

THEMESCENE

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THEMESCENE

Journal of the
British Thematic Association
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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

This year marks a new departure for the BTA who will, for the first time ever, be holding their AGM (on 11th July) outside London. The paperwork relating to the meeting – Agenda and Annual Accounts – is published here, page 66. (N.B. The Minutes of last year's AGM will be found in *Themescene* September 2008). Can I add my comments to those of our President: the holding of the AGM at Midpex in Coventry gives many members who perhaps found London inconvenient the chance to attend in the Midlands. This meeting gives you all the opportunity to express your views on the BTA and its management. As you know we have been canvassing opinions on social philately. The outcome is reported on the President's Page (p.43), but if you have views you would like put forward, whether or not in agreement with our policy, the AGM is the place to put them. With *Thematica* no longer, running the Friends of *Thematica* have moved the annual competitions to Midpex, so another attraction there will be the Fosbery Trophy, the BTA Cup, the Inter-Federation Thematic Competition and the Barclays Cup Young Collectors Competition. And if you are still wondering whether Midpex is worth a visit do have a look at their web page <http://www.midpex.co.uk/>; as I write over 50 dealers are listed to attend.

Prior to the AGM there will be the presentation of the Fransceka Rapkin Bowl, awarded to the author of the best article in *Themescene* the previous year, as voted for by the Committee. I am delighted to say this year it has been won by Lesley Marley for her two-part article "The Whale's Tale". Now both exhibit and story have been justly awarded.



John Hayward has been working extremely hard, speaking on thematic collecting at various events. The one at Emsworth is reported here (page 70), but I have deliberately kept the content of his talk brief. More regional events are planned on a similar theme (page 72) and I would encourage you and prospective thematic collectors, whether or not members of the BTA, to attend. Many people will be quite taken aback at the array of different types of material one can look out for on one's theme. There will be much food for thought for many thematic collectors.

I am delighted to welcome a new specialist society as an affiliated member of the BTA. The Astro Space Stamp Society has recently joined us, and to introduce themselves their newsletter editor Jeff Dugdale has written an article on page 63.

We always try and showcase new books on thematics when they come out, and where possible put them in the Library. A new Stanley Gibbons publication is reviewed here (page 78) and we are delighted to say Stanley Gibbons have offered it at a special discount to BTA members (page 61). If you respond to any of our advertisers please mention *Themescene*: we could not go on publishing four times a year without their support.

Well the forecasters say it's going to be a long, hot summer. Let's hope you still have time for your collecting between watering the garden! ☺

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

John Hayward

You will see on page 66 the Agenda for our Annual General Meeting to be held on 11th July 2009 at Midpex. This is the first time we have held our AGM away from London, so our provincial members, particularly those in the Midlands, have a fine opportunity to attend the meeting and make their views known about the running of the BTA. So make sure you attend the event itself, Midpex, which is always very good and where the BTA has a table; and come along also to the AGM which will be followed by a display from Gerald Lovell on what promises to be a different way of collecting thematically. If you can spare 30-60 minutes to man the BTA table please let our Secretary know (page 42) as it would be greatly appreciated.

In the last edition of *Thamescene* members were asked to consider whether or not the BTA should take Social Philately formally under its wing. After taking into account views expressed by ordinary and committee members, the BTA has decided not to go down the formal route and assume responsibility for Social Philately in the UK. We feel that it would be much better to adopt Social Philately informally as it is part and parcel anyway of thematic collecting, and most of us have some social items in our collections like postcards and private envelopes. In addition, the relatively new Open Class is very much about thematics and also embraces Social Philately. So, we propose to stick with our current constitution, but keep our eye on developments in the world of Social Philately and the Open Class, probably by having one person on the Committee with responsibility for these areas. A further opportunity will of course be available for members to discuss Social Philately under "Any Other Business" at the AGM and I look forward to that.

I am also looking forward to a visit to the International Stamp Exhibition at Essen in May which will have taken place by the time you read this. I will report on the event in the next edition of *Thamescene*. I greatly enjoy looking at the thematic exhibits at such events as you can learn so much from them, but meeting old continental friends is an important part of the occasion too. Visiting all the Philatelic Bureaux is a must as they are together on few occasions and finding out about their new issues is so much easier on the spot. Everything is at cost price too!

There are three dates also to note in your diaries. Swinpex is being held on 13th June 2009. This is always a very good stamp fair – up to 46 dealers. In the afternoon the BTA and Postal Stationery Society are holding a joint members meeting, so come along to that as well – the displays should be very attractive. On 26/27th June 2009 ThematiX 09 is being held at Twickenham. This is the successor to the dealers' side of Thematica and deserves your support. The BTA will have a table at this event and volunteers to man the table for an hour on either day would be welcomed. Please let me know if you can help out. The BTA is running another Thematic Workshop on 12th September 2009 at Handforth, Cheshire (see details on page 72). We have not been in the North West for many years, so this is an opportunity for our members in Lancashire and Cheshire particularly to spend an enjoyable day in the company of like minded collectors learning what thematic collecting is all about. There is always something new to learn.

Enjoy your collecting. ☺

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

Richard Wheeler

I can hardly believe that we are approaching the height of the Summer Season and that the next issue will herald Autumn.

These past few months have been a busy time. I have been lecturing for various clubs, spreading the word for thematics and getting a lot of feedback from members of societies, who principally have a general philatelic collection, an interest in a country or in postal history. Many have not realised the range of material that can be used in thematics which makes our study and story so interesting. The most frequent comment I have received is that they thought thematics was just a collection of flowers or animals, etc. I sat through one lecture not long ago where a one topic collection was exhibited on black stock sheets and one colour just blurred into another. It was an amazing collection but by the interval many viewers had lost interest. Nothing wrong with a one topic collection but there is so much more philatelic material that could have been added to make it an absolute gem and an outstanding display of Social Philately.

Apart from the fact that I also have a general philatelic collection and don't have a deep enough pocket to fill the blanks, I admire the lecturers who have displays with additional material which lifts their collection and creates interest. Often this brings their display into a Social one.

However, no matter how good the collection I cannot concentrate on the occasional lecturer who half turns his back on his audience and points out each individual stamp and remembers that he bought one at a tiny shack in Timbuktu, or that the perforation is not listed in the catalogues. One such evening with seven frames up in the first half, the lecturer took 20 minutes to get through the first twelve sheets! With much looking at my watch after 30 minutes (I was Chairman), the hint was taken and he did speed up. We got through in an hour before the members of my local club got a chance to see the exhibit. We still had a second half to get through! This is one reason why I love thematics because at least there is a story and related material to hold my interest.

A few weeks ago The Editor of *Stamp and Coin Mart* contacted Simon Moorcroft our hard working Publicity Officer, with a request for help in an article on Thematics in the June edition of their magazine. This was handed to me to provide the information required. Their Assistant Editor spoke to me on the phone with a request to answer a few questions. I decided it would be better if they were emailed to me. This was fortunate as it involved a few hours work to make the response. Such questions involved the history of thematics, how the BTA was formed, what do people collect and why, etc. etc. Hopefully we will get good publicity for the BTA and encourage a few more collectors to take the thematic path as I understand that it is a thematic issue

John in his mention of the adverts on the selvedge of stamps set me looking more closely at some of my material. Peter Denly very kindly sent me a 1936 South African mini sheet which had an advertisement for PUNCH cigars printed on the selvedge. It is now in my exhibit.

One stamp I am looking for is a 1946 stamp depicting a Wayang puppet from the Indonesia Republic issue for Java and Madura. I have been looking for years – but that is what our hobby is all about – the search and the joy when we find it. ☐

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S PAGE

Peter Denly

Ordinary members	204
Family members	17
Junior members	5
Society members	16
Overseas members	17
Overseas Society members	1
Honorary members	4

Total number of members 264
(At 1st May 2009)

Subscription renewal for the current year is now complete, and my thanks to the Membership for responding to the calls and reminders promptly. Since the start of 2009, we have been fortunate in recruiting 17 new members plus the 'Astro Space Stamp Society' which has decided to become affiliated. Members with a collecting interest in Space may wish to be put in touch with this Group if not already in membership; details on page 75. This reminds me of a recent trip to Houston, Texas and a visit to the Space Centre whose souvenir shop had on sale a number of philatelic items. Nonetheless, when departing from George Bush International airport to return home, it was a little disconcerting to find astronaut rations on sale amongst the snacks and nibbles – it made one look twice at the aircraft before boarding.

I have recently found some excellent collecting material amongst United States postal stationery. For example the Bicentennial covers issued in the mid-'70's feature a plough and spinning wheel, plus the printed stamp has a wheat sheaf to go with the plough. Other covers feature bells, tennis rackets, and balloons. In addition the postal stationery postcards issued for exhibitions at the turn of the 20th century feature a whole raft of items, and as with post cards of that era they are particularly well presented. Well worth a look. ☐

New Members joining since the March 2009 issue

Mr. K. Allen	Bexleyheath
Mr. M. Brickley	Littleton
Mr. C. Campbell	Ipswich
Mr. J. Dugdale	Mosstodloch
Mr. H. Duncan	Falkirk
Dr. J. Lobo	Luton
Miss E. Mearns	Aberdeen
Mr. R. Tatton	Loughborough
Mr. K. Taylor	Chinnor

Deaths advised since the March 2009 issue

Nil

PUBLICITY OFFICER'S PAGE

Simon Moorcroft

I do hope that all of you are looking forward to the summer which is now just around the corner, although it can sometimes lead to our collections being put to one side. However, this won't happen if, like me, you have a number of exhibits which need to be written or amended.

