THEMESCENE
June 2021

In this issue we:

Look at geopolitics
Venice, part 4
With **John Davis**

Examine some uncomfortable history
Penal colonisation of Australia, part 1
With **Chris Wheeler**

Admire a stamp designer and engraver
"Following the Masters"
With **David Roseveare**

Get up to date with digital technology
Blockchain meets philately
With **Estelle Shale**

Rethink collecting
A new approach to collecting
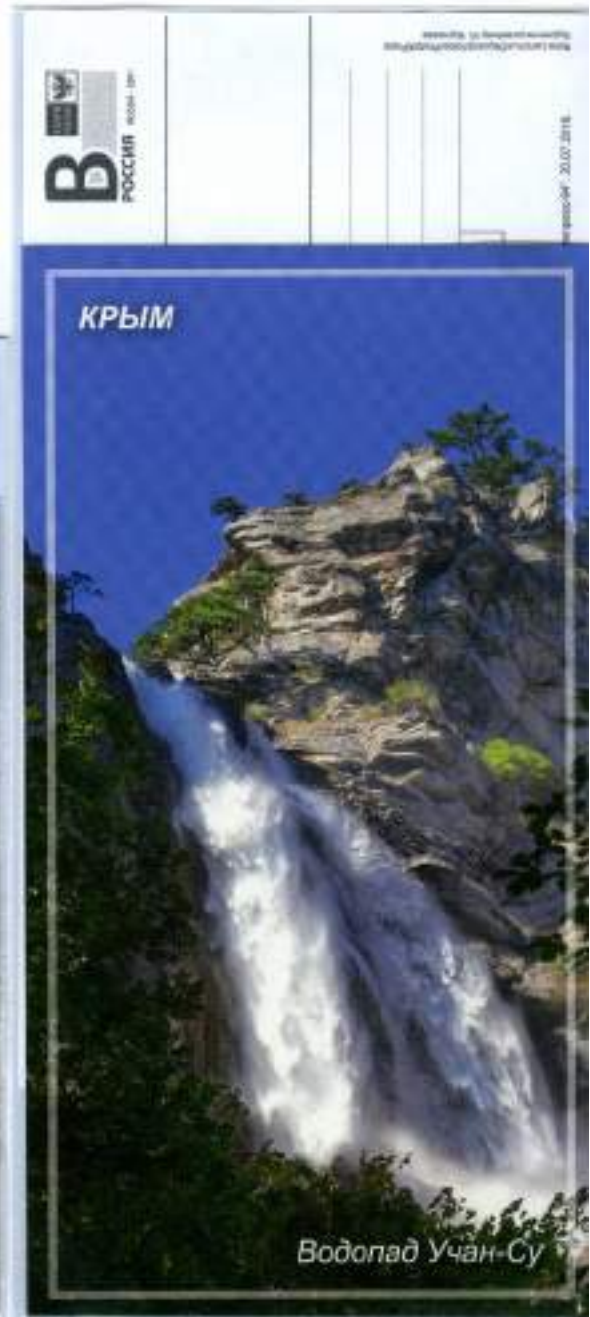*With* **Barry Stagg**

BRITISH THEMATIC
ASSOCIATION

2.4.2 STATISTICS

Height

Uchan-Su Waterfall
Yalta, Crimea

At 100m high the falls consist of two leaps and is the highest fall in Crimea and the Ukraine.

Two views of the Fall – the first being issued in 22 Sept 1988 while the second was 2018.

РОССИЯ

КРЫМ

Водопад Учан-Су

THEMESCENE

Vol. 38, No. 2, Whole Number 143
JUNE 2021

CONTENTS

REGULAR COLUMNS

SPECIAL FEATURES

ADVERTISERS

EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

I f you enjoy reading *Themescene* it is thanks to our contributors who write such interesting articles, and we like to record annually the work they put into this by awarding 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 John Davis for the first two of his series of articles on Venice. Second was Mark Humfrey with "Finding vanilla flavour in a thematic collection" and joint third were Paolo Duek with "Jaffa Gate and the Tower of David" and David Walker with "Interactive postage stamps". Voting was close, and many of last year's authors received at least one vote for first or second, which suggests to me at least that we are providing a wide range of interesting material. Thank you to all our contributors.

In this issue John finishes his series on Venice (page 40), and a new series starts (the first of five), this time on Australia (page 47). There are a number of shorter articles, and two more extracts from members' favourite items or pages. But I need more of these: just send me a short piece: a few pages, a few items, a few words, to feature your much-loved material. It's a quick and easy way to contribute to the magazine. In March *Themescene* we published the results of our first one page virtual competition. All the entries are on our website, and the three winning entries are published here on pages 57-60. And you will see on page 64 that the competition will be repeated next year, so start planning! I read Barry Stagg's article on *New approaches to collecting* (page 60) with interest. If you have had success with his "unknown unknowns" category drop me a line, I'd like to publish success stories about unlikely searches. The June issue of *Themescene* normally contains paperwork for our AGM, but for the second year running we have had to cancel the meeting due to Covid. Surely we will be back to normal in 2022!

This issue is packed with a variety of topics, but (and I know I say this regularly) I would love to have more. It makes planning so much easier if I have plenty of material. I just need a Word document and separate jpg illustrations. If you enjoy reading this issue then please consider contributing. Looking more widely we have been approached by the editor of *Stamp Collecting*, who would welcome thematic and other pictorial collecting articles. If you are interested in contributing please see the website All About Stamps.

And here's another suggestion for contributing. Our programme of Zoom talks (page 62) is going very well, and we will be holding them monthly for at least the remainder of this year. Would you like to give a talk? The requirement is a 30 - 40 minute talk using PowerPoint. If you have not presented on Zoom before our webmaster Jon is very happy to show you the ropes. This is a chance to share the fascination of your own subject. If you are interested please email Barry Stagg. All members receive emails alerting them to the forthcoming programme (unless they have requested otherwise). A few addresses are returned undelivered, perhaps because we have an old or incorrect email address. If you are not getting these emails and want them please contact us via the BTA website.

And finally, fingers crossed for the resumption of meetings and fairs!   📖

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg

Harold Wilson once said that a week was a long time in politics. I'm sure he was right. (Although these days with social media and a photographer in everybody's mobile phone it is more like an hour is a long time)! But a year without personal contact with fellow philatelists is certainly a long time. Virtual presentations and virtual shows are a lot better than no presentations or shows at all but fall well short of the real thing. As I write this we are all expecting the Prime Minister to relax the Covid rules further next week and we can return to something closer to normality. I'm looking forward to getting out and about - I think! I hope to get to Midpex in July and to Autumn Stampex later in the year, but after a year of driving no further than the local tip the thought of a 100 mile drive is making me feel a little nervous. And, as for spending a few days in London . . . !

Whilst talking about Autumn Stampex may I remind you all that we have a rare opportunity to showcase thematic collecting at that event. We hope to have over 100 frames of thematic material to show the philatelic community what a diverse range of topics can be collected. If, like myself, you don't want your collection judged then that's fine. Just tick the display only box on the entry form. More details about this event can be found on page 64.

And talking about collections I must admit to a failure, and I'm sure I'm not the only one. When we went into lockdown a year ago I thought it would be a great opportunity to write up my collection. I did get it out of the box and I did look at it, but after twelve months I've done precisely nothing with it! I have tried to convince myself it was because I was busy doing other things, particularly in the garden. And we had such wonderful weather over the summer it was not the right time to stay inside. And, as winter set in I thought this will be the time; but I never started to add items to the collection that I had bought over the past few years. Perhaps I need the incentive of a deadline. With Autumn Stampex only four months away then perhaps I should start now! But maybe not!

I know Zoom presentations are not to everybody's liking but it has allowed all those BTA members who can't get to physical meetings an opportunity to meet, if only on screen, fellow philatelists. At least one positive thing to come out of our lockdown. And on a similar line it has allowed collectors in this country to see what is going on abroad as well, particularly in the USA. Although the time difference is unfortunate - I must admit keeping awake at 11pm is becoming more of a challenge these days – I have seen some interesting collections and been given food for thought.

And talking of food (and apologies to those amongst us who are vegetarian) those bacon rolls they serve at Midpex are starting to taste very nice! Perhaps I will see you there, assuming I can remember how to get into 4th gear in the car! 100 miles. Now I am getting a little nervous!

