APRIL 2020



*These and previous page: special postmarks produced by the Royal Mail Handstamp Centre*



*Miniature sheet produced by Royal Mail*



**GBandEmpireStamps.co.uk** now incorporating **ThematicPostageStamps.co.uk**

Since publishing my first website in 1999 I have developed a portfolio of websites covering all aspects of philately and have recently provided a dedicated Thematics section which now contains over 2000 items and is expanding weekly.



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# A PHILATELIC PERSPECTIVE ON COVID-19

*Wendy Buckle*

**S**tamp collectors have long collected themes associated with natural disasters such as floods, famine, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions. Man-made disasters have attracted theme collectors and postal historians with stories to tell through crash mail, wreck mail or disinfected mail. COVID-19, the most recent disaster, has produced many challenges, and postal workers are one of the front-line services still working. Personally I'm very grateful to be receiving purchases while I am spending so much time at home.

I'm sure there must be collectors who are even now looking at the potential for a 'COVID-19' collection. A quick look at online sites suggests some interesting material is already available. Not surprisingly China was early in the field, with cachets telling people how to be careful (fig 1, other cachets were also used) and then with labels and postal stationery reinforcing the message (fig 2, other designs have also been issued). To my knowledge Iran and Vietnam have issued stamps (figs 3-4) and Algeria has issued a postmark (fig 5). Predictably, a number of countries notorious for abusive issues have also jumped on the bandwagon.

Switzerland has issued a charity stamp face value one Swiss franc, plus five Swiss francs surcharge. They cost five francs to buy, with Swiss Post bearing the face value cost of one franc themselves (fig 6). Proceeds are split between the Swiss Red Cross and Swiss Solidarity, a charity for those affected by disasters and humanitarian crises both in Switzerland and abroad. It was designed in six days by graphic artists who of course had to work distantly.

At first the concentration was on the virus itself, but now the focus is shifting. On 4th May the Isle of Man issued a set of eight stamps called "#CarryUsThrough" (fig 7). The designs went from concept to approval in 48 hours. According to the IoM Post Office "Each of the eight stamps symbolise strength, fortitude and love during a global crisis, celebrating the people making such a contribution to our lives; NHS workers, key staff, carers, volunteers, our community and the scientists and educators who will develop vaccines and educate our children". A donation from the sale of the stamps will be made to the Manx Solidarity Fund, a charity formed specifically to support those affected by the pandemic.

Postboxes are also telling the story. Royal Mail has painted six of them "NHS blue" in support of NHS staff during the coronavirus crisis. They are located close to the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff, St Thomas's Hospital in London, Royal Edinburgh Hospital, the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast and Trafford General Hospital in Manchester. The Trafford postbox commemorates the birthplace of the NHS, founded in Manchester in July 1948 under Aneurin Bevan.


The sixth postbox in this colour is at Marston Moretaine in Bedfordshire, close to the home, and in honour of Captain (now honorary colonel) Tom Moore, who at the age of 99 raised over £32 million for the NHS by walking 200 laps of his garden during the lockdown. In addition, from 27 April to 01 May Royal Mail issued an ink-jet slogan cancel to wish him a happy hundredth birthday (fig 8). 



Fig 1: From Honghu, Hebei Province, China, 21 Feb 2020.  
Boxed cachet "Do not go to places with crowds,  
wear masks, wash hands frequently"



