

THEMESCENE

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THEMESCENE

Journal of the
British Thematic Association
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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

Your Country Needs You! The Kitchener poster with this slogan has become something of a cliché, but it is useful shorthand. Or rather, in this case, Your Society Needs You! Ours cannot be the only club / association worrying about its membership. Peter Denly in our Membership Page always gives us a breakdown of the current membership. He systematically reminds people to renew their subscriptions, but as he says, we need more than a static number of members to continue to operate effectively on behalf of yourselves and thematics in this country. Page 47 outlines an offer you can't refuse: get one more person signed up as a member, and you will receive £5.00 off your own renewal fees for 2011. That has to be a bargain: a 33% reduction in fees for just one application form (and payment of course). So please, talk to your collecting friends and see what you can do.

The BTA continues to promote thematics as widely as possible. I recently had the pleasure of running a workshop at Solihull (page 65) and meeting both members and non-members. I hope I opened a few people's eyes to the huge range of types of material which can be collected, and maybe tempted one or two people to think more widely about their subject. Running meetings and events is an important part of the BTA's work, but it all takes time, and usually money as well. Or perhaps I should say, the BTA Committee have always considered meetings and events as important. Do you agree? Please take a few minutes to fill in the Survey on page 79 and send it to Jim Etherington. It's the Committee's job to provide what you the members want, and we need to know what that is. And do note question 4 about costs; which brings us back to subscriptions.

As well as the printed Survey, the obvious place to air your views is at the AGM. This issue will arrive on your doorstep very shortly before the meeting, to be held at SWINPEX (details on page 63). Following the business part of the meeting, including Any Other Business – your chance to tell us what you think - Anne Stammers will present "Rocks to Riches" which won last year's BTA Cup. This year's entries will be on display and judged at SWINPEX. **We need members' help.** If you are local to Swindon, and can spare a couple of hours on the evening of 11th June to help erect the display frames we would appreciate it. We also need volunteers to staff the BTA table at SWINPEX, and to staff our table at ThematiX. Please appear throughout this magazine. Please would you let Secretary Anne Stammers know if you can spare an hour or so on any of these dates. These are both events well worth attending anyway. SWINPEX is the biggest local society event in the south, having around 44 dealers, meetings of specialist societies, and – a luxury after last year – plenty of parking and plenty of space in the venue. ThematiX is the chance to enjoy a whole venue of thematic dealers, where just for once there will be no blank looks when you enquire for stuff on your own theme.

I'd like to send my congratulations to Richard Wheeler and Roger Swindells for their success at Antwerp, and Jim Wigmore for being awarded the Franceska Rapkin Memorial Bowl.

It seems a bit odd writing this Editorial only one week before London 2010 hits us. By the time you read it, it will be history (although the Festival of Stamps continues all year). Watch this space for full reports in the next issue.

Enjoy the 2010 events! ☺

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

John Hayward

I thought you would find this photo amusing as it was outside a post office which my wife and I visited early in April. It's not in the Wild West of America as you might expect, telling customers to remove their rifles and guns on entry, but in Longyearbyen,



Spitsbergen, where it is necessary to carry arms because of the threat of polar bears! I even got involved in thematics in this remote location, for in the Spitsbergen Museum shop I came across the book, "*The Postal History of Spitsbergen*". This is not just superbly illustrated with postal history items, but a rich source of

thematic material. For those who collect explorers, polar, airships, mining, land and sea mammals there are a good number of stamps and postal cancels nicely illustrated in the book. As well as the local stamps of polar bears, there is material on Nansen, Amundsen and Nobile, special cancels from the 4 remote post offices on the island showing coal mining, airships, walrus, seabirds, seals etc. Spitsbergen is worth visiting too by the way!



I was invited by the West of England Thematic Society (WETS) to give a display on Social Philately to them in April. This was a very pleasant occasion and gave me the ideal opportunity to present the Franceska Rapkin Memorial Bowl for the best article in the BTA Committee's view in *Themescene* in 2009 to WETS member, James Wigmore (see photo). This was for James' article on "Britain's Railway Evolution". It was split into three parts and I felt all of them were very good. I would remind all readers (as would no doubt our Editor) that articles from members for

Themescene are always welcome.

By the time you read this London 2010 will have been and gone. A full report of the event with photos, including our meeting, will appear in September *Themescene*. Meanwhile the international exhibition at Antwerp took place in April and I am very pleased to record that in the thematic class our Chairman obtained his first large vermeil medal for his exhibit of puppets (he is catching me up fast) and Roger Swindells gained a vermeil medal for his "A Glimpse Into the World of Beer", which was his first entry in an international exhibition. Very well done to both of them.

Our AGM to be held this year at Swinpex will very soon be upon us (see page 63). This is the second time we will have held the AGM away from London and Swinpex is a very good event to attend, so do come along to the meeting. I can assure you the meeting room itself will

be far better than at Midpex last year, so we will all be able to get in comfortably. It is your opportunity to let the Committee know what the BTA should be doing – so let us have your views. Anne Stammers is entertaining us afterwards with her display of minerals and precious stones. I have to apologise in advance though for my absence at the AGM. I shall be in the Isle of Man for TT week pursuing the other half of my thematic interest. The ferry and accommodation had to be booked over a year in advance when the date of our AGM was then unknown.

Finally, can I make a plug for ThematiX 2010. This is being held once again at the Harlequins Rugby Club near Twickenham station on Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd July 2010. This is the successor to the dealers' side of Thematica and deserves your support. There will be plenty of thematic material on sale from a good number of dealers and the BTA will have a table at the event.

Enjoy your collecting. 

*Half page advertisement
for Stamp Insurance Services*

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

Richard Wheeler

When I wrote my page in January for the March issue, little did I realise that I was going to be restricted in what I was able to do following the replacement of a knee back in early December. I was not able to go to the presentation by Jonas Hällström at the Royal at the end of January. I heard that it was a great success. I am hoping that I am going to be able to go to the seminar being held at London 2010 on Tuesday 11th May when Jonas is the Chairman for thematic philately from a modern perspective.

With the help of my wife Cynthia, I was able to present my display for Yeovil and Bridport Philatelic Societies in early March on consecutive evenings which drew large and appreciative members - so much so that at the end of the Bridport evening I had difficulty in getting away to go home. Once again I got comments that some collectors did not know what material a true thematic exhibit used. I shall also remember the Yeovil evening for the fact that in a maze of roadworks near the M5 with lights flashing everywhere, I missed a 30 sign and got done for speeding!

During this lay-off period, I was able to once again remount my exhibit ready for the International exhibition at Antwerp in April. The effort was worth it as I received a great set of constructive and helpful comments from the Judges. For once I must have done something right!

Having picked up my exhibit on its return to London, I immediately went to Kings Cross for the train to Perth where I was to present my Display, primarily for the children at the Scottish Philatelic Congress. It turned out that everyone is a child at heart and I had a good attendance of adults! The exhibition was well organised with Brian Sole in attendance for the Friends of Thematica, with the children's displays, the John Fosbery Trophy and the Inter Federation Competition for the Healy and Wise Trophy (see page 66).

As I still have problems with the aforementioned knee, Margaret Morris was my saviour running backwards and forwards in her car from the Hotel to the Exhibition ensuring that I put my leg up to rest it. She was kindness itself and her hospitality was unbounded.

The main object of going to Perth was to fly the flag for the BTA and to make our presence known in Scotland. As well as Brian Sole and Margaret, Peter Denly also made the trip. We met some of our members which was most enjoyable, admired the exhibits of our young friends North of the Border and received a very friendly welcome. It was certainly a case of mission accomplished.

