

THEMESCENE

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THEMESCENE

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

. Thematica was as successful as ever (p.). I only managed a visit on the Sunday, and thought it seemed quieter than usual, but there were plenty of people around to applaud the prizewinners at the presentations, and I'm pleased to say I got to meet two regular contributors to *Themescene* who until now had been only names at the bottom of a letter or email. The AGM voted in our new Chairman Lesley Marley: very good wishes to her for her term in office, and our thanks to Christine Earle for the commitment and hard work she put in ...

The event figuring most frequently in your Committee's thoughts at the moment is the upcoming Eurothema (p.). It's the biggest thematic event the UK has ever hosted, and we want to make it a huge success. As Lesley says in her page () do please support it if you can.

I do like to look for topical articles (i.e. chronologically relevant, not the American use of the word), though I rarely seem to achieve it, so I was particularly pleased when Ian Paton (p.) offered me his piece on slavery, which the abolition in the UK we have been celebrating this year. Whilst slavery was the most inhuman of practices I do concur with his open paragraph pointing out other European involvement; we seem to have spent the year apologising for our action two hundred years ago (and how can one apologise for what one has no influence over?) whilst failing to draw attention to such practices in other parts of the world today. But however horrible the practice, the article on slavery in the USA makes fascinating reading.

How about continuing the topical theme? The Scouting Centenary seems an obvious one. I have put some Crown Agents new issues together, but there is a huge subject out there: Thematica contained a fascinating selection of displays on the subject – would someone like to pen me a few paragraphs? And let's look ahead: next year we have

Slavery is followed by an article by Barry Floyd (p), which as I explain in the Preface, got published as a piece of personal indulgence and ended up by my making more work for myself. Then we have the third article in our series on the TT Races (p)

In May a team set off for theat Essen. The results are given on page...; our congratulations to all the British entrants in what was clearly a very high quality Exhibition.

Finally can I add my sympathy to the thoughts expressed by Lesley floods....



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Brian Sole

As you will read in this issue of *Themescene*, the Annual General Meeting in June resulted in some changes to your committee. Christine Earle completed her term of office as Chairman and was succeeded by Lesley Marley, well known for her exhibit, "The Whale's Tale". Chris continues as our FIP co-ordinator, acting as G.B.'s representative to the FIP Thematic Philately Commission. John Hayward has once again assumed the role of Vice-Chairman, whilst continuing in his role as Displays Organiser. I wish Lesley, John and Chris every success in their respective roles.

John Hayward has born the brunt of the organisation of Eurothema 2007, which takes place in conjunction with Thematica II, on 24 and 25 November 2007. The Exhibition Hall will be filled with more exhibits than we normally see at the Summer Thematica. This will be a great opportunity to see how our European friends prepare thematic exhibits.

My term of office as President was also due to be completed in June, but the Committee requested, and I agreed, to stay on for another year. This does mean that, in future, the Chairman and President will not change at the same time. However, I do consider that no one person should remain as Chairman or President for too long so that others are given the opportunity to take up office and to introduce new ideas for the running of the BTA.

Although as I prepare this article, there are still a couple of days to enter this year's National Stamp Exhibitions, it appears that the number of entries in the Thematic Class will be exceptionally low. The situation is not helped because six of our exhibitors are participating in Eurothema 2007. However, shortly after the close of Croydon 2007 and Thematica II, entry forms for next year's National Competitions will be available for Harrogate 2008, to be held 2-3 May 2008. If you have not entered the National Competitions this year, now is the time to start preparing an exhibit for Harrogate 2008!

Personally, I am very sorry that the Annual National Philatelic Competitions are no longer held at Autumn Stampex. Now that ABPS has to run the Annual Competitions, at different locations around the country, it means continually reinventing the wheel as new teams come to grips with the task of staging the Competitions, in conjunction with an Exhibition. Even with assistance from the ABPS Exhibition Committee, local organisers have to arrange for the hire of a suitable venue, the hire, transport and erection of frames, the judging of the exhibits and publicity for the event. It is also necessary to find volunteers to act as stewards and ensure that security arrangements are in place.

It appears that pleas to Royal Mail for fewer new stamp issues fall on deaf ears. Having advertised both the Grand Prix and Scout issues in July 2007, a late addition to the stamp programme was a set of seven Harry Potter stamps, a miniature sheet with another five first class stamps and a generic Smiler sheet of 20 first class stamps. I must confess to being an admirer of Harry Potter and felt that I had to buy these issues. In view of the popularity of Harry Potter and the astute timing of the issue, days before the release for sale of the final book, higher sales are likely to be achieved but almost certainly at the expense of the Grand Prix and Scout issues in the same month.

Incidentally the scout stamps were issued shortly before the World Scout Jamboree in Chelmsford, at which an estimated 40,000 scouts were due to be present. I understand that the Scouts' request for a Royal Mail temporary Post Office was refused, because not enough business was anticipated. ☒

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

Lesley Marley

The British Thematic Association was founded in 1984; thematic philately in Great Britain has come on a long way from being merely tolerated in the early years, by the postal historians and traditional collectors. It is now a firmly established philatelic discipline in the philatelic world. Many local societies are now pleased to invite thematic collectors to display at their meetings. Since its conception there have been many excellent and forward thinking chairmen. I hope I will be able to take the BTA a step further in the next four years. I would like to thank outgoing Chairman Christine Earle for her leadership and the magnificent effort she made in taking us into Europe through Eurothema and other International thematic events.

Eurothema is organised by a few European countries to further thematic collecting and exhibiting, to get together like-minded people to discuss how their exhibits have progressed over the years and learn how each country is furthering thematic collecting. It is for thematic exhibitors who have not qualified to enter a European or World exhibition at International level. I was asked to take part in Eurothema in 2003 in the Netherlands, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and what's more I learnt a great deal about writing up my thematic collection, and how different materials can be used to enhance an exhibit. It means nice places to visit and like-minded people to spend time with. My husband, not a stamp collector, now wants to go on all my trips; apart from visiting the exhibitions he spends his time enjoying the places we visit.

With all the above in mind, Christine, with the committee's consent, put our country forward to host Eurothema 2007. This event will be at Thematica II on 24th and 25th November 2007. Why don't you have a weekend break in London? There are many things for the non-philatelic partners and you will have the opportunity to see thematic dealers, the BTA entries and those from the Europe.

The Committee has put a lot of hard work into staging this event. I realise it is a long journey for some of you (I lived in Cornwall a few years ago, so I know the effort and planning it takes) but please try to support this event. I know by the good response to the John Fosbery and the BTA cup competitions that there are some of you out there who are very keen.

Well as I write this on a miserable Friday afternoon the radio is reporting of more floods in the West Country to follow the North's awful floods over the past few weeks, not good news for people. I know how it feels, as I was flooded out in Lancashire in 1965, I was 6 months pregnant at the time, but in those days I had no stamp collections to worry about. I hope the members in those stricken areas are coping and their stamps are dry.

Lastly I would like to thank all those who voted me in as your Chairman, and to the committee members for their support in the years ahead. ☒

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S PAGE

Peter Denly

Ordinary members	221
Family members	20
Junior members	6
Society members	17
Overseas members	21
Overseas Society members	1
Honorary members	3
Total number of members	289

(at 1st August 2007)

The Membership renewal process improved this year in that only 1% of the members required a written reminder following the issue of the March edition of *Themescene*. My thanks to you all, this has certainly helped with our increasing postage costs.

It is good to be able to welcome a further 7 new members, but sadly we have to say goodbye to two members both of whom have supported the Association for more than ten years. Referring back to June you will note a reduction in the total membership of 22. This represents those members who chose not to renew their subscriptions for the coming year. In some cases the members felt that they could no longer collect due to their advancing years; however several took the time to compliment the Association on the work it is doing and the quality of the *Themescene* magazine.

Houston, Texas in July is hot, humid, very wet and definitely 'mosquito city' so it will be no surprise that air conditioned indoor pursuits had the edge on outdoor activities. So saying I was able to spend a very delightful Saturday in Harris' stamp shop along Directors Row. You never know what can be found until you have a good dig through the dealers stock, and I was not disappointed either with the quality or the price. I was informed that July and August tend to be very quiet in America for philately which is when this dealer buys to be ready for the 'rush' in September. So I felt I might have had the pick of the crop. This has certainly proved to be a good contact who is happy to service wants lists from overseas, and has provided another avenue for locating material. ☒

New Members joining since the June 2007 issue

Mrs. C.R. MacArthur	Norwich	Mr. B. Austin	Reading
Ms. E. Gulacsy	Huntingdon	Ms. J.D. Gibson FRPS C	Vancouver
Mr. J. Hammond	Tottenham	Mr. K.W. Hatch	Maidenhead
Mr. G. Green	Kingsteignton		

Deaths advised since the June 2007 issue

Dr. D. Jones	Aberdeen
Mr R.N. Dyer	Leatherhead

PUBLICITY OFFICER'S PAGE

Simon Moorcroft

As I sit and write this I am about to go on holiday to somewhere hopefully warmer than here at the moment. The main thematic event of Thematica, as reported by myself elsewhere, was again a success. Visitor number held up reasonably well and the raffle held on both days raised a good sum which will be put towards Eurothema.

As this is the last issue before the show you will see a substantial amount of information and material relating to the two day event. Please do peruse this. There are still tickets for the finger buffet on Friday and the Palmares on Saturday. If you feel that you could help with the setting up or dismantling of the show we still wish to hear from you (contact John Hayward).