Fig 2: Huangshi, Hubei Province, China 24 Jan 2020



Fig 3 Iran



Fig 4 Vietnam



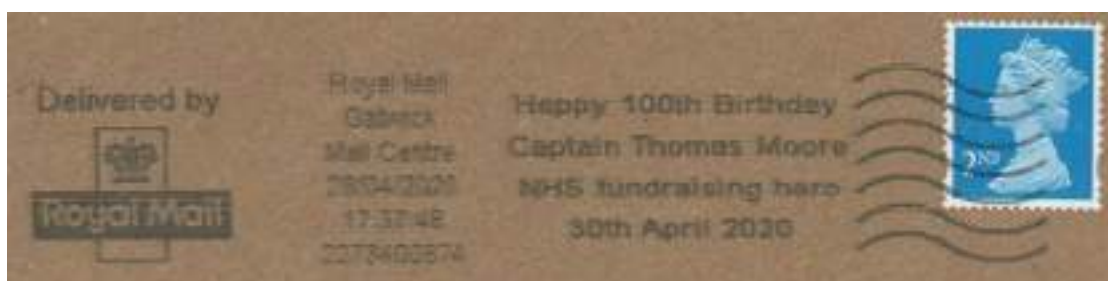
*Fig 5 Algeria postmark*



*Fig 6 Switzerland*



*Fig 7 Isle of Man*



*Fig 8 GB inkjet slogan*

# EXHIBITING PAGE: THEMATICS DURING THE CRISIS

*John Davies*

The COVID-19 crisis brought out a number of innovative ways for collectors to stay in touch with their hobby. One of those was a range of seminars organised jointly by the Royal Philatelic Society and Philamart, based in India, known as Philaminars 2020. The seminars covered all aspects of philately, including thematics, with a presentation by Jonas Hälstrom RDP FRPSL. The title of the one hour seminar was “Explaining the philatelic material in Thematic Philately” which, in turn, increased his knowledge, personal study and research.

Webinars also included Traditional Philately (Peter McCann), Postal Stationery (Lars Engelbrecht), Postal History (James Mazepa), RPSL Expert Committee (Chris Harman) and The History of the RPSL (Chris King).

Jonas explained that his collecting was borne out of his interest in sailing ships, leading to an international gold medal collection on the theme of “The History of Square-Rigged Sailing Vessels”. As others have done, he stressed that thematics have the wrong image of having too many rules, whereas there are only five in the regulations.

1. The concept
2. The selection of material based on philatelic qualification
3. The selection of material based on thematic qualification
4. The philatelic range and quality
5. The presentation of the exhibit

Examples were shown from his exhibit to demonstrate these aspects of storyline, thematic and philatelic information. These included postmarks of town or city names relating to specific aspects in the collection and the development and structure of different types of ship and materials used in their manufacture. He also explained that the “Pillars of Thematics” come from Traditional Philately and Postal History and its relatives in postal stationery and airmails, based on the philatelic material.

He told us that the quality of his collection had been broadened by also collecting postal history and postal stationery, which had greatly assisted in building the quality and variety of his thematic collections. By the time you read this, it is likely that the presentations will be available for viewing on [YouTube](#) by searching “Philamart + thematic”. Currently there is an earlier presentation on thematics by Peter Suhadolc, another highly qualified FIP juror: search thematic+Suhadolc on YouTube or click on the link on the BTA website under ‘Displaying thematic collections / Rules and guidance’.

172 people watched the Thematics seminar which was conducted using the Zoom conference call system. For the future, this may well be a way forward to increase accessibility to philatelic displays to a much wider audience. 📖

## BTA AT AUTUMN STAMPEX 2020

As previously announced, the BTA will be the lead organisation for displays at Autumn Stampex 2020. Thank you to everyone who has already offered material to exhibit or display. Of course we would like more!

In April ABPS decided that planning for Stampex 2020 (30 September to 3 October) would continue. But as we are all aware forward plans have to be fluid in these strange times and, according to the Stampex 2020 website, an update on plans for the exhibition will be made on 11 June. Once we receive that announcement we will put it on the BTA website. The BTA's advice is that if you want to display or exhibit at Stampex 2020 you should continue to plan on doing that until you hear otherwise

Exhibits can be either competitive or for display (the latter will not be judged): both are equally welcome. Exhibits can be anything between one and five frames (sixteen sheets per frame), or eight frames for those who have qualified for this.