On the home front with the West of England Thematic Society, we had a real gathering of BTA members at the end of April when John Hayward was the Speaker. He also, in his capacity as President of the BTA, presented the Francesca Rapkin Memorial Bowl to Jim Wigmore for the best article in *Themescene* in 2009. This is reported more fully in his President's Page.

I look forward to London 2010 and hope to meet many of our members also at the AGM which is to be held at Swinpex this year on Saturday 12th June (see page 63).

Now the sun is out, some of our energy turns to the garden with its addition of a little ash(?) to improve the soil – but keep an eye on philatelic events countrywide. Good health to all. ☺

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S PAGE

Peter Denly

Ordinary members	209
Family members	19
Junior members	2
Society members	16
Overseas members	23
Overseas Society members	1
Honorary members	4

Total number of members 274
(At 1st May 2010)

New Members joining since the December 2009 issue

Mr. & Mrs. W. Cox	Hemel Hempstead	Mr. K. Lewington	Basingstoke
Mr. T. Fray	Plymouth	Mr. & Mrs. J. Matthias	Cardiff
Mr S. Vurgan	Richon Le-Zion Israel		

Deaths advised since the December 2009 issue


Mr. A. Spencer Lea, Preston

Our subscription renewal programme is now nearly complete, but sadly we have said goodbye already to a number of members as advancing years, infirmity and change of interest has resulted in their resignation. The BTA is not alone with loss of members due to these reasons, it seems to be affecting stamp clubs and societies with other diverse interests right across the board.

Your Association is almost totally dependant upon the members' subscriptions for its income, and as you may appreciate in these straightened times income from bank interest has dwindled to almost nothing. Thus, for the BTA to continue with its programme of activities it is essential to maintain a strong membership and hence a healthy bank balance. To this end we would encourage members to try and find new recruits who are interested in Thematic collecting and act as their sponsors.

As an incentive, during the next 12 months, we would like to offer any member a discount of £5 on their following year's subscription when introducing a new joining member. So make sure that your name appears on the application form before it is submitted.

Your committee members work hard at recruitment by attending a number of fairs and workshops, plus speaking at Society meetings around the country each year. However, exposure is limited, whereas you the members, belonging to a whole raft of stamp clubs and philatelic societies, are ideally placed to help with a recruitment drive. You will find a copy of our re-designed application form on the BTA web site, and of course printed versions are available on application to the Membership Secretary. So please see what we can achieve.

Important – when changing your email address please be sure to inform the Membership Secretary. 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

GREAT THINKERS OF THE 16TH CENTURY

From Richard Hindle

An email sent to Ian Hobbs which the Editor thought deserved wider readership:

I thoroughly enjoyed your article on the great thinkers of the 16th century [*Themescene* March 2010, at the end of which Ian appealed for help and advice]. You have chosen a fascinating topic.

Your subject, like mine of exploration from 1400 to 1939, is vast and complex. I thought, quite innocently over thirty years ago, when I first took the theme seriously that apart from James Cook, there would only be thirty or forty other explorers on stamps. I'm now at about a thousand. So it was a case of fools rush in where angels fear to tread!

The development of exploration from Henry the Navigator (another great thinker, who precedes your time frame by a century) sending expeditions to find a route to the Orient and Columbus heading west seems straight forward enough. It then becomes a bit like a spider's web, with people criss-crossing the oceans and continents.

In fact it was Henry's fears about the fall of Constantinople to Islam which prompted his desire to find a sea route to bring spices to Europe. When Constantinople did fall, the Christian refugees brought Islamic learning to Europe, which helped start the renaissance and your topic, so you may have to revise your dates! My parameters changed several times.

Much of what you are collecting influences my theme and the subsequent discoveries then influence the thinking of the times.

With the order of the display, logic flies out of the window. The paths you chose to develop the theme are arbitrary. No one can say you are wrong, because it is your personal route though the maze. There will always be branches entering, leaving and sometimes rejoining the story.

With my exploration displays, I find that the audience is generally ignorant of the sequence of the facts (and apart from the well known explorers, ignorant of the expeditions), so the order of the display is of no great importance. They are there to be entertained, which is, hopefully, something I accomplish.

In researching the expeditions, I have found that expeditions do not happen without a reason. It is a "circle of improvement". There is a reason for an expedition - the expedition reports the findings - this creates a new reason for an expedition and so on.

The improvements and breakthroughs in navigational instruments, navigational science, cartography, even freedom of worship all come into the equation. In fact some of the background can be more interesting than the expedition itself!

Like you, I have been down many blind alleyways and "wasted money". In some cases the silly purchase has not been so silly, as subsequent research has shown it to be relevant in another context. Even if I didn't get a penny from selling my collection, I would never consider it wasted money, as the enjoyment I have had, and the knowledge gained, is a price beyond rubies.

Embrace the topic and get ready for a roller-coaster ride. Who knows where it will take you, but if it's half as good a ride as I've had you're in for a treat.

PLEASE HELP BROWNIES COLLECT ETHIOPIAN STAMPS

From: Lise Whittle



For three years, Alloway Brownies and Rainbows in Scotland have sponsored a little girl who lives in Ethiopia, through the charity called PLAN UK. Her name is Zemed, and she is now 7 years old. To sponsor Zemed, the Brownies raise £12 every month by doing odd jobs at home to earn 50p each week.

The Brownies have researched over 100 facts about Zemed and Ethiopia, and as part of their Brownie Collector Badge they would like to put it all together for a group stamp entry for the junior stamp competitions. But so far we have only found 2 stamps from Ethiopia! Do you have any Ethiopian stamps or other Ethiopian philatelic material that you could spare? The Brownies would be very grateful if you can, and will send you a copy of their Ethiopian Fact Sheet as a thank you! Please

also ask your stamp collecting friends.

Please send any stamps you can spare to Brown Owl Mrs Lise Whittle, 11 Nether Auchendrane, Alloway, Ayr KA7 4EE.

(And see Just4Kids for more information on Alloway Brownies).

And from a reader who wishes to remain anonymous:

YOU CAN TAKE A HORSE TO WATER ...

Recently my grown up son said to me:

“I’m really sorry, but when I was little you used to make me do stamps and it was really boring and I got headaches from them. They’re just bits of paper, you can’t get any satisfaction from them, you just sit and stare at them, and they’re only interesting for about one second. You can’t move them anywhere, you can’t play a game with them, you can’t do anything with them, you just have to sit and stare at them. Sorry.”

Oh well, I guess stamp collecting isn’t for everyone! I did try! Maybe he’ll change his mind one day ...

*One – eighth advertisement
for Thematic-Club International*

ROYAL SOCIETY COPLEY MEDAL

Jeff Dugdale tells the story behind the Royal Mail 'Royal Society' issue earlier this year

Collecting Science as a theme would be as daunting as tackling Music or Literature. Clearly subdivision into say Chemistry, or Medicine, or Astrophysics would make the task more manageable, but doing that would still challenge the collector to trace and write up hundreds of stamps. The famous scientists of one country would be an obvious alternative approach: France, for example, has been particularly good at celebrating her scientists. Further specialising into stamps for famous particular scientists would reduce that number to manageable targets but still be challenging: I am aware of enough stamps for say Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Cook, Darwin, The Curies, Koch, Einstein and Fleming to make a display on the work of each. A different finite approach might be to seek issues for winners of a category of The Nobel Prize, awarded only since 1901 and which for Sweden has issued regularly. But this year, as we mark the 350th anniversary of The Royal Society, let's look at international stamps for winners of its Copley Medal.

