

THEMESCENE

December 2020

In this issue we:

Go back in time

Venice, part 2

With John Davis



Tickle the taste buds

Finding vanilla flavour in a thematic collection

With Mark Humfrey



Visualize the Shipping Forecast

Attention all shipping

With Edward Quinton

Widen our perspective

From thematic exhibit to themed collection

With Jim Etherington



And look at a few favourite items

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 37, No.4. Whole Number 141

£2.50

www.britishthematic.org.uk



Fig 1: Torcello. The Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta (left), and the 11th/12th century Church of Santa Fosca (right)



Fig 2: The 12th century (with extensions, alterations and renovations since) Doges' Palace in St. Mark's Square, Venice

THEMESCENE

Vol. 37, No. 4, Whole Number 141

DECEMBER 2020

THEMESCENE

Journal of the
British Thematic Association
which is a member of the
Association of British
Philatelic Societies
ISSN 0268-2508

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle


I write this Editorial as we are into the second week of lockdown in England, with other parts of the UK having similar restrictions, and I suspect only our members in Australia and New Zealand are currently free of the threat of coronavirus. I'm sure we are all finding it dispiriting, but at least we have our hobby to take up our time. I have been impressed with the enthusiasm with which organisations have tackled the problem of engaging with their members. Some have offered public talks and displays via Zoom, some have set up similar events just for members. It has been an opportunity to advertise through public events, and of course for the first time to do so worldwide. Now the BTA is joining in, details are on page 131.

Dealers too are realising that they can benefit from collectors having so much time on their hands. Had the virus hit before the widespread adoption of the World Wide Web it would have been a disaster for dealers and auction houses, now it can actually work to their advantage by providing an international window into their products, easily identified with search engines. The advantages were on display at the recent [Virtual Stampex](#) (page 135); held at the beginning of October. It has been announced that the event will now be open until the end of the year, so you still have time to have a look around and perhaps enjoy some of the talks. The organisers state that "This is a wonderful opportunity for people to enjoy the show, get familiar with the platform and allow us to gear up for a bigger and better show in 2021", which I suspect is a very strong hint that this will be the format for Spring Stampex 2021, although no decision had been taken at the time of going to press.

But not all dealers have embraced online platforms, certainly some regular Stampex dealers did not take part. That is their choice. But it must be hard for collectors who for whatever reason are not IT savvy. Until now it hasn't mattered too much, people just collect in the way they wish, but I wonder how they are coping without the fairs and club meetings which underpin the social aspects which are so much part of the hobby.

You will find a varied spread of articles in this issue. I have previously put out a call for short articles from members on aspects of their collections. One way of responding has been to send a few items of particular interest, which tell a story in themselves, perhaps a favourite item, or one that is of particular relevance. Chess, parachuting and paper start this series (page 127). Why don't you [send me](#) something from your own collection? As you can see, it needs one or two illustrations and only a short piece of text.

I'm delighted to say the BTA is still attracting new members. Welcome to Flavia Del Giudice of Essex and Ian Whittaker of Berwickshire. For the rest of us, just a reminder that subscriptions are due, see page 131.

May I finish by wishing all our members the best possible Christmas, and hopes for a better new year. 



CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg


What can I say about COVID-19 that has not already been said? I have been fortunate that my family and I have kept clear of it (so far!) but it has disrupted all aspects of our life. And the next few months are looking bleak for us all. Having said that the UK is not a philatelic desert. Far from it. Although we can't meet in person a lot of work across the philatelic community has gone into remote talks and seminars. I know many of you do not have access to the Internet and are obliged to rely on the philatelic press to keep you up to date but those of you who do have access have seen an explosion of on-line events.

The BTA's one-page competition (see page 132) is a good example of the BTA trying to keep the thematic community together. A lot of effort has been put into this initiative and I hope you will give it a try if you can. We will also be having our first ZOOM talk this side of Christmas. Again, details can be found on page 131, and I hope you enjoy the event. Please follow the progress of this initiative on our web site as I hope to put on more talks in the New Year. And I would love to hear your feedback so please let the Editor or [I know](#) your thoughts on the talk.

As I write this Spring Stampex is still on but it is being reviewed on a frequent basis. But one event that is off is the BTA's Weekend in the Spring in Oxford. Sadly, the decision was made that we should postpone it until 2022 as it is not looking hopeful that a COVID-19 vaccine will be widely in place by the Spring.

I don't know how many of you buy material from eBay (or from any of the other auction sites) but I find myself spending more and more time on it. If eBay was a TV show I'm not sure what 'genre' it would be. Based upon some of the prices perhaps a comedy programme might be appropriate! And so many of the sellers can't even be bothered to describe their item in anything like enough detail. So frustrating!

I had the pleasure of spending the night in Penrith recently. And, to my surprise I saw a stamp shop opposite the hotel we were staying in! It never occurred to me to check before I travelled as I would have liked to support it but it was shutting just as we turned up. Surprisingly my wife was enthusiastic to visit it as well. On closer examination I saw that the stamp shop was part of a jewellers so, in retrospect, perhaps it was just as well they were shutting shop as we arrived!

Please keep well and stay safe. 



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: Grace Davies via email

I read with sadness of the death of Sheila Foster and with interest Lesley Marley's obituary (*Themescene* Sept 2020); what a full part Sheila played in the world of philately. In particular, Lesley's comment at the end that Sheila "was an inspiration to all who knew her" rang with significance for me.

I cannot remember when or how I met Sheila but it must have been an introduction by someone who knew I was starting on an exhibit to be called 'Story of the Peace Rose' with only one postcard and no idea of what material was available! I was soon able to appreciate Sheila's vast knowledge on the subject of roses, her fabulous exhibit and her generosity with advice and in helping me find special items. Really, she became my mentor. It was also due to Sheila that I have used Excel for all my exhibits. She sent me her notes on how to do it and was always available for follow-up advice.

When the BTA is able to have its planned displays at a live Stampex I intend to show my exhibits non-competitively. To 'Story of the Peace Rose' I shall add a note that this frame is in tribute to Sheila Foster.

From: Estelle Shale via email

Someone has been putting in a lot of effort recently to upload more issues of *Themescene* to the website resource, so I have been enjoying catching up with those that pre-date my joining the BTA. In doing this I came across the following – quoted from 'Wire That Fenced the West' by Ian Paton in issue 93, 2008.

"In thematic exhibiting circles there is concern about using covers without some post office related marking as well as relevance to the theme. For American Advertising Covers I believe the Congressional Post Office Act of 27 July 1868 ensures a formal post office connection, because the Act required the postal service to return, without further charge, all undelivered prepaid letters endorsed externally with the sender's name and address. Return would take place automatically if a letter had not been called for at the Post Office to which it was directed within 30 days, or such lesser period (often five days) as the sender might endorse on it. Naturally most organisations wanted to take advantage of this, and so complied with the Act by printing a return address on the front of their envelopes, often embellished with an illustration to advertise their products."