I am always on the look out to promote the BTA to a wider more diversified audience. To that end I will when the new season begins be working with our new Chairman to try and promote ourselves to the non collecting public. At present much of my work goes on trying to attract current collectors to either diversify into collecting thematically or to begin and join us in the process. But I currently do little to try and attract those not currently in the hobby. This is something I will be trying to rectify in the coming year.

This idea presents huge challenges with the largest one being how to you do it? After all, the BTA lacks the financial resources to advertise in the national press or through the mediums of radio or television. Having looked into the issue I concluded that possibly the most effective way to do what we want is to promote ourselves through another organisation which is in contact with the public. One of the main organisations specialising in this is the U3A. Lesley Marley has already written in *Themescene* of what the organisation can offer the BTA.

Developing our connection with the U3A is something both I and Lesley would like to see pursued. Our hobby is a great one and we should try and promote ourselves outside of it. Many people may want to begin collecting but don't know where to start. This could be partly solved by us having links with the U3A.

But the above is on a national scale. I would also like to see our publicity at local level increase as well. I am currently preparing publicity material which is aimed at the non-collecting public. I am sure many of you are members of social groups, like the WI, or visit local libraries. You could help the BTA by taking along and putting up a poster or handing out a leaflet to those interested. One central person does not have local contact throughout the UK.

Best wishes ☒

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

“WHAT’S IN A NAME?”

From: Margaret Morris, by e-mail

This well-known quotation sprang to mind when I recently received a copy of The Royal Mail Guide to Postmarking Services titled “All About Postmarks”, ref. PB373. On page 10 of that publication there is a feature entitled “Maximum Cards (or Maxi Cards)” and, from the illustrations provided, it would appear that Royal Mail believe their PHQ cards with matching stamp and special cancel for the issue would constitute a maximum card.

There are two points to consider. First is the fact that Maximaphily is an established collecting discipline with its own specialist societies, publications and regulations. As recently as last December a well-illustrated article in *Topical Time* demonstrated just how difficult it is for the true specialist to create a correct maximum card. When the principle is understood, one can understand that maximaphilists must feel that their terminology is being undermined by organisations such as Royal Mail.

The second point is that while thematic exhibitors are advised to use maximum cards sparingly if at all, they are specifically warned not to use cards of the PHQ type where the illustration on the card exactly matches the design of the stamp. I wonder if Royal Mail are aware of this fact.

Of course, the waters are considerably muddied by issuing countries such as Australia who produce postcards *related* to the design of their new stamps and apply the FDI cancellation. Although such items may avoid the criticism of exactly duplicating the design of the card and the stamp, they are really “spoon-feeding” collectors and detracting from the thought and time which go into the making of a true maximum card.

I offer these thoughts on nomenclature and wonder if some standardisation is needed – or does anyone bother? Perhaps it is a matter for our F.I.P. Co-ordinator – or should I just complete the quotation started at the top of this letter .. “that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”

*Full page advertisement for
Thematica*

‘THE PECULIAR INSTITUTION’: SLAVERY IN THE USA BEFORE EMANCIPATION & ABOLITION. Part 1

Ian Paton examines part of the story behind one of this year’s anniversaries

The bicentenary of the British abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807 has caused the media to bombard us with information about the evil and cruelty of this disgraceful trafficking, while praising the work of William Wilberforce [Fig. 1] and Thomas Clarkson for their part in achieving it. Subsequent references to the 1833 Act abolishing slavery in the British Empire reminded me of my years as a Commonwealth collector, when commemorative stamps brought history to life. In particular I have kept two evocative Sierra Leone stamps from the 1933 commemorative issue. The 2d showing the ‘Old Slave Market’ [Fig. 2] and the 1d ‘Allegory of Freedom’ [Fig. 3] with a slave casting off her shackles.



Fig.1 Wilberforce



Fig.2 Old Slave Market



Fig.3 Allegory



Fig.4 Leopold



In the rush of self-criticism we should not overlook the extent of the Portuguese and Spanish slave trade after 1500 to the West Indies. Nor should we ignore the fact that slavery was used to build the wealth of the Belgian Congo (now Zaire) under the personal control of King Leopold II [Fig. 4] from 1878, and it was not abolished until 1897; this stamp shows slaves being driven to market [Fig. 5].

I am writing about Slavery in the USA prior to 1863 using philatelic illustrations. As far back as 1619 Negro labourers were taken to the British North American Colonies and by 1789 the agricultural economy of the South, as well in many of the Caribbean Islands, had been built on the use of slaves to cultivate cotton, tobacco and sugar. The Constitution of the USA in Article 1 Section 9 states “The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person”.

Slaves were Chattels

Between 1763 and 1767 the boundary between Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware was surveyed by the English Astronomers Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon to settle a long standing colonial boundary dispute. The resulting boundary drawn along latitude 39°45’ was known as the Mason-Dixon Line which before the Civil War popularly designated the boundary dividing the Free and Slave States. The Quakers and Mennonites in Pennsylvania were the first religious groups openly to advocate the abolition of slavery and help runaway slaves to freedom via the Underground Railway.

On 5 March 1770, in what became known as the Boston Massacre, British troops fired on an aggressive mob and among the three people killed was Crispus Attucks [Fig. 6], an enormous Mulatto slave who was leading the mob.

At the time the USA was born in 1789 the Plantation System was seen as part of the normal way of life in the South; and the ideal unit for growing cotton was about 1000 acres with a labour force of around 100 slaves. Early Presidents like George Washington [Fig. 7], and Thomas Jefferson had plantations and were slave owners, though both detested the institution. In 1793 Eli Whitney [Fig. 8] invented the cotton gin which separated the short staple cotton from its seed, and its application over the next two years increased cotton exports from 140,000 pounds to over 1,500,000 pounds. This machine and the insatiable demands of the British textile industry ensured the growth of the plantation system and slavery.



Fig.6 Attucks

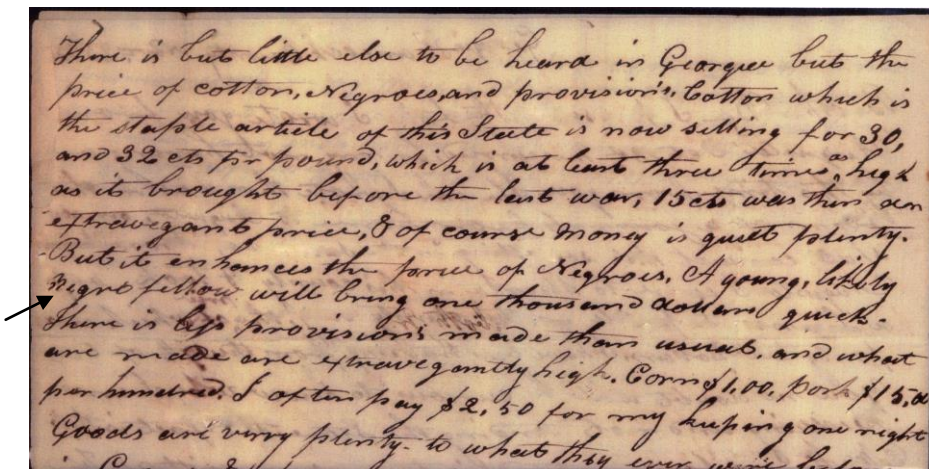


Fig.7 Washington



Fig.8 Whitney

Slavery was a problem for the U.S.A for which no one, however well-meaning, could see a solution. By 1830 the small number of slaves in the North could have been emancipated without difficulty since States with only about one Negro per hundred people would suffer neither economic damage nor political problems. In the South however for States like Virginia with forty-two Negroes per hundred, and South Carolina with fifty-five per hundred, anything but very gradual abolition would produce economic ruin and civil disorder, with vast numbers of former slaves looking for nonexistent jobs. The outlook for the slaves as well as their masters would have been disastrous.



Now for some illustrations showing that slaves were seen as chattels to be treated like any other property. The first one is an extract from an 1817 letter [Fig. 9] from a travelling peddler in Sparta, Ga. to his brother

Mr. Dennis Cooley in Deerfield, Mass. Commenting on the price of cotton, Negroes and provisions he notes that the large increase in cotton prices since the war (1812-14 with Britain) has enhanced the price of Negroes and a 'young lively Negro fellow' will bring over \$1000.

The next is a property inventory for Hugh W. Cooper (deceased) of Amite County, Mississippi dated 15 Dec.1828 [Fig. 10]. It begins by itemising 11 Negroes with values ranging from \$600 down to \$123, before going on to the less valuable horses (\$70) and a

further page of other possessions. The total value is \$4737 of which the slaves account for \$3565.

This folded adversity cover [Fig. 11] made from a merchant's order form, carries the manuscript notation 'Per Boy Sharpes' indicating that a slave carried it to the Post Office in Huntsville, Texas. The ms 2 is the charge that the addressee had to pay when collecting the letter at that Post Office. No date can be given and for the illustration the cover is folded to show that it is made from a printed form.