This medal, named after Sir Godfrey Copley who first donated the funds, has been awarded in almost every year since its inception in 1731; and whilst the criteria have changed a little since then it has been given for the best piece of scientific research in that year or in recent years. Examples of the language used in justifying the award show intriguing changes in style over time:

1731 for Stephen Gray ...“For his new Electrical Experiments: - as an encouragement to him for the readiness he has always shown in obliging the Society with his discoveries and improvements in this part of Natural Knowledge”

1839 for Robert Brown ...“For his discoveries during a series of years, on the subject of vegetable impregnation”

2008 for Sir Roger Penrose ...“For his beautiful and original insights into many areas of mathematics and mathematical physics. Sir Roger has made outstanding contributions to general relativity theory and cosmology, most notably for his work on black holes and the Big Bang.”



As you will already have gathered, some of the medallists are not exactly household names: for example J.T.Desaguliers, who worked with The Royal Society's then immediate Past President Isaac Newton won it three times (the most ever) between 1734 and 1741, and the names of Abraham Trembley (winner in 1743), John Mudge (1777) and Everard

Home (1807) do not resonate immediately. However, many *do* and the following pages show a selection of stamps for many international scientists whose work has contributed significantly to human knowledge and the benefit of mankind.

Note: criteria are paraphrased and stamps do not always relate directly to this award as, where possible, stamps showing portraits have been selected.



James Bradley (in 1748)
Discoveries about the
apparent motion of fixed stars



John Harrison (1749)
Curious instruments for the
exact measurement of time



Benjamin Franklin (1753)
Curious experiments and
observation on electricity



James Cook (1776)
Welfare of the crew of H.M.
Resolution on world voyage



William Herschel (1781)
Communication of discovery
of a new and singular star



John Goodricke (1783 share)
Discoveries relating to light
coming from the Star Algol



Alessandro Volta (1794)
Explanations of certain
Transactions,
experiments by Prof. Galvani



Hans Christian Ørsted (1820)
Electro-magnetic discoveries



John Herschel (1821 share & 1847)
Papers in Philosophical
& astronomical observations in 1830s



Francis Arago (1825)
Discoveries of magnetic
properties of non ferrous substances



George Biddell Airy (1831)
Developmental work on
telescopes



Michael Faraday (1832, 1838 shares)
Discoveries of Magneto-Electricity,
and re electrical induction



Carl Friedrich Gauss (1837)
Inventions and mathematical
researches in magnetism



Justus Liebig (1840 share)
Discoveries in organic
chemistry



Urbain Le Verrier (1846)
Investigations into disturbance
of Uranus leading to discovery
of Neptune



John Couch Adams (1848)
Investigations into the
disturbances of Uranus



Richard Owen (1851)
Discoveries in comparative
anatomy and palaeontology



Alexander von Humbolt (1852)
Eminent services in terrestrial
physics over a number of years



Leon Foucault (1855)
Various researches in
experimental physics



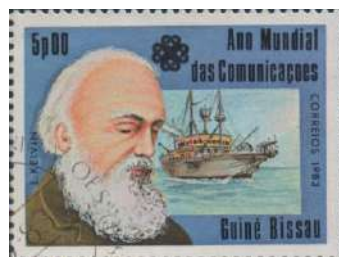
Charles Darwin (1864)
Important researches in geology,
zoology & botanical physiology



Hermann Helmholtz (1873)
Discoveries in physics
and physiology



Louis Pasteur (1874)
Researches on fermentation



William Thomson (1883)
Eminent researches in experimental

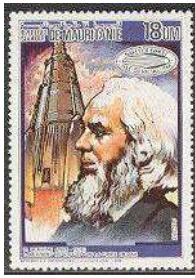


Rudolf Virchow (1892)
Investigations in pathology

and on pelerine

and mathematical physics

and prehistoric archaeology



Sir William Huggins (1898)
Researches in spectrum analysis applied to the heavenly bodies



Lord Rayleigh (1899)
Contributions to physical science



Joseph Lister (1902)
Physiological and pathological researches influencing surgery



Dmitri Mendeleev (1905)
Chemical and physical science



Elias Metchnikoff (1906)
Important work in zoology and pathology



Alfred Russel Wallace (1908)
Contributions to the theory of the origin of species by natural selection



Joseph John Thomson (1914)
Discoveries in physical science



Ivan Pavlov (1915)
Physiological investigations of digestion and into nervous system



Ernest Rutherford (1922)
Researches in radio activity and atomic structure



Albert Einstein (1925)
Theory of relativity and



Max Planck (1929)
Contributions to theoretical



William H. Bragg (1930)
Distinguished contributions

contributions to the quantum
theory

physics and as originator of the
quantum theory

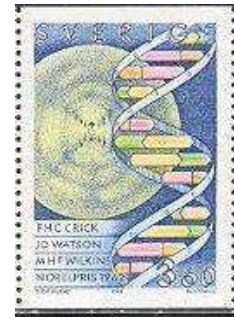
to crystallography
and radioactivity



Niels Bohr (1938)
Distinguished work in development of the quantum theory of atomic structure



William L. Bragg (1966)
Distinguished contributions in structural determination by X-ray diffraction



Francis Crick (1975)
Elucidation of the structure of DNA and work in molecular biology



Dorothy Hodgkin (1976)
Outstanding work on the structures of complex molecules



Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar (1984)
Work on theoretical physics e.g. stellar structure and relativity



James D. Watson (1993)
Tireless pursuit of DNA humane genome sequencing



Alan Hodgkin (1965)
Outstanding leadership in the development of neurophysiology

Andrew Huxley (1973)
Outstanding studies on the mechanisms of nerve impulses



Stephen Hawking (2006)
Outstanding contributions to theoretical physics and cosmology



THE PROGRESS OF PUPPETS

Richard Wheeler pulls some strings

Mention the word 'Puppet' and immediately most people think of Muppets. They also associate it as entertainment only for children. They couldn't be more wrong. Puppets can be traced back at least 2,500 years, and in all probability a much greater period into the mists of time when the Shamans ruled their tribes. Puppets are seen by more adults than children every day throughout the world. You only have to watch television commercials, entertainment or go to the theatre where forms of puppetry are used in many productions such as opera, and plays such as *Avenue Q* and *War Horse*.

THE ART OF THE PUPPET



Puppet presentation of the Nativity

Throughout the world, puppets are a high art and a cultural image. Their great influence is related to religion and teaching and affects peoples lives more than they realise.

Puppets are closely related to aspects in the development of theatre. The word 'puppet' is from the Latin 'pupa' meaning a doll, although not strictly a child's doll. The word marionette may be derived from 'Mary' since the Virgin was a popular figure in Nativity plays and copied by puppets. A doll is not strictly a puppet, in that playing with a doll involves an intimate action only. The player supplies the life and that is not show business. However when a doll is put on



a stick or a string, it does become a puppet.

They are worked in a dramatic manner by hands, other parts of the body, strings, wires, rods, computers or other external means and can be traced back in time to the wearing of masks and 'loss of self'. They come in many shapes and sizes varying basically from shadows, finger puppets, marionettes, rods and gloves to large carnival figures. The artistic hands of the skilled manipulator brings the puppet to life.

The Turks introduced a shadow character to Greece: Karaghiosis, who is a stone mason. Shadow figures are cut in profiles from thin leather, plastic or acetate, intricately pierced and subtly coloured. They have articulated joints and are controlled by two rods and held against a lighted screen.

A marionette is generally made of wood, metal or plastic that has been sculpted in the round and has 15 – 16 articulated joints which are controlled by strings from above the figure or object.