If you would like to compete:

- There are no qualification requirements.
- If you are new to competitions (at least at this level) you may find it helpful to read the guidance and tips on exhibiting on the [BTA's website](#) under "Displaying Thematic Collections".
- Unlike international competitions it does not have to be five frames: you choose how many frames you want to submit.

If you would like to display only (non-competitive exhibit):

- Don't feel obliged to rewrite your pages.
- You will not be required to submit original material unless you want to. Good quality scans are perfectly acceptable. Send them to BTA Chairman Barry Stagg either as printed pages (1 Naunton Way, Cheltenham, Glos., GL53 7BQ) or [email him](#) the file and he will print the pages out, mount them at the exhibition and take them down afterwards. Please email him if you have any queries about this.

Competitive or non-competitive:

- If you plan to exhibit, or are thinking about it as a possibility, please email the BTA Competitions Organiser, [Andrew Millington](#), and let him know how many frames you plan to exhibit.
- Let Andrew know if you will be a first time exhibitor at Stampex, as this will help the BTA's planning.
- You can produce more than one exhibit.
- The rules and regulations for Stampex exhibits and displays (the latter are called non-competitive exhibits) can be found by navigating through the ABPS website under '[Exhibiting](#)'.
- The entry form for Stampex 2020 should be on the ABPS website by the time you read this. If you prefer a printed copy we have obtained the entry form plus liability and insurance form, which are printed on the next two pages. They should be completed by hand and mailed to ABPS Autumn Stampex 2020, c/o SWE, 15



Abchurch St., London EC4N 7BW together with a scan of the front page and remittance as instructed. The closing date for entries is 20 July.

- The title and a brief description of each exhibit will be published in the Stampex programme. This will be taken from your entry form.
- The normal arrangements for Stampex are that you need to mount and dismount your own exhibit(s), so you will either need to be in London on 29th September, and 3rd October OR pass your entry to a nominated member of the BTA Committee who will be happy to manage this for you.
- Fees are £25 per frame. The BTA is committed to producing a very wide range of material that will showcase pictorial collecting, not to mention advertise the Association, and **to encourage those new to exhibiting (whether to compete or to display only) the BTA will contribute £10 towards the fee of the first (or only) frame of your exhibit.**

If you have any questions at all please contact [Andrew Millington](#). 

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## Application Form ABPS Spring Autumn 2020 National Exhibition

**Please complete clearly in black ink and capital letters.**

Organized by Stamp World Exhibitions, a company limited by guarantee

**Correspondence Address:** ABPS Autumn Stampex 2020, c/o SWE, 15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW.

Please tick if this is:    A Competitive Exhibit:  
                                   For Display Only:  
                                   A First-Time Exhibit:

**Displayers are responsible for the delivery of their own exhibits to the show. Those wishing to send in exhibits by mail must please agree this with the Exhibitions Secretary in advance.**

<b>1. Title</b>	<b>2. Surname</b>	<b>3. Forenames</b>
<b>4. E-mail Address</b>		<b>5. Telephone No</b>
<b>6. Address</b>		<b>7. Postcode</b>
		<b>8. Country</b>
<b>9. Title of Exhibit</b> <small>Email to exhibiting@abps.org.uk</small>		<b>10. Exhibition Class</b>
<b>11. Short description of exhibit (50 words maximum)</b> <small>Email to exhibiting@abps.org.uk</small>		<b>12. No of frames requested</b>
		<b>13. Sheet Size if oversized</b>
<b>14. If the exhibit is submitted on behalf of a society, or more than one author, or exhibitor, what name is to be used in the catalogue and on the certificate?</b>		<b>15. Literature: Date of issue</b>
		<b>16. Value of Exhibit: £</b>

<b>17. Past awards received by this exhibit at National &amp; International Exhibitions</b>									
Exhibition Name & Year	LG	G	LV	V	LS	S	SB	B	
<b>18. The undersigned (Exhibitor) hereby agrees to accept the rules and regulations relating to ABPS Autumn Stampex 2020 and confirms that the exhibit is owned by him/her.</b>									
<b>Signature</b>						<b>Date</b>			

Signing this form gives your assent to all of the rules and guidelines set out for the documentation to the exhibition, and to the data provided, and subsequent associated data, being stored in an electronic database, including security copies. Analysis of that data will be used for this exhibition and may be used to contact you in the future. Data will not be made available to third parties, except in connection with this exhibition, will not be used for commercial purposes, and will be retained only by SWE and its agents.