An inventory of the personal estate of Hugh M. Cooper	
1 Negro man ming	600
1 Negro man John	600
1 Negro man George	350
1 Do woman Fanny	450
1 Do Do Lily	275
1 Do Do Big Hannah	450
1 Negro boy Hampton	250
1 Do Do Newton	175
1 Negro girl Charity	125
1 Do Do Ellen	160
1 Negro boy Aaron	125
1 Negro boy	70
1 Negro boy	40
1 Negro boy	50

Fig.10

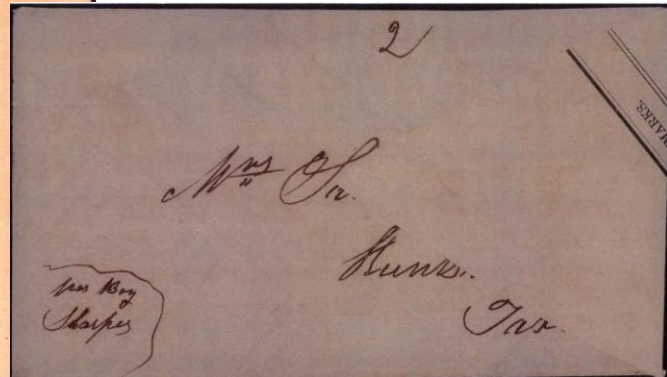


Fig.11



My final illustration in this section is of abolitionist sentiments displayed in the printed letterhead [Fig. 12] used by Mrs. Louisa Coddin, in Bloomfield, Maine. This letter, dated 9 Jan 1845, to a friend in Bridgeton, Maine, is full of abolitionist comments and the activities of the local anti-slavery society.

The Abolitionists

A large number of people worked for 'abolition' of which this is only a small selection including some former slaves.

Frederick Douglass (1817-1895) [Fig. 13] was born in Maryland and from the age of nine worked as a house slave in Baltimore, where he learnt to read. In 1833 he was returned to his plantation as a field slave, and after a failed attempt to escape in 1836 he was apprenticed to a ship caulker in Baltimore. In 1838 he escaped to New York City and then moved on to New Bedford, Mass. where in 1841, after delivering an extemporaneous speech before a meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, he was hired as an agent. After several years travelling and speaking for them he fled to Great Britain where he continued his

abolitionist work for two years. On his return to New York his freedom was purchased by public subscription. He founded the abolitionist newspaper *North Star* with Martin Delany as joint editor and it ran for 16 years. Active in the recruitment of Negro troops for the Union Army in the war, from 1881 to 1885 he was the Recorder of Deeds for the District of Columbia, before becoming from 1889 to 1891 the U.S. Minister to Haiti.

Sojourner Truth (1797?-1883) [Fig. 14] was born a slave in Ulster County, New York, and was emancipated in 1827 when the New York Emancipation Act was passed. She took to the road as an itinerant preacher in 1843, speaking out for women's suffrage as well as against slavery. At times she rivalled Frederick Douglass in eloquence and often shared the podium with him. Her fame as an anti-slavery orator preceded her to Washington where President Lincoln appointed her counsellor to the freedmen in the city. She continued her work after the war with the Freedmen's Bureau on behalf of former slaves.

Harriet Tubman (1820?-1913) [Fig. 15], born a slave in Dorchester County, Maryland, was initially a field hand until in 1849 she escaped from the plantation and made her way North with the aid of the Underground Railroad. During the next ten years she became the most famous and successful of the conductors on the Railroad; she made 19 trips to the South and helped to bring out over 300 slaves to the North. She met and worked with the leading white abolitionists of her time, including Ralph Waldo Emerson [Fig. 16]. He was the transcendentalist writer and poet who became more outspoken in his attack on slavery after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850; in 1857 he met John Brown and sympathised with his attempts to free southern slaves. Harriet Tubman attached herself to the Union Forces in South Carolina as a cook, laundress and nurse and gave valuable help as a guide and occasional spy. After the war she worked to establish schools in North Carolina for freedmen, and later after moving to Auburn, New York she founded the Harriet Tubman Home for Aged Negroes.

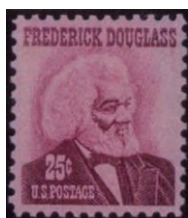


Fig.13 Douglass



Fig.14 Truth



Fig.15 Tubman



Fig.16 Emerson

Josiah Henson (1789-1883) [Fig. 17] was born a slave at Tobacco, Maryland and rose to be overseer on his Master's Plantation in Kentucky. He was ordained in the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1828 and two years later escaped to Canada with his wife and four children, when he learned that his family was to be broken up. He became one of the founders of the fugitive settlement at Dawn, Upper Canada. When he published his autobiography *The Life of Josiah Henson* in 1849, he was visited by the American abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe¹ who used him as the prototype for Uncle Tom in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Horace Greeley, (1811-1872) [Fig. 18] worked as a journeyman printer in New York City and after founding his own printing office in 1834, with a partner, he began publishing the magazine *New Yorker*. He worked for other newspapers including being Editor of the *Jeffersonian* a Whig Campaign sheet. In 1841 he established the daily *New York Tribune* and

¹ The USA issued a 75c Beecher Stowe stamp on 13th June 2007, available in the UK by mid-August.

as Editor was a fervent abolitionist. In 1860 he supported Abraham Lincoln and after the war advocated total amnesty for the former rebels' hoping to heal the wounds of sectional strife. In 1872, though in poor health, he ran for the Presidency as a Democrat and having been overwhelmingly defeated he died within weeks of the election.

Many women spread their reforming efforts across a number of causes, including abolition, temperance, women's suffrage and social welfare. I have already mentioned the abolitionist author Harriet Beecher Stowe but surprisingly cannot provide an illustration because she is without a commemorative stamp.

Lucretia Mott (1793-1880) [Fig. 19] was a Quaker feminist who worked constantly for liberal causes. She was a delegate to the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840, and though rebuffed because she was a woman she still managed to make her views known. In 1848, with Elizabeth Cady Stanton she organised the first women's rights convention in the U.S.A. After the adoption of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850 she and her husband opened their home in Philadelphia to slaves escaping down the Underground Railroad.

Lucy Stone (1818-1893) [Fig. 20] was a social reformer working for women's rights as well as abolition. She was recognised as an effective anti-slavery speaker and pamphleteer and in 1855 married the prominent Ohio abolitionist Henry Brown Blackwell.



Fig.17 Henson

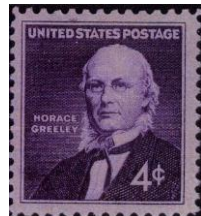


Fig.18 Greeley

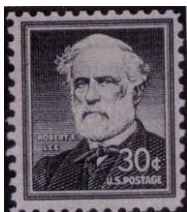


Fig.19 Mott



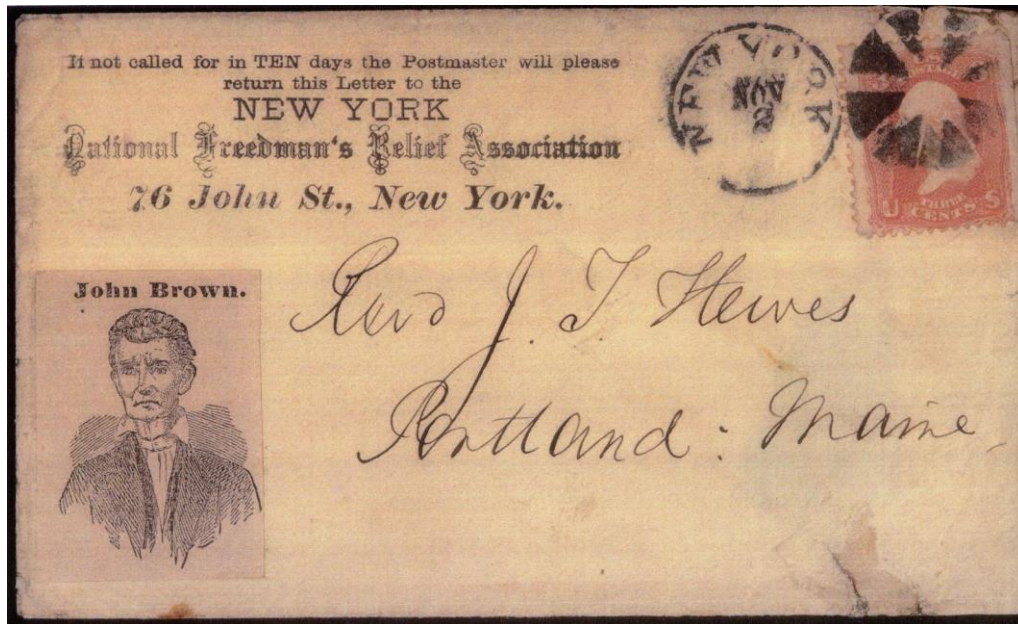
Fig.20 Stone

Now I come to John Brown, probably the most widely known name of all abolitionists because of the popular song *John Brown's Body*. For much of his life he was a restless drifter and business failure but he had strong religious convictions, was a fanatical abolitionist, and his house in Richmond, Ohio was a station on the Underground Railroad. In 1855 five of his sons moved to Kansas and he followed with a large supply of weapons to help in the struggle. On 21 May 1855 they murdered five pro-slavery men on the banks of Pottawotamie Creek, and continued fighting in what had become known as 'Bleeding Kansas'. On 17 May 1859 John Brown began his plan to invade the South and free the slaves, by leading a band of 21 men to seize the Federal Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. Three days later a company of US marines under the command of Col. Robert E. Lee [Fig. 21] stormed the Arsenal, killing ten of