Rod puppets have an upper torso pierced vertically by a rod which allows the puppeteer control of the head. The arms are controlled from below by two other rods.



Finger puppets are used for table top puppetry. In the 17th century hand (glove) puppets became popular as they were easy to operate, cheaper to make and were more mobile. They fit the human hand with one or more fingers supporting the head and the thumb and another finger inside the cloth arms. They are usually seen from the waist up, but sometimes (like Punch)

have legs which hang downwards.

In many parts of the world, Puppeteers bring their skills to Carnival in the creation of giant puppets, sculptures, masks and costumes. Brazil has the largest carnival in the world and features giant figures.

In poorer parts of Africa, puppets are used to teach both adults and children about social issues: AIDS, corruption, environment, gender equality and religion.

Goree Island off the coast of Senegal in West Africa is a former French colony through which 20 million Africans passed between the mid 1500's and the mid 1800's as part of the expanding slave trade. It was also famous for puppets.



WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

In around 381 BC Xenophon, the Greek historian, wrote about puppets in “The Symposium”, later corrected by Plato (427 – 347 BC). He and Aristotle (384 – 322) both mentioned the puppet theatre. When a person puts on a mask or a painted make-up (like an actor), they surrender their personality. Thousands of years ago the Shaman wore a mask fashioned from an animal skull. He was feared and respected by his followers. An example was a transformation mask with the outer image of an eagle which by pulling strings revealed an inner image of a supernatural being in human form.

Puppets evolved in the history of theatre as cultures developed. Before 2,500 B.C., peasants in the West sang in praise of Dionysus in a ritual of wild dancing and celebration of the harvest. They painted their faces with dregs of wine forming a mask. Holy men pulled strings to statues out of sight and amazed worshippers.



Religious rituals became increasingly dramatic with actors in vast auditoriums using masks to quickly portray the characters they were playing. Some of these took the form of expressions – comedy and tragedy, which today are associated with theatrical entertainment.

EASTERN HERITAGE

Indian puppetry is older than live theatre, where to impersonate someone else was taboo and suggested death. Puppets were not restricted and by virtue of the fact that a stage manager is a sutradahr (controller of strings) suggests that puppets were there first. In Rajasthan string puppets operated by two strings predominate, whilst in the State of Kerala, glove puppets are used - the Kathakali. Early puppetry in India presented the two Sanskrit epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, one of the principal devotional and



and

philosophical works of the Hindu religion. The shows are presented by a Dalang, a skilled storyteller, who imitates the voices, sings, conducts the music and is all the while seated cross legged for a show lasting eight hours.

A Chinese legend says that Emperor Mu, returning from Central Asia in 1000 B.C. brought puppeteers and materials with him. The earliest shadows were founded in the Han Dynasty in 206 BC. China has all forms of puppet and plays are based on the classics. Religion is based on Buddhism and Taoism.

Vietnam has four religions – Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Christianity. The former three have



melded with Chinese beliefs to form Tam Giao (triple religion). Water Puppets are over 1,000 years old and performed chest deep in a pool of water which forms the stage. The puppeteers stand behind a curtained backdrop and conceal the mechanisms under the water.



In Japan, puppets achieved dramatic status by the 16th century when a form of puppetry known as Bunraku was established with figures 4'6" in height. The first manipulator holds the puppet and moves the right hand, the second moves the left hand and the third moves the legs. They are dressed in black, which to a Japanese audience conveys that they are invisible.

THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE PRESENT DAY

After the fall of the Roman Empire theatrical entertainment in Europe was kept alive for the next 1000 years by jongleurs, wandering minstrels and mummers. A Greek named Potheinos was the first named puppeteer in the 3rd century. Puppets were used to spread Christian teaching until they introduced comedy and were subsequently banned. They found a new home on the streets and in fairs.



By the end of the 15th century a form of mime drama known as the Commedia dell'arte appeared in Italy. Among the characters were zanni known as Pulcinella, Arlecchino, Pantaloon and Captain Fracasse. The Harlequinade, the forerunner of pantomime, and Punch derived from this show.

The Orlando Furioso Marionettes, although known in Northern France and Belgium, are principally found in Sicily where they have been declared "masterpieces of oral and intangible heritage of humanity" by UNESCO. The puppets are controlled by a rod that passes through the head into the body. The arms are strung and the legs hang free. They are 80 cms. high and weigh about 15 kg.

In France, Italian showmen brought Punchinello into their shows where he became Polichinelle and acquired a hunchback. His popularity was surpassed by Guignol, a glove puppet dressed in the style of a Lyonnais silk weaver. He was created by Laurent Mourguet, a dentist, as a doll originally for children as a comfort when he extracted teeth. A Guignol is the accepted term for a puppet in France, and the show is just as popular today as when it first appeared.



The Civil War in England in 1642 saw the closure of theatres, and puppets became the only form of entertainment until Charles II came to the throne in

1660. On May 6th 1662, Samuel Pepys saw an Italian puppet play in St. Paul's Churchyard, Covent Garden, in which Pulcinello (string puppet) was a comic servant. It was not long before the English had problems in spelling or pronouncing his name and it was shortened to Punch. The hooked nose is of a Neapolitan peasant. The hunchback of fools was fathered on Punch and the fat stomach added as a counter-poise to his back. Judy was originally called Joan and meant a woman of the streets. She is portrayed in the show as a bossy panto dame with a falsetto voice.

The puppets appeared in large shows or fairgrounds with many operators and musicians. By the turn of the 19th century the fairs were no more and the showman turned to glove puppets and put a booth on a handcart, and with an assistant wandered with his show from place to place bringing news to local communities.

Punch Magazine was named after the anarchic glove puppet, Mr Punch, and was first published in 1841. Books of stamps advertising the magazine were first produced in 1929.



Puppetry in Eastern Europe did not develop very much until the 20th century. Now there are many State puppet theatres employing large numbers of professionals. There are also Punch-like characters, for example Vasilache and Petrouchka.

Czechoslovakia has Spejbl and Hurvinek who are big stars and have performed over 250 premieres at their theatre in Prague for adults and children. Bulgaria has Krali Marko, a legendary hero with his horse Sharkolya, and Hungary has Vitez Laszlo (Lancelot the Brave).

WHERE PUPPETS PERFORM



Puppets in performance cover live shows in all forms of venue, whether indoors, outdoors, theatre, film or television. Ventriloquists use a puppet dummy. This is an ancient art and is the practice of making ones voice appear to proceed from elsewhere. Buffalo Bob Smith presented 'The Howdy Doody Show' where he talked with string puppets. He was internationally acclaimed on stage and television whilst Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy started in 1938 and became big stars on stage and radio. Many Puppet Festivals are held throughout the year, particularly Charleville –Meziere and Mistelbach. Other areas of performance include theatres, anniversaries, in the street, private parties, cruises, fairs and fetes, and for advertising.

FILM AND TELEVISION

The cinema to-day features more forms of puppetry than at any time since 1926 when Lotte Reiniger, the famous German shadow artist made the first feature length silhouette film 'The Adventures of Prince Achmed'. Walt Disney produced the first feature length animated cartoon film with 'Snow White' and followed with Pinocchio in 1940, based on the story by Carlo Lorenzi first published in 1881.



Although some puppets did appear at the outset of television before World War II, it was all performed live. Today many methods of production and filming are used. No day passes without puppetry and animation being shown in some form or other. Postman Pat (1981 – 1996) was an animation series based on the Greendales village postman as he went on his rounds accompanied by his black and white cat, Jess. The initial episodes were so popular that the Post Office, realising the potential of Pat as a marketing tool, gave permission for the Royal Mail logo to be used on Pat's now famous red van.