Do try and come along and support our joint meeting with the Postal Stationery Society on 13th June at Swinpex. It will be a chance to see displays from two distinctive disciplines. Thematic philatelists often use postal stationery in their exhibits and displays and therefore it can be beneficial to learn about how postal stationery collectors approach the study of their material. In addition, do try and come along to our AGM on 11th July at Midpex. Gerald Lovell's display after the end of formal proceedings should be very informative and good fun. Also, if you come to Midpex you will be able to see the Thematica exhibits which are always a good source of inspiration.

You will see in this issue of *Themescene* (page 61) that Stanley Gibbons have published an advertisement offering BTA members a special discount rate on their new *Collect Aircraft on Stamps* publication (reviewed on page 78) along with substantial discounts on some of their other thematic publications. I wish to put on the record how very grateful the BTA committee is to Stanley Gibbons for making these offers available to the BTA. However, as you will see the offers are time limited so do make sure you hurry and make your purchases soon! Gibbons thematic catalogues can be beneficial to thematic collectors, especially if you are just starting out and need to find out what material is available.


We are now starting to see the pace of activity pick up in preparation for London 2010 Festival of Stamps. The BTA will have a major presence at the main exhibition at the Business



Design Centre, as will a number of other specialist societies. In addition to the event in London in May next year, there are a whole host of other events taking place across the country under the "Festival of Stamps" umbrella. These will be particularly beneficial for those who cannot or do not wish to travel to the London events. Do please try and support these events in any way you can. A

great many people are putting in a lot of effort to make next year's events a success, often battling against less than advantageous circumstances. A regularly updated list of exhibitions and events across the country, plus programme and trade stands booked for the International Stamp Exhibition is available at

<http://www.london2010.org.uk/international-stamp-exhibition>

Do please continue to support our events. 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

From: Richard A. Hindle, by email

I enjoyed Barry Floyd's article on Charles Darwin, but he failed to mention the prime reasons for Darwin actually going on the voyage and also for going to print when he did, as he spent many years thinking about his theories.

A former captain of Fitzroy's had committed suicide because in those days, it was not the done thing for the captain of the ship to discuss problems or reasons for decisions with junior officers. He was worried that the burden of command could become an unbearable burden. He thought that a companion, who would be able to do some useful work such as a scientist / naturalist would be the ideal person to accompany him. Thus, Charles Darwin came to be selected.

The concept of "natural selection" was also being developed by Alfred Russell Wallace, who wrote to Darwin from Papua New Guinea with his ideas and used the phrase "survival of the fittest" prompting Darwin to go to print before Wallace got back and published his ideas.

So if Darwin hadn't gone on the voyage, it is highly likely that we would be discussing Wallace's version of the "Origin of the Species".

Sources:

Gribben, John & Mary Gribben (2001), *Fitzroy*, ISBN 0-7553-1181-7

Raby, Peter (1996) *Bright Paradise*, ISBN 0-7011-4613-3

Editor's note: for more on the Darwin story see next page. And Richard has kindly agreed to write an article on Fitzroy for a future issue.

Half Page Advert for Thames Themes

CHARLES DARWIN: AN ANNIVERSARY ESSAY Part 2

Barry Floyd completes his philatelic perspective on the great man

Both before and after publication of *The Origin of Species* Darwin engaged in massive correspondence with a great many people, at all levels of society, seeking additional supporting evidence and confirmation of the veracity of his theory. Indeed, if there was any single factor that characterized the heart of Darwin's scientific undertaking, it was this systematic use of correspondence.

He was following, in fact, the intellectual leaders of the time, who wrote voluminous letters, providing a fascinating record of scientific collaboration.



Darwin and his study at Down House

In a letter to Henslow Charles wrote:

“....Don't forget to bear in mind, as you said you would for me, to notice any facts either hostile or corroboratory of my notion of all plants occasionally impregnating each other. -- I keep on steadily collecting every sort of fact, which may throw light on the origin & variation of species.”

Another communication, one of many, was to J.D. Hooker:

“Besides a general interest about the Southern lands, I have been now ever since my return engaged in a very presumptuous work & which I know no one individual would not say a very foolish one. -- I was so struck with distributions of Galapagos organisms &&& with the character of the American fossil mammifers, && that I determined to collect blindly every sort of fact, which could bear in any way on what are species. -- I have read heaps of agricultural and horticultural books, & have never ceased collecting facts -- At last gleams of light have come, & I am almost convinced (quite contrary to opinion I started with) that species are not (it is like confessing a murder) immutable.”

Many of Charles' letters went far and wide, e.g. to contacts in Australia, Borneo, Canada, China, the Hawaiian Islands, India, Jamaica and New Zealand. He wrote to

“civil servants, army officers, diplomats, fur-trappers, horse-breeders, society ladies, Welsh farmers, zookeepers, pigeon-fanciers, gardeners, asylum owners and kennel hands.” (7).

In them, he would ask for anything he needed, no matter how peculiar, and no matter how extensive the effort required. Question after question would be raised, disarmingly

interspersed with “If it would not cause you too much trouble ... I fear you will think that you have fallen on a most troublesome petitioner.”

His correspondents must have felt their hearts sink when the postman brought them a letter with the Downe postmark. He knew what a nuisance he was being but declared “if any man wants to gain a good opinion of his fellowmen he ought to do what I am doing, pester them with letters.” (8)

There was only one postbag in the village of Downe and Darwin’s letters must have monopolized it. In 1851 he spent £20 on stamps, stationery and newspapers, equivalent to some £1,000 today. His wife Emma and the older children would help to trim the Victorian postage stamps required for the mailing of his letters. By 1877 the expenditure on postage and stationery had reached over £53 (£ 2,650 today).

In all, Darwin wrote or received some 14,000 letters, extant in libraries the world over. There may have been as many again, lost to posterity. How fortunate that computers and the internet did not exist in his day, for so much of the invaluable exchanges of information between Charles and his correspondents would, regrettably, be unavailable for us to read today. An epistolary lament:

“... we now send most of our communiqués but once over a telephone wire into permanent oblivion, and many (if not most) of our letters now exist only in the cyberspace of e-mail and other similar devices (where they may, of course, be transferred to paper, but will just as likely be dumped into a lost realm with our phone calls).” (9)

Thus, with pen and ink and postage stamps, Darwin set about initiating “a considerable revolution in natural history.” To achieve this he was completely dependant on postal services around the world, enabling a profoundly important scientific theory to be propounded. It is claimed that the British postal system was

“... the preminent collective enterprise of the Victorian period, and Darwin sensed the splendour of this organization as readily as Anthony Trollope, who, after novelising the nation before breakfast, would go to his employment in the General Post Office in London. No one would believe the number of letters surging across nineteenth century Britain, said Rowland Hill, inventor of the penny post system. By mid-century, 600 million letters were dispatched every year” (10).

It is a sad reflection upon today’s postal services in Britain that thousands of offices, located in small rural communities such as Downe, and even in towns, have been closed. Due praise should also be offered the mid-nineteenth postal agencies in the British Empire and other overseas countries who received - via sea mail - the numerous communications originating from Down House and saw to it that the requested responses would eventually find their way safely back to the Darwin residence in S.E. England.



Most of the Darwin commemorative stamps have been issued by countries within the British Commonwealth. Some were well-removed from the route followed by the Beagle, e.g. Uganda in East Africa, which produced a millennium 2000 issue (17 stamps) marking People and Events of the Nineteenth Century. The stamp, honouring Darwin and *The Origin of Species*, features a rather poor image of the elderly Darwin.

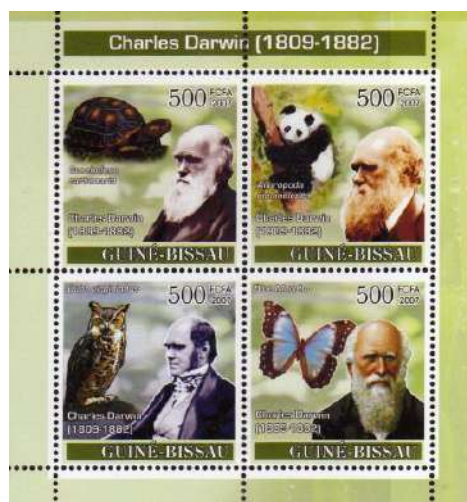
Another Commonwealth issue, from the Turks & Caicos islands in the West Indies, provides a more appealing tribute to Charles. The issue commemorates the 175th anniversary of the birth of Darwin, and was produced as a ‘Salute to Australia’ on the occasion of ‘Ausipex’: an international stamp

exhibition held in Melbourne in 1984. Various forms of Australian wildlife are shown, with small images of Darwin and H.M.S. *Beagle*.



As the fame of the scientist spread worldwide so a number of foreign countries elected to mark his contribution to natural history and the evolution of animal and plant species. In Eastern Europe, the Polish and Russian postal agencies featured stamps bearing the by now familiar figure of the old scientist, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species*.