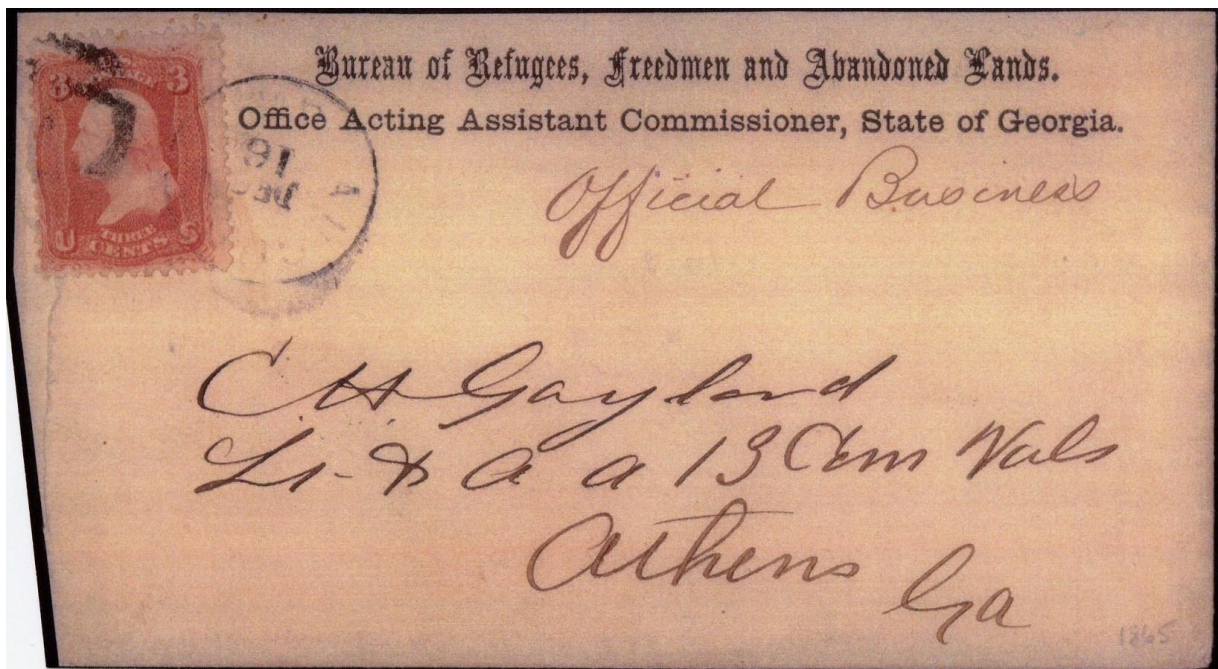


the men and capturing Brown. He was handed over to the State of Virginia, tried for treason, and convicted after he had rejected his counsel's advice to plead insanity. He was hanged on 2 Dec 1859. On a personal note I recall how fascinated I was, when in 1966 in the U.S. National Archives building in Washington, DC I saw on display Robert E. Lee's report of his actions at Harpers Ferry.

Brown became a martyr for Northern sympathisers, which explains why I have a label depicting him [Fig. 22] on a cover from the New York Freedman's Relief Association, established in February 1862, to raise money and support for freed slaves.



It was not until 3 March 1865 that Congress passed an Act, signed by Abraham Lincoln, authorising the formation of the Freedman's Bureau to help deal with all the problems of the freed slaves, including settling them on abandoned or confiscated land, providing food, and building schools and hospitals. Over \$17 million was spent before the Bureau was wound up in 1874. It was run by a Commissioner with ten Assistant Commissioners and operated in all the 11 Southern States - my illustration is for the Georgia Bureau [Fig. 23].



To be continued in December Themescene

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

From the Editor

The following article is unusual in featuring a subject which has not (as far as either I or the author are aware) featured on stamps. When Barry first asked my opinion on the worth of writing it up I said “yes” immediately for the selfish reason that the subject interested me personally. However it does have a wider resonance. We take written communication for granted, even if by computer or mobile phone texting; modern societies cannot operate without it. Where and how writing began, and how it developed, is a question I hope to answer – albeit in a simplistic way - in a series of articles in future issues. At last I will have been cornered into writing for *Themescene* myself, despite my belief that this is everybody else’s job but mine!

Even today we operate by signs and symbols as well as writing. We use road signs, regimental badges, national flags etc. to indicate instructions, membership or ownership. The earliest known however are the markings found in caves in Europe from around 30,000 to 15,000 years ago, and in Africa much more recently. Some famous ones feature on stamps. It is impossible from this distance to say what they meant: perhaps good hunting or a religious invocation, but they were certainly intended to store and communicate information essential to the life of the community. Anyone who has ever been in the caves of northern Spain, southern France or parts of Central Europe will know how easy it is to empathise with the striking, accurate and beautiful paintings.



Later on systems of decorating objects were in use to send messages. The pre-Inca Mocha tribes of Peru used beans marked with dots and/or lines. The wampum belts of the Iroquois of North America were woven with patterns and colours. Many societies used knotted cords, notably the quipu of ancient Peru. The Australian message sticks were one more example of societies perfectly able to communicate without the use of writing as we understand it.

Reference

Gaur, A. (1992) *A history of writing*.

ABORIGINAL MESSAGE STICKS

Barry & Jean Floyd

While readers of *Themescene* are primarily interested in studying topical postage stamps – as contemporary means of sending messages in letter form – we may perhaps legitimately enquire into earlier, historic means of communication between individuals and social groups.



The Aboriginal and Indigenous inhabitants of Australia have lived on the continent for some 40,000 – 50,000 years, many millennia before the first European settlers arrived in 1788. They lived essentially in hunting and plant-gathering societies, invariably nomadic, and with limited need for specialized communication between nations, tribes and clans.

Over time however, two methods of communicating evolved: smoke signalling, and message or letter sticks. The use of beacon fires and smoke messages can be traced back to the early stages of many societies worldwide. The second method – pieces of wood, around 20-30 cm in length and etched with angular lines and dots – is a much more distinctive Australian art form.



Whilst the use of message sticks was not universal among Australian tribes, the technique was sufficiently widespread to warrant our further examination.

The prime purpose of the message sticks – often called letters by Aboriginal people, or spoken of as ‘Blackfellows letters’ by early Europeans – was to relay information from one group of tribesmen to another. They could apparently perform a range of functions, from acting as a guarantee of good faith to summoning individuals or groups to a ceremony (‘corroboree’) or for a ball game.

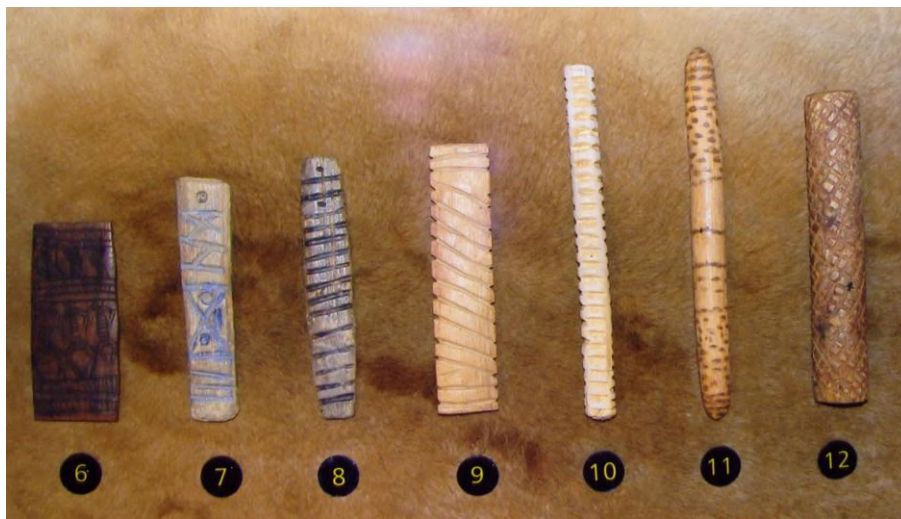
There were distinct variations in the methods of preparing and sending message sticks from one geographic region to another across the continent. Nevertheless there were certain similarities which can now be described. While of differing lengths, the sticks were usually carved quite simply. However some were elaborately marked, highly ornamented, and even brightly painted. The stick was etched by a sharp mussel shell or later by a knife. The principal creator was the headman or tribal leader. After making it, he would hand it to another elder who inspected it and, if necessary, added further marks. Other old men present might also be involved in approving the message before it was dispatched.

A description of the location and nature of markings on a letter stick is provided by an elder of the all but extinct Woiworung tribe, traditionally located on the Yarra River:

“The notches on the upper right hand side of the stick represent the sender, and other old men who join with him in the message. Those on the underside represent the recipient and the old men with him. The remainder of the stick being notched along the whole length above and below means that all men of both localities are to be present. The markings on the flat side at the right hand are merely ornamental, as are also the crescent-shaped ends of the stick.”ⁱⁱ

During the creation of the letter stick, the person who was to act as its carrier was present so that he knew the full content of the message to be relayed. Once approved by the elders, the stick was handed to the messenger, to be delivered by hand across country to the intended receiver.

What is clear from the above description is that message sticks were not intended to be



read by the recipients in the way in which a written letter is read today. Rather, the various notches and patterns served to remind the carrier of the information he was to deliver. In other words, the stick served as a memory jogger or *aide memoire*.

The appointed messenger (mailman) was usually a younger man, and, if possible, one whose sister was married to someone in that part of the tribe to which the carrier was directed. Only if the message related to initiation ceremonies would the messenger be one of the older men. In addition to the sticks all the mailmen carried tokens of one form or another. If the message related to a set fight, the token might be a club or shield; if to initiation rites, a sacred humming instrument, conveniently spoken of by its English name of ‘bull-roarer’. An invitation to a game of ball playing (a popular sport: an early forerunner of soccer?) might be conveyed by the ball itself, made from tightly rolled-up pieces of opossum skin, or, in the case of the Kurnai tribe, the ball from the scrotum of an ‘old man kangaroo’!