Keep safe and well. 📖

VENICE. PART 4: THE THREE VENICES (OR SHOULD THAT BE FOUR?)

John Davis

Introduction

We must first establish that 'Venice' is not just the city built in the Adriatic Lagoon, and known for its canals and gondolas. It is, in the broadest sense, the geographical region in north Italy (and at one time included the Dalmation coast, part of the former Yugoslavia). The historical and geographical boundaries of the four Venices have been very complex. Throughout history, the region has been frequently contested by wars and battles, with parts of it controlled at various times by the Republic of Venice, Austria-Hungary, Austria, France, Italy, and Yugoslavia.

The coinage of the geographical terms Venezia Tridentina, Venezia Euganea, and Venezia Giulia (later Fruili-Venezia Giulia) known collectively as the three Venices (Triveneto), see Map 1, was one of the most lasting and politically influential contributions made by Graziadio Isaia Ascoli (1829-1907). He was born into a wealthy Italian-speaking Jewish family, educated privately at home, and in 1854 wrote his first major work on Oriental languages. He became a linguist, and in Italy he was known, above all, for his study of Italian dialects.

Map 1 shows the Friuli area, including Udine and Pordenone, originally a part of Venezia Euganea. Today, the three provinces are referred to as Trentino-Alto Adige (since 1947), Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. At the time, the term Venezia Giulia referred to the Friuli region of north east Italy and the Austrian Littoral (coastal areas of crown lands) which were a part of the Kingdom of Illyria within the Austrian Empire. Later, Map 2 shows the provinces of Udine and Pordenone incorporated with Venezia Giulia to form the new province of Fruili-Venezia Giulia, with Trieste as its capital.

But let us turn the clock back to 1814/1815 when Venice, following Napoleon's defeat at the hand of the Austrians, became a part of Austria's Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, which extended from Milan and Como in the west to the Province of Udine in the east. The Fourth Venice. In 1859, Lombardy was ceded to the Kingdom of Sardinia, the embryonic Italian state, and in 1866, the Venetia area was unified with Italy.

The Stamps

The stamp issues fall into three main categories: 1) Lombardy-Venetia; 2) Austrian territories acquired by Italy in the First World War; and 3) Second World War.

1. Lombardy-Venetia 1850/1864 with later re-printings

This area had its own stamp issues based on a different currency to that of Austrian stamps. Stamps of the Arms of Austria (fig 1) and Emperor Francis Joseph 1 were valid throughout Austria, although Austrian stamps were not valid for use within Lombardy-Venetia. Postal Fiscal and Newspaper stamps were also issued in 1854 and 1858/59 respectively.

Map 1. Triveneto (the Three Venices)

Venezia Tridentina

Provinces of Udine and Pordenone

AUSTRIA

(Alto Adige)

Venezia Tridentina

Bolzano

(Trentino)

JUGOSLAVIA

(Friuli)

Belluno

Trento

Udine

Venezia Euganea

Pordenone

Gorizia

Vicenza

Treviso

Trieste

(Veneto)

Venezia Giulia

Venezia Euganea

Verona

Venezia

Fiume

Padova

Venezia Giulia

Lombardia

MARE ADRIATICO

Rovigo

Pola

Emilia-Romagna

Map 2. Fruili-Venezia Giulia

Pordenone

Udine

Gorizia

Trieste

Map 3. Trentino-Alto Adige – formally Venezia Tridentina

Kufstein

Kitzbühel

Reutte

Austria

Innsbruck

Schwaz

Imst

NORDTIROL

Landeck

OST-TIROL

Lienz

Sterzing

Bruneck

SÜDTIROL ALTO ADIGE

Schlanders

Brixen

Italy

Meran

Bozen

Formerly Austria but now Italy

TRENTINO

Trento

Pergine Valsugana

Riva

Rovereto

Now one Region of Italy known as Trentino-Alto Adige (formerly Venezia Tridentina)

2. Austrian Territories acquired by Italy First World War.

2a. Trentino 1918/1919

After the battle of Vittorio Veneto and the Armistice of 3rd November 1918, Italian troops occupied the Trentino South Tyrol up to the Brenner Pass. This was one of the Austrian territories acquired by, and awarded to Italy by the Treaty of St. Germain on 10th September 1919, see Map 3. Austrian and Italian stamps were issued with three different Trentino/Tridentina overprints (fig 2) one of which was also surcharged. The same stamps were also issued for Venezia Giulia, General issue and Dalmatia.

2b. Venezia Giulia 1918/1919

Trieste, Gorizia and the adjoining areas, with the Istrian peninsula were occupied by Italy in 1918 and awarded to it in 1919. There were four different types of overprint, one of which was also surcharged. A set of Austrian postage stamps was issued in 1918 (fig 3) followed by Italian Postage, Postage Due, and Express Letter Stamps.

2c. General Issue 1919

There were two different types of overprint/surcharge applied to sets of postage stamps (fig 4), Postage Due and Express Letter stamps

2d. Dalmatia 1919/1922

Present day Croatia comprises four historical regions viz. Slavonia, Istria, Dalmatia and Croatia. Italian troops occupied Dalmatia in 1918, until, by the Treaty of Rapallo on 12th November 1920, they gave up all except the territory of Zara (Zadar), which remained under Italian sovereignty until 15th September 1947, when it reverted to being a part of the Croatian Province of Yugoslavia, and is now in Croatia. The stamps were issued mainly for use in Zara, but a few were also available for use within the rest of Dalmatia. There were two different types of overprint/surcharge applied to sets of postage stamps (fig 5), Postage Due and Express Letter stamps.

3. Second World War

3a. German Occupation of ZARA (ZADAR) 1943

Zara (now Croatian Zadar), on the Dalmation coast, was originally a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire which after the First World War was acquired by Italy and annexed by it in 1919, with the rest of the Dalmation coast being a part of Yugoslavia. With the surrender of Italy in 1943, the Germans occupied Zara and overprinted existing stocks of Italian Postage (fig 6), War Propaganda, Air Mail, Express Letter, and Postage Due stamps "Deutsche Besetzung Zara" (German Occupation Zara), or ZARA within a pattern of bars.

The bombing of Zara during the Second World War by the Allies lasted from November 1943 to October 1944 and was noted for the number of attacks, the number of fatalities, and the destruction of 80% of the city's buildings. Zadar has been called the "Dresden of the Adriatic".

3b. Venezia Giulia and Istria (Istra) Yugoslav Occupation of Trieste 1945

Yugoslav partisans occupied much of the Istrian Peninsula in 1943-1944, attacked the cities of Venezia Giulia in the final days of the war, and entered Trieste on 30th April 1945. Provisional stamp issues were made by the Yugoslavs for Trieste, Istra, and Fiume (Rijeka) see Map 4

Trieste

In June 1945 Italian Socialist Republic stamps were overprinted and surcharged (fig 7).

Istria (Istra)

In June 1945 various stamps of Italy and the Italian Socialist Republic were overprinted "ISTRA" and further surcharged for use in Istra and Pola (now Pula), but it was believed

they were not issued. However, four of these were further surcharged and issued on 1st July (fig 8).

Fiume/Rijeka

On 26th July 1945 stamps of the Italian Social Republic were overprinted and surcharged (fig 9).

3c. Venezia Giulia and Istria Yugoslav Military Government 1945/1947

Following on from the provisional issues of overprinted Italian and Italian Socialist Republic stamps in June and July 1945 (see 3b above), Yugoslavia also issued its own stamps for the area under its control, viz. Fiume (Rijeka), all the Istrian peninsula except Pola (Pula) and the former Italian territory to the north-east of Trieste. See also Map 4. Sets of Postage/Pictorial and Postage Due stamps were either inscribed ISTRIA (fig 10) or overprinted and surcharged - Vojna (Military) Uprava (Administration) Jugoslavenske (Jugoslavia) [Narodne (People's)] Armije (Army) (figs 11-12).