**Liability & Insurance Form for ABPS Autumn Stampex 2020 National Exhibition,  
organized by Stamp World Exhibitions,  
a company limited by guarantee**

30 September – 3 October 2020  
Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 0QH

Please complete, sign, and return one form for each exhibit or entry.

Please write your name in capital letters: \_\_\_\_\_

**Liability and Insurance**

1. I accept that the material is submitted entirely at my own risk and undertake to make my own arrangements with regard to the insurance of the entry whilst it is out of my possession. (This must include transit risks, temporary housing of the exhibit, its use for judging purposes and its display at the exhibition.) I confirm that all material in this entry is my bona fide property and that all information given is correct.
2. I accept that Stamp World Exhibitions, the Organizers of ABPS Autumn Stampex 2020 National Exhibition shall not be liable whether in contract, in tort, under any statute or otherwise for damage to or loss of my exhibit and for any loss consequential thereto including but not limited to loss of profit and loss of opportunity. Nothing in this declaration shall exclude or limit liability in respect of fraud or any statements made fraudulently.
3. I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain suitable insurance for the entire period that my exhibit will be held by Stamp World Exhibitions, the Organizers of ABPS Autumn Stampex 2020 National Exhibition.
4. I note that it is a condition of acceptance of my exhibit that my insurer waives all rights of subrogation against Stamp World Exhibitions, the Organizers of ABPS Autumn Stampex 2020 National Exhibition.
5. I agree that the limitations on liability contained herein are reasonable in all circumstances at the date hereof and that Stamp World Exhibitions, the Organizers, may assign any or all of their rights and/ or obligations under this document.

Signed:		Date:	
---------	--	-------	--

Remittance payable to **Stamp World Exhibitions** including return postage (if applicable) is enclosed.

			Total
Frame Fee	No of Frames	@ £25 per frame	
Literature	No of entries	@ £25 per entry	
Literature entries where there are multiple authors. Add an extra £10 for each additional medal		@ £10 per medal	
<b>TOTAL:</b>			£

**Please tick to confirm you have enclosed your:**

Application Form                  Insurance Form                  Front Page                  Remittance

All entries must be with the organizers in accordance with the dates provided.

# WHAT THEMES DO BTA MEMBERS COLLECT?

*Charles Oppenheim (BTA Membership Secretary)*

Whenever a new member joins the BTA, they are invited to let the Association know what themes they collect. Their collecting interests are then translated into a four-digit code (as explained below) for entering onto the BTA Membership Database, which I maintain as an Excel file. In theory, if a member changes their thematic collecting interests, they should inform me, though in practice that rarely happens – either because members rarely change their collecting interests, or simply because they forget to let me know. Of course, members may well have multiple collecting interests, and the system allows for up to four subjects to be recorded for each member. One use of these codes is that if any members would like to get in contact with a fellow member with the same collecting interests, they can do so by contacting me. I will then contact target members asking if they'd mind having their contact details passed on, and only if they say yes, would I then put the two members in contact with each other.

The four-digit code was created a very long time ago (at BTA's foundation I believe), and has hardly changed over the years, although a few new codes have been introduced over time. It covers subjects in a hierarchical manner, but is not, as far as I can tell, based on any library classification. In other words, it was home-grown. The Appendix to this article provides the meanings of the one, and two-digit codes, to give a flavour of it and some examples of four-digit codes are provided in this article.