Annette Mills with Muffin the Mule, The Wombles, Harry Corbett and Sooty, Mr Squiggle, Zig and Zag were all amongst the many puppets shown on stamps; plus the outstanding educational programme for children, 'Sesame Street' where they learnt their alphabet and numerals. The puppets were by Jim Henson and Frank Oz who later caused a major impact on television and film with 'The Muppets'.



UMIMA

The Union Internationale de la Marionette is the worldwide organisation of puppeteers. It publishes information and offers support and technical assistance for professional puppeteers through seminars, conferences and symposia. It aims to stimulate the general public's interest in the art of puppetry.

PUPPETS ARE 'ALIVE' AND WELL.

AS PUNCH WOULD SAY – "THAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT".

An extended version of this article has previously appeared in Gibbons Stamp Monthly November 2007 and Topical Time (American Topical Association) Jan/Feb 2009.



Thematix '10

BRITAIN'S NATIONAL THEMATIC STAMP SHOW

Will be held on

Friday 2nd & Saturday 3rd July

Friday 10.30 to 17.00, Saturday 10.00 to 17.00

in the

The Members Clubhouse

at the

HARLEQUINS RUGBY CLUB

**The Stoop Memorial Ground
Langhorn Drive, TWICKENHAM,
Middlesex, TW2 7SX**

**Free parking & admission
Outside of the London congestion zone
Short walk from Twickenham Railway Station
by road M25 Jct12 – M3 – A316**

Contacts: Paula & Philip Cant (01256 415699)

e-mail: paula@paulacantstamps.co.uk

or

Bob Lee (020 8397 2332)

e-mail: boblee@thematix.co.uk

web site: www.thematix.co.uk

BRITAIN'S NATIONAL THEMATIC STAMP SHOW

SINGAPORE PHILATELIC MUSEUM

Barry Floyd revisits an old stamping-ground

I recently had an opportunity of re-visiting the splendid Singapore Philatelic Museum previously seen in 1996, a year after its official opening. My favourable impressions of the museum at that time were reported in *Themescene*, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 174-5.



Photo courtesy of Singapore Philatelic Museum

Fourteen years later it is good to report that the Singapore Stamp

Museum (SPM) continues to form a major attraction for collectors, not only for Singaporeans young and old, but for visitors from around the world. BTA members who travel to Australia and New Zealand to meet relatives and friends may well wish to break the long air journey with a stop-over in Singapore, there to enjoy a visit to the SPM along with viewing some of the many other attractions which the island state has to offer.

Singapore definitive stamps: Tourism Series (1990 624-632)



SG

The museum is located at Coleman Street, not

23B

far from St. Andrews Cathedral, and a short walk from the City Hall and Clarke Quay MRT (Mass Rapid Transport) stations. There is a modest entry fee: S\$5 (around £2) for adults and S\$4 for senior citizens.

The double-storey colonial building has several display rooms at both levels, as well as visuals along the corridors. The Room of Rarities boasts some of the largest, finest and most comprehensive collections of philatelic items - stamps, covers, postal artifacts - relating to the Straits Settlements and Singapore. Among the jewels is the first and only known Straits Settlement cover used in Singapore with the first set of stamps issued by the East India

Company in 1854. This precious envelope marks an important milestone in the history of philately.

A Heritage Room transports visitors back in time to the 19th century when the different migrant races struggled to build their lives. Early traditional trades, cultural festivals, costumes and musical instruments are tastefully displayed. These in turn have been faithfully reproduced on Singaporean stamps.

As visitors walk through the Orange, Purple and Green rooms colourful and unusual stamps are displayed, from the world's first stamp, the GB 1840 Penny Black, to vinyl record stamps from the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan that produce music when spun on a turn-table; stamps that are impregnated with fragrances; hologram and gold- and silver-foiled stamps; and those that glow in the dark, to stamps that are made of wood. Also on display is a German forgery of a British stamp printed during WWII with an intentional printing error mocking King George VI.

Thematic galleries offer a number of changing philatelic and material exhibitions throughout the year. There are displays from private collections by renowned philatelists and traveling exhibitions from abroad. At the time of my visit an entire room was devoted to the history and development of the automobile, including Grand Prix racing. This display had been competitively mounted by design-school students from the Nanyang Polytechnic. A great selection of car stamps and 'dinky-toy' models was included.

Another theme focused upon handcrafted traditional Edo-Kimekomi dolls, depicting Japanese festivals, folklore and traditions. Displays in 2010 celebrate the Year of the Tiger (February to August) and the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II (February to July). This showcases a collection of stamps, letters, postcards, and postal notices from the museum's collection and from private collectors.

Throughout the SPM there is a commendable focus upon appealing to children: the adult



collectors of the future. Many hands-on exhibits are there to challenge their existing knowledge of stamps and to raise their interest in the many facets of our time-honoured hobby. Frequent competitions and special events are arranged to encourage youngsters to enter, and continue in, the hobby.

Wall Mural in Children's Room

As is to be anticipated, the SPM has a welcome shop, located in the lobby of the building. It stocks philatelic accessories and an appropriate range of commemorative and definitive stamps (mint and used) from Singapore as well as other Asian and Pacific countries. Letters and postcards may be mailed from the Museum's sub-post office. The staff deserve a special note as they are most courteous and welcoming.

Readers wishing to learn more about the SPM may review the website at <http://www.spm.org.sg/coverstory/index.html> ☰

AGENDA

**For the 19th Annual General Meeting of the British Thematic Association
to be held on Saturday June 12th 2010 at 2.30 p.m. at Swinpex at
St Joseph's Catholic College, Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR.**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting published in *Themescene* September 2009
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report and adoption of Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2009
6. Election of Officers
The following Officers have indicated that they are willing to stand for re-election:

Richard Wheeler	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	Membership Secretary
Currently	Simon Moorcroft	Publicity Officer
Currently	Michael Blackman	Advertising
Currently	Brian Sole FRPSL	Committee member
Currently	Jim Etherington	Committee member
Currently	Gerald Lovell	Committee member
Currently	Charles Oppenheim	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 **June 11th 2010**

The meeting will be followed by a display 'Rocks to Riches' by Anne Stammers

Signed: *M. Anne Stammers* (Hon. Secretary) 29 April 2010

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS TO BE PRESENTED AT THE AGM

THE BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2009

2008	INCOME	2009
3,359	Subscriptions	3,439
-	Donations towards BTA Stampworld 2010 costs	500
13	Publications - net surplus	12
54	Other Sales and Income	14
117	Bank Interest	3
3,543		3,968
	EXPENDITURE	
2,784	"Themescene" - Printing and Distribution Expenses	2,704
-820	less : Advertising Income	-466
495	Meetings - net after cost sharing	139
-	International Events - Eurothema	223
137	BTA Cup Expenses	101
-75	less : Entry Fees	-90
291	Committee Meeting Expenses	333
146	Publicity and Web Site	214
99	Insurance	119
475	Affiliations	474
318	Administration Expenses	453
-	Thematic Trophy for 2010	250
-	Transfer to Stampworld fund	250
54	Sundry Expenses	0
3,904		4,704
-361	DEFICIT Expenditure over Income	-736
3,543		3,968

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2009

	Accumulated fund	
6,009	Balance at 1.1.2009	5,648
-361	less : Deficit for the year	-736
-	Stampworld 2010 fund (donations)	250
5,648		5,162

Represented by:		
6,090	Cash at Bank: Deposit Account	4,890
1,246	Current Account	91
200	"Themescene" float	200
184	Stock of publications	163
74	Amounts due and Payments in advance	71
<u>7,794</u>		<u>5,415</u>
-873	less: Subs received in advance	-114
<u>-1,273</u>	less: Amounts due or Received in advance	<u>-139</u>
<u><u>5,648</u></u>		<u><u>5,162</u></u>

Hon. Treasurer, P. J. Wood

Hon. Examiner, G.C. Boutle

SUPPORT THE BTA

HELP OUT AT OUR STANDS:

* SWINPEX: ERECTING FRAMES EVE OF 11TH JUNE

* SWINPEX: THE STAND ON 12TH JUNE

* THEMATIX ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 2ND – 3RD JULY

WE JUST NEED AN HOUR OR SO OF YOUR TIME.

