

# THEMESCENE

September 2024

*In this issue we:*

*Look down a lens*

**Photographic Philately: an introduction**

*With Geoff Blackwell*



*Discover a medical breakthrough*

**Insulin, a more than 100 year journey. Part 1**

*With Johan Diesveld*



*Admire some wildlife*

**An introduction to the birds of St Helena**

*With Mike Robinson*



*And catch up with BTA events*

**BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION**

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# THEMESCENE

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SEPTEMBER 2024

## THEMESCENE

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# EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle


The September issue always means it's competition time. We hold our annual one-frame competition at the South of England Stamp Fair at Ardingly, this year on 12th October; full details will be found on pages 100-103. Competitions aren't for everyone, indeed they aren't for most people. But if you have ever wondered about taking part and not done so, can I suggest a few reasons why it's worth doing. It gives you the chance to look afresh at your collection. You can enjoy what you have and perhaps start thinking about expanding it in new directions. As soon as you start rewriting you will realise that there are bits of the story missing because you don't have the material, so immediately you have a clear search target next time you go to a stamp fair (or lose yourself online). If you are a member of a local stamp club you will have a new set of pages to display at a members' evening, and of course a new entry for your club competitions. And for the few who want to take this further, to Federation and National level, getting your entry assessed by qualified judges will produce helpful feedback for the next step.

If these arguments don't convince you, then how about our biennial one-page virtual competition? Full details on pages 104-106. You don't need to send in original material, and you only need enough items for one page, which means you can concentrate on a very small subject if you want you. The only limitation is your imagination. Why not give it a go?

I know there are some people who actively dislike competitions and consider them elitist at higher levels, and with that in mind I was intrigued by an initiative from the Australian Philatelic Federation, who have established a Frugal Philately Class for National Exhibitions. It's not new, but I was unaware of it until BTA member Estelle Shale drew it to my attention. Information can be found at their [national exhibiting page](#) as well as an [interesting article](#). The Aussies have always been proactive in developing new ideas, and indeed started the whole idea of Open Philately; maybe in years to come Frugal Philately will also be accepted internationally?

And finally on the subject of exhibiting, EuroPhilEx, to be held at Birmingham next year, will feature up to 2,000 frames of exhibits. A number of BTA members have applied to exhibit, and I would say to anybody visiting the show: do go and look at some of the exhibits, even if participating isn't your cup of tea it's a chance to see lovely material displayed to it's best advantage.

This is the first time a UK International will be held outside of London. It could prove to be very successful and perhaps demonstrate that a capital city is not a requisite for important events. The BTA will be holding a meeting during the show, more details to follow.

We are pleased to welcome new member Lloyd Hogg of Swadlincote; a member after my own heart: he has already sent me an article for publication (part 1 will appear in December *Themescene*), for which I am very grateful. As everybody knows, I am always on the lookout for articles. All those reading this may take that as a hint ... 

# CHAIRMAN

**Barry Stagg**

## **Great Expectations**

Much of my time is spent supporting the Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS) as their Membership Secretary. Keeping the records up to date as societies change their officers, or their emails, or their membership numbers is a never-ending task. It is often frustrating (my telepathic abilities are zero so if I don't get an email, letter or call about a change then the records don't get changed). Apparently, this fact is a surprise to some people! But the job is always rewarding. Yes, it is my contribution to philately, but it also reminds me that nothing stays the same. And this is nicely summed up by the quote attributed to the Arapaho tribe of Native America 'only the rocks live forever'. I should say at this point that in case any of my committee colleagues are reading this, it is not a long-winded resignation letter! But I am surprised and saddened by comments by so many philatelists that philately in this country is dying. I wrote recently in *Thamescene* about change: philately is changing. More importantly philately is not some wispy entity, it is, amongst other things you and I. So, when I hear of a society with ten or twenty or more members closing because nobody is willing to change, to stop being just a spectator of life, but to be part of philately by supporting a society that has supported them, perhaps for years, I am saddened. Life is full of beginnings and endings but so many philatelists appear to be happy with just endings and watch philately change so much they lose sight of it forever.

At the risk of over-quoting in this article may I use the wise words of Martin Luther King 'Take the first step in faith. You don't need to see the whole staircase, just take the first step'. Who knows where it will lead? Perhaps you can take the first step by joining the BTA committee (and I know none of us will last forever!) and support thematic collecting\*\*.

Perhaps one thing that might be changing is the need for society meetings. In the past the BTA has been asked to not just have London-based meetings but to travel the country. This year we went to York. A great philatelic fair, easy to get to, easier to park and with a good selection of national and local dealers. We hired a good room and a good speaker with a good presentation. And had three people turn up! I must say I had greater expectations. And on that topic my last quote is from *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens 'Ask no questions and you'll be told no lies'. Following that guidance, what did we do wrong? Please let us know. We are very happy to change but we need some direction otherwise we can't keep supporting you, the BTA or British philately. 📖

\*\* The BTA is looking for a Publicity Officer to join the Committee. It's not an onerous job - just keep the philatelic press abreast with our activities, either to advertise in advance or report on after the event. Our two committee meetings per year are usually held via Zoom.

Please let [Barry](#) know if you can help.

# PHOTOGRAPHIC PHILATELY: AN INTRODUCTION

*Geoff Blackwell FRPS*

The apparent first use of the phrase *photographic philately* was when photohistorian Arthur Gill used it as the title for a short article in which he “thought that it may be interesting to try the field of photography (as a theme for stamp collecting) and see how the stamp producers of the world have honoured our noble art-science. Not very well, I’m afraid is the answer” (1). Some ten years on, a more comprehensive approach appears in the work of Cyril Permutt, who again used the term *photographic philately*, in his case as a chapter heading in his work on collecting photographic antiques (2). Although a collector and photohistorian, he was also a serious philatelist and this is reflected in his discussion which embraces not only stamps but covers and correspondence, as well as postal history and ephemera. He did not define *philatelic photography* but from these early papers we can deduce that it is: “The study and research relating to, and the collection of, stamps and postal material that (a) tell the story of photography and celebrate the people and events that make up its evolution and history, or (b) use the work of a photographer, (amateur or professional) as the basis (or key element) in the design of a stamp.”