I recently carried out an analysis of all members' codes to see what the most popular, and least popular collecting themes are, based on the one digit, two digit and four digit codes. The results of this analysis are as follows:

Based upon the first digit only, the most popular collecting area, with 88 such codes recorded, was numbers beginning with 4 (Science). This was followed by 77 members reporting an interest beginning with a 5 (Business, Commerce and Technology), and by 41 reporting an interest in themes beginning with a 9 (History and Geography).

Turning to the two-digit codes, the most popular was 31 members reporting a code starting with 55 (Transport), followed by 27 members reporting codes beginning with 47 (Zoology), and 25 members reporting codes beginning with 41 (Geology).

Turning to the most detailed level (four-digit codes), the most popular collecting interests were five members each collecting code 4730 (Birds), 6600 (Music and Musicians) and 5540 (Railways), followed by four each for codes 1401 (Winston Churchill), 4180 (Fossils), 4400 (Medicine), 4712 (Dogs) and 5551 (Safety at Sea).

An obvious question to follow is what are the LEAST popular topics? At the one digit level, the least popular topics were Literature and Language (code 7), with seven collecting in that field, followed by 17 members each who collected code 3 (Social and Domestic) or code 8 (Sports and Games). At the two digit level, no-one apparently collects code 06 (non-Christian religious leaders), code 22 (Special Forces), code 25 (Refugees), code 31 (Social ceremonies and customs), code 57 (Telecommunications), code 67 (Performing Arts), codes 73, 74, 75, 77 or 78 (all sub-sets of Literature), code 82 (Olympic Games), code 83 (Winter Sports), code 85 (non-Olympic multi-sports events), code 95

(Archaeology) or code 98 (Travel and Tourism). It must be said that some of these results look strange to me; does no-one collect these themes??


There are a number of UK specialist thematic societies that are affiliated to the BTA, and whose membership, no doubt, includes both BTA members and BTA non-members. These are societies such as the Captain Cook Society, The Bicycle Stamp Club, the Bird Stamp Society, Concorde Study Group, Exhibition Study Group, The Guild of St Gabriel and the Ship Stamp Society. There are also numerous specialist thematic societies associated with the American Topical Association. So my figures give only an approximate idea of the themes that BTA members collect. Perhaps the listing of *unpopular* themes might give you ideas for new thematic collecting areas with minimum competition from other BTA members....

### THE ONE- AND TWO-DIGIT THEMATIC COLLECTING CODES USED BY THE BTA

<b>0</b>	<b>RELIGIONS &amp; PHILOSOPHY</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>ARMED SERVICES &amp; WAR</b>
01	Christian religions	20	Armed services
02	Other religions	21	Uniforms
03	Religious festivals	22	Special forces
04	Religious objects	23	Particular wars in history
05	Christian Religious leaders	24	PoW and camps
06	Non-Christian religious lead- ers	25	Refugees
07	Religious books	26	Weapons
08	Religious orders and organi- sations	27	Not currently used
09	Philosophy	28	Not currently used
		29	Irregular forces
<b>1</b>	<b>POLITICS &amp; INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC</b>
10	Non-UK royalty	30	Social studies general
11	British Royalty	31	Social ceremonies and customs
12	Politics and Government	32	Domestic objects
13	Heads of States	33	Domestic activities
14	Political leaders and states- men	34	Wearing apparel
15	International affairs	35	Public services
16	International organisations	36	Law and order
17	Famous people	37	Mass media
18	Not currently used	38	Not currently used
19	Not currently used	39	Not currently used
		<b>4</b>	<b>SCIENCE</b>
		40	Pure science
		41	Geology
		42	Astronomy
		43	Biology
		44	Medicine