This seems to have parallels with free franks, where information about the person/organisation giving rise to the eligibility for free postage is admissible in thematic exhibits. I would be interested to know the opinions of any judges or exhibitors within the membership therefore on the use of such information on American covers sent whilst this act was active. A further query is, of course, how long this proviso on return was in fact in force. Neither question appears to have been followed up in the letters section of *Themescene* in subsequent issues and, even if it had, the exhibiting rules have evolved with the latest version awaiting ratification I believe.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *Continued*

From: Lis Whittle via email

Dear Members,

If you know a youngster aged 12 or under, please let their parents know about the Stamp Active 'Favourite Things' competition - see Just4Kids page 141 in this magazine for more details. Please photocopy the pages in colour or see the [Stampactive](#) website: and pass it on, with some suitable stamps if possible. It's probably best not to 'swamp' a youngster with stamps - most youngsters are really pleased to receive about 20-30 bright, colourful thematic stamps.

The competition deadline is 31st January 2021 - so don't leave it too late!

The winners will receive philatelic gifts selected by the Isle of Man Stamps & Coins website to the value of £25 (1st), £20 (2nd) and £15 (3rd). The best overall winner will receive a gift valued at £40.

If you would like the Just4Kids 'Favourite Things' competition page by email, please contact [myself](#).

HERE AND THERE

DECLARATION OF ARBROATH COVERS



A small number of these are still available for sale (see *Thamescene* June 2020 page 51). The related signatories still available are Graham Brown (musician), Karen Cargill (opera singer), Norman Bowman (actor), Darren Burnett (lawn bowls champion), Graham Brown (strong man) and Billy Kay (BBC broadcaster).

Please send orders, stating the signatory of your choice, to Jeff Dugdale, [via email](#).

Price is £10 each or three for the price of two.

AMERICAN TOPICAL ASSOCIATION



The [American Topical Association](#), to whom we are affiliated as an International Chapter, has launched a new logo and redesigned its website.

SUPPORT DURING A PANDEMIC

An Post, the Republic of Ireland postal service, provides social support which must be particularly valuable at the present time. Among other things it offers free newspaper deliveries to the elderly and vulnerable, and offers free postage to care homes. [Click here](#) for details. Do other postal organisations offer this?

VENICE. PART 2: THE REPUBLIC FROM ITS ORIGINS THROUGH TO ITS UNIFICATION WITH ITALY IN 1866

John Davis

The Venetian peoples are descended from the Veneti, an Indo-European race who existed 1,000 B.C. and who inhabited parts of north eastern Italy and the Dalmatian coast. In the 4th century B.C. the Greeks, wishing to trade with the Veneti, set up trading posts along the Adriatic coast. In the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C., the Veneti allied themselves with the Romans against Carthage (Tunisia) during the Punic Wars, and resulting from Roman influence, they gradually adopted the Latin language, Roman architecture, city planning and religion.

This was the beginning of the “Italianisation” of the Veneti people, and later, the Republic of Venice, the Venetian Empire, and the creation of the present day city of Venice and the Lagoon islands, all now within Veneto, the fifth largest of Italy’s 20 regions.

The first settlers were frightened men coming from the Italian mainland. For centuries they had enjoyed life along the north-eastern shores of the Adriatic, but in the early 5th century, with the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire and invaders from northern Europe, their lives were thrown into chaos. The Venetian people sought refuge and sanctuary in the Lagoon from the successive waves of Lombards, Huns and other invading powers, so the history of present day Venice began. The origins of the Republic of Venice are influenced by legend, one of which is that the history of Venice - meaning the city of Venice and the Lagoon Islands, began on 25th March 421. When invaders retreated, the Venetians went back to the mainland, but returned to the lagoon when attacked yet again.

On the arrival of Attila the Hun in 452, the Venetians realised that to live on the mainland was not a long-term option, and fled to make their permanent homes on the Lagoon islands. Their first settlement was on the island of Torcello (fig 1 inside front cover).

Tradition has it that Paolo Anafesto the first Doge (the supreme authority of the Republic, the equivalent of a Duke) was appointed in 697, and it is this date that is often cited as the beginning of the Venetian Republic. It is, however, possible that the first Doge was not actually appointed until the 8th century (fig 2 cover).

The Republic was formerly known as the Most Serene Republic of Venice. The soubriquet was originally bestowed on the Doge (The Most Serene) and later extended to include the whole of the Venetian Republic. The Venetians are still praying for it to return to its former glory (figs 3 and 4).

The capital of the Republic was originally Heraclea in Macedonia, Greece (697-742), then Malamocco on the Lido of Venice barrier island until 810 (fig 5). When the Venetians were attacked from the sea, the construction of the city of Venice began on the islands in the Riva Alto (now Rialto), which then became the new capital of the Republic. Wooden piles were sunk into the mud in the lagoon to form the foundations of all the buildings and infrastructure that now exists. The magical city of Venice is a wonder to behold and home of many beautiful palaces, basilicas, places of worship, buildings and edifices. It is impossible to comprehend how such were constructed on wooden piles sunk into the mud. The city comprises 118 islands, separated by about 180 canals with over 400 connecting

bridges. In addition to these inter-connecting islands there are over 60 other islands in the Venetian Lagoon, many of which are uninhabited.

According to another legend, when St. Mark was blown off course in the Venetian Lagoon, he saw an angel who told him he would be laid to rest in the Lagoon. In 828, the relics of Saint Mark were stolen from a tomb in Alexandria, Egypt, and brought back to Venice when he was made the patron saint of the Republic. The consecration of the Basilica of San Marco is variously recorded as 1084/85, 1093 (the date most often taken), 1102, and 1117, each probably reflecting a series of consecrations of different parts.

After an attempted coup in 1310 by Bajamonte Tiepolo (a revolutionary and conspirator against the Serenissima [Venice]), the *bocche di verità* (mouths of truth), or *bocche di denuncia* (mouths of complaint) were introduced. This was a spy network made up of informants and members of the public, where special mailboxes were placed in various parts of Venice, where alleged violations of the law could be secretly reported. The denunciations were then forwarded to the Magistrates and the feared Council of Ten (1310-1797), a body responsible for law and order (fig 6).

Over the centuries, with its military might Venice expanded its Empire, and endured a long history of wars, crusades and conflicts. It dominated Lombardy, Veneto, the Dalmatian and Adriatic coast, Genoa, the Ionian islands of Corfu, Cephalonia, Ithaca, and Zante. It captured coastal cities of Syria and territory in the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. In 1204, Constantinople was sacked and plundered, and the famous four bronze horses were brought back to adorn St Mark's basilica. In 1211 the island of Crete was annexed and remained in the Republic until the 17th century. From February 1489 until the mid 16th century the island of Cyprus was ceded to the Republic of Venice (fig 7), and in the 15th century it expanded into Italy and Albania.

In the 15th to 18th centuries, many famous painters were born in the Republic: Vecchio, Tintoretto (fig 8), Veronese, Tiepolo, Canaletto and Guardi, to name but a few, whose works still grace many famous art galleries and royal palaces. Venice also entertained many visiting artists from other parts of Europe. Antonio Vivaldi, born in Venice in 1678 is the most well-known and famous composer associated with Venice, and his musical composition *The Four Seasons* can be heard regularly in Venetian concert halls and places of worship throughout the year.