The author’s initial interest was sparked by a reading of an article by Fred Spira (1924-2007). He used the term *Photographica on Postage* and complained “the subject has long been treated as a stepchild by the post offices of the world” (3). He did not define *photographica* but all of the issues he addressed sit comfortably within the definition of philatelic photography as set out above.

The initial intention of this research was to build on that meagre body of knowledge, but it was quickly determined that, unfortunately, all three, Spira, Gill and Permutt had overlooked some important issues or made significant errors, as is often the case for pioneers. Therefore, it was decided to revisit the topic from its beginnings, bringing it to the attention of others, in this case thematic collectors, and to correct some of the mistakes of previous writers. (As no doubt in future, others will correct the errors made by this writer)!

Nevertheless, these early authors all mention three key stamps. Firstly, providing a good introduction, there is the 1939 stamp by France celebrating 100 years of photography and shows Francois Arago (1786-1853) making the January 1839 announcement of the discovery of photography, plus portraits of Niepce and Daguerre (Fig. 1).

The first photograph is attributed to Joseph Nicéphore Niépce (1765-1833) who successfully made an image of the view from his workshop window at his home near Chalon sur Saône. The original is held at the University of Texas and has been reproduced on at least two stamps (Figs 2 and 3). His work, whilst technically successful, was not commercially viable and he collaborated with Louis Jacque Mande Daguerre (1787-1851) but sadly died before much progress could be made. Daguerre later invented the daguerreotype which was the first commercially viable process. Daguerre and Niepce are celebrated on a number of stamps but the most accurate are probably those from Suriname (Figs 4 and 5).





Fig 1: France 1939



Fig 2: Mauritius 2018



Fig 3: Wallis et Futuna 1983



Figs 4 - 5: Suriname 1989



Fig 6: GB booklet 1989



Fig 7: GB 1999



Fig 8: USA 1954



Fig 9: France 1955



Fig 10: North Borneo 1894

In England William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877) a mathematician and scientist, who had been experimenting with his own invention of 'photogenic drawings' felt obliged to publish his work as soon as he heard about Daguerre's process. Unfortunately, Fox Talbot's work was not fully developed, and it would be several years before it overtook the daguerreotype and become, with many modifications, the process that was used universally up to the digital era. Despite the importance of Fox Talbot's work, he has never appeared on a stamp, but a sketch did appear on the cover of a booklet in 1989 (Fig 6). Curiously, his work as an inventor was celebrated in 1999 but the image used, somewhat in the style of his early experimental work, was produced by other photographers (4) (Fig 7).

If we return to the work of the early authors, we note that they all also included the 1954 USA issue in directly celebrating Kodak by marking the centenary of George Eastman's birth (Fig 8) and another issue by France commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Lumière Brothers' introduction of cinematography (Fig 9), but there the common ground ends.

We should however acknowledge that Gill was only asking a rhetorical question and 'thought it may be interesting' so perhaps the value in his article was that it should have sparked an interest in other photohistorians, the community to which it was addressed. Spira and Permutt offer more in the way of identifiable stamps, but Permutt also provides, in addition to specific examples, a narrative that references a large number of stamps, but in a non-specific way, simply indicating that stamps had appeared showing certain portraits etc. But there is a problem: all three of these earlier authors omit, or are in error, over earlier issues. Whilst unfortunate, this only serves to emphasise the need for a more serious study. Apart from individual errors, all three omit what turned out to be perhaps one of the most well-known photographs in philately, and one which they must have known about. Of course, that is Dorothy Wilding's portrait of Queen Elizabeth II. Given that they all also omit the use of photographs of Queen Victoria, King George V, King Edward VIII and King George VI, perhaps they, unknown to each other, took a common view that photographs of monarchs were somehow outside the scope of study. This is unfortunate in terms of overall coverage of the topic, but if deliberate, makes some sense since those stamps and the associated controversies merit a separate paper. For that reason, this author also omits those issues and moves directly to other topics.

The question of which photograph (aside from the Royal portraits) was the first to be used in stamp design remains somewhat uncertain. It is generally held that the first stamp using a 'photographic' representation, appeared as early as 1894 in North Borneo. Although photographic in style, it is not clear whether that design was derived from a photograph or an illustrator's work (5) (Fig 10).

The first design incorporating an attributable photograph is that engraved by Marcus Baldwin using John Hamlin's photograph of 'Plowing (sic) in Amenias' (Fig 11) issued in the United States in 1898 celebrating The Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition (6). This took place in Omaha from June to November 1898, and with an issue of nine stamps which are now amongst the most collected of USA stamps. The aim of the exposition was to showcase the development of the entire Western United States, stretching from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. The two-cent stamp illustrated farming (Fig. 12). It has been noted that the crew on the plough, driver Even "Ed" Nybakken, Arthur John De Lance (with dog) and Sam White, are thus the first living individuals (apart from heads of state) to be shown on a USA stamp. Nybakken complained that a gust of wind, forcing him to hold his hat, obscuring his face at the moment of exposure, ruined





*Fig 11: Plowing (sic) on the Amenias and Sharon Land Company, Amenias, N.D., J R Hamlin, circa 1889, reproduced by kind permission of North Dakota State University Libraries.*



*Fig 12: USA 1898*



*Fig 13: USA 1998*



*Fig 14: Romania 1913*



*Fig 15: USA 2013*



*Fig 16: Philippine Islands 1932*



*Fig 17: Canada 1929*



*Fig 18: Canada 1988*



*Fig 19: Canada 1988*

his claim to fame forever. Since the issue of the stamp there have been numerous suggestions that the photograph must have been retouched as 'it was just inconceivable that such an aggregation of farm machinery and horses, as shown in the picture, was in actual operation on any one farm in the whole of the United States' but irrespective of that possibility, the design of the stamps certainly carries a message of success and technology (7). Perhaps as a consequence of their significance, the same designs were later reproduced in close facsimile (Fig 13) to celebrate the centenary of the Exposition. In what appears to be a nostalgic nod towards early photography, the 1998 stamps were issued in a bi-colour design with the central vignette in black and white only, but as can be seen from the illustrations, the original stamp was a single colour printing.