If a special ceremony was planned the carrier might also wear or carry a ‘kilt’ and be painted and decked with feathers. While on the move the message stick was placed in a net bag for safe keeping. On arrival at its destination the mailman would hand it to the headman at some place apart from the others and then recite the full message, referring as he did so to all the marks on the message stick.

Whatever the nature of the relayed oral messages the carriers were treated with respect; people were always glad to receive news ‘carried in the mouth’. They stayed with the receiving tribes until such time as they were asked to make the journey home, with messages in response. Their ability on occasion to remember quite lengthy numerical and locational information is commendable, e.g. the number of overnight camps or moons required before achieving a meeting, or topographic features to be identified en route.

“The markings on the sticks ... are well calculated to afford some measure of the mental capacity and of the mental status of the persons using them”.ⁱⁱⁱ

When traveling, distances and times were incorporated into relayed messages, and the numbers to be counted were quite large, carriers would have recourse to

“various parts of the body, each of which had a recognized name, and an understood position in this method of enumeration ... This method of counting fully disposes of any belief that the paucity of numerals in the languages of Australian tribes arises from any inability to conceive of more numbers than two, three or four.”^{iv}

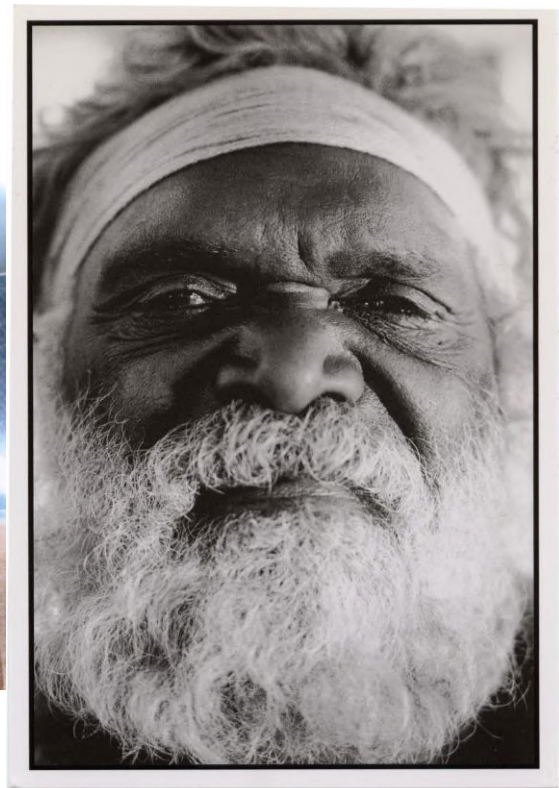
It is interesting to note that the Australian national broadcasting station, ABC, calls both its indigenous online and its television components *Message Sticks* in recognition of the traditional Aboriginal means of communication.

Whilst travelling recently around Australia, visiting Aboriginal art centres in the Northern Territory, and museums in Brisbane, Queensland, and Sydney New South Wales, we were able to view several displays of message sticks from numerous nations and tribes. ☒

i. This essay draws heavily upon information regarding message sticks provided in the first definitive study of this means of communication:

Howitt, A. W. (1889) “Notes on Australian message sticks and messengers” *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* pp.314-332

- ii. Howitt p.318
- iii. Howitt p. 314
- iv. Howitt p. 318



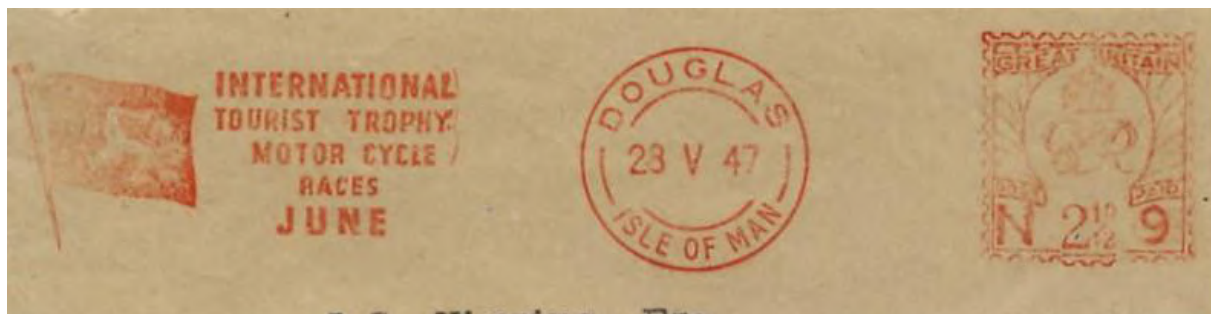
THE T.T.RACES 1907-2007 Lap 3

In the third of four articles on the Isle of Man T.T. Races John Hayward looks at the period after WW II.

Well, I achieved a lifetime ambition and went to the TT Races for a week in June for the Centenary event. Apart from enjoying the event immensely, I could not help but be impressed by the informality of everything, especially around the Grandstand at Douglas. Wandering around the pits and mixing with the riders was such an experience, quite unheard of in MotoGP and World Superbike events. The Manx Philatelic Bureau had a shop behind the Grandstand and the special issues for the Centenary Races were an obvious purchase:



Back to the aftermath of WW II. The TT recommenced in 1947 and a Manx metermark, now quite scarce, was used to advertise the event:

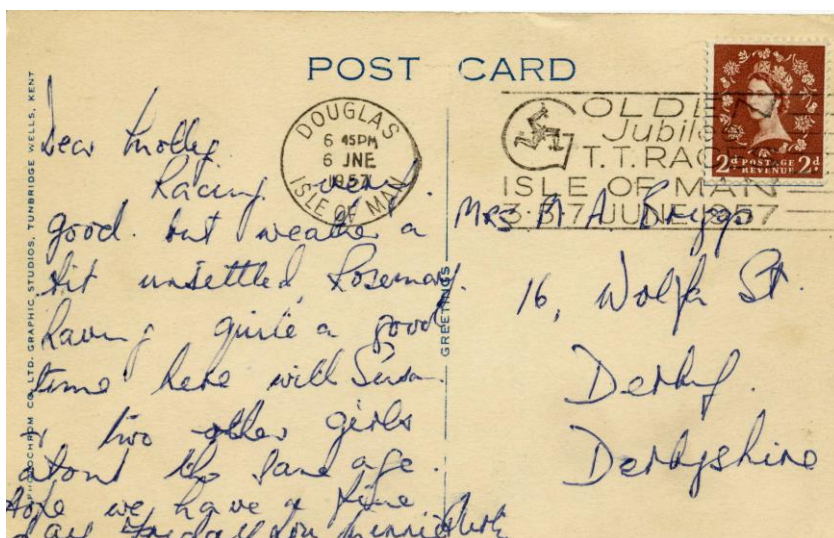


The popularity of the Races was soon re-established, especially by riders like Geoff Duke, 5 times winner, who became a household name. Then in 1957 in the TT's Golden Jubilee year, the first 100 mph lap was recorded by Bob McIntyre. Soon British machines were being eclipsed by Italian and Japanese machinery. The 1960s and early '70s proved hugely popular, with stars like Mike Hailwood and Barry Sheene attracting the fans. Experiments were tried with the shorter Clypse Course for the sidecars and lightweight machines and many different classes for production and racing machines.



But problems were on the horizon. The Mountain Course in becoming faster and faster was getting more and more dangerous – there were no safety roads or run-offs which one sees at shorter closed circuits – and unfortunately

regular fatalities brought cries for its abandonment from the popular press, and some riders even refused to ride there. As a result it lost its World Championship status in 1978.



Golden Jubilee



Geoff Duke



Mike Hailwood

Nonetheless, the races survived almost certainly due to financial support from the Isle of Man Tourist Board, plus two riders whose immense popularity could draw fans in their numbers to the Island – Mike Hailwood and Joey Dunlop. Mike Hailwood returned to the TT in 1978 after an 11 year gap and amazingly won two more TTs. His record number of 12 wins was eventually eclipsed by Joey Dunlop (figure 7) with his unsurpassed 26 race victories. Sadly, neither of them could appear for the Centenary celebrations this year as they had succumbed respectively to a road and racing accident. Meanwhile lap speeds had increased to 122.63 mph by 1990 and even the sidecars were lapping at over 100 mph.



David Jefferies

In the last 15 years or so star riders like Carl Fogarty, David Jefferies and John McGuinness have continued to popularise the TT Races, and in the process have raised the lap record to a staggering 130 mph witnessed by myself this year. Even the outbreak of foot and mouth disease on the UK mainland in 2001 could not diminish the TT's attraction, even though the races had to be cancelled that year, the only occasion something other than a World War has prevented their running. ☒

The final article will be published in December Themescene.

EUROTHEMA 07

By the time members read this article it will be 10 weeks away from the BTA's premier event of the year, but this will be the last opportunity to publicise it in *Themescene*. Our plans for the event are coming to fruition, yet there is a lot more to do to ensure Eurothema 2007 is successful. The BTA sub-committee organising the event has been hard at work for over a year slotting all the pieces of the jigsaw together – the competition, judging, arrangements for our foreign visitors, publicity, the Palmares dinner, the printed programme, etc. Success will not only be in ensuring everything is alright on the night, but in the numbers we can get through the doors and hopefully the favourable impression the show has on them.