3d. Venezia Giulia and Istria Allied Military Government 1945/1947

On 9th June 1945 an agreement was signed in Belgrade under which Trieste and the roads and railways to Austria should be under the control of the Supreme Allied Commander. The remainder of Venezia Giulia would be under Yugoslav control. The agreement came into force on 12th June, but the lines of demarcation were settled by an agreement signed by Lt-Gen. Morgan and Gen. Jovanovic on 20th June. The area under British and United States control included Trieste, Pola, Gorizia and the Isonzo valley. See also Map 4. Italian Postage, Air Mail, and Express Letter stamps were all overprinted A.M.G.V.G. (Allied Military Government Venezia Giulia) (fig 13).

3e. Free Territory of Trieste (FTT) 1947-1954

A Free Territory of Trieste (FTT) was created by the Treaty of Paris on 10th February 1947 and came into existence seven months later on 15th September 1947. It consisted of two zones. Zone A included the city and port of Trieste and a coastal strip to the west administered by a joint British and United States Military Government; and Zone B, included the villages of Koper, Pirran and Novigrad to the south of Trieste, administered by a Yugoslav Military Government. On 26th October 1954, under a four-power agreement, Zone A, except for three villages south of Trieste, was to be ruled by Italy, and Zone B, with the three villages, by Yugoslavia. A final agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia on the incorporation of these areas in the two countries was signed at Ancona on 10th November 1975.

3e(i). Zone A Allied Military Government 1947/1954

Many Italian pre-existing and later stamp issues (Definitives, Commemorative, Air Mail, Express Letter, Parcel Post, and Concessional Letter and Parcel Post for the payment of tax on mail permitted to be delivered by private companies) (figs 14-15) were overprinted A.M.G.F.T.T. (Allied Military Government Free Territory of Trieste). There were thirteen different types of overprint. The use of stamps of the Allied Military Government ceased on 15th November 1954.

3e(ii). Zone B Yugoslav Military Government 1948/1954

Yugoslavia issued both pre-existing and new stamps (Commemorative, Air Mail, Postage Due and Red Cross) (figs 16-19) that were inscribed or overprinted with either STT VUJA, VUJA STT, or STT VUJNA or VUJNA STT. There were 19 different types of overprint. The first stamps from 1st May 1948 up to 1st June 1949 had the values in Italian Lira. Subsequent issues were in Yugoslav Dinars. The overprint initials stand for:Slobodna (Free) Teritorija (Territory) Trsta (Trieste) Vojna (Military) Uprava (Administration) Jugoslavenske (Jugoslavia) Narodne (People's) Armije (Army) (Free Territory of Trieste

Fig 1: Lombardy Venetia 30 Nov 1850 letter from Milan (in Lombardy) to Vicenza (in Venetia) franked with a 45 centesimi Arms of Austria stamp with a boxed MILANO postmark

Fig 2: Tridentina 1918 Italian 50 centesimi bright mauve overprinted

Fig 3: Venezia Giulia 1918 Austrian 6 heller orange overprinted

Fig 4. General Issue 1919 Italian 25 centesimi di corona on 25 centesimi blue overprinted and surcharged

Fig 5: Dalmatia 1922 Italian 50 centesimi di corona on 50 centesimi mauve overprinted and surcharged

Fig 6: German Occupation of Zara 1943 Italian Postage stamp 20 centesimi red overprinted

Fig. 7: Venezia Giulia and Istria Yugoslav Occupation of Trieste 1945, Italian Socialist Republic 20 centesimi +1 lira on 5 centesimi brown overprinted and surcharged

Fig. 8: Venezia Giulia and Istria Yugoslav Occupation of Istra Italian Socialist Republic 6 lira on 1.5 lira on 75 centesimi carmine

Fig. 9: Venezia Giulia and Istria Yugoslav Occupation of Fiume-Rijeka 1945, Italian Socialist Republic 16 lira on 75 centesimi carmine overprinted and surcharged.

Fig. 10 Venezia Giulia and Istria Yugoslav Military Government. 30 lira Bright magenta inscribed ISTRIA

Fig. 11: Venezia Giulia and Istria Yugoslav Military Government. 35 lira on 9 dinar pink overprinted and surcharged

Fig. 12: Venezia Giulia and Istria Yugoslav Military Government. 6 lira on 1 dinar blue-green overprinted and surcharged

Fig 13: Allied Military Government 1945/46 Italian stamp 60 centesimi orange-vermillion overprinted

Fig 14: FTT Zone A Allied Military Government 1947 Express Letter 60 lira carmine

Fig 15: FTT Zone A Allied Military Government 1948 Parcel Post se-tenant pair 5 lira bright purple

Fig. 16: (FTT) Zone B Yugoslav Military Government 1948 Labour Day 100 lira carmine-red strip of three each with a different inscription in Slovenian, Italian and Croatian.

Military Administration by the Yugoslav People's Army). The use of stamps of the Yugoslav Military Government ceased on 25th October 1954.

. . . And this concludes my four-part series of articles on Venice, the Republic of Venice and the three/four Venices which I hope you have all enjoyed, and appreciated that Venice is a lot more than just the city in the lagoon with its Grand Canal and gondolas. 📖

Fig. 17: (FTT) Zone B Yugoslav Military Government 1948 Red Cross 2 lira on 50 para brown and red

Fig. 18: (FTT) Zone B Yugoslav Military Government 1952 Marshal Tito 60th birth anniversary 28 dinar brown-lake

Fig.19: (FTT) Zone B Yugoslav Military Government 1952 Philatelic Exhibition, Koper 50 dinar blue-green, imperforate miniature sheet, with First Day of Issue postmark 29th November 1952

Map 4. Trieste and environs
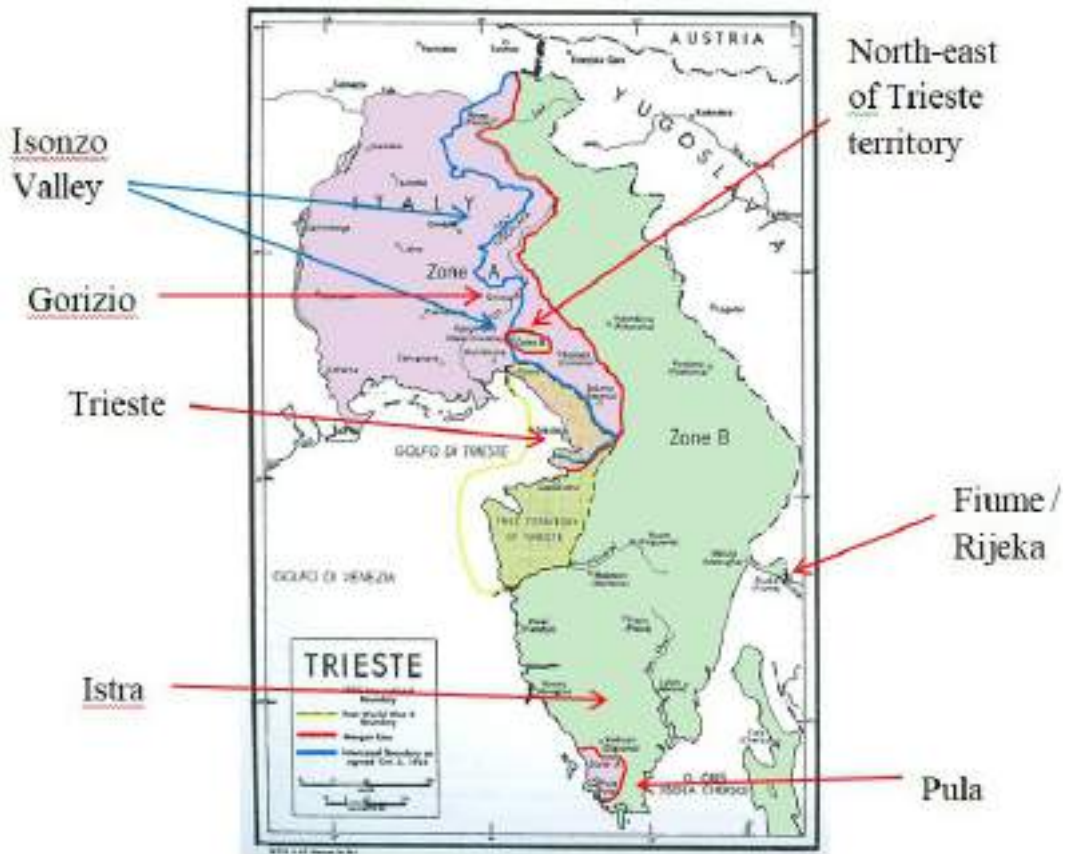
THE PENAL COLONISATION OF AUSTRALIA (1788 - 1868). PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Chris Wheeler

The inspiration behind these articles comes mainly from the lengthy novels by the Australian authors Nancy Cato, Lola Irish and Colleen McCullough, with support from Wikipedia and Stanley Gibbons.