Venice has always suffered from the dangers of flooding, and from 1609 up to 1797, it introduced AQ (short for Acque, meaning water) Letter Sheets, where all notaries, scribes and public agents were required to use these to communicate with government agencies. A charge of 4 soldi for every letter was accounted for through the use of numbered AQ Letter Sheets, which could be used as a wrapper enclosing a letter, or with the message written on the Letter Sheet itself. The money raised was handed over to the water authorities to control Venice's tidal flooding. These Letter Sheets are considered by many as the world's first examples of pre-paid postal stationery, by some as revenue documents, and by others as semi-postal due to the use of revenue for flood relief (fig 9).

All Empires decline and fall, and between the 15th and early 18th century advances by the Turks took many of the Republic's territories and it could no longer defend itself. Its war fleet had declined from 3,300 ships in 1410 to just eleven. In 1796 Napoleon Bonaparte advanced on Austria. France and Austria agreed that Austria would take the remaining Venetian possessions in the Balkans and the French would take Lombardy. The City of Venice surrendered to Napoleon on 12th May 1797, and after nearly 1,400 years the end of the Republic of Venice was declared. After the fall of the Republic, the



Figs 3 - 4: The Serene Republic



Fig 5: Republic of Venice 8th to 18th centuries



Fig 6: Bocche di denuncia



Fig 7: Cyprus, showing coat of arms of Venice



Fig 8: Tintoretto



Fig 9: AQ letter sheet used 1628



Fig 10: Lombardy-Venetia 5 soldi Emperor Franz Joseph I stamp 1863.



Fig 13: Centenary of the union of Venice with Italy



Fig 12: Death of the Bandiera brothers

last Doge was forced out of office, and the use of Le bocche di verità, and the AQ Letter Sheets came to an end.

Until the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar in 1582, countries celebrated New Year's Day on 25th March. After the change, 1st January was adopted. However, in the Republic of Venice, New Year's Day was always 1st March, but after the fall, 1st January was adopted to bring it in line with other European countries. Venetians these days are keen to remember their proud traditions and maintain a sense of community, and in 2015 for the first time since 1797, the New Year was celebrated publicly on 1st March as a reminder of its history.

On 17th October 1797 Napoleon signed the Treaty of Campo Formio and ceded Venice to Austria which took control of the city on 18th January 1798. In 1805, Napoleon then re-captured Venice to become a part of Napoleon's Kingdom of Italy.

On 12th January 1806, Napoleon formally adopted Eugène de Beauharnais, the son of his wife Joséphine by her first marriage, who was then declared Heir Presumptive to the Kingdom of Italy. On 20th December 1807, Eugène was given the title of Prince of Venice.

In 1814, Venice changed hands yet again when following Napoleon's defeat at the hand of the Austrians, Venice and Venetia became a part of Austria's Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia (figs 10-11).

The Bandiera brothers, Attilio and Emilio were prominent revolutionaries in the fight for Italian unification. In 1843 there were many conspiracies and nationalist uprisings, which resulted in the brothers and nine others being executed by firing squad in 1844 (fig 12).

Between 1848 and 1866 there were three Italian Wars of Independence. The first was in 1848/1849, when revolutionaries and conspirators, who wanted a united Italy, formed the breakaway short-lived Republic of San Marco, but were defeated by Field Marshall Joseph Radetzky. The second was in 1859 which resulted in Lombardy being ceded to the Kingdom of Sardinia, the embryonic Italian state. The third was in 1866 when Venetia and Udine were ceded to France, but by a plebiscite the Venetian people voted to be a part of the unified Italy which still exists today (fig 13).

My next article will continue the story of Venice from 1866 up to the present day. 📖



Fig 11: Venice to Trieste, franked Lombardy-Venetia 30 cents Arms of Austria stamp postmarked 24 April 1851

FINDING VANILLA FLAVOUR IN A THEMATIC COLLECTION

Mark Humfrey

One of the few flavourings found all around the world is vanilla. Highly prized by the Aztecs in the making of chocolate drinks that had deep spiritual meaning it has steadily spread far from its Mexican origins. The challenge is to find this ingredient on philatelic material.

Some desserts contain vanilla flavouring. There are examples from around the world. Sherry trifle with vanilla custard is shown in the gastronomy series of Gibraltar (fig 1). Vanilla is also one of the flavourings in Lapis Sagu from Singapore (fig 2) and Suspiro from Peru (fig 3). The Canadian national treasure series has the Vanilla cream filling of J.A. Vachon et fils Patissiers (fig 4). Mail order filled waffles are illustrated on the commercial reply paid envelope; this version is from 2009 (figs 5 - 6).

Having the recipe is helpful to confirm the presence of vanilla. The French Polynesian issue of 1987 gives the ingredients for Po'e, a local confection. The issued colour is blue but the proof was printed in black (figs 7 - 8). In Creole cooking, as found in the Zil Elwannyen Sesel islands of the Seychelles, vanilla is often used (fig 9). The recipe given is for Daube. This is the banana version that is a dessert but if made without the sugar it can be served as a savoury side dish.

Suchard started making advertising cards from the 1870's. The Suchard product was placed in a recipe and then the cards made available for promotional purposes. Many of the cards refer specifically to vanilla in the recipes; fig 10 is just one example. In thematic competitions this type of item does not go down well with some judges. The card is essentially a private printing carrying a Swiss 5 Rappen (Centimes) indicator mark. No stamps are added to this example. It has a Fribourg cancel for 12 August and a receipt mark for Couvet 12 August 1880. This indicates that the card was valid for postal use in Switzerland (fig 10a).

In competitions there is less contention with similar cards issued in Belgium. The commissioning company paid a fee to the Belgian Post Agency. The design was then printed onto the card and finally at the printers in Mechelen the stamp imprint was added. There are 2790 issues. The examples shown are Publibel 516 & 517 from 1941. These have the 'Petit sceau de l'etat' imprinted stamp. The card for Aliante Pudding and Aliox soup is printed in French (fig 11) and in Flemish (fig 12). The advert starts with the slogan 'Despite the war...'. The vanilla is in the bottom left of the advertisement.

Chocolate flavoured with vanilla appears in many forms. One example shows a folded letter sheet for "JE-KA" of Zagreb when part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (fig 13). In this case the stamp is S.G.209 (light green variety) used in 1926 on mail to Dubrovnik. The advertising detail is in fig 13a. Further examples are three pre-stamped cards from Japan advertising Prince Chocolates (fig 14). Vanilla flavouring has traditionally been sold in a solution. On the USA 1892 envelope for Souders' they are advertising their product with this attractive cachet, fig 15. This type of material is fine for American competitions but is less welcome everywhere else in thematic events.



Figs 1 - 4: Desserts with vanilla flavouring

Figs 5 - 6: Waffles by mail order



Figs 7 - 8: Vanilla in the recipe

Fig 9: Recipe for Daube (far right stamp)





Fig 14: Pre-stamped cards from Japan



Fig 15: USA 1892 envelope for Souders'



Fig 16: 14 Goodwin Tidswell Ltd



Fig 17: Prava Ruka advertising slogan, Brno, 1934.



Fig 19: B & G

Advertising using metermarks is very common around the world. To illustrate this figure 16 shows the rare Goodwin Tidswell Ltd advert from 1939. Some of these metermarks can tell other stories, such as the Prava Ruka (Right-hand) advertising slogan. In figure 17 the mark is from 1934, and is from Brno in the First Czechoslovakian Republic. Figure 18 shows the same product, same image however it is now issued in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The final example is an example from the USA for B&G, fig19.