NOTIFY SECRETARY ANNE STAMMERS OF YOUR AVAILABILITY

BTA NEWS

BTA WORKSHOP 23rd APRIL

The BTA ran another of its successful workshops for thematic collectors, this time at the Stamp Fair ran by the Solihull Philatelic Society. It was open to all, whether a member of the BTA or not, and those present ranged from the experienced to someone for whom thematics is at present just a gleam in his eye. (Let's hope we've convinced him!). The workshop concentrated on the fun side of collecting, illustrating the very wide range of material available to the thematic collector. Many like to include non-philatelic material including postcards, telegrams and paper ephemera, and on the philatelic side there are booklets, perfins, Cinderellas, miniature sheets, meter marks, special cancels, and whole array of things to help illustrate the subject. 14 frames of different types of material were shown, and this was followed by a short display by Anne Stammers who illustrated how different types were integrated into her collections.

The Fair itself was a large and well attended event, featuring 22 dealers, 4 society meetings and the Midland Philatelic Federation Spring Convention.

81ST ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH PHILATELIC SOCIETIES, 16/17.04.2010



Brian Sole Richard Wheeler Peter Denly



Richard and Mr. Punch

Peter Denly reports on a hugely successful meeting

Following up on a suggestion made by Margaret Morris, the BTA accepted an invitation to visit Perth and hold a meeting with a display at the 81st Scottish Congress hosted by the Aberdeen Philatelic Society on behalf of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies.

At mid-day more than 40 people arrived in the Hay Room and after an introduction by Brian Sole (Patron of the BTA), they were treated to a first class display and entertainment by our Chairman, Richard Wheeler, with his award winning “Masks, Mimes and the Evolution of Puppets”.

To the great amusement of the audience, which comprised both adults and children, Richard not only led us through his unique collection, but also showed off the range of puppets he had brought with him from his collection. A young volunteer Aaron Forsyth was invited to the front and was shown how to operate a glove puppet after which Richard followed with some antics using a favourite cat character (whose name may not be revealed) together with a little magic.

Before the audience was invited to examine the display, Margaret Morris gave a warm vote of thanks both to members of the BTA for having travelled to Perth and to Richard in particular for a most entertaining display.

It was good to see some members of the BTA supporting the event including Margaret Armstrong and John Baron, and we extend our thanks to them.

The Congress was extremely well organised, all credit to Aberdeen P.S. and both the fair and the evening awards dinner were well attended. In the exhibition hall there was a wealth of top class material to view which included the John Fosbery Thematic competition (Winner Barbara McTaggart with “Gilbert & Sullivan”) and the Inter-Federation Thematic competition for the Healey & Wise Salver which was won by the team from Surrey.

During the Congress Douglas N. Muir, Curator of the British Postal Museum and Archive, was invited to sign the Book of Scottish Philatelists. The citation referred to his many years of research and his numerous publications.

The Barclays Cup competition for young collectors, organised by the Fiends of Thematica had winners all from the Doonfoot Primary School in Ayr and were:

Layla Donnelly	Group A: Age up to 8	4 sheets	Grow Your Own
Lynne Mitchell	Group B: Age 9 to 12	8 sheets	Bobbing Along
Claire Mitchell	Group C: Age 11 to 18	16 sheets	Is it a Bird? Is it a Plane?

Each visitor to the Scottish Congress was given one of the remaining souvenir sheets that had been produced by The Friends of Thematica in 2009 celebrating the design career of Jeffery Matthews, and printed by Cartor Security printing.

In total, over 600 attended over the two days. Plans are already in motion for the next ASPS Congress on 15-16 April 2011 which will be hosted by the Strathclyde Postcard Club and the Glasgow Thematic Society.

All in all, Perth was most welcoming and a successful visit for the BTA achieving good exposure to Scottish philatelists. Many thanks to all who made it such a pleasure. The Friends of Thematica is grateful to The Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies for providing the facilities to enable the entries to be shown at the Scottish Congress. ☐

HERE AND THERE

BRILLIANT BRITAIN! – A NEW YOUTH STAMP COMPETITION

Stamp Active Network are pleased to announce a new competition based on the fact that British stamps tell us a lot about Great Britain e.g. its history, its culture, its geography, its people, its plants and its animals.

Young people in Primary School, up to the age of 12 (on 1st September 2010), are invited to create a one page mini-exhibit about some aspect of Britain. Only stamps, covers and other philatelic items from Great Britain can be used. The page must have a title, and either captions or a short write up that tells the story. The entrant's full name and address (home or school) should be on the back of the page, also their age on 1st September 2010. Entries should be on good quality paper (A4) or a similar size album page, and placed in a clear protector. The entries can be either hand-written or prepared using a computer.

There will be three age groups – Up to 7; 8-9; 10-12 – with prizes being awarded (for First, Second, Third and Runners up) in each age group.

The entries will be judged on knowledge of the subject, originality and presentation.

Only one entry per person is allowed. UK entrants only.

Winners will be announced in the philatelic press and on the Stamp Active Website www.planetstamp.co.uk. The best entries will be on display at Autumn Stampex 15th – 18th September at the Business and Design Centre (near the Angel tube station in Islington, London).

The deadline for receiving entries will be 1st September 2010.

Send entries to

BRILLIANT BRITAIN Competition,
Stamp Active Network,
3 Longfellow Road,
Banbury, OX16 9LB.

NEW SIGNATORIES TO SIGN ROLL OF DISTINGUISHED PHILATELISTS

The Roll of Distinguished Philatelists was established in 1921 by the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain with the approval of His Majesty King George V who was the first Signatory. An invitation to sign the Roll is regarded as the world's pre-eminent philatelic honour.

Not including the newly elected RDPs, 346 philatelists from 40 countries have achieved this distinction. There are at present 71 Signatories from 24 countries including fourteen from Great Britain, ten from the USA, five from Italy, four from Germany, and three from Switzerland.

At a recent meeting of the Board of Election, comprising Patrick Pearson (Chairman), Tomas Bjäringer, Christopher Harman, Alan Huggins, Rolf-Dieter Jartzky, Jane Moubray and Robert Odenweller, with Christopher King, Secretary to the Board in attendance, the members unanimously decided to ask Cornelis (Kees) Adema FRPSL (Netherlands), Dr Hugo Goeggel FRPSL (Switzerland), Dr Wolf Hess FRPSL (Germany), Dr Giancarlo Morolli FRPSL (Italy), Wade E Saadi FRPSL (USA), and Brian Trotter FRPSL (United Kingdom) to sign the Roll.



Dr Wolf Hess has served at a number of FIP sponsored international exhibitions and is a team leader for the postal history class. He has served as Jury President and Secretary at national exhibitions. He has also participated as exhibitor having formed gold medal exhibits in traditional, postal history, postal stationery and thematic classes. He has done research in the thematic and postal history fields and also written two books besides many articles on various subjects on thematic and postal history.