A somewhat speculative Darwin-related issue comes from the West African state of Guinea-Bissau. Some postal authorities decide to profit from philatelic celebrations unrelated to their own countries. The life of Charles Darwin (1809 - 1882) is commemorated by an admittedly attractive mini-sheet with four stamps showing the British scientist and various creatures associated with the evolution of different species.



Conclusion

This essay has rightly heaped praise upon the great scholar and scientist Charles Darwin, and his enthusiastic support of the postal services of Britain and the world. *The Origin of Species*, while written for the educated reader of Darwin's time, achieved a unique literary status among works of scientific imagination. And it remains an important book to this day, since the theory of evolution is the cornerstone of modern biology, with loyal supporters such as Prof. Richard Dawkins. It may be that the forces driving evolution today - principally natural selection and genetic mutation - no longer have as strong an impact upon modern life forms as that experienced by earlier generations, but the fundamental principles of evolution still stand.

We may lightly record just two admittedly minor weaknesses in Darwin's makeup. As a child he would sit for hours reading the historical plays and poems of Shakespeare. In adult life, to his great regret, he wholly lost all pleasure from poetry of any kind. He even declared: "I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me." Philatelists may find another of Charles' protests rather more unfortunate. His close friend James Hooker was, to his credit, a stamp collector but when he came to defend the hobby before Darwin, the latter declared:

“6/7ths of my children collect, and I collected seals, franks, coins, minerals, shells, insects and God knows what else. But by Jove I can hardly stomach a grown man collecting stamps.” (11).

Perhaps we should forgive Charles this lacuna in collecting interests, in view of the broad successes he achieved in so many realms of intellectual endeavour. However we may reasonably wonder how he would have reacted to seeing the numerous commemorative stamps issued in his honour over the years. We like to think that they just might have changed his mind over our appealing hobby! ☰

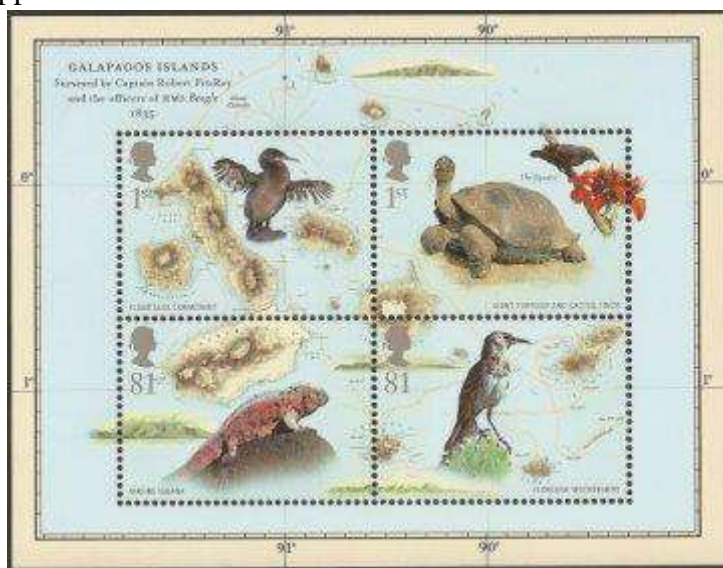
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(8) Kinley, James (ed.) (1974) *Charles Darwin and T H. Huxley. Autobiographies.* Oxford Univ. Press, p. 71.
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(10) Browne, Janet (2003) *Charles Darwin. The Power of Place* (Random House,2003), p.13
(11) Healey, Edna (2001) *Emma Darwin. The Inspirational Wife of a Genius* (Headline Book Pub., p.259.

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Morris, Solene, Wilson, Louise, Kohn, David (1998) *Charles Darwin at Down House* English Heritage. Figs. 1, 13 and 14 are from this booklet and reproduced by kind permission of English Heritage.
Van Wyhe, John (2008) *Darwin: the story of the man and his theories* Andre Deutsche

A checklist of Charles Darwin stamps has been prepared by Ronnell Townsend and issued by the America Topical Association (Jan. 2007). This was helpful in the search for philatelic illustrations in support of this article. The A.T.A. has been notified of addenda to their listing.



PEACE – A SUBJECT FOR PHILATELY?

Grace Davies explains her interest in an unusual thematic subject

Pavlov would have been proud of me! As a non collector at a stamp club auction with my son, who was too young to be a member in his own right, I heard the auctioneer say “New Zealand Peace Set”, and shot up our card to bid. Why? It was an instinctive response to the word ‘Peace’. Brought up in a staunchly pacifist household, I had absorbed my parents’ values and beliefs and although no longer an activist, the conditioning was clearly still strong!



That was in 1985. I took my surprise acquisition home and then discovered in stamp packets while looking for GB or ships, that there were other stamps related to Peace, and I started to collect them. In 1986 I took Leon to a stamp fair in London and came home with a mini sheet commemorating the 40th anniversary of the United Nations in 1985 and the International Year of Peace in 1986. With this to enhance my miscellaneous collection of stamps I decided to support IYP by having a go in the club thematic competition. With no real idea of what I was doing I used nearly everything I had to put together the required eight pages. To my surprise I came second! I think the judge liked the originality of the idea. For me, this focussed my mind on the possibilities of a collection on the theme of Peace. When some time later I acquired a complete mint Swiss Peace Set for £40 I bought my own stamp album and ‘got serious’.

Did I know that what I was doing was unusual? I was certainly taken aback at my early forays to stamp shows when dealers would shake their heads and say “Peace? Sorry, no, we don’t have anything”. But I persevered, encouraged by those dealers who seemed interested and tried to help. If any of you are reading this, a big Thank You, for ‘having an idea’, or physically looking through some of the endless boxes for me. I learned how much material there was for me if I knew how to search and, as my collecting developed, was willing to pay.

I have taken peace as an abstract idea. I can illustrate it in many ways, and in the beginning I thought carefully about what the word meant. So I start with the most obvious, perhaps, as the Cessation of War (at the end of hostilities) and the Absence of War (as in peace-time). There is some lovely post-war material, of which of course the 1945 Swiss peace set is a highlight. It took me several years to find the used stamps, completing the set with the 5 franc stamp in Budapest in 1993. An example for Absence of War is a 1964 Spanish issue celebrating 25 years of peace since the civil war. And so on, adding cards, covers and cancellations. Then came conferences; after every war there is a lot of ‘mopping up’ to do and other meetings to try and prevent war; Locarno, for example, and the 1932 Geneva Disarmament Conference. Well yes, what about preventing war? So we have the Peace Movement, then the League of Nations, replaced by the United Nations. All unable to keep the peace but with lots of treasures for my growing collection.

And how like Topsy it grew, it seemed of its own volition! A mixed box would suddenly show me a cover on Esperanto – “Language of World Peace”. Of course! The doves started the section on various symbols of peace and the 1977 US Peace Bridge got me going on ‘Peace as a Name’.



Discovering that Tien An Men meant Gate of Heavenly Peace led me into an unexpected diversion. Issues called Peace and Justice opened up 'Peace Associated with other Ideas'. And what would I do without 'Miscellaneous' as a home for the strange Egyptian 'Philatelic Crusade for Peace'?

Commercial Airways stamp on 1932 first

flight cover from Peace River

Along the way, I kept finding material on relevant people, which particularly interested me. Many were Nobel Peace Prize winners. Now about half my collection illustrates Alfred Nobel, the Peace Prize and the Laureates since 1901. The award that first year was to go to Henri Dunant for the founding of the Red Cross, but from the beginning of the prize there was controversy! Some said that the Red Cross did not promote peace, rather it humanised the face of war. So as a compromise the prize was shared between Dunant and Frédéric Passy, a bona fide peace activist.



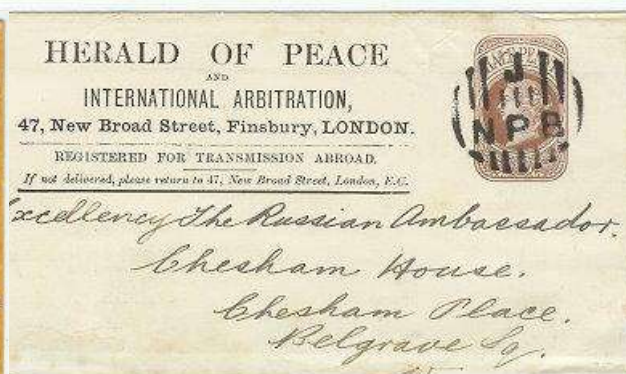
Now it is 2009 and I have come a long way since those early days. I compete at club or county level and I enjoy it, but what I love best is to share and show to other clubs. To compete at national level with more than one frame, as often suggested, would be problematic for me as it would mean breaking up much of my display.