You, the members, can help to make the show successful. You have already brought in nearly £100 in the sale of raffle tickets at Thematica in June. Incidentally, an old BTA stalwart, Brian Asquith, won the first prize of a bottle of whisky. You can help even more by distributing publicity flyers for us, or assisting with assembling the exhibition frames on Friday 23rd November 2007 and dismantling them between 5pm and 7pm on Sunday 25th November 2007 (call John Hayward about either task on 01276 29246). But your attendance at the show on Saturday or Sunday 24/25th November 2007 in the El Alamein Room of the Victory Services Club, 63 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF, the usual venue for Thematica close to Marble Arch, will add to its success. This is your opportunity to view many international thematic exhibits gathered in one place, and to see how they tackle “Thematics” on the Continent. You will be able to talk to the competitors and hopefully listen to what the International judges have to say about the exhibits.

We have entered a strong British team – details in *Themescene* June 2007 – who at this moment will be hard at work on their exhibits. Let us hope they are successful in lifting the coveted Eurothema trophy for the first time. The results will be announced at the Palmares dinner on the evening of Saturday 24th November 2007. If you want to attend the dinner (dress smart casual or lounge suit) and the Patron's Reception which precedes it, reservations should be made on the cut-out slip on the next page. There is also a welcoming buffet for our Continental friends and visitors on Friday 23rd November 2007 at 6.30pm, for which reservations can similarly be made.

An additional attraction of Eurothema 2007 will be the entries in the annual National and International Thematic Classes which form part of the former Stampex being held at Fairfield Hall, Croydon, on 23rd and 24th November 2007. ☒



EUROTHEMA 07 TICKETS

I wish to apply for _____ Tickets at £10 each for the Buffet
Please use capital letters

Name _____

Address _____

Names of guests attending _____

I enclose my cheque payable to the British Thematic Association for £ _____

Signed _____ Date _____

The application form for tickets and cheque to be sent to :-
Mrs. L Marley 17 Boundary Way, HAVANT, Hants PO9 1NE

No later than the 24th October 2007

I wish to apply for _____ Tickets at £30 each for the
Patron's Reception and Palmares Banquet.
Please use capital letters

Name _____

Address _____

Names of guests attending _____

I require the vegetarian alternative yes _____ no _____

I enclose my cheque payable to the British Thematic Association for £ _____

Signed _____ Date _____

The application form for tickets and cheque to be sent to :-
Mrs. L Marley 17 Boundary Way, HAVANT, Hants PO9 1NE

No later than the 24th October 2007

NEW ISSUES

The stamps below are reproduced with the kind assistance of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau

This year sees the centenary of the Scout movement, which today has more than 28 million members, both youths and adults, male and female, in 216 countries and territories. Each country's issues feature local scout groups, their leaders and their activities, plus a commemoration of Lord Baden Powell and the World Scout Jamborees. Baden-Powell was born on 22 February 1857 in London. After education at Charterhouse School he joined the army, beginning his military career in India, before serving in Africa. He became a national hero for his defence of Mafeking, besieged for 217 days during the Boer War. Returning to England, in 1907 he set up the first experimental scout camp at Brownsea Island, Dorset, from 29 July to 9 August 1907. *Scouting for Boys* was published in 1908 and the Scout Movement was born, followed by the setting up of the Girl Guides in 1910, the Wolf Cubs in 1916, the Senior Scout section in 1917 and the Rovers in 1922. World Jamborees are now worldwide, the 21st being held at Hylands Park in the UK. For further details see the official website <http://www.scouts.org.uk> And of course the website of the Scout and Guide Stamps Club <http://www.sgsc.org.uk>

SECOND EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THEMATIC PHILATELY, ESSEN 3-5 MAY 2007

Brian Sole explains the hard work that goes into judging competitions

The competition was divided into eight thematic classes, plus a Champions' Class for the winners of each of the Classes in the first Championship. In each class it was possible for up to ten exhibits to be shown, from ten different FEPA countries. Exhibits comprised between seven and eleven frames of twelve sheets and the owners had to have entered a FIP or FEPA exhibition at least once. A gold medal was awarded to the entrant with the highest score in each class and silver and bronze medals were awarded to the runners up. On the last day, each member of the jury casts votes, in front of spectators, to decide the overall European Champion from the eight gold medal winners. It has been compared with the voting in the Eurovision Song contest!

David Griffiths was our most successful entrant with "Here be Dragons". He scored 88 points in Class 1 Arts & Culture and won the gold medal.

Francis Kiddle displayed "Goat and Man" in Class 3 Man and Everyday Life and scored 78 points but was unplaced.

Ron Backhouse showed "Anyone for Tennis?" in Class 4 Sport & Leisure. He scored 85 points and was placed 5th out of 8 entries but was only 4 points behind the winner from Germany with 89 points.

John Hayward displayed "The Iron Steed" in Class 5 Transport and Technology. John scored 83 points and was also placed 5th out of 8 entries. The winner of the class was Willem van den Bold showing "May I introduce myself? My name is Automobile", with 95 points.

Lesley Marley entered "The Whale's Tale" in Class 7 Animals and Plants. She scored 84 points and was placed 4th out of 6 entries. The winner was from France and scored 90 points.

Sheila Foster was our unluckiest entrant. Sheila showed "The Rose" in Class 8 Agriculture and Pets and scored 90 marks but was placed 4th, only 4 points behind the winner from Israel with 94 points.

Just for the record, GB did not have entries in:

Class 2 History and Organisations. The winner was from Portugal with "That Glorious Deed" and there were 10 entries with marks ranging from 95 down to 73.

Class 6 Medicine and Science. The winner, and the winner of the European Championship, was Wolf Hess, Germany, with "Gegen die Tuberkulose" and 97 points.

I was part of the jury and judged classes 5 and 6 with Giancarlo Morolli as team leader and Peter Suhadolc from Slovenia. We began judging at 6pm on Wednesday evening, the day we had arrived, and continued until about 10pm. The following day we were working from 9am until about 6pm. We were free to look at exhibits we had not judged on Friday until the Palmares ceremony began at 4pm. This was followed by a Dinner outside of Essen. The Jury President was Damian Läge who ensured that all the arrangements and discussions went very smoothly.

On the Saturday morning we took part in the jury critique, involving discussions with entrants. In the afternoon jury members were divided into teams and evaluated selected exhibits according to the criteria for Philatelic Knowledge, Rarity and Condition. We then met together and a member from each team presented its findings, which led to further discussions. The aim of the Seminar was to establish consistency when judging and was very enlightening. The seminar continued on Sunday morning until lunchtime with talks by Wolf Hess and Giancarlo Morolli on Postal History elements in thematic philately. It was a tiring few days but well worthwhile meeting and working with so many European judges. ☒

Advertisement for Thames Themes

MINUTES

of the 16th Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 24th June 2007
in the Allenby Room, Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, London W2 at 2.30p.m.

Present: The Chairman and 20 other members present.

The Chairman opened the meeting by asking the President, Brian Sole, to present the Franceska Rapkin Memorial Bowl to Dennis Horgan for his article 'Who was Opa Dorus Rijkers?' in *Themescene* June 2006.

Apologies: Brian Asquith, Steve Boorn, Ron Backhouse, Shelia Foster, Chris George, Francis Kiddle, Gerald Lovell, Peter Greening, John Mills, Edward Quinton, Ron Trevelyan.

Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting held on June 25th 2006

These had been published in *Themescene* September 2006 and were circulated at this meeting. Lesley Marley proposed and Richard Wheeler seconded that the minutes be accepted as a true record – passed unanimously.

Matters arising

The President, Brian Sole, referred to the award of Life Membership to John and Betty Miller. Sadly Betty had died last year but Brian had been able to visit them to present their joint certificate, only 4 or 5 weeks before Betty died unexpectedly.

Chairman's report

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and began her report by thanking Maurice Gale and the Friends of Thematica for staging, yet again, another excellent thematic exhibition.

The Chairman continued by saying that, as what would have been her last written report had not been received by the editor for the June *Themescene*, she would now read it:

"This will be my last Chairman's report as my four year term of office has now come to an end. I would like to reflect, if I may, on the many achievements and triumphs we have experienced during that term, and look forward to an event taking place later in the year.

Looking back over the last four years of my Chairmanship there have been very many highs and of course one or two lows as well.

Our achievements on the international exhibiting scene have been outstanding, as I have reported over the years. We now have five international gold medallists in our midst, with several other up and coming collectors also attaining very high awards.

I look back, also with pride, on the wonderful non-competitive display that you, the BTA members, put on at Stampex last year. What a triumph, surely it was the most colourful and looked-at display ever seen at the National exhibition. It was wonderful proof, amongst all the doom and gloom, that thematic collecting is still very much alive and extremely popular.

Unfortunately there were the sad times as well. We lost our dear friend John Fosbery, an irreplaceable character in Thematic philately, although I am pleased to say his name will live on in the annual BTA 'no rules' competition held here at Thematica. This competition was instigated by John to encourage thematic collectors at all levels to display their wares, without running foul of the judges!

There was also the disappointment of the demise of the Philatelic Music Circle. It is such a shame that this fine and respected society should have to be wound down through lack of volunteers to fill the committee places.