There is a long tradition in Europe for packed good to be sealed with a stamp. These were provided to the retailer by a company to promote their goods. These non-philatelic stamps are very useful in open class displays as they can often fill gaps in a story where no other material exists. These are from Belgium (1954) Denmark (1935) and Germany (1930), fig 20.

No vanilla flavouring display would be complete without showing the hero of Hungarian cake making: Jozef Dobos (fig 21). He is credited with inventing Dobostorta. It is an iconic cake, still served in the Dobos restaurant in Budapest, and featuring plenty of chocolate and vanilla! It is so famous that it was celebrated in a special issue in 2006. The recipe is clear on the sheetlet but is in Hungarian. 📖



Fig 18: Bohemia and Moravia



Fig 20: Advertising labels



Fig 21: Jozef Dobos

FROM THEMATIC EXHIBIT TO THEMED COLLECTION

Jim Etherington

In recent years our Association has enlarged its remit to include not just thematic, but all competition classes that come under the 'pictorial' umbrella. It has also placed more emphasis on 'themed' collecting, recognising many members prefer to create their own collections and not to be governed by competition rules.

For the past twenty years my main focus has been the development of a thematic exhibit and this has driven my collecting interests. I was happy to adhere to competition rules realising that this was the only way to be successful. However while focusing on my thematic exhibit I also started to accumulate other material that, while related to my story, could not be included in the exhibit because they contravened the rules. I began to find this a little frustrating because I could see these items would enable me to elaborate my story more fully.

In discussion with a fellow thematic collector the suggestion was made that I could convert my thematic exhibit to an open class exhibit to allow for the inclusion of this additional material. But this would have involved a complete rewrite and having to comply with more rules. It was my desire to break free and explore a way of collecting that I felt more rewarding rather than being confined by just another set of rules. Having had the satisfaction of achieving Gold at international level, and with the realisation that the only way of achieving a Large Gold was to throw a lot of money at the exhibit, I came to the decision to turn my back on competitive philately.

It was time to form a collection rather than an exhibit. I needed a new sense of purpose. However I could not abandon the idea of forming a collection that told a story. For me it is the theme that holds a collection together and gives it a focus. My thematic exhibit related the events of 1940 from a British perspective, and for a number of reasons I decided to retain this focus for my new collection. I had invested a considerable amount of time accumulating the thematic and philatelic knowledge that underpinned my exhibit and I still retained a considerable interest in the period. I had also built up a good collection of contemporary postcards and paper ephemera relating to the theme. These, together with the postal history items I had amassed as possible items for inclusion in the exhibit, seemed a good basis upon which to develop my new collection.

While retaining the structure of the story as developed in the exhibit, the decision was taken to restrict myself to the collection of covers, postal stationery, postcard and paper ephemera of the period. As a consequence stamps, booklets, proofs and the myriad of other philatelic items all had to go. Fortunately I had sensibly retained sets of stamps where a single stamp had been used for the exhibit, so once replaced in the set it could be resold as a complete set. Together with other unwanted items these are now being sold on eBay.

Writing up the new collection has also been a pleasure. Text in a thematic exhibit has to be succinct, but in a collection there is no limit to the amount of text you include. This allows the story to be elaborated more fully and items to be described in greater detail. Fig 1 illustrates this new freedom well. The cover addressed to Gunner K V Hall, Battery HQ

of the 158/73 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment serving with the B.E.F. and posted from Clapham on 15 June 1940 was returned with the address crossed through and a 'CANNOT BE TRACED' cachet added.

The 158 Battery, together with 157 and 159 Batteries, formed the 53rd (City of London) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment. Tasked with defending RAF airfields in France the 158 Battery was eventually evacuated with 12 Anti-Aircraft Brigade from St. Nazaire, some boarding the *Lancastria*. On 17 June the ship was attacked and sunk by a Junkers 88 aircraft 17km out from St Nazaire. Possibly as many as 9,000 troops, RAF personnel and civilians being evacuated from the port lost their lives.

A search of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website identifies Gunner Kenneth Victor Hall, aged 22, of 158 Bty., 53 H.A.A. Regt. Royal Artillery, the son of Albin Clement and Charlotte Kollie Hall, of Stockwell, London was among those on board *Lancastria*. Together with one sailor and sixty other soldiers from the ship Hall was interred in Les Moutiers-en-Retz Communal Cemetery, France.

If thematic rules are being strictly adhered to, the only element of this cover that might be referred to is the 'CANNOT BE TRACED' cachet to illustrate the various explanatory cachets that were applied to mail being returned from France. But in a collection so much more of the story can be told, particularly the human tragedy surrounding this incident. The cover can further be enhanced by the inclusion of a postcard of the *Lancastria*.

I am certain that moving on from a thematic exhibit to themed collection was the right decision for me. I enjoyed creating the exhibit, but I think I may enjoy even more the freedom of doing my own thing. 📖



Fig 1: 'Cannot be traced' cachet



Fig 2: RMS Lancastria

ATTENTION ALL SHIPPING

Edward Quinton

This collection was started several years ago because there were no new items for any of my collections, thematic or Switzerland, or any of their many sidelines.

I listened to the Shipping Forecast on many occasions and noticed one of the areas had been renamed. Curiosity got the better of me and I wrote to the Meteorological Office to enquire about it. They kindly replied with the details plus their fact sheet (22 pages). This gave the history of the shipping forecast, who, when and how it started, and how the areas developed over time. At first they were very large areas round the coast and gradually became smaller. It also listed all the areas and how they are named: Forth, Tyne, Humber after rivers or estuaries; some are sandbanks: Viking, Forties, Dogger; others are places or islands: Portland, Biscay, Lundy, to name but a few.

This made me think: would it be possible to form a collection illustrating them? But what to use? Stamps, postcards and postmarks for some. Maps for Biscay, North and South Utsira. What about Sole? Two cigarette cards - dover and lemon sole. To get postmarks and cards I contacted the nearest postmaster or postmistress and sent an S.A.E. and a cheque for payment; only one refused to help. But I found one Irish stamp to represent Shannon.

Satisfaction, objective achieved.

The area renamed was Finisterre, renamed FitzRoy after Captain, later Admiral Robert FitzRoy, who started predicting the weather in the 1860s. 