At the moment I am working on a new project. It is the story of the Peace rose. This rose is already in my collection as a Symbol of Peace and under Peace as a Name. It has a wonderful story, moving from France 1884 to USA 1995, which I am trying to illustrate in philately to share with others. But I am having difficulty finding good philatelic material. Well, I shall persevere again. There is pleasure in the search. ☐



Geneva Disarmament Conference stamps



Newspaper wrapper for "Herald of Peace"

NEW ISSUES

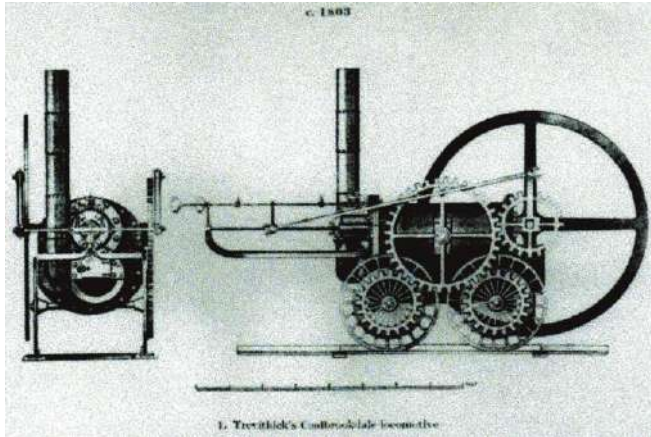
The stamps below are reproduced with the kind assistance of the CASCO Philatelic Services

BRITAIN'S RAILWAY EVOLUTION. PT.1

Jim Wigmore explores its early development

THE TRANSITION FROM HORSE TO STEAM

For many years the only way of moving loads over land was to use either horses or oxen. The terrain and the poor quality of the roads often made this very difficult. As early as the end of the 16th Century tracked wagon ways were being experimented with. However it was the 18th Century before this idea was carried forward for use over long distances. In Britain the Surrey Iron Railway was started in 1801. The intention was to have horse drawn wagons being hauled between London and Portsmouth. However it was not completed and ended at Mersham. The flanged wheels shown on the stamp are incorrect, plain wheels were actually used running on plate rails.



According to “The British Railway Locomotive 1803-1853” by The Science Museum, the first British steam locomotive proposed was by Richard Trevithick for the Coalbrookdale Iron Works in 1803. The diagram is shown left. There is no conclusive evidence the locomotive was ever built or



actually ran, hence the stamp produced by Paraguay featuring the locomotive is pure artistic licence.



stamp design is once again pure artistic licence.

In 1808 a Trevithick engine “Catch Me Who Can” is known to have run around a circular track in what is now known as Euston Square in London. The design appears on the front cover of the Science Museum booklet and on a stamp by Antigua, the

The first successful and practical locomotive to be produced was a design by J. Blenkinsop in 1812. Despite various sketches and stamp designs, the actual arrangement of the engine is known to have been moved by rack and pinion rail level.



Following experiments to prove that smooth wheels running on smooth rails would provide adequate traction William Hedley built



“Puffing Billy” in 1813. Originally mounted on four

wheels it had to be modified to be carried on eight wheels to prevent breakages of the cast iron plate rails that it ran upon. It was modified back to four wheels after 1815 when the rails were replaced by wrought iron.

THE STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY

The firm of Robert Stephenson and Sons was formed in 1823 following earlier experiments by George Stephenson at Killingworth. One of the earliest locomotives from this works was “Locomotion” for the Stockton & Darlington Railway.

This was the first Public Railway in Britain. Its primary purpose was to transport coal from the Durham coalfields to the coast for transshipment by sea. The prevailing gradients from the coalfields to the coast were falling or level which allowed the loaded trains to be pulled by horses. Steam locomotives of the “Locomotion” type were used to haul the empty wagons back, the horses being loaded on the empty wagons. “Locomotion” stood on a plinth on the platform of Darlington Bank Top Station for many years prior to its removal to the Railway

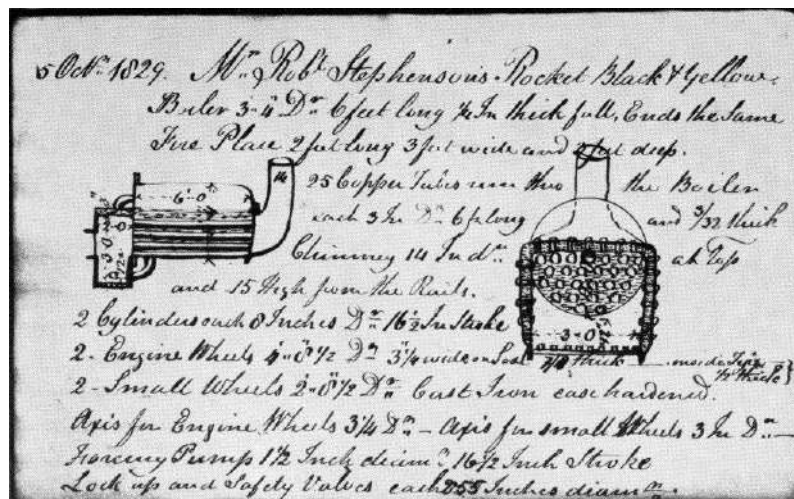


Museum at York. It has been variously featured on stamps, that of the British stamp being about the best representation. At the 150th Anniversary of the railways opening one of the special handstamps featured a horse on a wagon.

THE 1829 RAINHILL TRIALS

These were set up by the Directors of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway to establish if steam locomotives could be proved reliable enough to operate their proposed railway. There was much interest from locomotive engineers, however only three locomotives actually made the trials: “Novelty”, “Rocket” and “Sans Pareil”. Only “Rocket” completed all the tasks laid down by the directors as mandatory, running for a period of over 6 hrs during the day and being declared the winner. The fact that “Rocket” was able to complete the tasks set were due to some important design features not immediately obvious. “Rocket” had been entered as a

joint venture between Henry Booth and George Stephenson and incorporated an idea suggested by Henry Booth of the use of multiple fire tubes to improve the generation of steam. It was this feature that enabled “Rocket” to complete its tasks and was to lead to the overall success of the steam locomotive. The page from a Mr Rastricks notebook shown here gives the details.

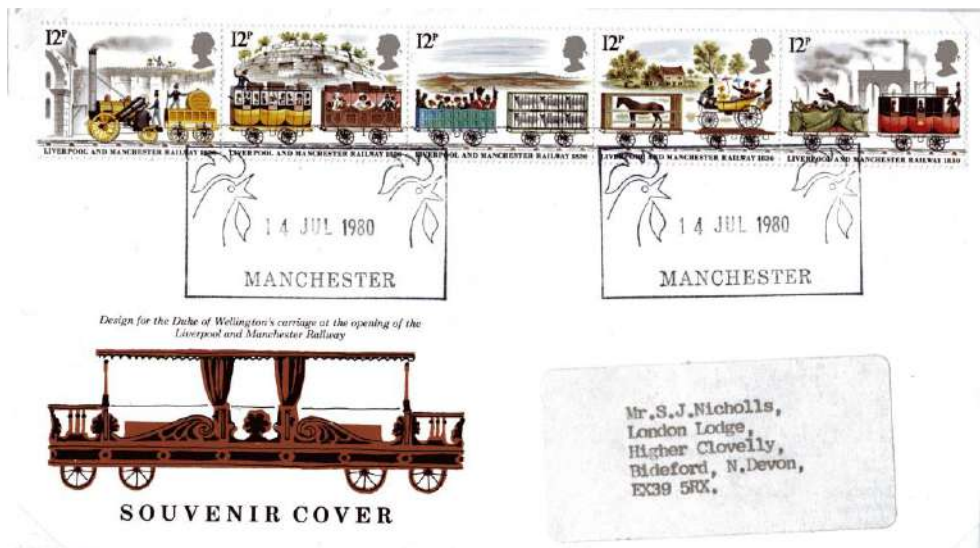


Most philatelic reproductions of “Rocket” show the locomotive as it ran at the Rainhill Trials. The locomotive was quickly modified with the cylinders lowered and that is the form it entered service and formed the basis of all the locomotives to follow.