The forced exile from a society has been used as a punishment since Ancient Roman times. It reached its height in the British Empire during the 18th and 19th centuries. It removed the offender from society, and was seen as more merciful than capital punishment. This method was used for criminals, debtors, and military and political prisoners. Penal transportation was also used as a method of supporting colonisation and increasing the labour force. For example, from the 1820s until the 1860s, convicts were sent to Bermuda to work on the construction of the Royal Navy Dockyard (fig1) and other defence works, including an area still known as "Convict Bay" at St George's Town, and to other Caribbean Islands such as Barbados to work on developing the sugar cane farms and the building of villages and storage facilities (fig 2).

Many convicts were shipped to the eastern States of the newly developing USA, which were then a colony of Great Britain. Many other countries were also trying to establish colonies in this 'new land' which led to conflict and the French and Indian War (1754-1763), which some see as the American portion of the Seven Years' War. One of the primary causes of the war was increasing competition between Britain and France, especially in the region of the Great Lakes and the Ohio Valley. It was settled in the Treaty of Paris (1763) (fig 3), when France formally ceded to Britain the eastern part of its vast North American Empire, thus formally ending the conflict and confirming the new nation's complete separation from the British Empire. However, this newly developing USA wanted complete independence, which led to the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783) (fig 4) when the British were defeated. One of the obvious results of this defeat was that alternative destinations had to be considered for banished convicts. Some 60,000 Loyalists had migrated to other British territories, particularly to British North America (Canada) to continue the struggle. Many of these were arrested and sent to Great Britain and ended up as convicts on the First Fleet to Australia.

After the termination of transportation to North America, British prisons became overcrowded, and dilapidated ships moored in various ports were pressed into service as floating gaols known a "hulks". Some of the convicts had been imprisoned for very minor offences, such as pilfering. Warning signs were displayed everywhere (fig 5). Following an 18th century disastrous experiment in transporting convicted prisoners to Cape Coast Castle (modern Ghana) and the Gorée (Senegal in West Africa), British authorities turned their attention to New South Wales, for at this time Captain Cook and others were returning from their discoveries of Australia (fig 6), which appeared to be a largely uninhabited continent with potential as a new colony and penal location. Although much further away, Australia was decided upon.

Several Europeans had landed or circumnavigated Australia before Captain Cook started his voyages. Captain Cook had previously discovered the Northern Route across

Fig 1: Bermuda 1962.
Royal Navy Dockyard

Fig 2: Barbados 1950 sugar cane

Fig 3: France 1983.
Treaty of Paris

Fig 4: Bangladesh 1976
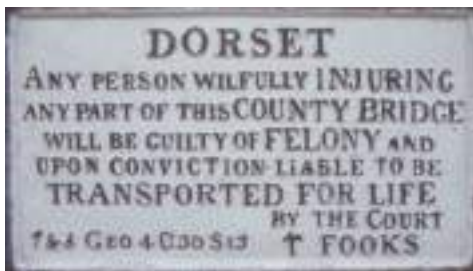*American Revolutionary War*

Fig 5: Threat of deportation. Signs still
found on several bridges in Dorset

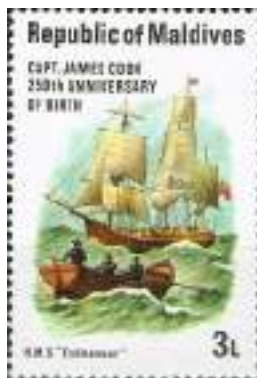*Fig 6 GB*
Cook's charts of Australia and
New Zealand

Fig 7: Maldives 1978
H.M.S. Endeavor

Figs 8 - 9: GB 2018
Joseph Banks and Sydney Parkinson

the top of Australia in HMS *Endeavour* (fig 7) on his way to New Zealand. It was on his third visit to the Pacific Ocean, on 29 April 1770, that Botany Bay was the site of his first landing of HMS *Endeavour* on the land mass of Australia. Cook recorded in his diary that "The great quantity of plants Mr Banks and Dr Solander found in this place occasioned my giving it the name of Botanists (Botany) Bay". Earlier that day he had written in his journal "at noon we were about 2 or 3 miles from the land and abreast of a bay or harbour within which there appeared to be a safe anchorage which I called Port Jackson". Naturalists Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander, and artist Sydney Parkinson (figs 8 - 9) spent several months from April 1770 collecting and sketching the flora and fauna they found there. The land was subsequently claimed for the British Crown on the basis that it was *terra nullis*, or empty land. Of course, this was a fallacy as the Torres Strait Islander peoples had been living on the land for some 60,000 years. This eventually became the first European settlement for convicts on the Australian mainland, but due to its then inhospitable conditions, this penal settlement was almost immediately moved across the Paramatta River to Sydney Cove.

Thus, on 13 May 1787, what became known as the "First Fleet" consisting of eleven ships and about 1,530 people (736 convicts, 17 convicts' children, 221 marines, 27 marines' wives, 14 marines' children and about 300 officers and others) under the command of captain Arthur Phillip set sail from England (fig 10). These convict ships in the First Fleet manned by the Royal Navy were sent in convoy, taking about a year for the journey, via Tenerife, Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town (figs 11 - 13), then across the South Atlantic and Bass Strait to Sydney, using the prevailing winds as best as possible and re-stocking at each port of call. Conditions on board were horrendous and many died. Eventually, on 26 January 1788 they reached and established a settlement at Sydney Cove. This date later became Australia's National Day – Australia Day. The colony was formally proclaimed with the raising of the British Flag by Governor Phillip on 7 February 1788 at Sydney Cove (fig 14), although James Cook had proclaimed sovereignty over Australia from the shore of Possession Island in 1770.

The First Fleet which established the first colony was an unprecedented project for the Royal Navy, for it had a dual role in establishing a military base in the Pacific to deter the French. The Colony of New South Wales, which included the whole of Australia and New Zealand, was thus established in 1788 as part of the British Empire. Over subsequent years, further Fleets arrived and self-governing States were created, reducing the size of New South Wales, and New Zealand became an independent country. This later period also saw the introduction of stamps, vehicles and planes. Until then ships made irregular trips back to Great Britain, so there was little communication, especially from the convicts who were not allowed to write until they were freemen. One of the earliest letters from a convict is shown (fig 15), written in 1818. Letters about convicts were also sent back and forth (fig 16).

At each stage, the Aborigines lost their indigenous and itinerant life-style, became second class citizens, and having lost their traditional way of life obtained their livelihood as servants and slaves, lacking education and spending the little they earned on poor-quality food and subject to the dangers of alcohol. This is now changing as attitudes and appreciation of what has happened to them is being recognised.

As the years passed, penal colonies were established up the east coast of Australia, at Port Macquarie, Moreton and in Queensland, as well as on Norfolk Island, Tasmania and finally along the Swan River (Fremantle) on the west coast. These will be the subject of later articles. 📖

Fig 10: Australia 1987
Departure of the First Fleet

Figs 11 - 13: Australia 1987
First Fleet at Tenerife, Rio de Janeiro and Cape of Good Hope

Fig 14: Australia 1979
Raising the flag at Sydney Cove

Fig 15: Convict letter from New South Wales
1818

Fig 16: 1831 Oban to
Edinburgh. Letter about the
transportation of a convict.

"FOLLOWING THE MASTERS": THE WORKS OF ELSA CATELIN

David Roseveare

Regarding the results of the NEXOFIL 2020 "Best stamp in the world" competition (*Themescene* March 2021) my attention was drawn to the stamp which gained second place in the "best stamp design" category. It commemorated the re-opening of the French National Postal Museum and was the work of Elsa Catelin, a French artist who I have known and admired for a number of years (fig 1). Born at Coutances, a town in the Normandy region, in 1975, she attended the University of Rennes graduating in 1997 with a diploma in graphic arts. She then entered the Estienne College in Paris and was awarded her diploma in engraving in 2000.