Gill, Permutt and Spira all ignored, or were unaware of the 1898 issue, and Spira erroneously suggested that the first photographic images used were those of aircraft illustrated in the Romanian airmail issue of 1913 (Fig 14).

In 1918 we have the widely documented case of 'the inverted Jenny'. This includes an image made from a photograph that the designer went to extraordinary lengths to obtain. Unfortunately, at least one sheet was initially printed with the centre upside down and released before the error was spotted, but those that were sold are now amongst the rarest stamps in the world. The stamp is so famous in the philatelic world that the US Post Office issued a memorial copy in 2013 (Fig 15).

There have also been other occasions when the photograph used was simply the wrong one. A stamp for the Philippine Islands was said to show the Panjansan Falls. A philatelist later noticed that it was an image of Vernal Falls, a completely different location (Fig 16).

In contrast to the errors, the stamp issued by Canada in 1929, showing the yacht *Bluenose*, was once named as the 'most beautiful stamp' issued (8). It was a composite from two photographs by Wallace Robinson MacAskill (1893-1956). That stamp too gave rise to further related commemorative issues, one celebrating the yacht's Captain and another its naval architect (Figs 17, 18, 19).

On some occasions, designs have been based on images produced by amateurs. Early examples are the stamps produced during the siege of Mafeking. Although the Post Office had run out of stamps, Lieutenant-Colonel Baden Powell, the officer in charge of the garrison, believed that having local residents write to each other would help morale and a decision was made to produce stamps locally (9). Some external mail was also being 'smuggled' through the siege lines at night. Two designs, each based on an amateur photograph, one of Lord Baden Powell and the other of (Cadet) Sergeant Warner Goodyear, were produced using a form of the blueprint processing. These stamps, designed from photographs of Dr W. A. Hayes (Warner Goodyear) and Edward Ross (Baden Powell), have become scarce and the focus of considerable research. (Figs 20 and 21).


*Figs 20 - 21: Mafeking 1900*





Although the work of more than 100 photographers appeared on stamps during the first 150 years of stamps and photography, this paper is only intended to be an ‘appetiser’ so we can finish with a jump to the lighter side. In 1989, to commemorate 150 years of photography, China produced stamps for children, celebrating our senses. For ‘sight’ it sought to engage children with photography. The stamp had a large hole where the camera lens should be, to encourage children to hold up the stamp and look through it, as if

using a camera. (Fig. 22).

In concluding this brief introduction to the topic, it is suggested that *photographic philately*, whilst still an emerging field of study, exists not as Spira suggested ‘as a ‘stepchild’ but, to adapt his metaphor, it is rather the somewhat immature and troublesome teenage offspring of a marriage between photography and philately, but deserving of its own identity. 

### Notes and references

- (1) Gill, A. T. (undated) *Photographic Philately*
- (2) Permutt, C. (1986) *Collecting Photographic Antiques*
- (3) Spira, S. F. “Photographica on postage stamps” *History of Photography* vol. 3 (1) 1979, pp. 61-69
- (4) The image used in this case was provided by Z. And B. Baran
- (5) Williams, L. N. (rev. ed. 1990) *Fundamental of Philately*
- (6) John R. Hamlin (1833 - 1903)
- (7) CHAFFEES of North Dakota - The two-cent stamp  
<https://sites.google.com/site/chaffeesofnorthdakota/two-cent-stamp>
- (8) This was the result of a vote by readers of *Stamp Magazine* in 1934
- (9) Robert Stephen Smyth Baden-Powell (1857-1941) later to become Major-General, The Lord Baden-Powell, Founder of the Boy Scout movement in 1908.

## **EuroPhilEx Birmingham 2025**

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# INSULIN, A MORE THAN 100-YEAR JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY. PART 1

*Johan Diesveld*

## Foreword

In 2021 we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the discovery of insulin (Fig 1). It is an important hormone (chemical messenger) in the human body. Produced in the pancreas, it affects the blood glucose levels, and high levels of glucose can be one of the main causes of diabetes.

In the following story, I will say little about the relationship between the hormone insulin and diabetes and what can be done about it. My main focus will be on the search for the molecule insulin and its chemical structure.

## Introduction

Diabetes is not a ‘modern’ disease. The ancient Egyptians described diabetes as early as 3000 BCE (Fig 2). The Greek Aretaeus of Cappadocia (130-200 AD) also described diabetes quite accurately (Fig 3).

In the Middle Ages, people relied on all sorts of more or less ‘experts’ for their health. One of these was uroscopy, the so-called water-gazing. Observations included: quantity, viscosity, colour, odour, transparency, precipitation/flocculation and foaming. There was a clue for some diseases in the bottle of your personal fluid. There was also further ongoing research, uhm ... tasting. As a doctor, you do everything for your patients, but this is going a bit too far for me. Okay, tasting; urine from diabetics tastes sweet. So the water-gazer (Fig 4) pitched his tent in the market place, people queued up and one by one they were given a consultation. In public, no problem!

Taking things to the next step was the Frenchman Claude Bernard (1813-1878) (Fig.5). He was able to show that the pancreas had a decisive influence on digestion. The pancreas produces all kinds of digestive enzymes that are secreted into the duodenum to begin their work of digesting food. These are called exocrine (external) secretions. The pancreas also has endocrine (internal) secretions, including insulin, which is released directly into the blood.

In 1869, the German pathologist Paul Langerhans (1847-1888) (Fig 6) identified separate cells in the pancreas. Of these, beta-cells were found to produce insulin; these cells are known as the islets of Langerhans.