THE LIVERPOOL & MANCHESTER RAILWAY

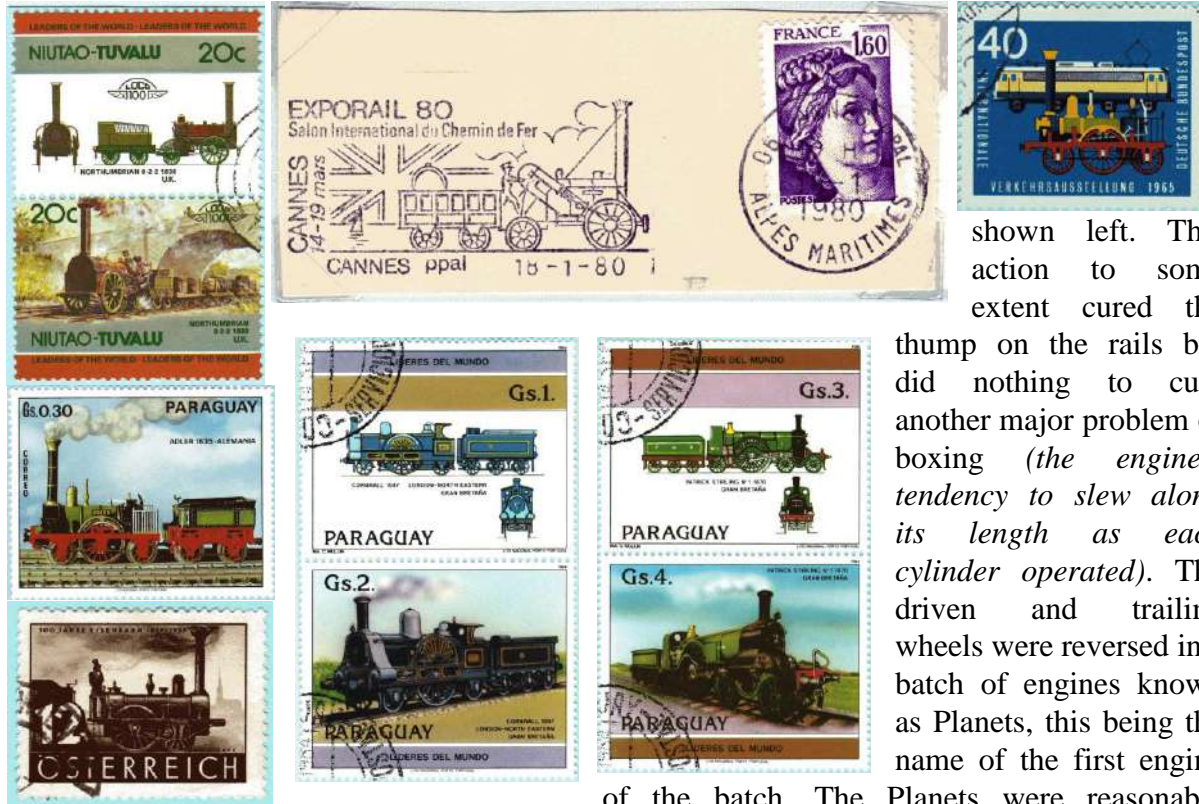
The first Public Railway to use steam locomotives exclusively opened on 14th July 1830 amid much pomp and ceremony. The cover below produced by Royal Mail features the full set of stamps produced to commemorate this historic occasion and gives a good idea of the likely scene on this railway in its earliest days. The event also heralded the first death from a railway accident. The MP for Liverpool, William Huskisson, left the carriage he was riding in to go and speak with The Duke of Wellington. He failed to notice a train being hauled by “Rocket” and was knocked down, dying subsequently from his injuries.



BEYOND RAINHILL

“Rocket” had set the railway world alight and proved that a steam locomotive could be relied upon to do a days’ work. The Stephenson Locomotive Works at Gateshead were for the moment “The builder of successful locomotives”. What must be understood is that locomotive construction of the day employed blacksmith techniques, with very little of what today we would call precision engineering. There were many problems of manufacture and still more problems of running to be overcome. “Rocket” initially had its cylinders set at an angle of around 45 degrees to the rail, well illustrated on the French Commemorative cancel shown on the next page. This caused a lot of thump on the rails which could lead to breakage of the rails.

The immediate cure was to lower the cylinders to a near horizontal position. “Rocket” was modified and the next batch of locomotives of this type were headed by “Northumbrian”



shown left. This action to some extent cured the thump on the rails but did nothing to cure another major problem of boxing (*the engines' tendency to slew along its length as each cylinder operated*). The driven and trailing wheels were reversed in a batch of engines known as Planets, this being the name of the first engine

of the batch. The Planets were reasonably successful and it is known that engines of this type were exported by Stephenson.

Although the problem of boxing had been partially cured it was not fully cured until the engines were lengthened and trailing wheels introduced for and aft of the driven axle; these became known as “Patentees”. These engines set the standard for many years, they were easy to build and maintain using blacksmith skills and they were exported all over the world. The lack of precision machine tools and quality steels were to hinder locomotive development for many years to come. The locomotive with a single driven axle became the norm for many railway companies in Britain for high speed work and many developed and built these locomotive types in their own works. The Great Western, London & North Western, Midland and the Great Northern Railways all built very fine examples of single drivers that looked extremely fine engines. All had increased the size of driving wheel to gain the maximum adhesion to the rail. The Great Northern 8 foot singles perhaps being the most handsome of all, they achieved the unique status of appearing on three issues of Uruguay. It was well understood that to increase adhesive effort it was necessary to have more engine weight or coupled driven axles, or both. The ever increasing weight of trains was becoming a problem that could only be solved by using more than a single locomotive. ☐



To be continued in September Themescene

Stanley Gibbons advert (pdf)

Stanley Gibbons advert (pdf)

ASTROPHILATELY: A “UNIVERSALLY” POPULAR THEME

Jeff Dugdale, Editor of Orbit, the Journal of the A.S.S.S.

Astrophilately was born soon after the launch of the first earth orbiting satellite, the Soviet Union's Sputnik on 4th October 1957; reached its peak during the Apollo mission years 1969-1972 when it was very near the top of the thematic interest lists, and continues to engage and fascinate thousands of collectors all over the world.

Our British-based Astro Space Stamp Society has over 120 members, about two thirds of whom reside in the United Kingdom. *Orbit*, its quarterly magazine, is sent to overseas members as far away as New Zealand, China and Saudi Arabia, and to readers in exotic places like Nepal and Mongolia, as well as to over twenty in the USA and Canada. The A.S.S.S. has an excellent website which complements *Orbit* : www.asss.utvinternet.com

We have some very well known members in the world of international philately such as Margaret Morris, Ian Ridpath, Andrew Swanston, Jurgen Esders, Beatrice Bachmann, Charles Bromser, and Bert van Eijck. I write from time to time on our theme in generalist stamp magazines such as *STAMP*, my most recent article being on the 50th anniversary of Sputnik in the September 2007 issue.

In America the hobby is serviced by the A.T.A. Space Unit and their popular all colour bi-monthly magazine *The Astrophile* (now 50 years old) is taken by over 300 members. In Europe there are flourishing sister societies each with their own print or online publications - in Holland (*Nieuwsbrief*), Germany (*Weltraum Philatelie*), France, and Italy (*Ad Astra*) whose society was launched earlier this year with just under twenty members.

So what do we do? If you were to consider branching out from aerophilately you would have a very wide choice of aspects of our hobby to select from, such as Manned Space Flight, Unmanned Space Flight and Astronomy, each of which can be subdivided, offering many much smaller and more manageable topics.

I'll start with my major interest which is the first of those in that list. I was a child of the 1960's and remember listening on the wireless to the Moon landings - Apollo XI in July 1969 and all that - which so captured our imagination, but are now largely taken for granted or ignored as the date for manned return to the Moon is forever delayed. I doubt if I shall see it in my lifetime.



Apollo XI

Apollo XV

Mercury

Gemini

So one could collect the American Apollo Program, but before that came Gemini (two pilot craft) or Mercury (single pilot). Before that you could look into the history of American planning for going to the Moon and the captured German scientists and their V2/A4 rockets. Perhaps you have heard of Wernher von Braun? Simultaneously the Soviets were taking away captured scientists and hardware from the Peenemünde rocket site for their own space programme, which then led to Sputnik and within a few years to Vostok, Voskhod, and the old warhorse Soyuz manned ferry, which first flew in 1971 and newer versions of which still make

journeys to orbiting space stations. (You will know the name Yuri Gagarin but have you heard of Sergei Korolev and Valentin Glushko?)

After Apollo came the first signs of international cooperation with the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project in 1976, which could be a theme all on its own, such was the proliferation of stamps for it. The first American space station was called Skylab, whilst the Soviets began with a series of Salyut stations, all shrouded in secrecy and some still very mysterious. Then followed MIR which the Americans latterly visited in their space shuttle on several occasions, and today the International Space Station is serviced both by shuttles and Soyuz craft two or three times a year.



Skylab

Soyuz



International Space Station

The third country to put a man in space by themselves was China with its Shen Zhou Craft. Three such launches have occurred to date, in October '03, in October '05 and the latest during the Beijing Olympics.

In all some 480 astronauts, cosmonauts and taikonauts have flown in space, around ten of whom have done so six or seven times each. Just over 10% of this number have been women. There have been four fatal flights in space, not counting accidents to spacefarers on the launch pad, namely Soyuz 1 (in April '67), Soyuz 11 (in June '71), the *Challenger* (January '86) and *Columbia* (January '03) shuttle tragedies, killing a total of just under 20 fliers.

Today we are on the verge of new aspects of space flight, with wealthy citizens spending \$10 million to fly in Soyuz for a week, or to go private via Virgin Galactica or half a dozen rival companies who are, as you read, working on plans to fly civilians on ballistic flights, providing them with four minutes of weightlessness on the edge of space (100 km up) for £100,000 or so.

Any one of the above programmes could provide a starting point for you to branch out into astrophilately but the number of options provided so far is dwarfed by the possibilities in collecting unmanned missions.



The Russians launched their Sputnik first and followed this quickly with other Sputniks carrying dogs, whilst shortly after the Americans began ballistic and then orbiting craft carrying monkeys and other biota. So Animals in Space could be another theme.

Soon both countries began sending craft to planets in our solar system, with Mars being by far the most attractive (and frustrating) to both countries. Today our Moon and every single planet, apart from Pluto (which ironically since 2007 is no longer classed as a planet) has had at least one probe sent to it; and the Pluto/Charon binary system will be closely examined by an American craft when it arrives in a year or so. A collection for each of the planets, or indeed our Sun, would be a fascinating one to research and put together. Then of course man has sent probes well beyond the solar system - Pioneer and Voyager, still faintly active in the depths of space after 40 years - and to several comets which have passed through our solar system, notably Halley's comet in 1986 which was a major collecting theme. Many nations have now launched craft (either by themselves or

with American, Soviet, Chinese or French help) including ones with considerable poverty on their territory e.g. Mexico, Pakistan and India. One could collect all the space issues of such a single country.