I first met Elsa in 2006 after she completed the Albert Seyrolle stamp for the French Southern and Antarctic Territories (fig 2). The task was originally assigned to Pierre Béquet but he was unable to finish the engraving because of ill-health. She had only started work at the French Stamp Printing Works at Perigueux (fig 3) two years before and Pierre was extremely satisfied with her work. Her name first appeared on a design proof for Monaco; a vignette accompanying three profiles of Princess Grace designed by Pierre Albuisson, Czeslaw Slania and Martin Morck (fig 4). Three leading artists, what company! Since then she has designed and engraved over 260 stamps for many countries and received a number of awards for her work. Furthermore she engraved the stamps for two consecutive definitive series. Elsa is an extremely caring person; before she embarked in stamp creation she studied in the U.S.A. at the Pillet Hand Prothesis Company and on her return to France she worked for the French National Institute for the Blind. Only a few years ago she patented a series of maps, in braille, for the benefit of blind and disabled people. Another side-line: she has a talented sister, Vanessa, who is well known for her musical work with young people and an author of children's books, Elsa providing much of the artwork.

Following the death of Pierre Béquet in 2012 I was encouraged to study the work of the French banknote creators. This led me to Pierrette Lambert (*Themescene* December 2017). In doing so I received a number of 'prompts' stating that few people had written about the similarity between the stamp and banknote artists and I should follow it up. This was a challenge, and so far I have produced six magazine articles on the subject, some well received by the French media. Elsa has copies of them all, the last one being a study of the activities of the Bank of France during 1944, the banknote printing works being located at Chamalières near Clermont-Ferrand. Last year I received the news that Elsa had given up her job at the stamp printing works and had joined them at the same location. What a coincidence. As well as starting a new career in banknote design she remains a 'freelance' stamp creator.

The study and subsequent presentation of the work of stamp artists is not easy. Other disciplines have specialised handbooks and catalogues to refer to. Meeting a designer in person is important: a lot of additional information can be obtained, especially when they introduce you to others. Many of them had the benefit of a classical education and this facet shows up in many examples of their work. The ability to undertake work on a number of different projects during a set period is essential.

I have chosen just a few of the many works that Elsa has created. Some were judged to have been the best stamp issues for that particular year and others were produced in conjunction with other artists. What makes her work so interesting is that so much has been achieved in such a short space of time. I hope that they give you all the same pleasure as I had in studying and compiling this article.

For further reading refer to her website. 📖

Fig 1: Elsa Catelin

Fig 3: French Stamp Printing Works at Perigueux

Fig 4: Monacophil 2004. Homage to Grace Kelly. Artist's proof signed by the four designers. Elsa's first mention (vignette)

Fig 2: Albert Seyrolle issue designed by Pierre Bequet but finished by Elsa Catelin

French definitive engraved 2013 'Marianne et la Jeunesse'

Catelin's first stamps for France and French Antarctic Territories

Further stamps shown on back cover

A FAVOURITE PAGE

Jean Alexander collects Waterfalls, and Postal Stationery. We see the Victoria Falls Bridge here, and the inside front cover has a page of her two interests combined: spectacular scenes of the Uchan-Su Waterfall, Yalta, Crimea.

2.7 BRIDGES

Victoria Falls Bridge

The idea of a bridge across the Zambesi was suggested by Cecil Rhodes.

Cecil Rhodes

proofs

Building started in 1904 and the bridge was completed in 1905.

13 September 1905 cancellation for opening of the Victoria Falls Bridge.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY COLLECTING 1

BLOCKCHAIN MEETS PHILATELY

Estelle Shale

Fairly recently, having bought from an Austrian auction, I received my purchase in the cover illustrated – well those are some weird looking stamps! What may not be obvious from the scan is that they are quite substantial plastic plaques, half the size of a credit card and about half the thickness. So obviously I had to find out what they were. It turns out they are crypto stamps "the world's first ever blockchain stamp" (details and illustrations at Crypto Stamp.

The Austrian post office has chosen to issue these stamps and make them available as physical items with linked non-fungible tokens (NFTs) via the Ethereum communty. There is an excellent explanation of what this means at Non-Fungible Tokens which I quote here "NFTs are tokens that we can use to represent ownership of unique items. They let us tokenise things like art, collectibles, even real estate. They can only have one official owner at a time and they're secured by the Ethereum blockchain – no one can modify the record of ownership or copy/paste a new NFT into existence."

Underneath it all is the blockchain principle – what is that? In essence blockchain is digital bookkeeping. It records all the details of transactions. The innovation comes in the manner of the storage of that information. The information is powerfully encrypted, duplicated and then distributed across a vast network of computer systems. This protects the data from hacking and falsification. There is no central database to be hacked or manipulated, there is no all-powerful owner/administrator of the data to become corrupt, and if someone manages to falsify one record (which is difficult) there are many other true copies elsewhere that identify the cheating. There is a good introduction to the subject

at Blockchain Explained although of course this takes a finance perspective. The technology has wide application to any record keeping that needs to be secure. There is a description of blockchain cryptography of stamps at UN Crypto Stamp but it is only for the technically minded.

Each crypto stamp has a digital twin (the NFT) that has an owner, and those digital NFTs can be added to collections, and sold and transferred just like physical stamps have been since the 19th century. So, do I now own the digital version of the physical stamp on the cover I received? No! I can scan the QR code and see who does own it (in terms of a long code not a personal identifier/name) but that is all. Austria's Issue 1 crypto stamps had additional codes that could be detached from the stamp, and it is these detachable codes that allow you to register ownership and put the digital twin in a 'wallet' i.e. digital collection. Thus, you can separate the postally valid stamp from the digital ownership codes. Imagine a credit card that can be snapped in two. Austria's issue 2 is like a sim card for your phone, you press the stamp out of the card containing it. My cover has issue Two stamps so the codes are on the back but the adhesive is <u>very</u> strong and any attempt to remove the stamp would wreck the cover and, in all likelihood, the stamp and the codes, so I shall not attempt it.

Austria was the first country to issue crypto stamps but they have been followed by the UN, Croatia and Gibraltar at the time of writing. At present different issuing authorities are partnering with different blockchain providers so any collection of NFTs would necessarily be dispersed amongst a number of digital wallets. However, the UPU has announced a project for the creation of a digital marketplace for crypto stamps and the intention of creating a unified platform for collections.

Back to the physical stamps in my possession. You may note that there is no cancellation of any kind on the cover. An Internet search for images of covers that have been through the post suggests that the cover should have been cancelled but that conventional handstamp ink has a hard time adhering to the plastic. The thickness of the stamp also causes quite a break in the cancel registration not too surprisingly.

There seems little doubt that these stamps will be of interest to collectors of digital technology themes, but the illustrations will widen the thematic appeal. Austria has real and mythological animals. The UN has three designs representing the HQs but claims the stamps are each linked to one of 17 sustainable development goals. Since this is not visible, I assume this link is tied to the digital twin and therefore there is an element of pot luck. I checked the shop and there is no way to specify a goal that you are interested in when purchasing. Gibraltar has more conventional views such the Rock (which does seem rather unadventurous) and Croatia has postal relevance showing five means of mail transport. I note the bicycle has been replaced by the drone!

Blockchain technology, although invisible to most of us, will become widely adopted for both legitimate and nefarious purposes like most great inventions, but are crypto stamps a gimmick? Surely, at the moment, the answer must be yes, the digital twinning being aimed squarely at collectors. Nonetheless, there is palpable excitement in the blockchain community over these issues and so they are spreading the word on philately to a group that is in the main well outside the reach of conventional approaches to the hobby. For hard core techies crypto stamps are a portal – philately meeting them on their home (digital) turf! 📖

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY COLLECTING 2

BARCODED STAMPS

Wendy Buckle

QR codes have been used for tracking packages for some years, and countries have also been using them on stamps. A quick search of the term on Delcampe for instance will find examples going back at least as far as Luxembourg 2013 (Games of the Small States of Europe). The use of such technologies are becoming more common, as shown on the following examples.