The next step was taken by the German-Lithuanian doctor Oskar Minkowski (1858-1931) (Fig 7) and the German doctor Josef von Mering (1849-1908). They removed the pancreas of a dog in 1889 and the dog promptly developed diabetes.

## Discovery of insulin

The turn of the century saw a major advance in diabetes research. During the first years of the First World War, the Romanian N. Paulescu (1869-1931) worked on it. By feeding a diabetic dog an aqueous extract of the pancreas (in which insulin had been dissolved = pancreatin), he was able to observe a beneficial effect on blood sugar levels (Fig 8). He

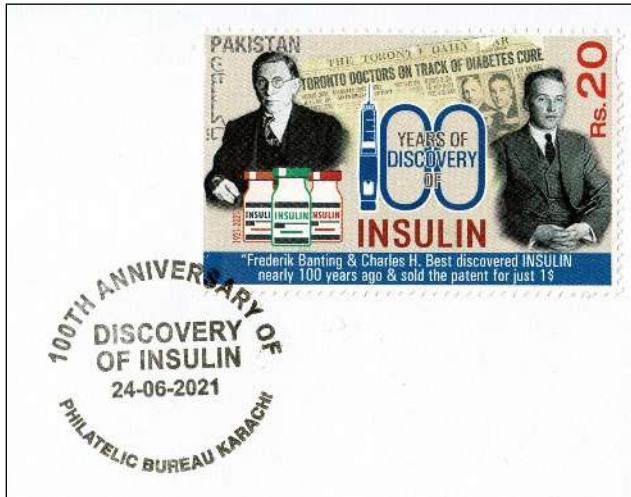


Fig 1: Centenary of discovery of insulin. Pakistan 2021



Fig 3: Aretaeus. Transkei 1990



Fig 2: Ebers Papyrus from around 1550 BC describing insulin. UAR 1971



Fig 4: Tasting urine. Urology Conference. Austria 1982.



Fig 5: Rue Claude Bernard in Paris is named after the French scientist. Paris 21 Dec 1897.



Fig 6: Paul Langerhans studied the pancreas. West Berlin 1997



Fig 7: Oscar Minkowski. Transkei 1990



Fig 8: Nicolae Paulescu recalls the research with pancreatin. Romania 1991



Fig 9: Paulescu's discovery of insulin is perhaps not credited enough. Romania 1993



Fig 10: Frederick Banting. Canada 1991



Fig 11: A Croatian postage stamp issued to mark the 75th anniversary of insulin. Mandatory on all letters from 10 to 17 October 1996. A practice well known in the former Yugoslavia, of which Croatia is one of the successor states.





Fig 12: 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discover of insulin. Canada 1971



Fig 13a: Reverse of a Portuguese postcard, issued on 22 January 2022, to mark the 100th anniversary of the first insulin injection in a human being



Fig 15: 15 Banting, one of the most famous Canadians of the twentieth century. Canada Millennium issue 2000



Fig.13b: Front of the Portuguese postcard, with the special cancellations: um passado de sucesso a criar futuros felizes = a successful past creates happy futures

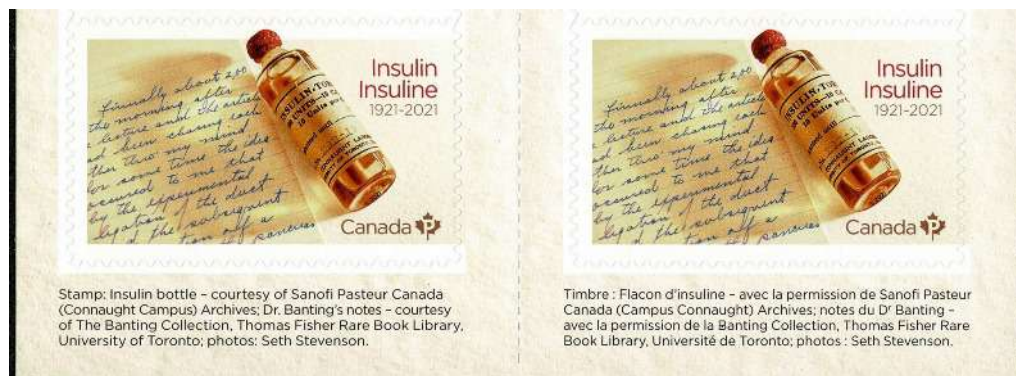


Fig 14: Part of Banting's notes. Canadian stamp booklet 2021

had come this far in 1916 when he was drafted into the army. After the war, he continued his research and published extensively in 1921. His 'purification' of the pancreas for insulin was a step in the right direction, but the resulting 'concoction' was not easy to use in humans. However, it was shown to have a beneficial effect in humans (Fig 9). He did not receive the recognition he deserved for this work.

The next group of people to venture into research were Canadians. Frederick Banting (1891-1941) (Fig 10) saw the possibilities and asked John Macleod (1876-1935), a laboratory director, for help with space and engineering aids. Experiments with dogs were carried out with his assistant Charles Best (1899-1978) (Fig 11). The pancreas was surgically removed, but the islets of Langerhans remained alive. This showed that purification of an insulin extract was better. Injecting this extract into diabetic dogs gave encouraging results.

In consultation with Macleod, the tests were tightened up. Another collaborator was involved in the research: James Collip (1892-1965). By the end of 1921, they had so much knowledge and expertise that an experiment on a human was deemed responsible (Fig 12). On 11 January 1922, 14-year-old Leonard Thompson, who was dying of diabetes, was treated with an injection of the (impure) insulin extract (Fig 13). Unfortunately, the extract was so impure that Thompson suffered a severe allergic reaction. Collip was able to obtain a completely pure extract from bovine pancreas within two weeks. The effect was very positive and trouble-free (Fig 14); Thompson lived on another thirteen years with regular insulin injections. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Collip had already shown that bovine insulin also worked well in the human body. Later it was shown that pig insulin was also effective in the human body. With today's knowledge, this is not so surprising since the composition of human, bovine and porcine insulin is very similar. Another fortunate coincidence was that bovine and porcine pancreases were widely available from abattoirs. Purification was also greatly improved, making allergic reactions rare.