Astronomy is of course a vast theme with literally infinite possibilities to collect: star systems, constellations, famous observatories, earthbound and orbiting (like the Hubble Space Telescope), famous astronomers and cosmologists from cultures long and recently past. UFO's and Aliens could also be a sub theme for you.



As with any theme one can collect stamps, souvenir sheets, covers, maximum cards, special cancels, and for the risk takers - autographs. Some shuttle covers signed by all crew members now change hands for hundreds of dollars, but how can you tell if the signatures are authentic? (This shuttle launch cover is signed by astronauts Hennen and Gregory).

If you would like to start an aspect of this theme we have members all over Britain who would be delighted to get you started. Please just ask! ☰

Astronomy — the 2009 Europa Theme

This year tying in with the 400th anniversary of Galileo's first discoveries over 30 countries within the Europa family will take this as their topic with an issue or one stamp within a wider set carrying the Europa symbol and dealing with an aspect of Astronomy. Here are some examples of issues so far, taken from philatelic publications received by your Editor. In issues in 2010 we shall review all the stamps produced.

See <http://www.europa-stamps.blogspot.com/> for more detail

Greenland issued 19.01.09

Jersey issued 10.02.09

Netherlands to be issued 07.04.09

Sweden issued 29.1.09

Liechtenstein issued 02.03.09

Denmark To be issued

Belgium to be issued 06.04.09

Finland to be issued 06.05.09

Iceland To be issued 07.05.09

Aland to be issued 08.05.09

ASTRONOMIE

AGENDA

**For the 18th Annual General Meeting of the British Thematic Association
to be held during Midpex on Saturday July 11th at 12 noon at the
Xcel Leisure Centre, Mitchell Avenue, Canley, Coventry CV4 8DY**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 17th Annual General Meeting (published in *Themescene* September 2008)
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report and adoption of Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2008
(*follows on next page*)
6. Election of Officers
The following Officers have indicated that they are willing to stand for re-election:
Richard Wheeler Chairman
Wendy Buckle Vice-Chairman
Anne Stammers Secretary
Peter Wood Treasurer
7. Election of Committee members
The following members have indicated that they are willing to stand for re-election:
Currently:
Peter Denly FRPSL Membership Secretary
Simon Moorcroft Publicity Officer
Michael Blackman Advertising Manager
Brian Sole FRPSL Committee member
Jim Etherington Committee member
Gerald Lovell Committee member
Ronald Hyams Committee member
8. Ratification by the membership of appointment of
Ron Backhouse Librarian
Grahame Boutle Examiner

9. Any Other Business

Nominations for Officers and Committee Members and any other motions for discussion should be received by the Secretary by **July 1st**

The meeting will be followed by a display 'Covering the Cost' by Gerald Lovell

Signed: Anne Stammers May 2009 (Hon. Secretary)

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2007

THE BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2008

2007	INCOME	2008
3,170	Subscriptions	3,359
36	Publications - net surplus	13
27	Other Sales and Income	54
241	Bank Interest	117
<u>3,474</u>		<u>3,543</u>
	 EXPENDITURE	
3,018	"Themescene" - Printing and Distribution Expenses	2,784
-840	less : Advertising Income	<u>-820</u> 1,964
226	Meetings	495
8,007	Eurothema	-
-		
4,178	less: Income	-
-750	less: Donation	-
59	BTA Cup Expenses	137
-75	less : Entry Fees	<u>-75</u> 62
457	Committee Meeting Expenses	291
486	Publicity and Web Site	146
99	Insurance	99
398	Affiliations	475
252	Administration Expenses	318
70	Sundry Expenses	54
<u>7,229</u>		<u>3,904</u>
-		
<u>3,755</u>	DEFICIT Expenditure over Income	<u>-361</u>
<u>3,474</u>		<u>3,543</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2008

Accumulated fund		
9,764	Balance at 1.1.2008	6,009
-		
<u>3,755</u>	less : Deficit for the year	<u>-361</u>
<u>6,009</u>		<u>5,648</u>
 Represented by:		
5,090	Cash at Bank: Deposit Account	6,090
2,969	Current Account	1,246
200	"Themescene" float	200
204	Stock of publications	184
-	Amounts due and Payments in advance	<u>74</u>
<u>8,463</u>		<u>7,794</u>
-924	less: Subs received in advance	-873
-		-
<u>1,530</u>	less: Amounts due or Received in advance	<u>1,273</u>
<u>6,009</u>		<u>5,648</u>

Hon. Treasurer, P. J. Wood

Hon. Examiner, G.C. Boutle

**Half page advert for
C.G.I. Services**

SOUVENIR SHEET AT MIDPEX

Jeffrey Matthews' sheet free at Midpex

In 2002 The Friends of Thematica arranged the first of a series of souvenir sheets to be given free to visitors to the Thematica stamp exhibition, which was held twice a year in London. The series of sheets has traced the work the work of leading British stamp designer, Jeffery Matthews, MBE.

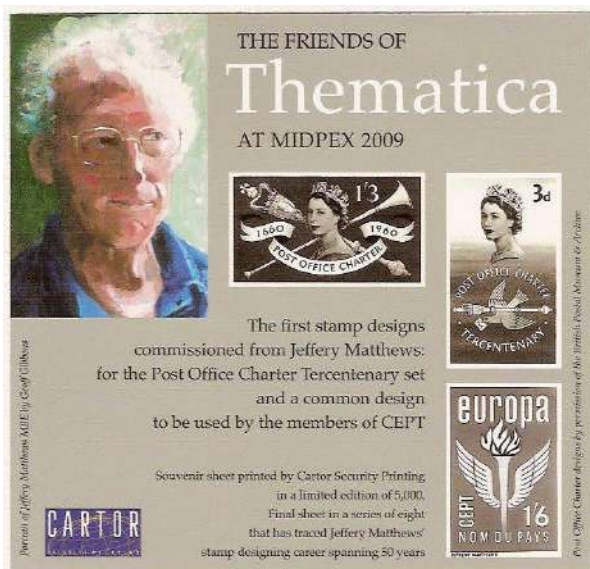
The main responsibility of 'Friends' at the exhibition was to organise the various competitions. Although the exhibition is no longer being held (although a new event, Thematix, will be held on June 26 and 27 at Harlequins Rugby Club, Twickenham), the competitions are continuing, and will this year be held as part of Midpex.

The Friends of Thematica had already planned an eighth, and final, sheet in the series, and this has been produced, and will be given free to all visitors to Midpex. As with all the previous sheets, the final sheet has been designed by Jeffery, and reproduces the very first stamp designs he produced – 50 years ago. These designs, for the Post Office Charter set of 1960 and a single design to be used by the members of CEPT, were not, in the event, adopted. The sheet also appropriately, includes a portrait of Jeffery.

The sheet has been very kindly printed by Cartor Security Printing, one of the principal suppliers to Royal Mail, in a limited edition of 5,000. The sheet faithfully reproduces not only the portrait but also the three stamp designs, the artwork for which was prepared in black and white, as in those days most British stamps were printed in a single colour.

Midpex will be held at the Xcel Centre at Canley, near Coventry on July 11 from 10am to 5pm. A shuttle bus will be provided to link the venue with Canley Station.

The competitions organised by The Friends of Thematica are the John Fosbery Trophy, BTA Cup, and Barclays Cup youth competition. ☰



THEMATIX

June 26 & 27, 2009

Harlequins Rugby Ground
The Jester Suite

Langhorne Drive, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW2 7SX

<http://www.thematix.co.uk/thematix.htm>

MEMBERS MEETING AT EMSWORTH, 21st MARCH 2009

Wendy Buckle enjoys a day by the river

John Hayward welcomed thirteen attendees, members and non-members, to this meeting jointly sponsored by the BTA and the Hampshire Philatelic Federation. He outlined its aim of being a “fun day”, pleasurable for beginners, and nothing to do with exhibiting.

The morning started with short displays by almost everyone there:

Wendy Buckle	Printing, showing some new acquisitions.
Richard Dunnerthorne	Architecture and town planning, including European Architectural Heritage Year, exhibition events and conservation.
Lesley Marley	The stamp designer and engraver Claude Halley.
Allen Payne	Golfers and golfing.
Terry Lay	The voyage by H.M.S. Endurance to the Antarctic and the bases they called at.
Sheila Foster	Proverbs. One stamp per proverb, and a theme which delighted everybody there.
Grace Davies	The Peace Movement. Including cinderellas from the Office of Peace Security, the International Peace Bureau and the Universal Peace Congress.
Jo Knott	Bridges. A one page competition done for her local society.
Tony Kell	Art and wildlife.
John Hayward	Delivery and collection of mail by motor cycle, and motorsport.



After a coffee break David Hunter showed a selection of his competition entries:

Eight page:

- Stamp Design. From pre-stamp, the Treasury competition, early designs, and recess and photogravure stamps.
- Mechanical Engineering. The application of scientific knowledge to the design and application of machinery. From earliest known devices

such as Archimedes screw through to water wheels, steam power and diesel.