Italy

In 2015 the Globe Postal Service (GPS), a private postal operator in Italy, set up a postal service "dedicated to the tourist" (see GPS Best Tourist Postal Service)

). To use it, you must buy one of their own stamps, stick it on a special tourist postcard and post it in one of the 1900 special yellow mail boxes set up by GPS throughout Italy. The sender can add a personalized video or photo to be viewed exclusively by the recipient on any device via the GPS app, and can track delivery of the item. It's not quick: within Europe delivery time is given as "about 14 days", but if your recipient is IT savvy they will get a an interactive postcard!

Palermo

Island of Sicily Cefalù

Germany

This year Germany has begun incorporating digital matrix codes into all its postage stamps. Two such stamps have been issued at the time of writing, with the intention of all issues having a code by the end of 2022. The unique code will allow for tracking via an app, plus information about the stamp and its design. It should also deter forgers since sorting machines can detect whether a stamp is valid.

UK

Digital matrix coded (colloquially called barcoded) second class stamps went on sale on 23 March for the first time in the UK, sold to business customers on sheets via Viking Direct and the Royal Mail online shop. They are not available from post offices. As with normal Machins they were printed in gravure by International Security Printers, but with the matrix code added by an ink-jet printer. This matrix code means that every stamp is different, and could be identified and verified by sorting machines, although the actual use of these stamps has not yet been decided.   📖

Simulated perforation between stamp and code.
Thanks to Chris Wheeler for illustration.

VIRTUAL ONE-PAGE COMPETITION

The full results of the first BTA virtual one-page competition were published in March *Themescene*. All twenty-five entries are now on the BTA website under 'Displaying Thematic Collections' and we are pleased to reproduce the winning entries here. 📖

THEMATIC PHILATELY
Gaye and Graeme Chequer *Cattleya Orchids: what's in a name?*

PILLAR BOX PERSECUTION!

INTRODUCTION: British pillar boxes have been subjected to criminal acts by people 'posting' explosive and dangerous items, damaging the letters inside and/or causing harm to property and major injuries to the public if the box shatters.

1. SUFFRAGETTES...threw bombs, acid and ink into pillar box apertures across the country from 1912-14, as part of the 'Votes for Women' campaign.

PLAN: Running through the entry, numbered section headings are in **bold**. Descriptions are in *italics*.

2. 'ER' NOT 'EIIR'...was coined by protesters in Scotland, who blew up a pillar box in 1953 because it had an 'EIIR' cipher. They argued that the new queen was the second Elizabeth of England, but the first of Scotland.

3. THE PROVISIONAL IRA... placed timed devices inside five pillar boxes in the centre of London in 1974. The blasts injured twenty people.

1971 'Patriotic Seal' propaganda label

Matchbox label

4. ANTI-SOCIAL ARSON... was a problem in north-west England in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The number of pillar box fires led the Post Office to obtain handstamps to apply to affected mail. The culprits posted lit matches:...

'London Opinion' postcard No.5033, artist: Alfred Leete.

"RED PILLBOX - I THOUGHT YOU WERE A LETTER-BOX!"

...fireworks were also dropped into pillar boxes, usually around Bonfire Night.

Cover salvaged from a pillar box fire in Warrington. There is also water damage, from when the fire was put out.

THIS IS YOUR LIFE - Miss Penny Black

The father of Miss Penny Black is generally accepted to be Rowland Hill, although there are some that say James Chalmers had a twinkle in his eye at around the time she was conceived.

After a long and difficult birth Miss Penny Black finally entered the world on May 6th 1840 followed shortly afterwards by her sister Tuppence Blue.

Miss Penny Black and her sister Tuppence Blue.

An immediate success Miss Penny Black was soon a famous star with her picture seen all over the world. Many a Victorian Gentleman and office boy have slobbered over her rear (J Lo eat your heart out!). Miss Penny Black featured in numerous photo shoots, including Philympia and a family portrait with her 'father'.

A brief fling with Jeffrey Matthews in the 90s resulted in a makeover and a cameo appearance with her great great grand daughter Liz. For this shoot she changed her usual black for blue, mauve, grey and rosine. (Her sister Tuppence was not amused as she always considered blue her colour).

A book celebrating Miss Penny Blacks life and featuring her on the cover was published in 1981.

Now a Grand Dame Miss Penny Black has inspired hundreds of fan clubs up and down the country, and plenty of old men (and a few women) still lust after Penny and are willing to spend lavishly to acquire her.

HAVE FUN WITH THEMATICS

MOST FUN EXHIBIT
James Dickinson *This is your life - Miss Penny Black*

A NEW APPROACH TO COLLECTING

Barry Stagg

What has philately and a USA politician got in common? Perhaps more than you think. In 2002 Donald Rumsfeld, a senior USA politician, used the phrase 'Known knowns', referring to the Iraq conflict. To quote from him '*There are **known knowns**. There are things we know that we know. There are also **known unknowns**. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also **unknown unknowns**. There are things we do not know we don't know*'. For any of you who work in risk management, planning or project management you will be familiar with these terms. But I think they could be helpful for philatelists as well.

I believe these three above states can be translated into use for philatelists, in particular thematic collectors. For them we can add a fourth state, the '**Unknown Knowns**' and these are things where we don't know what we want but we know where to find them. See the figure below for these stages shown as a matrix. I believe all four can be translated into a style of collecting.

Known knowns	*Known unknowns*
Unknown knowns	*Unknown unknowns*

In philatelic terms these four states can be defined as follows:

a. The **Known Knowns**. <u>We know what we want and we know where to find it</u>. Most of us start by collecting against a catalogue or a 'wants list'. We know that the stamp [using the word to mean any philatelic item or supporting item] exists but we have not got it yet. The vast majority of new and experienced collectors alike, to a greater or lesser extent, collect like this.

b. The Known Unknowns. <u>We know what we want but we don't know where to find it</u>. We have all spent hours looking through dealers stock in the hope of finding that missing item. Occasionally, very occasionally in my experience, we find it. It takes a lot of time and effort but the reward, the feeling of success is well worth it. As most collections are not complete, and never are if you are a thematic collector, we can all relate to this stage.

c. The **Unknown Knowns**. <u>We don't know what we want but we know where to find it</u>. I might call this inspirational searching! Looking for the new angle, the new perspective. We might see something in another collection that might be an idea for a new chapter in our collection. It might be a suggestion from a colleague or something said in the media that gets our imagination working. What it does require is an open mind and a willingness to explore, perhaps by research of some form. Many collectors spend hours searching through dealer's stock for inspiration, for that new idea.

d. The **Unknown Unknowns.** This is a fourth stage for philatelists. <u>We don't know what we want and don't know where to look.</u> Many collectors stop searching before they get to this point but I believe that this is a mistake that can lead to missed opportunities. This stage is about encouraging collectors to be imaginative and look in unlikely places, places you would not expect to see material useful for your collection. Move on from dealer's stock, auction house catalogues and the internet. Look instead at charity shops and antique shops as both sell stamp albums. Sunday markets the same. My personal favourite are non-philatelic auction houses. They often have stamps for sale at very reasonable prices. Give them a try. You may be surprised what you find.

This technique is supported by Sherlock Holmes! You may know the quote from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's '*The Sign of the Four*' said by Sherlock Holmes "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth". So when you have exhausted the dealers stock, and eBay is full of items you already have, start looking for that illusive item somewhere you would not associate with philately. Putting it simply: if you can't find any new ideas in conventional sales outlets then search in the 'improbable' places. Give it a go. Look somewhere different to try and find material to expand your collection. You just may be lucky! 📖

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STILL ZOOMING ALONG

On 18 March over 40 BTA members and guests were treated to a super presentation by Jon Matthias on the subject of the *Statue of Liberty*. And what an interesting and entertaining presentation it was: lots of interesting stamps showing Lady Liberty (and Jon told us there are 398 stamp designs on the theme of Lady Liberty!) and a few postcards from Jon's friends and family who had visited the statue.

Jon was a font of information regarding the Statue of Liberty. During his presentation he told us that it is located on Liberty Island close to New York, was a gift of friendship from the people of France to the United States and is recognized as a universal symbol of freedom and democracy. It was designed by French sculptor Frédéric Bartholdi and its internal metal framework was built by Gustave Eiffel. (Yes, of Eiffel Tower fame). The statue and its plinth was completed in 1886. At first the statue was brown but, as it was made of copper, it has turned green due to oxidisation over time and some early depictions of the Statue do show it brown. Many of the stamps that Jon showed depicted one or more of these interesting facts. Jon finished his talk showing some personal links to the Statue of Liberty. Jon's passion and enthusiasm for the topic was evident throughout his talk.