4	<b>SCIENCE (cont)</b>	7	<b>LITERATURE &amp; LANGUAGE (cont)</b>
45	Not currently used	73	Literary works
46	Botany	74	Mythology
47	Zoology	75	Science Fiction
48	Invertebrates	76	Not currently used
49	Nature general studies	77	Philology
5	<b>BUSINESS, COMMERCE &amp; TECHNOLOGY</b>	78	Etymology
50	Agriculture	79	Not currently used
51	Commercial activities	8	<b>SPORT</b>
52	Civil engineering	80	Sports, general
53	Raw materials	81	Ball games
54	Mechanical engineering and manufacturing	82	Olympic Games
55	Transport	83	Winter sports
56	Disasters	84	Motor sports
57	Telecommunications	85	International non-Olympic sports events
58	Postal services	86	Sports on or in water
59	Philately	87	Air sports
6	<b>ART &amp; ENTERTAINMENT</b>	88	Indoor games
60	Art, general	89	Not currently used
61	Architecture	9	<b>HISTORY &amp; GEOGRAPHY</b>
62	Painters	90	History and geography general
63	Paintings	91	History and geography of continents
64	Sculpture	92	History and geography of individual countries A-K
65	Not currently used	93	History and geography of countries L-Z
66	Music and musicians	94	Historical periods and events
67	Performing Arts	95	Archaeology
68	Photography	96	Flags and national emblems
69	Prehistoric art	97	Explorers and exploration
7	<b>LITERATURE &amp; LANGUAGE</b>	98	Travel and tourism
70	Literature, general	99	Not currently used
71	Authors		
72	Poets		

(There are also codes for non-thematic philatelic collecting interests, such as plate blocks, errors, booklets, postal history, etc., but BTA members rarely note them, and so no analysis of them has been carried out for this article).

If you would like to check how your interest are recorded, and perhaps update them, please email [Charles Oppenheim](mailto:Charles Oppenheim). If you have any comments on this article do email the [Editor](#). 

# HERE AND THERE

## THE POSTAL MUSEUM

At the time of writing the Postal Museum is, like every other public institution, closed to the public. It has put a number of features on its [website](#) which may be of interest:

- Mail Rail from home. You can take a virtual tour offering the sights and commentary you would have experienced if you were riding the train. Of course it's not as good as the real thing, but if you haven't been on Mail Rail yet it might whet your appetite.
- Voices From the Deep. Slides and commentary telling the story of the *SS Gairsoppa*, a British India Steam Navigation Company cargo ship, On 14 February 1941 it was torpedoed and sank by a German U-boat. The wreck was discovered in 2011 and many items were recovered including 717 letters.
- The Mystery of the Tolhurst Envelopes. An article about the delightful illustrated envelopes posted between 1909 and 1934.
- Travelling Post Offices. A brief history.
- The Post Office in the 1918 Influenza Outbreak. A look at the archives.
- Delivering Medical Care. An article on the historical records of nurses in the Post Office.

## LONDON 2020 SPECIAL STAMP ISSUES

The postponement of London 2020 came too late for Royal Mail, which on 10 March issued a first class booklet commemorating the exhibition. It contains six self-adhesive stamps comprising two each of the Penny Black, Twopenny Blue and Penny Red designs for first-class stamps first issued in 2015-2016. Other commemorative issues have been postponed.

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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.)

## FAMILY QUIZ TIME!

Get set for a Quiz Night! Use this quiz, or make up your own. Remember to have a break in the middle, and to prepare some refreshments and entertainment!

### ROUND 1

- 1) Which festival is called the festival of light?
- 2) How many Cricket world cups does India have?
- 3) Which place is known as the roof of the world?
- 4) How many teeth does a healthy adult have including the wisdom teeth?
- 5) How many people are there in the world? (approx.)



### ROUND 2

- 6) Which is the continent with the most number of countries?
- 7) True or False? Chameleon's have extremely long tongues, sometimes as long as their bodies?
- 8) In whose memory is the Nobel Prize awarded?
- 9) How many strings does a violin have?
- 10) How many cards are there in a complete pack of cards?





### ROUND 3

- 11) What is the name of the biggest rainforest in the world?
- 12) Which African nation is famous for chocolate?
- 13) What makes up (approx.) 80% of our brain's volume?
- 14) Which instrument is used for measuring wind speed?
- 15) An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain. True or False?