Such an important result is worthy of a Nobel Prize. Indeed, the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded in 1923 for the discovery of insulin. The Nobel Prize is awarded to a maximum of three (living) people. Problems were inevitable! It was eventually awarded to Banting (Fig 15) and Macleod (who was never depicted on a Canadian postage stamp; he returned to his native Scotland after some time). This caused some surprise. Banting was so angry that his collaborator Best had not been co-nominated that he shared half his prize money with him. Similarly, Macleod shared his prize money with Collip. There has been much surprise that Romanian Paulescu was not co-nominated or at least mentioned. This is not the first time (and certainly not the last) that a Nobel Prize has been the subject of controversy. 📖

*To be concluded in December 2024 Themescene*



The author is a member of the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Thematische Filatelie (NVTF), the Dutch Association for Thematic Philately, the Dutch equivalent of the British Thematic Association. Details about the Association will be published with part two of this article.

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BIRDS OF ST. HELENA

*Mike Robinson*

**S**t Helena, a self-governing British Overseas Territory, is a volcanic island in the Atlantic Ocean in the Southern Hemisphere, north of the Tropic of Capricorn and south of the Equator; probably formed 14.6 or so million years ago. It is around 1,200 miles from Africa and 2,500 miles from South America. Although St Helena is located in the Tropics, the climate is generally mild due to the South-Easterly Trade Winds.



The St Helena Plover (Fig1) is commonly known as the Wirebird on St Helena, Sadly, it is the only surviving endemic land bird species on the Island. The Coat of Arms of St Helena incorporates a Wirebird: the unofficial National Bird of St Helena.

Known land bird extinctions include the St Helena Crake, the St Helena Rail, the St Helena Cuckoo and the St Helena Hoopoe (Fig 2). The extinctions are probably linked to the arrival of man, the introduction of mammals (there are no endemic mammals on St Helena) and deforestation.

The Wirebird is thought to be a close relative of the (migratory) Kittlitz's Sand Plover, which is native to Africa and Madagascar. Diet and climate might explain how the Wirebird developed its own specific attributes: it is 20% or so larger than the Kittlitz's Plover. It is conjectured the Wirebird's ancestors might have arrived on St Helena up to 100,000 years ago during the Lower Pleistocene Era (there is fossil evidence), at which time it seems the South-Easterly Trade Winds were stronger than now, thus 'favouring' the colonisation of St Helena and other Islands by African birds.

Concerns regarding the future of the Wirebird have been slightly allayed during recent years: the number of adult birds is increasing (currently 550 or so individuals). During 2020 it was assessed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as being 'Vulnerable' on the Red List of Threatened Species: up from 'Critically Endangered'. Nevertheless, the Wirebird faces several threats to its continued survival. A new (2023) Predator Control Project is focusing on feral cats, which pose a major danger to ground nesting birds such as the Wirebird. Feral cats and rats were reportedly eradicated on Ascension Island. The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) identifies dogs, rats and the Common Myna as additional natural threats to St Helena's birds.

A set of four stamps was issued during September 1983 featuring some of St Helena's land birds: Java Sparrow, native to Java, Bali and Indonesia; Madagascan (Red) Fody, native to Madagascar and Mauritius; Common Waxbill, native to sub-Saharan Africa; and the Yellow Canary, native to Western/Central regions of Southern Africa (Figs 3-6). All





Fig 1: 1953 Wirebird



Fig 2: 2023 Extinct species St Helena Crake, the St Helena Rail, the St Helena Cuckoo and the St Helena Hoopoe



Figs 3-6: 1983

Java Sparrow

Madagascan (Red) Fody

Common Waxbill

Yellow Canary



Figs 7-10: 2021

Brown Noddy

Fairy Tern

Sooty Tern

Masked Booby

are thought to have arrived as ‘caged birds’ during the 17th and 18th centuries, some of which escaped into the wild.

Other land birds include Common Myna Birds, native to Southern Asia: possibly descended from ‘caged birds’ kept by Miss Phoebe Moss at The Briars, released during 1885. There have been several failed introductions: including Blackbirds, Chaffinches, House Sparrows, Robins, Skylarks and Song Thrushes. Almost all land birds are known introductions, either deliberate or by escape from captivity; the exceptions being the Wirebird and the Moorhen. It is not known how, when or why the Moorhen arrived on St Helena.

BirdLife International has designated St. Helena an important Bird Area due to the abundance of breeding sea birds. Nine sea bird species are recorded as breeding, either on St Helena or the surrounding islands. St Helena is surrounded by numerous small so-called, islands, many un-named, which provide sites for birds to nest (many white from accumulations of guano). Named islands include Egg Island, Lot’s Wife Island, Shore Island, Thompson’s Valley Island and Speery Island.

A set of stamps featuring sea birds and their young was issued during December 2021 featuring the Brown Noddy, Fairy Tern, Sooty Tern and the Masked Booby (Figs 7-10).

A licence is required to kill, capture, take eggs &c. from non-domesticated birds on St Helena: the penalties for doing so in relation to Protected Birds are severe viz. a fine up to £50,000 (£500 for other birds) and/or up to 12 months in prison.

Two land birds are protected, namely the Wirebird and the Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*). Seventeen sea birds are protected. A set of four stamps issued during June 2007 featured some Protected sea birds: the Black Noddy, Madeiran Storm Petrel, Masked Booby and Sooty Tern (Figs 11-14).



*Figs 11 - 14*

By way of closing these brief remarks, there are occasional (including not so occasional) vagrants which visit St Helena. Occasional vagrants are birds that land on St Helena after perhaps being blown off course, or perhaps by choice; generally a single bird but sometimes multiple birds. By way of example of the latter, Cattle Egrets take advantage of the South-Easterly Trade Winds and are regular visitors to the Island, originating it is suggested from Angola, en-route it would seem, to South America! Traffic would appear to be one way, although there is a Westerly Airstream above the (shallow) South-Easterly Airstream.