Sixteen Page:

- The Scots Connection. The Highland clearances of the 19th century led to mass emigration from Scotland. Many of their descendants gave major contributions to society, and the display included those from the realms of exploration, medicine, science, architecture, politics, literature and sport.

Thirty-two page:

- Sugar. Currently David's main, and award-winning, subject. Known in ancient times, the word itself derives from Sanskrit, and Buddhist missionaries introduced sugar to China and South-East Asia. Europeans learnt about sugar from the Arabs during the Crusades. The Spanish took sugar to the New World, where they discovered that growing conditions in the West Indies were ideal for sugar cane. This led to 400 years of the dreadful slave trade, a poignant part of the display. When slavery was abolished indentured labourers were introduced from China and India, on five-year contracts which were often extended and resulted in permanent settlement. As well as the human side of the story, David outlined the manufacture from early days to modern technology, modern manufacturers and by-products of sugar, including Golden Syrup.



Altogether a fascinating story beautifully told.

After lunch - a healthy walk by the river or a less healthy but very enjoyable pub lunch – John Hayward gave a workshop on thematic collecting. This was nothing to do with competitions, but some ideas on what sort of material it is possible to collect, and where you might get it.

For those just starting out he suggested taking some care in choosing a theme. Try and avoid an enormous subject,

because you will never be able to cover it. Choose, for instance, one Olympiad rather than The Olympics, or one animal / family of animals rather than “animals”. Choose something you are already interested in, and perhaps have some knowledge of – not only will you already know about your subject, but it works the other way: reading further to collect will help your subject knowledge.

Lesley Marley showed one frame of her “Whales Tale” topic, on folklore and legends, pointing out ways in which stamps can be used: shades, colour shift, tabs (often a rich source of subject material), and booklet stamps (a good way of using the same stamp twice: once as issued stamp, once as booklet example).

John then covered the many types of material it is possible to collect, if that is what interests you. This is a message he is busy getting across at the various roadshows he is conducting across the country (see page). These talks are full of useful information to anyone wanting to extend their collection.

For the final display Lesley Marley showed a one frame display of social philately, including private envelopes and illustrated letterheads.

Everyone enjoyed a very full day, and thanks are due to John and David for the work they put in, and particularly to Lesley for all her behind-the-scenes organisation, not to mention regular supplies of tea and coffee. ☺

BTA NEWS

BTA TABLE AT MIDPEX 11th JULY

The BTA will be running at table at Midpex, in the same way as we always did at Thematica. We need some volunteers to staff the table for one-hour slots during the day. Please contact the Secretary, Anne Stammers (see page 42) if you are able to help.

MEMBERS' MEETING SWINPEX 13TH JUNE 2009

St Joseph's Roman Catholic College, Ocotal Way, Swindon SN3 3LR.

Members are reminded the BTA is holding a joint Members' Meeting with the Postal Stationery Society at the above venue on Saturday 13th June 2009 at 2pm. The meeting affords members the opportunity to display pages from their thematic collections showing postal stationery from all over the world. Members of the Postal Stationery Society will likewise be displaying worldwide postal stationery with a thematic content.

All members are welcome to attend this meeting. Please bring 12 pages of thematic postal stationery and be prepared to talk on them for around 2 minutes. This gives members an opportunity to display the many forms of postal stationery including all those wonderful illustrations and advertisements. You will have plenty of time to visit the Stamp Fair as well.

THEMATIC WORKSHOP 12TH SEPTEMBER 2009


St. Mary's Methodist Church Hall, Wilmslow Road, Handforth, Cheshire SK9 3LG

The BTA is running a Thematic Workshop in conjunction with the North Western Philatelic Federation (<http://nwfedps.org/>) at the above venue on Saturday 12th September 2009. The programme for the event will be:-

- 1000am Display of up to 12 sheets by attendees
- 1130-1145 Coffee Break
- 1145-1300 Guest Speaker Margaret Morris "Doing Time"
- 1300-1400 Buffet Lunch
- 1400-1645 Thematic Workshop (with Tea Break 1515 – 1530)
- 1645-1730 Final Question & Answer Session & Close of Workshop

Those attending should bring up to 12 sheets from their latest thematic acquisitions and be prepared to talk on them for no more than 2 minutes. The thematic workshop in the afternoon will include advice on starting and building a thematic collection and examples of the full range of thematic material available.

There is a charge of £10 per head for the Workshop payable on the day to cover the cost of morning and afternoon tea/coffee, a buffet lunch and the hire charge. Parking is available within the Church grounds. The postcode for Satnav and/or Google maps is SK9 3LG. There is also a regular bus service from Manchester. As many BTA members as possible are encouraged to attend this event. It will concentrate on the fun side of thematic collecting especially emphasising the "please yourself" approach and will not cover the more formal side of thematic exhibiting.

Places for the Workshop should be booked in advance via Adrian Jones or Alan Randall Jones of the North Western Federation, to whom cheques for £10 should be sent made out to the "North Western Philatelic Federation". Adrian can be contacted at 3a Westhoughton Rd, Adlington, Chorley, PR7 4EU, phone 01257 480442 or Alan at 61 Cloverley, Brooklands Rd, Sale M33 3QE, phone 0161 962 5180, email alan@philatelix.orangehome.co.uk. 

HERE AND THERE

ABPS

ABPS has a brand new website at www.abps.org.uk Sponsored – and paid for – by a major philatelic auction, it looks as if it will grow into a very useful philatelic site to add to your favourites. It currently carries information on national and federation events, fairs, exhibitions,

ABPS



ABPS web-site

too soon. Toddlers must walk before they can run.

seminars and auctions, and specialist and local society meetings and displays. So if you belong to such a society get them signed up. The Events Diary view should lead to easier planning for organisers by avoiding dates clashing.

As I write this the site is in its infancy so don't expect too much,

BRITISH POSTAL MUSEUM AND ARCHIVE

Agreement has been reached on developing a new centre for the BPMA at Swindon, with a Museum, Royal Mail Archive, searchroom, facilities for meetings and visitors, and more. It will be next door to the headquarters of the National Trust, English Heritage National Monuments Record, and the Steam Museum. For the full story see

<http://postalheritage.org.uk/aboutus/organisation/future/swindon-2013-a-new-centre-for-the-bpma>

The BPMA website is a mine of information, see for instance its online exhibitions at <http://www.postalheritage.org.uk/exhibitions/onlineexhibitions/index.html>

NEWS FROM STAMP ACTIVE.

Interest in stamps by young collectors is rising rapidly. Not only did the number of entries in the Stamp Active Competition at Spring Stampex go up by 10%, but, within the last month alone the Kidstamp Club has enrolled nearly 70 more members. Whilst this is indeed great news, it brings with it a number of problems. To encourage our new members we like to send them a first day cover, a miniature sheet or something similar as well as a selection of stamps, preferably relating to the collecting interest that they have advised. This increase in new members has placed a great strain on our supplies and we desperately need more covers, sheetlets, etc. There must be many collectors with surplus material. All they need to do is put it in an envelope, stick a stamp on it, and send it to :- Kidstamps, 46 Moorfield Road, Rothwell, Nr. Kettering, Northants. NN14 6AT.

The British Youth Stamp Championships, sponsored by Stanley Gibbons, will take place at Autumn Stampex from 16-19 September. Anyone up to the age of 21 can enter but entry forms must be in by 24th July. The finished entry must be sent in by 14th August. All the details for the competition can be found by accessing the competition page of Rocket News on the www.planetstamp.co.uk website of Stamp Active Network, and an entry form is also available for downloading. ☰

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, 35 – 50
Rathbone Place, London, W1T 1HQ*

GROUP NEWS

ALBA STAMP CLUB

Programme 2009

20 June	Outing to Summerlee Industrial Heritage Centre	
12 September	Camelon	Scottish Holidays
10 October	Motherwell	My Scotland
5 December	Camelon	Alphabet afternoon, letter F



Programme 2010

16 January	Motherwell	Letters of the Words MILNGAVIE
6 March	Camelon	Lunch at Copper Top Restaurant and AGM
10 April	Motherwell	Alex Shepherd entertains

ASTRO STAMP SPACE SOCIETY

Secretary is Brian Lockyer, 21 Exford Close, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, BS23 4RS.
Email: brian.lockyer@tesconet Society web site is www.asss.utvinternet.com

GUILD OF ST.GABRIEL

Programme 2009

20 June	Jerusalem: the Nora Hargreaves Collection	
19 September	Tour of Israel	Rev. David Hague
17 October	Something old, something new	All members
21 November	S.M.O.M. Odyssey of Mercy	Peter Greening

Programme 2010

16 January	Letter R	All members
20 February	Secular manuscripts Plus Bring & Buy	Peter Greening
30 March	National A.G.M. plus annual competitions	
17 April	Great Britain	Ray Pottle
19 June	My favourite city	All members



35 specialist societies will be at

MIDPEX

11 July 2009

Xcel Leisure Centre

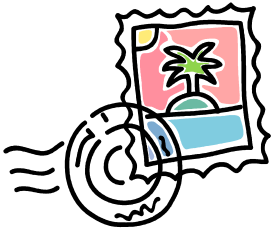
Mitchell Avenue

Conley

Coventry

CV4 8DY

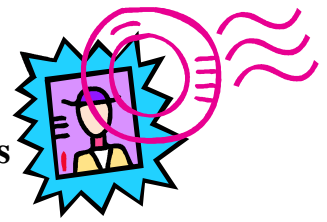
<http://www.midpex.co.uk/>



Just4kids

(by Lise Whittle)

(Adult readers - please photocopy these two pages
and pass them on to a youngster)



ARE YOU A NUMBER CRUNCHER???