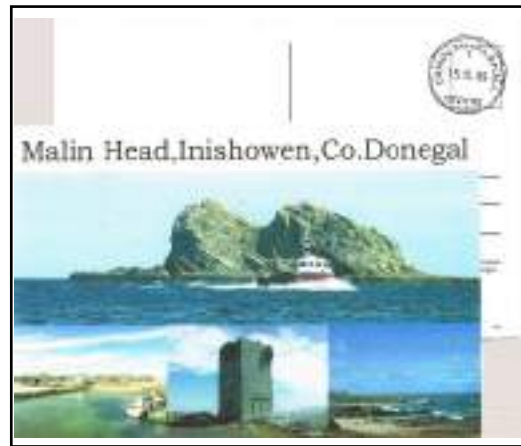
Sandbanks - Viking and Dogger:



Rivers - Thames



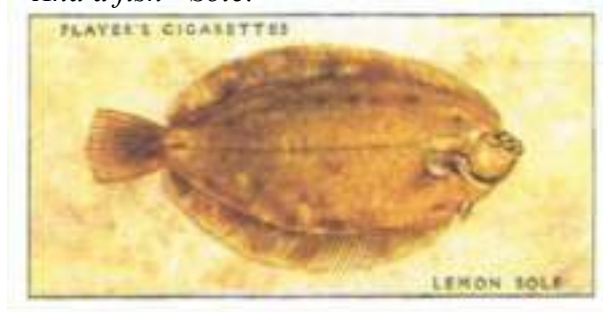
Places - Fair Isle, Malin, Lundy:



An admiral - FitzRoy:



And a fish - Sole:



MY FAVOURITE ITEM(S)

CHES *By Charles Oppenheim*

I have appended two sheets from my chess collection. They represent my favourite items in that collection, and have a common thread - namely dishonesty. You might think chess is a respectable game where nothing naughty or illegal happens, but not so based on these examples. One shows a totally imaginary game of chess played by two people who probably never met, let alone played chess, on covers used as part of US Civil War propaganda. The second shows a fictitious chess tournament organised by a very dodgy lawyer to raise money under the false pretences of organising a chess congress. Again the cover comes from the USA. Based on this very small sample, one might conclude that it is best never to have nothing to do with chess players from the USA.



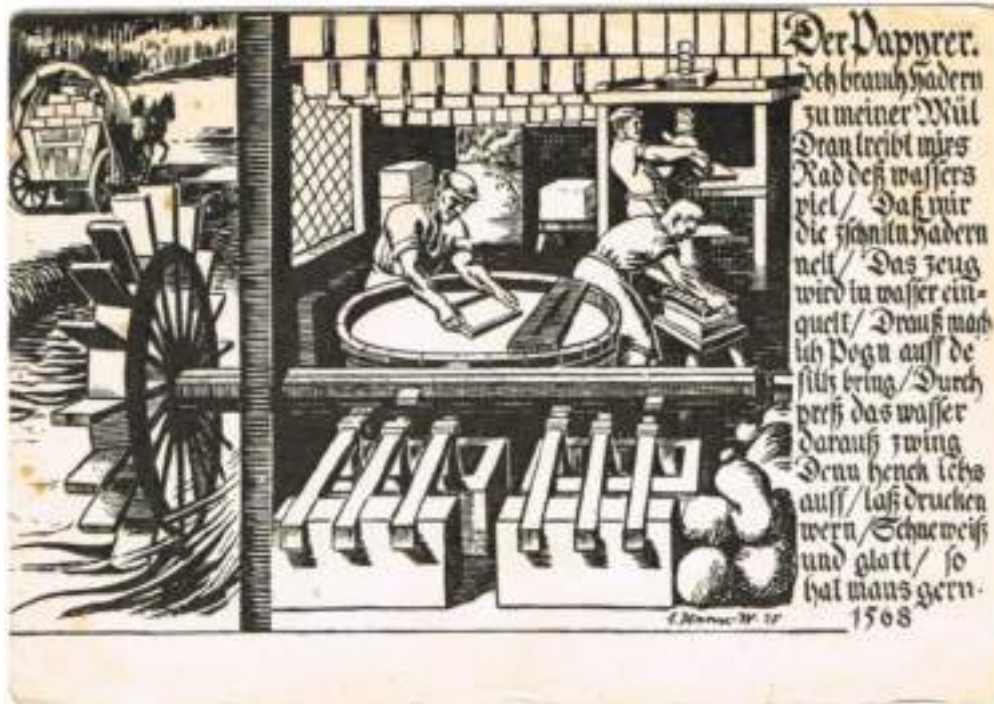
A FAKE 19TH CENTURY CHESS TOURNAMENT IN THE USA?



Isaac Trabue (1829-1907), an eccentric lawyer and chess fanatic, promoted the first of what he hoped would be an annual series of Trabue Chess Congresses, to be held in "Trabue City" (now called Punta Gorda), Florida in mid December, 1885. Entry to the congress was open to anyone "except lawyers" (Trabue disliked other lawyers). The prizes were plots of land, which Trabue had bought as a speculation, but had turned out to be swamps; Trabue believed they could be used to grow pineapples. No 1885 chess congress was held, and historians dispute whether Trabue was a con man or just incompetent. The cover, posted in Louisville, Kentucky, where Trabue lived, is the earliest known to advertise a chess congress. The letter itself is from Trabue to the Florida Land Agent, indicating that his intentions might have been honest after all. It is unclear if any 19th century Trabue congresses were run, but these days an annual Trabue Congress is held in Punta Gorda every December.

PAPER MAKING *By Wendy Buckle*

They say that a picture paints a thousand words, and that is certainly true for diagrams. A sketch of how something works is far less cumbersome than a wordy explanation, which is why I was so delighted to find this World War II feldpost card, with its cutaway illustration of how a paper mill works. It shows the outside of the mill, with the waterwheel driving the beaters (bottom centre) which pulverise the rags into pulp; in the centre a man dips the mould into the pulp and hands on the drained sheet to be pressed between felts to remove excess water, while the man at the back piles the sheets into a press to remove more moisture. Top left is a cart carrying away the finished product. The illustration is adapted from a 1568 woodcut by Jost Amman, the first known printed illustration of a paper mill, and as such one that appears in every book I have read on the subject. I've been looking for it on a philatelic item for a long time.



PARACHUTING *By Barry Stagg*

Most collectors have favourite items or favourite sheets. Perhaps it is an item that has taken years to find and you have a sense of pride in finding it, perhaps it was the first item you collected or the item or sheet that tells a fundamental or important part of your story. So what is my favourite sheet or item? I found this a difficult judgement to make. I looked at all of these possible criteria and found many possible items and sheets but none outweighed all the others. Then I looked at it from another perspective: as thematic collectors we love researching and telling the story, in my case the story of parachuting, archery or daffodils. But which one do I feel the greatest passion for? Without a doubt it is the parachuting story. It is so full of drama, emotion and of incredible bravery and sometimes stupidity! You cannot help admiring those early men and women who parachuted into the Victorian sky dressed in their Sunday best or, during World War II, parachuted into the night sky not knowing what was waiting for them.

I asked myself which page of my parachuting collection do I like the most and I quickly came up with the answer. This page (see over) is a short study that you are allowed in a thematic exhibit. Thematically it depicts seven parachutists who trained with SOE and went to various countries in occupied Europe during World War II. Sadly they all died. From a philatelic point of view these are some of the first stamps issued by Israel, with an interesting range of colours and overprints.

3.2 Allies learn a lot from Axis parachuting failures. A study of the Israeli Interim Period parachute issue of 1948.

The Interim Period in Israel took place from 2nd May until the 23rd May 1948 (Saki), as the British were leaving the country and the Israeli government was being formed. The transitional government used whatever materials they could find to provide a postal identity, often using overprinted Jewish National Fund (JNF) labels. One set of labels commemorated the 35 Jewish parachutists who were sent into occupied Europe in WW2 to organize and work with the Resistance movement. Many never returned. Seven of them, Avraham Yaron, Euzo Solari, Aba Bendoren, Perez Goldstein, Aviva Rak, Hana Senesch and Rafael Reiss were national heroes and captured the heart of the new nation, hence their appearance on the labels. By adding a value on to these seven labels they became some of the first stamps issued by the new state of Israel. The labels and stamps can be found in black, brown, blue and green with or without either the Hash or Tel Aviv overprint.