Interestingly, a set of four stamps featuring vagrant birds, issued for Tristan da Cunha (a dependency of St Helena) during November 1989 featured a Cattle Egret (Fig 15 left) as an occasional visitor. Cattle Egrets have also visited Ascension Island. Vagrant sea bird species include the Wandering Albatross and Giant Petrels. 📖

**Minutes of the 31st Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 8th June 2024 at  
Grange Leisure & Community Centre, Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon SN3 4JY,  
at 1 p.m.**

**Present:-** 17 members

**The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting**

1     **Apologies** were received from Anne Stammers, Mike Blackman, Lesley Marley, Wayne Cox and Malcolm Gascoyne.

2     **Minutes of the 30th Annual General Meeting, as published in Themescene 2023** were agreed as a correct record.

3     **Matters arising**  
There were no matters arising

4     **Chairman's report**  
The Chairman began by thanking all the Committee for all their work over the past 12 months. Without their tireless efforts the BTA would not exist. He declined to mention each by name for fear of missing one; however, every one of the committee has put in a lot of their own time and effort into making the BTA a successful organisation. He thanked them all for this commitment.  
During 2023 the BTA continued with its successful Zoom meetings which continue to attract 20 to 30 people every time. Diverse topics such as Cricket to Chess, from Polar Orchids to Photography were covered and enjoyed by all. Sadly, the BTA Members' meeting at Stampex in September had to be cancelled due to the continuing rail strikes; however, the one-frame competition went ahead at Ardingly in October with some lovely exhibits. Although the number of entries was low the quality was high, and they were much enjoyed by the visitors to the Fair. Overall, it was an interesting year, with *Themescene* keeping everyone all informed and entertained throughout.  
Having started by thanking the Committee for all their work the Chairman finished by thanking the membership of the BTA for their continued support and wished everyone well for the next year.

5     **Treasurer's Report**  
**RESULT FOR 2022**

The accounts show an operating surplus of £5.00. Subscriptions nearly held up, and the small drop was offset by higher interest paid on the bank savings account. Both printing and postage costs of *Themescene* were higher, as were operational costs, that is affiliations, website and insurance.

Looking at 2024, there is a concern that subscription income may be lower, and with the cost of the BTA meeting at the RPSL (print and postage) there is the possibility of a deficit next year. However the Treasurer recommended that there should be no rise in subscriptions.

Jon Matthias proposed and Pauline Boddy seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.



## 6. Election of Officers

No new nominations had been received. It was proposed by Andrew Millington and seconded by Colin Mount that the Officers be re-elected 'en bloc' Agreed unanimously.

## 7. Election of Committee Members

It was proposed by Gerald Lovell and seconded by Janet Nelson that the committee members be re-elected 'en bloc' Agreed unanimously.

The Committee post of Press / Publicity Officer is currently vacant. There is also a need for someone to organise booking speakers for the Zoom meetings. The Chairman requested that if anyone is interested in taking up either of these jobs and would like more information, then please either email or telephone him.

## 8. Ratification of the appointment of Examiner

Brian Turner was re-appointed as Examiner. Agreed unanimously.

## 9. Any Other Business

a) Andrew Millington reminded attendees that the BTA one-page virtual Competition would run again this winter. He urged people to start thinking about preparing an entry.

There being no other relevant business the meeting closed at 13.15.

The meeting was followed by a display 'Tell me, please, why was Sudan the last one' by Jan Nyeki.

**Tell me, please, why was Sudan the last one?**  
The life story and legacy of the last male White Northern Rhinoceros called **Sudan**.

The aim of the exhibit is to use the life story of the last male White Northern Rhino, called **Sudan**, to highlight the importance of protecting natural ecosystems and individual species from negative impact of human activities.

Sudan's convoluted life was more than 40 years long. It involved travel between continents, life in captivity, extinction of species in the wild, civil wars, poaching, illegal animal trade, increased awareness of nature protection, and climate change.

In this exhibit we are invited to listen to a discussion between a grandmother and her granddaughter, who just learned, that the last male White Northern Rhino, called **Sudan**, had died. The granddaughter is interested why and how had that happened. The grandmother patiently answers all questions. The discussion ends in a handover of future of our Earth from the grandmother's generation into hands of the young girl's.

**SUDAN**  
A 44-year-old male (as of 2017), he's captured from the wild in 1973 and 1978 at about 2 years of age. He's the only surviving rhino.

The only surviving northern White Rhinos in the world.

Front page of the booklet reduced to 3.5%.

2018 Kenya. **Sudan and his biography**. Page 812 from a prestige stamp booklet issued by Kenya Post to commemorate transfer of the last living White Northern Rhinos from Safari Park in Dvůr Králové, Czech Republic to Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Kenya.

**EXHIBIT PLAN**

- Childhood in Africa**
  - 1.1 African savanna – Sudan's birthplace
  - 1.2 Savanna ecosystem
  - 1.3 White, black or grey rhino?
  - 1.4 Big Five member
- Life in Europe**
  - 2.1 First safari parks
  - 2.2 Safari park as animal sanctuary
  - 2.3 Travel to Dvůr Králové, Czechoslovakia
  - 2.4 Breeding in captivity
- While away from Africa**
  - 3.1 Poaching
  - 3.2 Tragedy in the Garamba National Park
- Sudan's legacy**
  - 4.1 Is it too late?
  - 4.2 Protection of species and ecosystems
  - 4.3 Future is in the hands of young generation

**Bibliography:**

[1] - Josef Vagner (1975). Occurrence and catching of white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium Simum Cottoni*) in the province Upper Nile – South Sudan, 1975. Accessible through [4].

[2] - Jimmy Chipperfield (1975). *My Wild Life*. Macmillan London, ISBN 13: 9780333180440.