Do you like numbers? Do you like the TV number programme 'Get 100'? Are you a Maths Mega-Star? Even if you think you aren't, you can have lots of fun with numbers on stamps. Look out for any stamps with numbers on, and try and collect them in numerical order (that means, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and so on). Watch out for number 9 – it's hard to find!



GB (Great Britain) definitive stamps are an easy way of collecting numbers on stamps. Definitive stamps are the everyday stamps with the Queen's head on that we use on our letters in Great Britain. Here is a GB First Day Cover from 15th February 1971 showing some definitive stamps ranging in price from 1/2p to 9p.



(This date is interesting because there was a Post Office strike on that day, and so the stamps weren't really cancelled (the black circle mark with the date) on the 15th – the post office did it later. Some people like to collect stamps which have been 'delayed in the post'.)

(Continued on next page)

Another way of collecting numbers on stamps is to look out for 'To Pay' stamps. These aren't real stamps, but are labels which look like stamps. They were put on letters by the post office if the person posting the letter hadn't put enough stamps on the letter. The person who received the letter had to pay - what a cheek!!



And look out for overprinted numbers on stamps – sometimes if a country had printed too many stamps, or the currency had changed, they would print another number on top of the stamps – these are called 'overprints'. These are really exciting because you get a choice of two different numbers on the stamp, the number underneath, and the number on top!



Look out for everything that comes through your letterbox – even parcel labels have lots of great numbers on them! How many zero's can you spot on this label?



You can even use your number stamps to help you with your Maths Homework! Try this sum, and see if you can find some number stamps to fill in the gap. Show it to your maths teacher – they'll be really impressed!



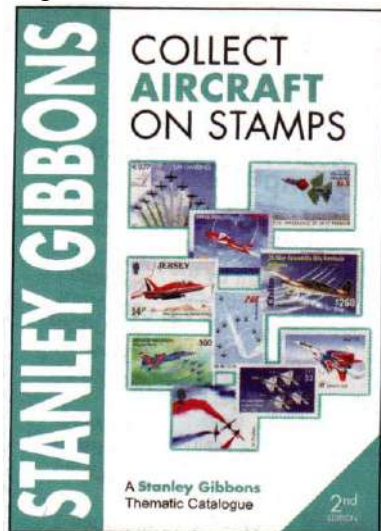
So give collecting numbers on stamps a go

– and just like the title of the TV programme, see if you can ‘Get 100’!!!

BOOK NEWS AND REVIEWS

Stanley Gibbons Collect Aircraft on Stamps 2nd Edition

This, the second edition (2009) of Aircraft on Stamps, published by Stanley Gibbons at £34.95, is a beautifully produced book but unfortunately I do not have the first edition with which to compare it but I am sure that the editors will have made improvements to the original.



There are 296 pages listing over 24,000 stamps which depict more than 1,600 identified aircraft, including helicopters and gliders plus over 180 identified airships and balloons. It is based on Stanley Gibbons Stamps of the World simplified catalogue including supplements up to October 2008. Not all miniature sheets appear to be listed. Designers and manufacturers names are included in the identification of the aircraft, and for personalities such as Lindbergh you need to look under the name of the aircraft - Spirit of St. Louis or Ryan NYP Special.

It does not include unidentified stylised aircraft, children's toys, kites, spacecraft etc., or those where a small part of the aircraft is visible. For more philatelic details, Stamps of the World should be consulted and for varieties etc., the 22-part standard catalogue would need to be used.

It is in alphabetical order by country, in chronological order within each country, with the year of issue and SG catalogue number; whilst issues such as Parcel Post (USA 1912) and Canada Special Delivery Stamps (1927, 1942 and 1946) are at the back of the country's listing. Mint and used stamps are priced, as are sets. The catalogue is in colour with stamps reproduced at 75% of full size but not all the stamps in a set of two or more are illustrated. Coincidentally I recently bought a collection of Aircraft on Stamps and found this section quite useful in looking through them.

The above mentioned country listing is coupled with a general Classification Index which is cross-referenced to the more detailed Sectional Index. However, in this latter index I found it a little difficult to locate the aircraft type which, although listed in capitals, could perhaps benefit from being also in bold type.

My particular interest being in Concorde I eventually found it in the Sectional Index under C2(b) "Civil Airliners - jet powered". Looking under Great Britain I saw MS2289 and MS4921/23 listed but neither of which could I find in the GB country section. Under Bahrain we have 232/5 the four stamps for the opening of the London - Bahrain route on 21 January 1976 but no mention of the miniature sheet. These may be the only errors or omissions in the whole book but they do seem to indicate the need for a little more care in the proof reading.

Even with these minor reservations, if you are interested in aircraft on stamps then this is the book for you and should be on your shelves.

Brian Asquith, Concorde Study Circle

See page 61 for a special offer from Stanley Gibbons: buy this for 15% off plus free postage

Guide to collecting cricket stamps and covers.

In association with *Stamp and Coin Mart* Chapman and Mitchell Covers have released a guide to collecting cricket stamps and covers. Contributors include Tom Graveney, John Jameson and Cricket Philatelic Society President Arthur Melville-Brown. India's leading cricket historian, Dr Boria Majumdar also contributed a piece on India's rise to cricket prominence. The guide was launched at Stampex, the national stamp show, on February 25th. A special display of cricket memorabilia was mounted at the show with the MCC. This ranged from the bat W. G. Grace used to score his 1000th Test run to Indian Premier League kit donated and signed by Rahul Dravid and Sourav Ganguly. The bat was auctioned at Sotheby's in May and the IPL kit will form part of the "Going to the Cricket" exhibition at the MCC museum.

The 32 page guide, also titled *Going to the Cricket*, costs £3 and is available from the MCC section of the web site at www.bletchleycovers.com. It will also be on sale from the MCC Museum.



LIBRARY LISTING

Members asking to borrow books and catalogues are not required to pay the cost of outward posting, only the return cost.

Please send the librarian a stamped and self addressed envelope when requesting a list of articles on the topic(s) of your choice. Copies cost 10p each plus adequate return postage

The Librarian recommends you phone him asking how best to proceed and say if you prefer to make your own copies.

Books

Collect aircraft on stamps 2nd ed. Stanley Gibbons Thematic Catalogue. 2009

Termini, B. *Perforated hearts* American Topical Association. 2008 [current cost to post to members £2.68]

Articles

		Physics	
4	Solczanyk, A.	Physics with Ukrainian Connections	Topical Times 8/2007
		Prehistory	
3	Whittle, C.	Old Fourlegs' - coelacanth	ThemNews 10/2007
		Rail Travel	
2	Borgstein, A.	The Blue Train	ThemNews 4/2007
		Religion	
2	Hearl, T.	St Helena And The Cross	Gabriel 2/2007
2	Whittle, C.	Jesus on the Cross	ThemNews 2/2008

4	Staines, A.	Royalty Queen of Hearts [Princess Diana]	Stamp Magazine 9/2007
		Scouts	
5	Foy, K.	Scouting Around	Gibbons Stamp Monthly 8/2007
		Slavery	
2	Whittle, C.	Abolition of Slavery	ThemNews 8/2007
		Space	
1		Masonic Astronauts	Masonic Philatelic Club 2006
3	Duncan, H.	Satellites from a Small Country	Orbit 10/2007
3	Randall, A.	Out of the Blue (US naval cachets)	Stamp Magazine 1/1996
		Stamp Collecting	
1		John Lennon: the Lost Album	Scott Stamp Monthly 1/2006
	Bruse-Bowling,		
13	W.	Day of the Stamp parts II, IV, V & VI	Stamp Collecting 1983 - 1984 Malaysian Philatelic Bulletin 5/2006
3	Silva	Philately and the UPU Today	
4		Franklin D. Roosevelt Stamp Collection	
		Submarines	
3	Randall, A.	Out of the Blue (US naval caches)	Stamp Magazine 1/1996
		Tattoos	
			Indian Thematic Society 12/2007
2	Binningen, A.	Decorated Skin, a Thing of Beauty	
		Tea	
1	Horowicz, K.	Beginners Please	Stamp Magazine 3/1969
		Tobacco	
2	Homer-Woolf, G.	Smoking Stationery	Stamp Collecting 11/1983
		Trees	
2	Whittle, C.	Bonsai	ThemNews 8/2007
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			Malaysian Philatelic Bulletin 5/2006
3	Silva	Philately and the UPU Today	
		US Presidents	
		The 1912 attempt on Teddy	
1	Soper, B.	Roosevelt's life	Scott Stamp Monthly 10/2006
5	Goldsmith, B.	J F K	Stamp Magazine 5/2007
		Walls and Ramparts	
2		The Great Wall of China	ThemNews 6/2007
2	De Luca, V.	Black Walls of Diyarbakir	Topical Times 8/2007
		World War I	
5	Gelms, G.	World War One Aviation	Topical Times 10/2007
		World War II	
3	Gelms, G.	Aviation in World War II	Topical Times 2/2007