The black labels valued with no overprint. Originally they would have been in sheets of 25, five horizontal and seven vertical stamps.
The set of JNF labels are without a value and are poorly perforated, suggesting a roulette wheel was used.



The 10 mil block variety with the Tel Aviv overprint. They were purchased 11 by 11.



The 10 mil brown Tel Aviv overprint defaced with a star within a circle for reasons as yet unknown.



The 70 mil green variety Tel Aviv overprint.



The 10 mil green variety overprint.



The postage is correct as it cost 10 Mils to post a letter at the time. After the 2nd May postmark, the first day of the interim period.



The blue label variety.



A registered letter in the period cost 25 Mils to post. This is the value on the envelope.

BTA NEWS

BTA ZOOM PRESENTATION 09 DECEMBER

You are invited to join in the first British Thematic Association virtual presentation by Zoom on Wednesday 9th December at 19.30.

To start off our displays and discussions on Zoom Andrew Millington will show some items from his collection of copper-related stamps. It is a wide ranging collection and includes geology, technology, art and architecture, and economic and social history - so something for most tastes!

All you need to do to register for this event is [email](#) and ask to be registered.

YOU WILL BE SENT A LINK TO THE PRESENTATION ONE HOUR BEFORE THE EVENT.

The event will last for approximately one hour and there will be an opportunity for you to ask questions.

This Zoom event is accessible on most devices including smartphones, tablets (like iPads), and laptop and desktop computers.

You do not need a computer camera to take part in this event – if you wish, simply choose to join without video when Zoom opens. Nor do you need a Zoom account.

For more information on how to use Zoom, including video tutorials about how to join a meeting, [click here](#).

DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES BTA PRESENTATION ON ZOOM 09 DECEMBER 2020 AT 19.30 hrs.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

Unless you have prepaid for 2020 you will find a renewal slip with this issue of *Themescene*. You have the option of paying the full renewal fee, which entitles you to a print copy of *Themescene*, or paying a reduced fee of £15.00 if you wish to receive the electronic-only version of *Themescene*. The choice of course is entirely yours, but this is a cheaper option, and for overseas members a much cheaper option. Just indicate your choice on the renewal form.

Whichever option you choose, all members have access to the e-version of *Themescene* via the '[Resources](#)' tab on the BTA website. The full text of the magazine is available from 2005 to date. You will need to set up a username and password. Go to the '[Users](#)' tab of the BTA website and click "Request a Password". If you have any problems please email us via the 'Contact' link on the website.

BTA WEEKEND

We have decided, with regret, to postpone the next Weekend, due in March 2021, since it becoming clear that the coronavirus will still be with us by that date. It has been rescheduled for 2022. The programme remains unchanged.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES BTA WEEKEND 30 SEPTEMBER to 02 OCTOBER 2022

BTA ONE-PAGE VIRTUAL COMPETITION

The BTA is excited to announce its first-ever 'One-Page Competition'.

We have launched this to encourage people, regardless of age and experience, to exhibit something from their thematic collection that excites them and will be of wide interest to our members as well as other thematic and topical collectors. The rules are simple, you do not need to have exhibited before to enter and, as the theme of the competition is 'Fun with Thematics', why not have a go!

Those of you who read *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* and *Stamp Collecting* will have seen their one-page competitions, and you may find inspiration there.

Rules

1. Exhibits can be on any aspect of pictorial, thematic or topical collecting on any topic you like. Stamps, covers, postal stationery, slogan or commemorative postmarks, picture postcards, etc. are included: i.e., anything within the remit of a thematic, topical, picture postcard or open class in an organised competition.
2. Exhibits are restricted to one A4 page (including international equivalents) and other pages of approximately A4 size, or an album page, in either portrait or landscape format.
3. The balance of philatelic material-to-text is your choice.
4. Your page can be printed, typed or handwritten. It must have a title, but do not include your name on the page.
5. The closing date for entries is 31 January 2021.
6. There is no fee to enter this competition (though in future years there may be a modest entry fee) and each person can only submit one entry.

Judging Criteria

Judging criteria for entrants aged 21 or younger

	<i>10-15 years old</i>	<i>16-18 years old</i>	<i>19-21 years old</i>
Treatment	33	35	35
Knowledge	22	27	30
Material	20	23	25
Presentation	25	15	10
	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

These are based on FIP Youth Classes.

Judging criteria for entrants older than 21 years

THEMATIC EXHIBITS Category and sub-category		
Treatment	Title and plan	15
	Treatment	15
	Innovation	5
Knowledge study and research	Thematic	15
	Philatelic	15
Condition and rarity	Condition	10
	Rarity	20
Presentation		5
		<i>100</i>

OPEN EXHIBITS Category and sub-category		
Treatment	Title and plan	10
	Treatment	20
Knowledge, study and research	Thematic	20
	Philatelic	15
Condition and rarity	Condition	10
	Rarity	20
Presentation		5
		<i>100</i>

PICTURE POSTCARD EXHIBITS Category and sub-category		
Treatment	Title and plan	10
	Treatment	20
Knowledge, study and research		35
Condition and rarity	Condition	10
	Rarity	20
Presentation		5
		<i>100</i>


The judges will use whichever of these criteria are most appropriate to the exhibit, and reserve the right to use other F.I.P. Class judging criteria if they are deemed more appropriate.

Scanning and file details:

Exhibits should be prepared as you would for a normal display.

- Scan the page at 300 dpi as a separate pdf or jpeg file. Do not use protectors.
- Name the file with your “Family name; space; First initial; space, First three letters of your exhibit title” (e.g., Citizen J Uni.pdf or .jpeg). If your title begins with the word THE, use the first three letters of the second word. Also, if the first word is less than three letters, e.g, A, use the first three letters of the second word.
- Send the file as an e-mail attachment to Andrew [Millington](#), include your name and, if you are 21 or under, your age in the email.

If you do not have access to a scanner personally or through a local stationer or printer, please contact [Andrew Millington](#).

Entries will be judged by a panel drawn from the British Thematic Association committee. All entrants will receive e-certificates and feedback. Entries will be published on the BTA website, winning entries will be published in the BTA’s journal, *Themescene*, and printed and displayed at Spring Stampex in London in February 2021. 



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VIRTUAL STAMPEX

Report by Wendy Buckle

“It’s Stampex - but not as you know it” was the marketing line to introduce ‘Virtual Stampex’ held 01 to 03 October. Stampex organisers the Philatelic Traders’ Society had taken the decision some months ago to cancel this year’s usual event, and instead poured time and energy into organising what they claimed to be the world’s first international interactive online stamp show. The claim may be a little generous, events have been happening in the USA at least, but they certainly succeeded in putting on a major show with a choice of activities.

The site was logical and easy to use. You needed to register in order to enter. An online plus downloadable Show Guide was available from the Info Desk, which also had IT Support and a link to “Stamps in the Attic”, an initiative launched by The Philatelic Traders’ Society offering those people with inherited or gifted collections the opportunity to have them appraised for free at Virtual Stampex.