16 April saw Barry Stagg showing *Ladies from Heaven*, a tantalising title for what was a most entertaining postcard display on the subject of women parachutists and women's support role in parachuting. Early parachutes were made from silk, so the display started with early silk production in China, largely undertaken by women; and when silk mills started in England it was women who did the weaving. It was not until World War II that parachutes began to be made by the cheaper man-made rayon.

Barry highlighted some his 'parachuting heroines'. Katy Paulus of Germany made her first parachute jump from a balloon in 1893, only the third parachute jump in the world. She invented the packable parachute, credited with saving many lives in World War I. The Englishwoman Dolly Shepherd was an exhibition parachutist, a hugely popular figure in the Edwardian period. She retired and lived to a good age, at a time when one in three parachutists were killed by their exploits.

Parachuting, or to be more precise, lady parachutists, seem to have been an endless source of inspiration to the artists and publishers of comic postcards. Think about it: the parachutist descends gently, while a breeze from underneath her blows upward. It just needs the parachutist to be depicted in utterly unsuitable and unlikely clothing for the male viewer in the scene (not to mention the purchaser of the postcard) to enjoy a view of stocking tops (and perhaps more).

This was a great talk, showing both the danger of the hobby, and the fun that can be had from it. Some very rare real photograph postcards were shown, as well as the humour of an earlier age.

On 20 May we were treated to a talk on *Pietism and Philately* by Adrian Thomas. Christianity has split itself into groups and factions since its early days: Eastern and Western Christianity, Protestant and Catholic, each with many aspects. Lutheranism is a branch of Protestantism, and Pietism a branch of Lutheranism, with a strong emphasis on personal belief and behaviour. Philipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705) proposed five

fundamental principles: the use of Scripture; Priesthood of all believers; Practice as opposed to knowledge: Reform of schools and universities; Preaching for edification.

Beginning with Martin Luther the display covered a very wide range of theologians, preachers, educators, composers and others. Given its origins, it is not surprising that early Pietists were mainly German, with the movement spreading to Scandinavia and later to other parts of Europe. While many of the people involved may not be well-known (at least in the UK), famous names did feature, including John Wesley, Albert Einstein and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Not every Pietist has featured on a stamp, but collecting widely has resulted in a broad range of relevant material: engravings, coins, medals, banknotes and postcards all augmenting the philatelic material.

The display was not all serious theology. It included a warning against ever using the German private postal service MZZ (nice stamps, simply awful service), and a reference to one of the best book titles I've heard in a long time: *Beard Theology: a holy history of hairy faces.*

Note

The programme for the next few Zoom meetings is on page 69. Further dates have been planned and will be found on the 'Events' page of our website. And if you have missed any presentations they are all available on the 'Events' page to members only. You will need to log in to the site first. If you need help setting up an account please contact us Via email. 📖

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AUTUMN STAMPEX 2021:
BTA DISPLAYS

At the time of going to press, it is planned that Autumn Stampex 2021 will go ahead as a non-virtual event at the Business Design Centre from September 29th to October 2nd. You may remember non-virtual events from a year or so back? They are the ones we go to on a train, to meet friends and buy stamps!

Autumn Stampex 2021 will be important for our society as we are the organisation leading this exhibition in terms of competitive and non-competitive (display) exhibits. Details can be found in previous issues of *Themescene* and on the BTA website. So far we have had a good response from members wanting to enter Stampex. We now need to turn these promises into entries. If you didn't let the BTA Competitions Officer, Andrew Millington, know you might be entering earlier this year it is not too late enter (and to let him know)!

You can now enter your exhibit or display for Stampex at the ABPS website by going to the home page and clicking on the 'Exhibiting' link on the top row. That opens a drop-down menu; click on 'Register yourself or enter an exhibit here'. If you have not entered Stampex before, you need to complete a very straightforward registration process. Once done (or if your details are already on the ABPS system) you can enter your exhibit.

At this stage all you need to do to enter is to provide the title and a short description of the exhibit, the number of frames, whether you are a first-time exhibitor, and how the exhibit will be delivered and collected. (If a member of the BTA is taking and collecting your entry on your behalf choose 'Exhibitor deliver by hand to venue' / 'Exhibitor collect by hand from venue'. There is a 'Comment' box underneath to explain this if you wish to). You also need to add the exhibit's introduction page in pdf format; though this is not required initially. The closing date for entries is 30th August 2021.

The fees (£25 per frame) will be invoiced directly to you by ABPS later.

If you have any issues registering or entering please contact Andrew Millington (if your question relates more to the BTA rather than to ABPS or Stampex). If the latter, please contact the ABPS webmaster.

We look forward to seeing you, and your exhibits, at Stampex and flying the flag for pictorial philatelic collecting!

BTA VIRTUAL ONE-PAGE COMPETITION 2022

At a recent Committee meeting we took the decision not to hold physical competitions this year. We hope Stampex will go ahead, thus replacing them; but if physical events are again cancelled we will not be able to hold them anyway.

However this year's virtual one-page competition was so successful that we have decided to organise another next year. Further details will appear in September *Themescene*, but the closing date for entries will be January 31st 2022. So, plenty of time to think and prepare! 📖

EXHIBITING PAGE 1

FIP Thematic Commission Newsletter
March 2021

The latest edition of the newsletter of the F.I.P. Thematic Commission has been published. It contains one article in particular which will be of interest to exhibitors and collectors of postal stationery and is preċised here.

The Origin of the Microfilmed Mail in WorldWar II by Ing. Raudel Busto Galup

Collectors are very familiar with World War II British Airgraphs, and their counterpart in the USA known as V-Mail, and they are regularly used in exhibits. Perhaps the best study on the subject is José Ramón Moreno Fígares *Bulletin of the Philatelic Thematic Exhibition Filatem 2010, pages 51-71* which covers the entire history of microfilmed mail in World War II.

However the true origin of this type of mail dates back to the nineteenth century, with the Siege of Paris during the Franco-Prussian War 19 September 1870 to 28 January 1871. With Paris under total siege there was a need for innovative communication methods, which gave rise to the use of balloons, known as 'Ballon Monte' and the use of carrier pigeons, which is what is relevant here. Their story is told by J. D. Hayhurst *Pigeon post into Paris 1870-71* , published by the author in 1970. Using pigeons limited the size of the letter that could be carried, so the originals were photographed and reduced in size for transmission. On receipt they were read using a system of magnifying glasses, mirrors and spotlights to reflect and enlarge the image. This system has similarities to the World War II airgraph procedure: photographs were carried during the Siege of Paris and microfilm was carried during World War II. It has been suggested for some years that the idea for the Airgraphs was inspired by the Paris pigeon post, and now proof has been found of the theory with the discovery of this 1942 Airgraph which reproduces pictures from the Siege of Paris and the caption

The proprietors and Editor of "The Aero Field" send their greetings for Christmas and theNew Year by the 72 years old method then revived in the present emergency (...)

The pictures show a Ballon Monte and an 1870 item of pigeon post being projected on a wall. It also reproduces the 1870 Notice published by the British Post Office outlining procedures for using the service: a clear demonstration of where the ingenious idea was born.   📖

EXHIBITING PAGE 2

ROUND-UP OF VIRTUAL COMPETITIONS
All fairs and exhibitions ground to a halt a year ago, but organisers gradually picked themselves up, thought hard about the situation, and replaced traditional events with virtual competitions. And it seems to have been a popular turn of events. Competitions (including our own) have been well supported, and plenty of thought and ingenuity has been demonstrated in the submitted entries. Recent competitions have included:

Virtual Stampex, who held its own competition with 19 entries including four Thematic and two Open, as well as hosting the ABPS Northern Exhibition, another 19 entries including four Thematic and two Open. In addition to the traditional classes there were also entries in Maximaphily and Cinderella.

Stanley Gibbons 'SG Blues 2021' was also promoted at Virtual Stampex. Their one-page competition had the theme of "the story of an issue" interpreted as widely as you like. It was won by BTA member John Davies with *Genesis of the Jubilee envelope*, which can be viewed here.