On a brighter note, last May six BTA members: Sheila Foster, Lesley Marley, Ron Backhouse, John Hayward, David Griffiths and Francis Kiddle, prepared their exhibits for the second European Championships of Thematic Philately. With Brian Sole as the UK Judge and myself as Commissioner, we all went off (with the exception of Francis) to Essen, in Germany for another 3 day feast of Thematic competitions, dealers, and seminars. I am thrilled to report that our 'team' returned with another clutch of well-earned medals. Congratulations to them all.

Now we are looking further forward to Eurothema 07, being held in conjunction with Thematica II, November 24/25. Please make a note of the date in your diary now, this is a very exciting occasion for us and should not be missed. And by the way — if you think you could help out in any way during this event please contact either John Hayward or Lesley Marley.

I cannot end my term of office without a very big thank you to all the committee members who have helped me over the last four years.

To Anne for her unstinting work as Secretary (the hub of any society); to Wendy who does such a truly fantastic job in getting *Themescene* together each quarter; to Peter (Wood) for keeping our finances in order and the other Peter (Denly) for keeping our Members in order! Thanks also to our Librarian, Ron; to John for his excellent organisation of more than just 'Displays'; and to Simon for his excellent and enthusiastic work as our Publicity Officer.

I would also like to offer my thanks to the relatively 'new' members of our committee who have kindly volunteered their time and services so that the BTA may continue to go forward: Richard Wheeler (*Themescene* back issues and distribution); Mike Blackman (Advertising); and Mike Chapling (committee member); welcome aboard chaps!

I would also like to thank the Vice Chairman and my successor, Lesley Marley, for her support.

My final words of thanks go to our President Brian Sole, who has been a steady hand and my philatelic guiding light for as long as I can remember. He is the stalwart of Thematic Philately in this country, and I am very proud to have served my term of office under his leadership.

All that remains to be done is to wish the incoming Chairman good luck, and to tell you that you haven't quite heard the last of me, as I will be remaining on the Committee as your FIP representative.

Treasurer's Report and adoption of Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2006.

I refer all members present to the Income and Expenditure statement for the Year ended 31 December 2006 handed out today. Following examination it differs a little to that shown on pages 59 and 60 of *Themescene* Vol. 24, No. 2 of June 2007 (which at the time of publication had not been examined, despite a note to the effect it had).

The "Other" costs and thus deficit are some £28 lower than published. However there are some more substantial changes on the balance sheet because I had treated uncleared cheques incorrectly and although I had separated the Distribution managers "float" (held for the purchase of mint stamps) it wasn't in the total, so the Balance sheet which appeared in *Themescene* didn't add up ! I apologise for this and stress, it was a result of my errors, and felt I had to give the correct one today [and following this Report].

As advised last year we had a deficit in the year, primarily as a result of the 'Village Green' exhibition at STAMPEX.

Income

Shown in the balance sheet is the donation £750 from the Philatelic Music Society. Rather than just use that up in covering ordinary costs it was decided that should be specifically identified as helping to fund EUROTHEMA and will no doubt be suitably mentioned in the brochure.

If we include the *Thamescene* Advertising, which actually is shown offsetting costs, then income was the same as last year. Note the interest has fallen and I will return to that later.

Costs

Net cost of the Stampex "Village Green" was £922; we made a donation towards the 2010 International of £250 (we have no other outstanding commitment to that event) and there were the costs associated with the other meetings: Torquay, the AGM and Worpex.

The other costs were very steady year on year, publicity somewhat higher with some website costs, advertising a little higher and an element of costs from previous years that won't recur.

Next year and the future.

In the 2007 Accounts there will be the financial impact of "Eurothema" and we should expect another deficit year which will eat heavily into our reserves.

The Committee policy has been to use the reserves for events to raise the profile of Thematics and attract interest. However, it seems inevitable that subscription levels will have to be looked at because leaving aside the "special events" pressures are starting to arise in various areas of what one might call the "normal" operations.

On the income side advertising is falling away, it will be down for 2007 and other advertisers are considering their position (which may be a polite way of ceasing). As our reserves are used on projects the bank interest will fall away, for 2008 it is likely to be very much lower.

On the cost side, room hire is becoming more expensive, for the AGM here (where we are in a sense tied because of Thematica) and committee meetings, only two a year, (again here and alternatives so far identified wouldn't make significant savings once increased travel expenses are factored in).

The bi-annual ABPS exhibitions and our support is now perhaps a regular commitment that we want to take on rather than seen as one off events.

Postage is a potential problem area but it is hoped that by close attention to getting as close to weight bands as possible this can be avoided – it may result in differing numbers of pages in different issues of *Thamescene*.

Since the last committee meeting agreed not to propose an increase in subscriptions I have had time to worry about the time lags involved - the room costs and loss of advertising have already hit us for 2007, let alone the effect in 2008 when any increase could come into effect.

If the meeting here, representing active membership, were to feel there is a case for an increase I would not be heartbroken!

But first I would ask for questions and request the Chair to ask you to formally accept the accounts.

The Chairman remarked that it was the Treasurer's job to worry; proposed by John Hayward and seconded by Mike Chapling that the Accounts be accepted. Agreed unanimously.

The Treasurer thanked Ron Hyams for his work and help as Examiner of the Accounts.

Corrected accounts:

THE BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION
Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31 December 2006

2005	INCOME		2006
3,543	Subscriptions		3,468
52	Publications - net surplus on account		87
87	Miscellaneous sales (net)		49
244	Net Bank Interest		201
<u>3,926</u>	TOTAL INCOME		<u>3,805</u>
EXPENDITURE			
3,312	"Themescene" - Printing, distribution and Expenses	3,328	
-860	less : Advertising Income	-980	2,348
118	International Activity		0
875	Meetings (includes AGM)		490
-	Stampex-Village Green (includes Brochure)	1,392	
-	less: Advertising Income - £450, Donation(Guild of St Gabriel) - £20	-470	922
113	BTA Cup expenses	85	
-100	less : Entry Fees	-75	10
252	Committee Meetings and Expenses		284
284	Publicity and Web Site		437
99	Insurance		99
393	Affiliations (ABPS, ATA, Friends of Thematica)		377
383	Officers Expenses (other than shown under relevant activity)		367
-	Donation to 2010		250
101	Other		79
<u>4,970</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>5,663</u>
-1,044	DEFICIT Expenditure over income		-1,858

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2006

Accumulated fund			
12,666	Balance at 1.1.2006		11,622
-1,044	less : Deficit for the year		-1,858
<u>11,622</u>			<u>9,764</u>
-624	less : Stocks of publications		-379
<u>10,998</u>			<u>9,385</u>
-	Eurothema Fund - Donation from Philatelic Music Circle		750
<u>10,998</u>			<u>10,135</u>

Represented by:		
12,700	Cash at Bank: High Interest Account	11,200
58	Current account	1,345
0	Held by distribution manager.	200
<u>380</u>	Amounts due to us and payments in advance.	<u>9</u>
13,138		12,754
-431	less: Subs received in advance	-1,138
<u>-1,709</u>	less: Amounts due or received in advance	<u>-1,481</u>
<u>10,998</u>		<u>10,135</u>

Hon. Treasurer, P. J. Wood ACMA, Hon. Examiner, R.Hyams

Election of Officers

Chairman - Margaret Morris proposed and Wendy Buckle seconded that Lesley Marley be elected as Chairman – agreed unanimously.

Vice Chairman - Peter Denly proposed and Richard Wheeler seconded that John Hayward be elected Vice Chairman – agreed unanimously.

Secretary and Treasurer - John Hayward proposed and Simon Moorcroft seconded that Anne Stammers be elected as Secretary and Peter Wood as Treasurer – agreed unanimously.

Election of Committee Members

It was proposed by Ron Hyams and seconded by Stuart Henderson that those willing to stand again be re-elected ‘en bloc’. This was carried unanimously.

Wendy Buckle	Editor <i>Themescene</i>
Peter Denly	Membership Secretary
Simon Moorcroft	Publicity Officer
Richard Wheeler	Distribution <i>Themescene</i>
Michael Blackman	Advertising
Mike Chapling	Committee member
Brian Sole	Committee member
Christine Earle	FIP Coordinator

Ratification by the membership of the appointment of

Ron Backhouse	Librarian
Ronald Hyams	Examiner of the Accounts

Lesley Marley proposed and Anne Stammers seconded that these appointments be ratified. This was carried unanimously.

Any Other Business

a) **Room Hire** – John Hayward explained that a room now had to be booked for a whole day at the Victory Services Club and wondered if a specialist society, that would like to hold a meeting on the same day as the BTA AGM or BTA Committee meeting (next one is 29 September), would then consider sharing the cost of the room to the advantage of both societies.

b) **Thank you** – The President thanked Christine Earle for all her work as Chairman – it had not been an easy time but she had stuck with it and achieved much. He also thanked the

committee members – a thriving group with new blood. The President wished our new chairman good luck.

c) **Term of Office** – Chris Earle said that she felt that 4 years was a good term of office for the Chairman as one has to ‘settle in’. John Hayward, during his term of office had really got the display side of the BTA up and running.

Chris had raised the profile of the BTA both nationally and internationally.