### ROUND 4

- 16) Which is the hottest continent on Earth?
- 17) Which is the smallest continent in the world?
- 18) What is the top colour of the rainbow?
- 19) How many years are there in a millennium?
- 20) Who painted the Mona Lisa?



*Answers on next page*

Here are some collaged pictures made out of - stamps! Why not have a go - you can find out more on the Stamp Active website, use the link below. If you don't have enough stamps to make a collage, ask a collector if they have some spares, or contact Kidstamps (on the Stamp Active website) Check with the adult who looks after you before you start your collage.  
<https://www.stampactive.co.uk/art-stamped-bringing-stamps-lives/>



**Adult collectors, can you help provide free stamps for youngsters?**

This article appears on the Stamp Active website  
<https://www.stampactive.co.uk/free-stamps-for-youngsters/>

WANTED - PLEASE CAN YOU HELP: I am currently sending out packs of approx. 250 world stamps to kids during the Covid19 Lockdown. It is hoped to encourage the next generation of young collectors, and judging by the letters of thanks and appreciation I have had from the parents that their kids are loving getting the stamps. But to sustain the project I am in need of a constant supply of stamps for the packets. Please if you have swaps, stamps you don't want, or any type of philatelic material you can donate please let me know as soon as possible. Many Thanks Mervin.

Send donations to: Mervin Wallace, 6 Underwood Close, Sapcote, Leicester, LE9 4FY

**Quiz answers**

- 1) Diwali. 2) Two. 3) Tibet. 4) 32. 5) Over 7 billion. 6) Africa.
- 7) True. 8) Alfred Nobel. 9) Four. 10) 52. 11) The Amazon.
- 12) Ghana. 13) Water. 14) Anemometer. 15) True. 16) Africa.
- 17) Australia. 18) Red. 19) 1,000. 20) Leonardo de Vinci.

# **BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND**

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**voco Oxford Spires Hotel**

**Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS**

**<https://oxfordspires.vocohotels.com>**



## **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: £249 per person

With single room supplement £299 per person

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 for those not booking the full package. 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. There will be free parking for hotel users.

By train: only a short taxi ride from Oxford 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 <https://www.experienceoxfordshire.org/>

If you are coming by car there are many places which are a short drive away.

# BTA FUN WITH PHILATELY WEEKEND

Friday 26th to Sunday 28th March 2021

voco Oxford Spires Hotel

Abingdon Road, Oxford, OX1 4PS

<https://oxfordspires.vocohotels.com>

## PROGRAMME

### Friday

p.m.

18.15

Arrival

Welcome, with Pimms and soft drinks

Members' displays (6 sheets, one minute)

19.30

Dinner; followed by invited display by Bob Hill *Where are the Kit Cats??!*

### Saturday

09.00

Invited display by Ian Shapiro on *Royalty*

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

Demonstration of stereo-zoom microscopes by Owen Green. Please bring along any stamps you would like to see examined.

*and*

*Go By Cycle!* Brian Sole's multi-award winning exhibit.

Static display over lunchtime and afternoon.

*or*

Free time to visit Oxford. In good weather it is a short walk along the Thames towpath which can be reached from the hotel grounds.

16.00

Members display on a theme, letter E or F (12 sheets)

19.30

Pre-dinner drink

Dinner followed by a light-hearted quiz and raffle

### Sunday

09.00

Invited display by Brian Asquith *Faster than a bullet: the Concorde story*

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:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rooms based on two people sharing   | £249 per head  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> With single room supplement         | £299 per head  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Thursday | £109 per head;<br>[plus single room supplement £25.00]   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra dinner/bed/breakfast Sunday   | £99.00 per head;<br>[plus single room supplement £25.00] |

Or:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evening meal Friday   | £42.00 per head (inc. drinks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day delegate Saturday | £15.00 per head               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evening meal Saturday | £42.00 per head (inc. drinks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day delegate Sunday   | £7.50 per head                |