The name of Dr Giancarlo Morolli and thematic philately is almost synonymous; he has provided leadership in the development of the subject as member, and from 1977-2004 as President of the FIP Thematic Commission, achieving universal acceptance of the concept of thematic philately. For this he was awarded the FIP Medal of Service in 2004.

In addition to the Thematic Commission Giancarlo has served in a number of senior positions, he is currently Vice President of the AIJP, a director of FEPA, and national representative for Italy to the Royal Philatelic Society London. In the exhibition field he has served as a juror internationally since 1972 and was President of the Jury at Genova '92, Italia '98 and Italia 2009, playing a key role in the organisation of these exhibitions. For his services he has received a number of awards, most recently the FEPA 2006 Medal for exceptional service to organised philately.



The Signing Ceremony will take place on Friday 23rd July at Leamington Spa Town Hall during the 2010 Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, which will be held in Kenilworth from 22nd - 25th July.

AUTUMN STAMPEX

Information and entry forms for the national competition at Stampex are available from the BTA website at <http://www.brit-thematic-assoc.com/exhibiting.htm>

STAMP ACTIVE NETWORK: NEW STARTER PACKS FOR SCHOOLS AND JUNIOR CLUBS

The Stamp Active Network is launching a new scheme to help anyone who wants to start a new school or junior stamp club.

The scheme is being generously supported by Stanley Gibbons. They have been raising funds for the scheme through charitable donations to their auctions and they have agreed to fund the first 50 packs to schools and junior clubs. They are also providing the materials at discounted prices to the Stamp Active Network.

Organisers will receive:

- Loose stamps and covers
- 10 Plastic magnifiers
- 10 Plastic Tweezers
- 5 Packets of Hinges
- 3 16 page stockbooks
- 1 sample "World Stamp Album"
- 1 "Enjoy Stamp Collecting" booklet
- 1 "Collect British Stamps" Catalogue
- 5 Packets of mixed stamps
- 1 "How to Identify Stamps" booklet



"Stanley Gibbons is proud to support this initiative by Stamp Active. Getting young people involved in philately is essential for the future and we congratulate John and the Stamp Active team on their work so far. We look forward to hearing from new clubs across the UK as this initiative gathers pace in the coming months." said Stanley Gibbons Marketing Manager, Alex Hanrahan.

There is a simple procedure in place to ensure that genuine club organisers get one of the packs by completing an application form and a letter is also required from the host school or club on an official letterhead. In return for the pack, Stamp Active are asking that organisers share information about the club's activities and keep them up to date on the progress of the club.

There are limited resources available through Stamp Active but the support of Stanley Gibbons ensures that there will be plenty of support available in 2010.

It is hoped that individuals, dealers, clubs and societies may also wish to become a sponsor of one of the new Clubs by making a donation of £50. In return they will receive a certificate giving details of the new Club and further information on the progress of the group.

Commenting on the new scheme, Chairman of Stamp Active, John Davies, said "This is a great opportunity for everyone to get involved in promoting our great hobby. Everyone needs a little help to get started and we hope the new packs will kick start many more new junior stamp clubs in schools and philatelic societies around the country."

If you feel you would benefit from one of these starter packs or would like to support this initiative, please write for further details to:

Beverley Davies, Secretary, Stamp Active Network, The Meadows, Chapel Lane , Mathern, Chepstow, NP16 6HS.

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*

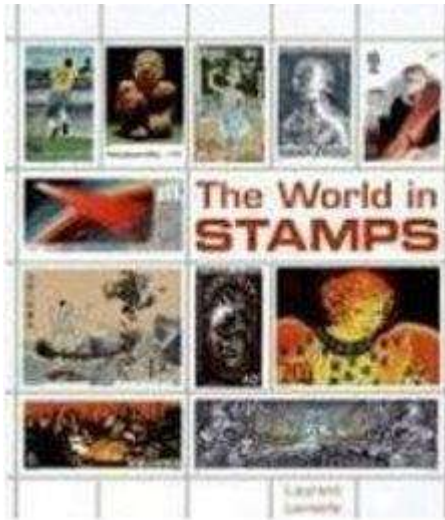
BOOK NEWS AND REVIEWS

LEMERLE, Laurent. *The World in Stamps.*

Henry N. Abrams, Inc, 2006. 255 pages

Currently available at £9.99 (plus £2.00 postage, U.K) from Postscript, 24 Langroyd Road, London, SW17 7PL (Tel. 020-8767-7421). Original price £24.95.

Quite the most attractive and beautifully presented book featuring topical philately has recently been added to my library. First published in Paris in 2005 it is the work of a French philatelist who acknowledges that he only became interested in collecting stamps after discovering a collection that his father had started in the First World War. He has certainly made enormous strides since then.



Remarkable Stamps; Classic Commemoratives.

Each main group of topics is introduced by a paragraph or two of explanatory text, while each featured stamp is briefly annotated.

“There are some 500,000 different stamps in the world. Many of these provide fascinating evidence of the image that postal authorities wish to give of their country, year by year. They reveal the cultural continuity of many nations while also reflecting the evolution of their political “propaganda” or their vision of different aspects of society ... Many stamps are also aesthetic objects in their own right, reproducing beautiful works of art from cultures all over the world, the wonders of nature, the power and commitment of Olympic athletes, and major industrial and architectural achievements.” (Preface).

In his ambitious endeavour the author recognized early on that, with such a wealth of raw material to draw upon, finding ways of conveying this diversity - in what was necessarily a limited number of examples - was to prove far from easy. To ensure some sense of balance, he tried to include as many countries as possible for each theme. However, to avoid the volume becoming prohibitively large, and thus losing clarity, the number of stamps had to be limited. And this led to some agonizing decisions:

“The choice of themes stems from a desire to reflect the great variety of stamps in existence. However there may be those who object that a certain subject has not been included. Given the immensity of stamp production, it is quite possible

that some particular type of stamp has eluded me. But often there is simply no stamp on a particular subject. For example there are no images of Mohammed as this is forbidden by the Koran; there is no commemoration of genocides such as those in Cambodia or Rwanda, whereas the Jewish Holocaust has been the subject of numerous issues from various countries.”

In this limited-space review it is not feasible to note the entire range of topics selected by the author. To end however, a few themes may be listed as of likely interest to members of the British Thematic Association, while remembering that just a few well-chosen stamps will have been included.

Under the heading of *Man's Habitat*, the themes of houses and villages, towns and monuments are included. Under *Art and Culture*, costumes, jewelry and works of art appear, covering in greater detail hairstyles and adornments, regional costumes and fashion, embroidery, carpets, ceramics, gold and silver ware, jewelry, clocks and watches. Stamps featuring paintings and sculpture are divided into portraits of women, and portraits of men and couples; while daily life, landscapes and animals in art are also included. Completing the group, literary classics, crime fiction, fantasy and comic strips appear, also stamps relating to theatre, classical music, opera, ballet and the cinema.

Under the heading of *Society*: jobs and social life, the themes of farming and animal husbandry are treated, also the fishing, industry, the service sector, military and public forces, royal and princely families. Stamps illustrating education, leisure, environmental health and human rights are also identified.

A last illustration. Under *Nature*, the mineral and vegetable kingdoms are represented by stamps showing landscapes, forests, trees, fruits, flowers, minerals and fossils. A sub-heading of Land Fauna: wild and domestic animals, features stamps showing wild animals of the savannah and virgin forest, woods, prairies and mountains. Horses and farm animals (perhaps duplicating animal husbandry?), dogs, cats and other pets are also included. Fauna of the sea and air on stamps: fish, birds, butterflies, insects and reptiles, complete the *Nature* group.