All About Stamps, the website of *Stamp Collector* magazine, held it's latest competition: "to produce a one-page entry using British stamps". Congratulations to the winner, BTA member Wayne Cox with "The other side of British stamps". All the entries can be viewed on their website.

SLOVENIAN VIRTUAL COMPETITION FOR ONE-FRAME EXHIBITS
The Slovenian Philatelic Federation wants to encourage as many people as possible to participate in its One-Frame competition, being held as part of the DesetoOkno ('Tenth Window') exhibition in Kranj from 9th – 18th September 2021. So it has decided to run the competition online. The frame fee is a very moderate €10, and all pictorial classes are included. The deadline for applications is 30 June. Rules and application form are available at FEPA News.

ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH PHILATELIC SOCIETIES
Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Scottish Congress which was due to be held in April had to be cancelled. As an alternative the ASPS website has provided displays from 24 member societies which would normally have been shown during the exhibition. They will be available to view "for a few months through the summer" and include thirteen thematic and eleven postcard displays. Go to ASPS and follow the links.

HERE AND THERE

ROLL OF DISTINGUISHED PHILATELISTS
Of the five new signatories announced for the 2021 Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, two are pictorial collectors:

Dr. Seija-Riitta Laakso, RDP – Finland
Seija-Riitta has exhibited in five different classes: postal history, thematic, open, picture postcards and literature, receiving high awards nationally and internationally. Her doctoral thesis *Across the Oceans* successfully and academically combined 19th century maritime history and postal history.
She is well known for her contribution to the serious collecting and study of picture postcards. Her exhibit *Paris by Night* garnered numerous awards on both sides of the Atlantic.
Seija-Riitta is a qualified judge at Nordic level and an APS judge in the United States. She has served on the Thematic Commission of the FIP and has been Secretary General of the Philatelic Federation of Finland.

José-Ramón Moreno, RDP - Spain
José-Ramón Moreno has worked tirelessly at the organisational level of European and international philately for over twenty years. Until 2019 he was President of FEPA,working with European federations and globally in the development of philately and organisation of exhibitions. In November 2019 he was elected FEPA Honorary President. His contributions have been recognised in many countries, with honours including the Gold Medal of Philatelic Merit of the Spanish Government.
A qualified international judge for thematic philately and philatelic literature, José-Ramón has been deeply involved in updating the judging regulations of both classes and was also among the contributors to the regulations for the new Open Philately class. He is author of the book *Thematic Philately: Analysis and Research*, published by the Royal Hispanic Academy of Philately. His articles have contributed to the development and understanding of thematic philately, particularly within Spanish speaking countries. José-Ramón's thematic collections span a range of sports-related subjects, including yachting, skiing and golf, and have received high awards including an FIP Grand Prix.

NOTOS 2021
If you fancy a few days of culture and philately in Greece, (Covid restrictions permitting) NOTOS is being held from 19 - 22 November. It has been forced to change location because the original venue is now being a mass vaccination centre. The big plus is it will now be held at the Zappeion, which is much closer to the city centre.

CALL FOR SPEAKERS

THE BTA ARE HOLDING MONTHLY TALKS ON ZOOM

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GIVING A TALK?

PowerPoint; 30 - 40 minutes

Please contact Barry Stagg on bastagg@btinternet.com

STAMP ACTIVE

The results of the Stamp Active Competition *My Favourite Things*, held in conjunction with Virtual Stampex, have been announced. Congratulations to all the winners, thanks to all who took part, and grateful thanks to Isle of Man Stamps and Coins for their generous sponsorship of this youth competition. The winning entries are:

Up to 7 years of Age
1st	Benjamin Campbell	Lizards
2nd	Niamh Cameron	Hedgehog goes for a Walk
3rd	Abeni Johnstone Louis	The Tree of Life

Age 8 – 10
1st	Peter Talks	I Love Running
2nd	Michael Clough	My Favourite Place is My Garden
3rd	Rahael Talks	My Favourite Things – Dogs, Plants & Christmas

Age 11 – 14
1st	Seren Abbott	Golf
2nd	Ed Potter	Bicycle, Cricket & Planes
3rd	Tamish Timma	Tamish's Favourite Things – Dinosaurs & Space

Age 15 – 18
1st	Christopher Stuttard	The Pianoforte

Best Overall Entry
Peter Talks   I Love Running

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BTA PROGRAMME 2021

16 June
19.00 for 19.30

ZOOM MEETING
Jean Alexander *Stamp Advisory Committee Christmas menus*
Between 1977 and 2014 Royal Mail held a Christmas Lunch for members of the Stamp Advisory Committee as a thank you for their work. In each of these years a special menu was produced. The design department wanted to show off their expertise and flair to the designers on the committee. This is part of the collection of original and ingenious menus.

13 July
19.00 for 19.30

ZOOM MEETING
Edith & Rodney Knight *History, Culture & Civilization of Spain*
In 1492 Columbus sailed the Ocean Blue, from a (just about) united Spain. To get to this point, we need to travel from Talyots, Trajan, Egeria, Visigoths, Moors, Abd al Rahman I to III, Sepharad Jews, Wilfred the Hairy, El Cid, to Ferdinand 1st (not) and Isabella.

10 August
19.00 for 19.30

ZOOM MEETING
Katrin Raynor-Evans *Exploring Astronomy and Space Through Philately*
The presentation aims to provide the audience with an introduction to the topic of astronomy and space, including the world's first astronomy stamps, the global spread of astronomy on stamps and astronomy/space discoveries and achievements that have appeared on philatelic material.

*The '*Events*' page of the BTA website has details of the remaining 2021 monthly programme of ZOOM meetings*

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'.

Please note that this meeting is **provisional** subject to COVID restrictions

09 October

South of England Stamp Fair
At Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL
Over 40 dealers, free parking and cafe facilities.
BTA Table

Please note that this meeting is **provisional** subject to COVID restrictions

Just4Kids by Lise Whittle

MEET SAMMY THE SWALLOW!

Hello! My name is Sammy the Swallow. I am a small bird with a dark, glossy-blue back, a red throat, a pale under-part, and two long tail feathers like streamers. I have brown legs, and my beak is black, short and thin.

My wife is Sally Swallow, and we have just flown all the way from Africa back to the UK, and we will stay here for the summer. We flew across the very hot Sahara Desert, into Morocco, up eastern Spain, across the Pyrenees mountain range, through western France, and across the English Channel to the UK. Some of my cousins fly to different countries – look at the names of the countries on all of the stamps on these pages to see the countries we can live in! We flew 200 miles each day to get here, eating insects which we caught while we were flying. We can fly between 17-22 miles per hour – that's a lot of flaps!

I'm really good at flying – I'm a bit like a gymnast in the air!

I am a barn swallow, and my Latin name is Hirundo rustica – Hirundo is the Latin word for 'swallow' and rusticus means 'of the country'. If you look closely at the stamps, many of them will have my Latin name on them. That way you will know for certain that the stamp is showing a picture of me!

Sally and I will stay here in the UK for the summer and we will build up our same old nest again, and have 2 or 3 clutches of eggs. But it's too cold for us to stay in the winter, so in October our babies will fly with us back down to Africa again, and enjoy the sun. **Look out for me! Sammy x**

Fly Away, Fly Away Over The Sea
Poem by Victorian poet Christina Rossetti
Fly away, fly away over the sea,
Sun-loving swallow, for summer is done;
Come again, come again, come back to me,
Bringing the summer and bringing the sun.

Write to us and tell us about your bird stamps to win a stamp prize (children only) to: Just4Kids,c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth BH1 4RS.

Many people get swallows and house martins muddled up as they are very similar - in fact, they are both from the same family called 'passerines'. House martins have shorter tail feathers and are slightly differently coloured. A good way to remember is swa**LL**ows have **L**ong tails!

In this stamp from Malta, the house martin is bottom left, and the swallow is top right. See if you can spot their Latin names.

France 2021 'Philaposte' New Year card sent out to their customers. Features "Metiers d'Art" and incorporates all the tools of the stamp engraver.

New Caledonia 2020. Jacques Chirac commemorative issue. First engraving as Freelance after leaving the stamp printing works.

France 2017. Organ of the Church of St.Jacques, Luneville. Signed piece, rated by many as one of her finest works.

France 2015 France Musical Boxes. Miniature sheet signed by the artist.