[3] - [www.safaripark.cz/en](http://www.safaripark.cz/en) webpage of Safari park in Dvůr Králové, Czech Republic

[4] - [www.olpejetaconservancy.org](http://www.olpejetaconservancy.org) web page of the non-profit conservancy in central Kenya

[5] - [www.rhinoceroscenter.com](http://www.rhinoceroscenter.com)

[6] - W. A. Fairburn (1947). Merchant Sail, Fairburn Marine Educational Foundation, Edinburgh

**Selected items are marked according to their philatelic status and rarity:**

- Unique
- High importance
- Moderate importance
- Important

**The fonts used for the main thematic text:**

- Little girls' questions.
- Grandmother's answers.
- This font is used for philatelic text.
- This font is used for additional thematic research and description.

# TELL ME, PLEASE, WHY WAS SUDAN THE LAST ONE?

*Report of a display given by Jan Nyeki at the BTA AGM*

Jan introduced his talk by explaining that he had been interested in animals since the age of six, had started exhibiting early, but then put things on the back burner until he neared retirement. Joining the BTA a few years ago gave him the opportunity to polish up his exhibiting skills, and he entered EFIRO in Romania this year.

The title of his display (as above) proved unpopular with the jurors, but does serve to attract the attention of those viewing. The display tells the story of the last male, northern white rhino, born in Sudan and named after the country. It is told as a dialogue between a grandmother and her granddaughter, who wants to find out why Sudan and his fellow rhinos are now extinct.

The natural habitat of the rhinoceros is the African savannah. They are herbivores, who exist alongside other herbivores in the same territory (giraffe, elephant, gazelle etc.) since each animal grazes on different plants, or different parts of the same plant. Sadly the rhino was one of the “big five” game animals (the others being the lion, leopard, elephant and African buffalo), killed by trophy hunters. Rhinos were, and still are, also illegally poached for their horns. There is much demand in some Arabian Peninsular countries where they have been traditionally used to make the handles of ceremonial knives, plus a huge demand for illegal use in Chinese traditional medicine, and in Vietnam. Rhino horn - just a mass of keratin - became more expensive than gold. Such pressures have led the numbers of all species of rhino to be dangerously depleted.

In 1975 Sudan was captured as a young calf in South Sudan and taken to a safari park in Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), led by its director Josef Vágner who had a licence to catch wild animals in order to set up a breeding programme to conserve the species. It was a long journey for Sudan and his animal companions, taken by ship from Mombasa (Kenya), around the Horn of Africa, to Hamburg and down the River Elbe to the wildlife park. But it proved successful inasmuch as Sudan fathered three calves and became the grandfather of one.


In this whole endeavour Vágner had a perhaps unlikely ally in Jimmy Chipperfield, of the Chipperfield Circus family. Realising that circuses featuring performing animals were no longer acceptable to the public he moved into wildlife parks, and set up the world’s first drive-through safari park at Longleat in 1966. (As an aside, some of the lions came from the film set of *Elsa*).

In more recent years attempts at protecting species have been attempted in Africa. The Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1980 for its protection of critical habitat for northern white rhino and other species. However poaching still continued, and over 700 rhinos have been killed in the park.

Eventually it was decided to bring Sudan back to Africa. In December 2009 he, his daughter and granddaughter were moved to the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. Sadly, breeding attempts with Sudan at the Conservancy were unsuccessful. However, that is

not the end of the story, as experiments are continuing using in-vitro fertilization using a southern white rhino as a surrogate mother.

The northern white rhino is extinct, other sub-species of rhino are threatened, being on the International Union for Conservation of Nature “red list” of endangered species. They are still being poached, and now climate change may threaten their habitat. Their future is uncertain, but many people are working night and day to try and protect them. Let’s hope for success.

This was a fascinating display: every aspect of this compelling story told through wonderful philatelic material, a real treat for the audience. 





# BTA NEWS

## HAVING FUN WITH NUMBERS

The BTA held a meeting as part of York Stamp Fair, inviting guest speaker George Henshilwood to display his award-winning *Having Fun With Numbers*.

George began by giving a bit of background to his collecting. A childhood collector whose hobby had gone into abeyance for much of his working life, George returned to collecting on retirement, starting with completely new interests around collecting countries thematically and then various thematic subjects. Mentored by Margaret Morris he began exhibiting competitively, first at the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies Federation, then at the Northern National competitions.

*Having Fun With Numbers* is currently a five-frame exhibit which has been exhibited internationally and is about to be expanded to eight frames. Like many thematic collectors George's interest was initially sparked by existing subject knowledge, having studied maths at university and gone on to qualify as an actuary. But perhaps unlike some thematic collectors he has chosen to take a light-hearted approach. The title of this display does not lie: this is not a dry examination of mathematics but rather an entertaining look at stories around numerals. Have you heard of the curse of the 9th symphony? Or the Nelson (or double, or triple Nelson) in cricket? An array of unlikely stories made for a great presentation. The serious side of the subject was not completely neglected with the final frame looking at the lives and works of famous mathematicians.

This was a thoroughly enjoyable talk and a beautifully presented display. Thank you George.

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# BTA NEWS

## THE BTA NEEDS YOU!

We are looking for a **Publicity Officer** to join the Committee of the BTA. It's not an onerous job - just keep the philatelic press abreast with our activities, either to advertise in advance or report on after the event.

Our ever-popular **Zoom presentations** always attract interest. Would you like to contribute? We are looking for talks of around 30 minutes in length, supported by a PowerPoint presentation or by pdf images.