“I hope that through my endeavours the reader will find in this volume what I wished it to be: a reflection on the stamp as a tool for “reading” the world of the past and present, and the aesthetic satisfaction of discovering many beautiful or highly original stamps, often designed by internationally renowned artists. If I succeed in persuading readers to start collections on a theme of their choice, I will consider my aim accomplished.” (Preface)

Neil Pearce

SPARE COPIES OF THEMESCENE

Regular contributor Barry Floyd has a complete run of Themescene (from 1984) that he would like to dispose of. If anyone wants them please email him at bnfloyd@hotmail.com or write to him via The Editor

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PHILATELI-GRAPHICS, the quarterly newsletter of the Graphics Philately Association (GPA), website <http://www.graphics-stamps.org/>, the APS affiliate and ATA study unit, announces the publication of a bibliographical supplement designed to provide easy access to the articles published in the newsletter during the last five years about books on stamps.

The bibliography, compiled by GPA member and retired professor of Library Science at Florida State University (Tallahassee), Dr. Martha Jane K. Zachert, includes nearly 200 articles and is divided into three sections. Section A lists articles about stamps that reproduce real, identified books or pages from real books, both manuscript and printed. Section B notes articles about stamps that show books as symbols or articles about stamps that include quotes or illustration from real books. Section C gives articles about stamps that show an honoured or identified person with personal, though unidentified, books. Each entry is annotated to provide a succinct idea of the content of the article.

This 20 page publication will be sold separately from subscriptions to *Philateli-Graphics* available in either hard-copy or in an electronic pdf version (Adobe Acrobat) as an e-mail attachment.

Mark H. Winnegrad

Graphics Philately Association

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* BTA STAND AT THEMATIX, FRI AND SAT 2ND – 3RD JULY

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NOTIFY SECRETARY ANNE STAMMERS OF YOUR AVAILABILITY

Thank you

Just4Kids

by Lise Whittle

*(Adults, please photocopy these pages
and pass them on to a youngster you know)*



1



2

Are you a Rainbow, Brownie, Guide, Beaver, Cub, Scout, or in something similar? Have you ever been away on Camp Holiday? 2nd and 3rd Alloway Brownies went away for a 'Wild West' weekend. They collected stamps and wrote about their weekend. Here is part of what they wrote:



3



4

"Our Brownie Pack Holiday Wild West Weekend didn't take place in the Wild West - it took place in Scotland! But we found out all about the real Wild West in America. The Native Americans had lived in America for centuries. White men arrived from Europe in the 16th Century, and thought they must be in the East Indies, so they called the natives 'Indians'. Sometimes the white men and the Native Americans got on well, but sometimes they fought over who owned the land and the animals. The white settlers built their homes on ranches, rode horses and herded cattle, they became known as Cowboys (1). The Native Americans lived in tents called tepees (2).

For our Wild West Weekend we were split up into three groups - Wagon Wheels, (3) Cactus (4) and Wild Horses (5). We did lots of activities - we made our group flags, and learned about how the American flag has 13 stripes to represent the original 13 states or colonies that the European settlers set up, and 50 stars representing the 50 states in America today (6).



5



6

We made dream catchers out of cardboard plates, coloured string and feathers, which the Native Americans traditionally made to catch bad dreams and to let only good dreams get through the holes and glide down the feathers to the person sleeping below (7).

Cowboys needed hats with big brims to keep out the sun, and neck scarves to cover their necks and mouths to keep out the dust. We made our own neck scarves, and wore pink cowgirl hats! (8).



7

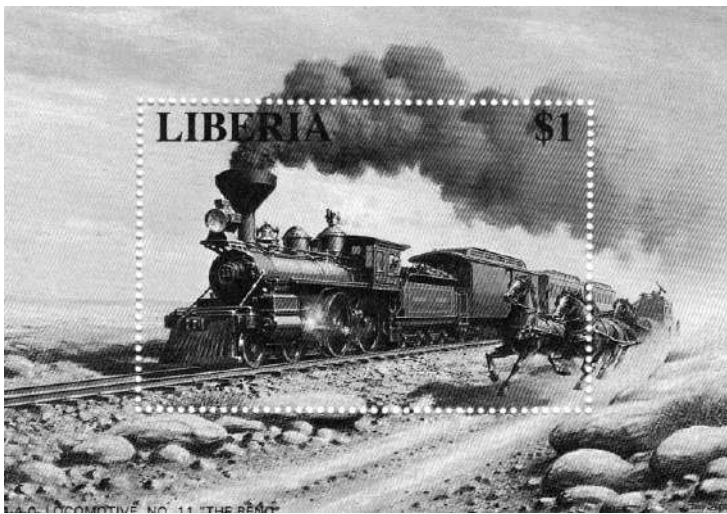


8



9

The Cowboys and Native Americans used rope lassos to catch horses and cows. We made a huge big lasso and lassoed our leaders! (9)



10

We cooked Rock Cakes and Rocky Road biscuits to remind us of the Cowboys travelling through the mountain trails (10).



11

There are lots of snakes in America, the Cowboys and Native Americans had to be very careful and look out for snakes. We made rattle snake brooches and added rattling beads to the tails (11).

We decorated china mugs, then sat around the campfire (12) and drank hot chocolate, sang songs, and listened to a Wild West story before going to bed in our bunks."



12

By Brownies Rhea, Ellie, Brooke, Olivia, Jennifer, Ella, Beth, Lauren, Rachel, Katie, Jenny, Tanya, Sarah and Girl Guide Lara.

To contact us, send in a letter, or to get your free Young Stamp Collector's CD, send your name and address to:

*Just4Kids, c/o The Editor, Themescene,
87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth. BH1 4RS*



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If you would like to receive a list of articles on your topic(s), send a stamped sae to the librarian. To assist, he will quote the current postal rates when he sends the list.

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New DVDs

Hällström, J. *The History of the Square-Rigged Sailing Vessel* (Display at RPSL)

Walden, J. *The Nuclear Option* (Background and stamps)

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BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Proposed Association meetings

The committee has discussed the possibility of holding Association meetings on a more regular basis to provide members the opportunity to come together to share displays and discuss common interests. It is envisaged these would follow a format very similar to local clubs and specialist societies.

However, before embarking on this venture it was agreed to solicit the views of the membership. It would be pointless for association officers to put a lot of time and effort into a project if it was not something the membership wanted.

Taking this into account we would be grateful if you would complete the following questionnaire and forward it by post to:

Jim Etherington, 17 Berkeley Row, LEWES, Sussex, BN7 1EU, or electronically to jespeth@hotmail.com .

Name

Address.....
.....

Email

1. In principle do you think regular members' meetings would be a good idea? YES / NO

Give reasons

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.....

2. Would you prefer to have meetings regularly held in London? YES / NO

3. Would you prefer to have meetings regularly held at an alternative location? YES / NO

4. Would you prefer meetings to be held at different locations around the country?

(When answering this question please bear in mind this option would present more difficulties to arrange (e.g. venues/the availability of frames) and would probably incur more costs to the Association.)

YES / NO

PTO

5. Would you prefer to have meetings held at an exhibition/stamp fair or entirely separately? YES / NO

6. If meetings were held would you be prepared to display? YES / NO

7. Please make any further comments on the proposal

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Many thanks for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Send or email to:
Jim Etherington, 17 Berkeley Row, LEWES, Sussex, BN7 1EU, or electronically to jespeth@hotmail.com .