Events that you would normally expect to see at Stampex went ahead. The ABPS organised two competitions: an inter-federation and an individual one-frame. There were 26 entries in the One-Frame competition, including five Thematic and two Postcard. The Inter-Federation competition had two entries each from eight Federations, with five Thematic, three Picture Postcard and one Open entry. Both of course were virtual, with competitors submitting scanned entries. These looked good on the screen, offering single-page or multi-page view.

Dealers were to be found in the Booth Hall. You could browse the screen to see who was there, or use the Search facility to identify a specific dealer. A Chat facility was available (by text or audio / video). Stock was displayed via links from the dealers’ stand through to their website. From the buyers’ perspective this has advantages and disadvantages: if you know precisely what you are looking for you may be more likely to find it, but just browsing generally through web pages does not have the same enjoyment as browsing through actual stock. Serendipity doesn’t work very well. And if you regularly

check a dealers' stock online any way you may not have found anything new. It also meant some dealers who always attended Stampex were not there because they have no online presence; this may be a wake-up call to them. On the other hand there were a number of overseas dealers who never attended Stampex in person and who I at least was unaware of before this event. One tip for dealers: the Chat facility was being well used by collectors with specific questions, but one dealer at least did not respond. He must have lost sales.

The Auditorium was the place for talks, online auctions and private treaty sales. There were eleven talks, delivered via Zoom, on a whole range of subjects. And if you missed them they could be viewed retrospectively.

The Museum of Philately took the place of the traditional Stampex Court of Honour. It describes itself as a unique digital platform that captures and preserves award winning collectors, collections and rarities. Those with Grand Prix or Gold Medal winning collections can discuss the inclusion of their collections. It includes two collections by BTA members: *A Jubilee Reminiscence: the 1890 Penny Postage Jubilee* by John Davies and *The Jewish Homeland, our struggle for survival* by Lawrence Fisher.

It was a wet weekend when Virtual Stampex took place, and I was glad to have something to focus on indoors. It's certainly not a full replacement for the real thing, in large part because the interaction with dealers was not face-to-face, and there was no meeting up with old friends. And if you are not comfortable with IT then this wasn't for you. But on the plus side there was no travelling, no getting tired from standing around, and you could spread the event over three days without any hotel costs. Without it there would have been no Stampex and no chance to carry on our hobby. I'm grateful to the organisers and participants for the huge time and effort which went into it. 📖

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EXHIBITING PAGE

TC News September 2020

The latest edition of the newsletter of the F.I.P. Thematic Commission has been published. It contains three articles in particular which will be of interest to exhibitors.

Dr. Joachim Maas

Mathematics, a science between theory and application: thematic and philatelic challenges.

At Stockholmia 2019 Dr. Maas won 'Best in Class' for his thematic entry. He also gave a presentation, reprinted here, on how he told the story of mathematics, the science that deals with the logic of quantity, shape and arrangement. A prime requirement of any thematic exhibit is to illustrate your subject using the widest possible range of philatelic material. This is challenging for any subject, but for abstract mathematical principles it is doubly so. The article shows many examples of the author's ingenuity, of which three examples are highlighted here.



A Swiss perfin illustrates Pythagoras' theorem



Cape of Good Hope triangular pair shows a rhomboid shape, as defined by Euclid

France issued stamps to the value of 1, 2, 4 and 8 decimes (this cover has one of each): an illustration of the binary numeral system.



Much of the material shown ranks as high philatelic importance, and well as high thematic importance; and while most of us may never aspire to the level of this stunning exhibit reading the article may open one's mind to different ways of thinking about illustrating a subject.

Jari Majander. Pictorial stationery cards of Greece 1901–1903

The first pictorial stationery cards were picture postcards printed to private order by the Greek Post which came into use in 1901. A company could provide a batch of cards to the postal authorities, who applied an imprinted stamp on to the address side. It is within the rules to use the picture side in thematic exhibits provided it is described as printed to private order. They are mainly tourist postcards featuring views of Athens and Corfu. Official pictorial stationery cards were issued from 1901, in values for both domestic and overseas use. There are 384 different cards covering many subjects including sport, archaeology, classical mythology, architecture, churches and religion and arts and sciences. The article has helpful philatelic information for anyone writing-up one of these cards.



Official postal stationery card showing the Theatre of Epidauros

Jari Majander. In quest for abusive and undesirable stamp issues

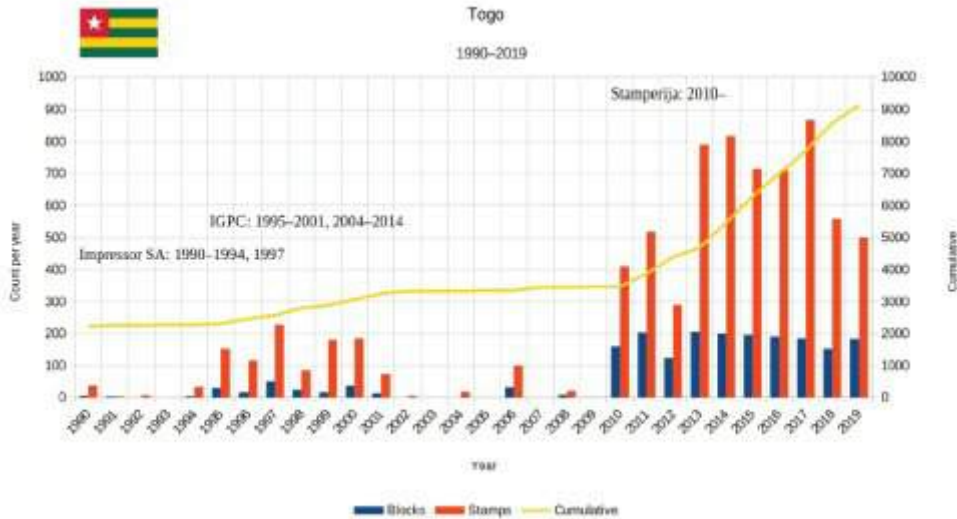
The latest *Guidelines for judging thematic philately exhibits* gives a list of “inappropriate material” which includes “abusive, illegal and undesirable issues, as defined by the UPU and the FIP Philatelic Congress of 1976”. But while illegal stamps are clearly defined according to the UPU, abusive and undesirable issues are less so. Most, if not all countries of the world have issued stamps unnecessary or undesirable. However it is still possible to distinguish between what are acceptable and less acceptable issues. Many of the latter have been issued by the two largest agents working on behalf of postal authorities: the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation (IGPC) based in the United States, and Stamperija Ltd based in Lithuania. Between them they manage the stamp issues of over 80 countries.

The UPU Code of Ethics defines abusive issues as those where the theme is contrary to the culture of the country, or a set where the number of stamps issued far exceeds acceptable limits. The article investigates this with a detailed statistical analysis of those countries with a sudden change in their stamp issuing policy or in the annual number of new issues over the last three decades. Care needs to be taken when making judgements, some poorer countries get valuable income from their stamps, and circumstances change, nevertheless it is worth looking at the evidence. The article goes into some detail about the desirability of using particular issues in a thematic exhibit where no other philatelic material is available to illustrate a particular concept. There are times when the subject matter is relevant; but there are also many examples of issues where the subject matter is not relevant to country’s culture and which have been produced only to satisfy the demands of topical

collectors. The author makes clear that such stamps are to be avoided completely in exhibits.