Lesley Marley had vast experience with Devon and Cornwall and had achieved getting societies to talk to one another and not work in isolation, and Chris felt that Lesley would carry on with this theme throughout her Chairmanship – if members had ideas for displays or talks then please tell Lesley or a committee member. Chris was looking forward to the next four years and will continue to work in the background for the BTA and was pleased and proud to hand over to Lesley.

d) **New Chairman’s remarks** – Lesley Marley thanked the past Chairman for her remarks and welcomed Margaret Morris as the Patron of the BTA for Eurothema. She thanked Brian Sole for agreeing to stay on as President, also the Committee and was looking forward to everyone working together.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 3.05 p.m. and was followed by Peter Denly, winner of the BTA Cup at Thematica 2006, giving his winning display on ‘The Mariner’s World’.

ADVENTURE FOR THE PHILATELIST & MARINER!

Simon Moorcroft Report on Thematica, BTA AGM and Peter Denly’s Display

Britain’s premier thematic exhibition took place in the usual weekend of June, opening to reasonable weather. The usual attractions were present with another good showing from dealers. Stock in some quarters seemed to have been refreshed and dealers seemed able to offer material for most themes. Most reported brisk and successful trade. Visitor numbers held up well with the usual number through the doors. Sadly there were very few young visitors which were slightly disheartening considering the large amount of work and effort put in by Harry Wright.

The exhibits, organised by Friends of Thematica and supported by the BTA, were again well supported this year. In the BTA Cup competition there were five entries with Barry Stagg’s “The History, Development and Uses of Parachutes” winning the Cup. This covered pre-World War I through to paragliders, and included military and sporting aspects. We look forward to him displaying at the 2008 AGM. Entries in the Inter-Federation Competition were slightly down this year with only three Federations submitting material. Kent was triumphant thanks to Grahame Boutle’s entry of “Man Under the Sea”, on submarines, submersibles and diving equipment through to deep sea robots. In the John Fosbery visitors were given eight entries to choose from. Some tough decisions had to be made and some innovative and interesting material was submitted. After the two days of voting Peter Miller’s entry of “Iron

Walls” was announced as the winner; a history of iron-clad ships from the American Civil War to World War II. .

The number of entries in the youth competition was as good as ever. This is surprising given the fall in the number of children visiting the show. It was excellent to see that so many had put so much time and effort into their exhibits. The colour and innovation of some was most commendable.

Awards were presented at a ceremony in the El Alamein Room on Sunday. Awards in the adult classes were presented by Jeffery Matthews MBE as usual. Grateful thanks go to Jeffery for his continued support of Thematica and for the designing of the souvenir miniature sheet. The junior awards were handed out by Eric Friedman of Rushstamps Ltd who without their support the junior competitions could not be staged. Unfortunately very few of those children who won trophies etc were present at the ceremony although those that were there were pleased with their prizes.

At 2:30pm the BTA AGM got underway with Christine in the chair. The meeting began with the presentation of the Francheska Rapkin Memorial bowl to Denis Horgan for his article “Who was Opus Dorus Rijkers?” The formal proceedings then got under way. Chris presented her final Chairman’s report commenting on another successful year. She outlined the planning and work that has been going into Eurothema and explained that the show was on track and look set to be excellent. She thanked the committee for their continued hard work and commitment and the BTA generally for helping her through difficult times at the beginning of her chairmanship. Chris also mentioned that when taking office she had wanted to increase the profile of the BTA and Britain in international thematic philately where Britain had long been considered a token force. She was pleased to report that after three years much of her aims had been achieved with Britain now a major part of Eurothema and many British thematic philatelists achieving very high medals at international exhibitions.

The Treasurer’s report was given successfully. Peter Wood had to report a deficit of expenditure over income. One reason for this was the one-off expense incurred as a result of the Village Green Display at Spring Stampex 2006. In addition, costs relating to publicity had also increased. He also stated that Eurothema is also a major financial commitment. However he pointed out that the BTA held good reserves and thus saw no reason to raise subscriptions.

After the other formal proceedings had been completed successfully and without hindrance the new Chairman Lesley Marley introduced the BTA Cup winner of 2006, Peter Denly, and asked him to present his display.



Peter firstly explained that the title of the display was different to that which was entered into the competition. The original title of “A Mariner’s World” being replaced by “Man’s Marine Adventures”. The inspiration for the title came from marine insurance policies which include the words “marine adventures”. This alludes to the early days of maritime exploration and travel where every journey a ship undertook was an “adventure” which was coupled with uncertainty. Peter explained that the words are still in use today because the

principle of maritime travel has not changed although in reality modern technology has made it less of an ‘unknown’

Peter's display focused on many aspects of the sea and how man has used it. One major section was charts. Their importance is still as great today as it has been for hundreds of years. Peter explained that it was vital particularly in the early days of navigation because navigating wrongly could lead to ships running aground or sinking. Peter explained that the world owes a great debt to Captain Cook who understood the very great importance of accurate navigation material and devices. Cook was at the forefront of chart development and devised a printing system where charts would be printed by specially engraved copper plates. These plates could

be used again and again. Peter explained that one of the first company's he worked for had a chart department and, at the time, still printed the charts using the copper plate system.

Another large section Peter had included was relating to Lighthouses. Peter again explained the importance of these buildings and how vital they are even today. He mentioned Trinity House which was founded by the Church and today is responsible for substantial amounts of charitable work.

Peter illustrated the development of vessels both for civil and military use. He explained that the most obvious and important change came with the conversion from sail power to steam propulsion. Naval vessels have developed greatly over the last hundred years with a major breakthrough happening with the launching of



HMS Dreadnought. Peter explained that the Germans were particularly advanced in naval technology at the beginning of World War Two. He placed a particular emphasis on the pocket battle ships of the German fleet, ships like the Admiral Graf Spee, which were some of the most powerful and formidable ships afloat at the time. Peter had illustrated the pocket battleships with a postal stationary card from Germany.



Throughout the display Peter entertained the members with an array of personal stories, experiences and memories. He chose to end with the Empress of India which was wrecked in 1914. He showed a cover rescued from the ship addressed to a Miss Winnie Farrant who Peter explained was his mother. It was a superb and poignant way to end the display.

Peter's display was entertaining and comprehensive, giving a good insight into a vast field. High quality material was present throughout with some rarer items intermixed. Pieces with a personal connection are, to their owner, priceless of course. It was excellent to see Peter's collection in, by and large, its full form

and to see how he has developed it. Words of appreciation were given by John Hayward. ☒

HANDSTAMP SPECIAL

*The Handstamps reprinted on these pages first appeared in the "British Postmark Bulletin".
For a free sample copy, write to: The Editor, Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, Gavrelle House,
2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ*

GROUP NEWS

GUILD OF ST. GABRIEL

Meetings are held at St. Wilfrid's Convent, Tite Street, London. Visitors are always welcome. The Guild is inter-denominational and further details are available from the Secretary David Hague email david.hague@blueyonder.co.uk or telephone 020 8664 9850.

Just4Kids

(Junior Page)

DO YOU HAVE ANY PETS?

Lots of you are bound to answer “Yes!” But even if you don’t have a pet of your own, you probably know someone else who has one. Rory has lots of pets, and he wrote some poems about his pets. He found stamps which showed pictures of his pets on them. Here are some of Rory’s poems.

*“I have made up poems about my pets.
If they are poorly I take them to the vets.
Pets can be big or small.
I love them all.”*

*“I have two little fish
Their names are Jerry and Snappy.
If I feed them every day
They are happy.
To feed my fish I drop
Fish flakes which I get from the pet shop.”*



*“I have a little dog
She is fluffy and white.
She barks a lot
But she doesn’t bite.
I feed her. She likes to eat
Dog biscuits and meat.
I take her for a walk.
I wish she could talk.”*



*“My hamster Sandy has a wheel.
Then he likes his meal.
He eats seeds, raisins and nuts.
He stores his food in his hut.
I clean out his cage when he gets smelly.
He climbs up my sleeve while I watch telly.
One day he got out.
He chewed up the computer cable and made my Dad shout.”*



COLLECT some PETS!

You could start a collection of pet stamps. Ask everyone to look out for pet stamps, and you could visit stamp fairs and exhibitions if there are any near you. Or look at the advertisements in this magazine, and ask your parent to help you contact the stamp dealers (sellers). Or look on the Internet, but always ask your parent first.

ARE YOU A BUDDING POET?

Perhaps you could have a go at writing a pet poem. It can be about any pet you know, or a pet you would like to have. Send your poem to the address below, and you'll win a prize - we'll try to find you a stamp of your pet, and you'll also receive a goody bag. So get scribbling and let your imagination run wild!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Well done to ARLO from Warwickshire who won 1st Prize in the word search competition - Arlo wins a goody bag of stamps and insect postcards, a camera and a shower microphone radio!

Hope you like your prize, Arlo.

The answers were; letter, stamp, perforations, queen, red, postman, goody, prize.

Pet JOKEs CORNER



What is the best way to catch a fish?
Get someone to throw one to you!

What do rabbits do when they get married?
They live hoppily ever after!

What is an octopus?
An eight sided cat!

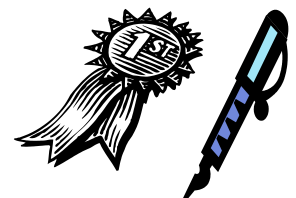


(Thanks Louix for the fab pet jokes - a prize is on its way to you!)

WRITE TO US!

Send all your jokes, poems drawings and letters to;
Just4Kids,
c/o The Editor, Themescene, 71 Churchward Avenue, Swindon,
SN2 1NW

A PRIZE WILL BE SENT TO EVERYONE WHO WRITES IN.



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BOOKS

Lighthouses

265 grams The lighthouse Stephenson's (Scottish lighthouses) by Bella Bathurst

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