### 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*



# MALAY FESTIVE FOODS

*Barry Floyd*


In 2017 Malaysia issued a series of stamps which feature tasty festive foods serving the Malay community throughout the country. The special dishes are presented to commemorate *Hari Raya Haji* or the Festival of Sacrifice, an important Islamic event (*Eid al-Adha*) which is celebrated around the world. Marking the end of the *Hajj*, the annual and often arduous journey to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, it lasts for four days and reminds the faithful of the prophet Abraham's complete belief in God, when a sheep was slaughtered in place of his son Ismail. [At the time of going to press it had not been decided whether the 2020 *Hajj* would go ahead].

The Malays dress in their finest clothes to welcome guests to their homes, to visit relatives, or to visit the graves of departed loved ones. The bonds of fellowship and unity are thus strengthened. The food delicacies are consumed to express gratitude and as a sign of obedience to *Allah*. The festive meals are not only favoured by Malays but also by people of the other races in Malaysia, Chinese and Indians among them. While the ingredients of the several dishes are similar, it is their arrangement in combination and location on the plate which distinguishes each traditional festive food.

Among the special cakes and desserts prepared and served to mark *Hari Raya* is the display featured in the 60 sen stamp (fig 1). Coconut milk and rice flour are blended, cooked in containers made from *pandam* or banana leaves. The coconut milk has a soft white texture, jelly or *agar-agar* included. The centre is made from rice flour and sugar, offering a sweet and creamy taste. *Pandam* leaves provide the green colouring.

The 80 sen stamp (fig 2) shows small pouches woven from palm leaves, filled with boiled rice and hardened in the packets. While palm leaves were traditionally used to create the pouches, plastic wrappers are more common today. When ready to serve, the packets are cut open and the rice cake is divided into small pieces, to be eaten with peanut sauce or other condiments. The rice is often consumed with *sate*, usually made with beef or chicken that is cut, mixed with spices and pierced with bamboo skewers. These are then barbecued over an open fire.

Pictured in the 90 sen stamp (fig 3), *lemang* is often prepared and served during Muslim festivals. It is made from glutinous rice cooked in bamboo and baked over an open fire. As the rice is cooked it is constantly monitored, tapped and rotated several times so that it is cooked evenly. Well-prepared, *lemang* can be kept for two or three days. When served, the bamboo is split open, the content cut into small pieces and eaten with peanut sauce or other seasoning relish.

We trust this short article on Malay festive foods will be of interest to thematic collectors featuring foodstuffs and perhaps cooking in general. Here is a topic with world-wide implications, for our dependence upon eating is universal and our choice of edible items equally diverse. From county to country, region to region, cultural group or individual, the consumption of animal or vegetable matter is a reality which postage stamps have not hesitated to feature, whether as commemorative issues or definitives. Bon appetit! 

This year the *Hari Raya Haji* will be celebrated across the world on 31<sup>st</sup> July.



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3

The *Eid al-Adha* has also been commemorated on stamps:



# NEW GB ISSUE

On 6th May Royal Mail issued a set of eight stamps commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. They show “evocative photographs capturing the relief and jubilation that followed the formal conclusion of the conflict in 1945”. The originals were in black and white but have been enhanced with colour (‘colourised’).



*A serviceman returns home to South Devon from his airbase in Lincolnshire*



*Jubilant nurses celebrate VE Day in Liverpool.*



*Ecstatic crowds gather in London's Piccadilly on VE Day.*



*Evacuees return home to London after a wartime stay in Leicester.*



*Troops march through London's Oxford Street during a parade for the Victory Over Japan exhibition.*



*Soldiers and sailors leave a demobilisation centre carrying their civilian clothes in boxes.*



*Allied prisoners of war at Aomori Camp near Yokohama, Japan cheer their rescuers.*



*A member of the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRENS) proposes a toast during VE Day celebrations in Glasgow.*



*Various VE Day postmarks were available*