Following the article is a statistical analysis of 33 countries, for each one giving the numbers of stamps and blocks issued between 1990 and 2019, together with very brief political and historical details about the country and an overview of its issues. This analysis should prove very helpful to anyone not sure about the status of an issue.

An epilogue to the article gives the history and current practice of nine postal agencies.




Example of analysis: issues per year, cumulative total, postal agency managing the process.

TC News is on the [FIP Thematic Commission](#) website. 📖




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BOOK REVIEW

TOPICAL ADVENTURES: A GUIDE TO TOPICAL AND THEMATIC STAMP COLLECTING

Edited by Jack R. Congrove, Dawn R. Hamman and Martin Kent Miller
American Topical Association, Handbook #168, 2020. 190pp, col illus throughout.
Can be ordered via the [ATA website](#)
Reviewed by Barry Stagg

Don't be put off by the title of this book, *Topical Adventures*. This book is for all thematic collectors. It has been put together by the American Topical Association (ATA) and, as you would expect, it is clearly aimed at the USA collector; however, there are lots and lots of good ideas and information that anybody would find interesting and helpful. And I must say the BTA gets a number of mentions!



So, who is this book aimed at? I would say any thematic collector. There is a lot of information for the beginner but I would be surprised if the experienced collector did not find items of value. The book is well produced in colour with clear illustrations. The table of contents has a good structure and is easy to follow and the twelve page index is very comprehensive making navigating the book easy. I like the glossary of terms. Although any experienced collector will be aware of the majority of terms listed it will be of great value to somebody new to the hobby.

The book, unsurprisingly, starts with an overview of the ATA. After that it looks in a steady and methodical manner through what to collect (whatever you want), where to find the material and the types of material to collect. Some useful information on how to store and mount your collection follows and then pages with many illustrations on exhibiting your collection. Two comments that I believe we all would agree with is that thematic collecting should be fun and that there is 'no right or wrong way to collect stamps'. And I fully support the book's suggestion that any thematic collection should 'follow your passion'. It does make a difference.

I rather like the chapter on Errors, Freaks and Oddities. It has some nice illustrations of typical and famous errors such as the 'Inverted Jenny' but also includes missing colours and incorrect labelling on stamps to name but two types of Errors. There are sections on Ephemera, Revenues and much more. There is even a section on ATA study units that many will find useful if you wish to join another philatelic grouping covering your collection topic. I believe the book would have benefited if it had more on collecting postcards, although I must say there are a number of good references where the interested person could obtain a lot of further information. On a similar line I was disappointed with the lack of Display (Open to most of us) information. It does get a mention but perhaps it is just too new a topic to warrant inclusion in this book.

This is not a 'coffee table' book. It is designed to be used as a reference book. If the BTA still had a library then I would recommend we buy a copy. With 190 pages there is something for everybody. At \$44.50, or \$49.50 for non-members, plus postage it is not cheap but with the festive season nearly upon us perhaps this would fill somebody's stocking this Christmas. 📖

FAVOURITE THINGS COMPETITION!

<https://www.stampactive.co.uk/competitions-2/competitions/>

If you're 12 or under, have a go at this 1-page children's competition. Choose some stamps that go together as a theme, or that tell a story. You can use stamps, covers and other philatelic items if you want.

Choose stamps of your FAVOURITE THINGS which could include

- **Sports** - maybe describe a game or match, or a dance
- **Animals** - such as pets, birds, wild animals, or just one type of animal
- **Colours of the Rainbow** - find all the colours in stamps
- **Flowers** - maybe choose flowers for a bouquet
- **Places you go to** eg castles
- **People** eg Kings and Queens
- **Hobbies** - what is yours?
- **Objects** - you could show stamps for an imaginary museum
- **Transport** - maybe show stamps of a real or imaginary trip
- **Countries or Continents** eg Canada, GB, or Europe, Africa
- **Authors** - your favourite books or make up your own story
- **Toys** - you could show toys or describe games you like
- **Time of year** eg Spring, Summer, Autumn or Winter, or the whole year
- **A song or story** - use stamps to illustrate the words
- **Your Perfect Day** - of all your favourite things!
- Choose a title and write it at the top. Then lay your stamps in a neat layout and write something beneath each stamp.



The possibilities are endless! Have a go!

FAVOURITE THINGS' STAMP COMPETITION INFORMATION:

<https://www.stampactive.co.uk/competitions-2/competitions/>

CLOSING DATE 31st JANUARY 2021

RULES

- Young people up to the age of 13 (on 1st September 2020) are eligible to enter. UK Only.
- **Closing date for entries is now 31st January 2021.**
- Stamps, covers and other philatelic items can be used. The page must have a title, and either captions or a short write up that tells the story. The entrant's full name and address (home or school) should be on the back of the page, also their age on 1st September 2020.
- Entries should be on good quality paper (A4) or a similar size album page, and placed in a clear protector. The entries can be either hand-written or prepared using a computer.
- Entries will only be returned if a large stamped-addressed envelope is enclosed with the entry.
- There will be three age groups – Up to 7; 8-9; 10-12 – with prizes being awarded (for First, Second, Third) in each age group, sponsored by Isle of Man Stamps & Coins. Winners will receive select philatelic gifts selected by Isle of Man Stamps & Coins website to the value of £25 (1st), £20 (2nd) and £15 (3rd).
- The best overall entry will receive a prize valued at £40.
- Winners will be announced in the philatelic press and on the Stamp Active Website www.stampactive.co.uk. The best entries will be on display at the next Stampex Exhibition at the Business and Design Centre (near the Angel tube station in Islington, London), and also in Prestwick, Ayrshire.
- Send entries to: **Stamp Active Network, 3 Longfellow Road, Banbury, OX16 9LB**



BTA PROGRAMME 2020

- 09 December **BTA PRESENTATION ON ZOOM**
Andrew Millington showing items from his collection on
Copper

BTA PROGRAMME 2021

- 17 - 20 February **Spring Stampex**
Entries to the BTA virtual one-page competition (see page
132) will be displayed at Spring Stampex. The BTA will
make all the arrangements for this.
- 12 June **Annual General Meeting and guest speaker 14.30**
Plus guest speaker
At Swinpex, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic College
Ocotol Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR
Over 40 dealers, free parking, and cafe facilities.
- 29 September -
02 October **Autumn Stampex**
At Business Design Centre, Islington
Lead society BTA. BTA Table at the event.
Seminar led by José Ramón Moreno, former President of
FEPA and an FIP judge, on 'How I could improve the
evaluation of my thematic exhibit'.
- 09 October **South of England Stamp Fair**
At Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL
Over 40 dealers, free parking and cafe facilities.
BTA Table

COVID - 19

Please note that this programme is **provisional**. Events may be cancelled dependant on government advice; please check the BTA website for current information.

If the situation improves the BTA will consider adding to this programme during the year.

BTA WEEKEND

Now rescheduled for 30 September to 02 October 2022

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WE WISH ALL OUR READERS A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS



Christmas 2020
STAR, WINSCOMBE
03.11.20