For more details of either of these please contact BTA Chairman [Barry Stagg](#)



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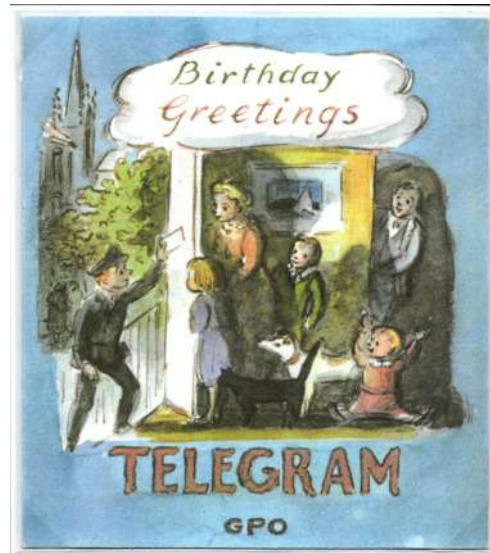
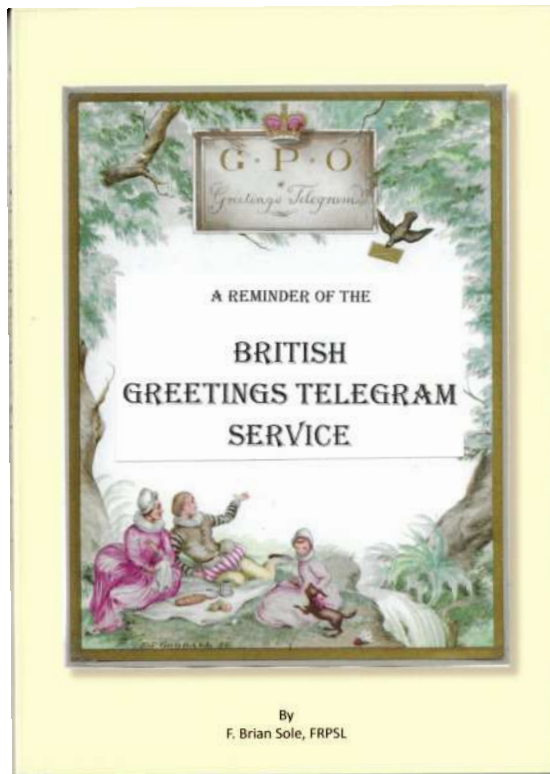
# BOOK REVIEW

## A REMINDER OF THE BRITISH GREETINGS TELEGRAM SERVICE

*Author* Brian F. Sole FRPSL.

2024. 132pp. ISBN 978-1-3999-9046-2.

Available from the author, email [brian.sole@btinternet.com](mailto:brian.sole@btinternet.com). Cost £4.99 plus postage.



The primary purpose of this book is to illustrate in colour every one of the 77 Greetings Telegrams and their envelopes issued by the British Post Office from the start of the service 1935 until 1982, when it ended. Using all items from the author's own

collection it builds on work done by previous authors, particularly Ian G. Wilkinson in his *British Greetings Telegrams & Telemessage Special Occasion Cards*, published in 1991 but with black and white illustrations. It is followed by detailed information on advertising and souvenir overprints found on some forms.

These celebratory telegrams certainly benefit from colour reproduction, with specific information given about each issue: date of issue, size, artist, purpose, colours and date withdrawn. While pre-war issues were all general in purpose, after the war telegrams for specific occasions were introduced including valentine, birthday, wedding and new baby. The commissioned artists featured a number of people whose work in other areas of the graphic arts are very highly regarded today, including Rex Whistler, Alan Sorrell, Rowland Emmett, Edward Ardizzone and Norman Thelwell.

Much background information precedes the listing including the introduction of the telegraphic service; souvenir telegrams from exhibitions, starting with the British Empire Exhibition in 1924; the introduction of the Greetings Telegram Service; the design of the forms and the promotion of the service.

If you are a pictorial collector looking for new ideas showing your theme this book is an ideal source of inspiration, as well as being a fascinating read on a slice of postal and social history.

# BTA PROGRAMME 2024

18 September  
19.00 for 19.30

## **Zoom meeting**

Dr. Jean Alexander

*Supermarket philately. Part 2*

In the second of a four-part series of presentations Jean will show how Royal Mail promote their own products with special offers.

12 October  
10.00 - 16.00

## **BTA One-Frame Competitions**

*At South of England Stamp Fair & Sussex Convention*

*Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL.*

21 November  
19.00 for 19.30

## **Zoom meeting**

Les Ashton-Smith

*Alphonse Mucha, his life and work*

The story of Mucha's journey from humble beginnings to international acclaim, and his profound impact on the new country of Czechoslovakia in terms of stamps, currency and cultural legacy, is told using various images, stamps, and covers. This presentation tells the story of Mucha's life and the evolution of his artwork and style, and the legacy he has left behind.



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# HERE AND THERE

## **AVOIDING ILLEGAL ISSUES. Website [www.wnsstamps.post/](http://www.wnsstamps.post/)**

If you are a collector who tries to avoid “abusive and illegal issues” - those issues from unrecognised countries - then you may find the website of the WNS (World Numbering System) useful. It is the worldwide numbering system for postage stamps created by the UPU and the WADP (World Association for the Development of Philately).

The WNS was launched on 1st January 2002, with the primary aim of compiling a database of all postage stamps legally issued, from that date onwards, by the issuing postal authorities of UPU member countries and territories that have signed up to the WNS. Only those postage stamps received by the UPU International Bureau and whose authenticity has been confirmed are assigned a unique WNS number and added to the WNS website. This therefore serves as a primary reference tool for checking postage stamp issues, helping to safeguard the philatelic industry against illegal issues.

And to help the collector, each postage stamp registered on the WNS website includes a link to the website of the member concerned, and to its online shop where available, making it easier for collectors to buy the stamps.

To look into this go to their [Search page](#). You can search under country, date of issue, and/or theme and sub-theme; or do a free text search.

## **KIDS HAVE FUN AT STAMPEX 23rd - 26th OCT 2024**

There will be a range of attractions at Stampex including:

- Free Vouchers for £20 to spend at the event (limited to 50 youngsters daily. (U18 Only)
- Free Goodie Bags for children with stamps, activity books and other items
- Free Stamp Collecting Guide
- Free Activities on theme of the Seaside
- Treasure Hunt and Lucky Dip
- Join Kidstamps, the free postal club for young collectors
- Free children’s auction (2pm Saturday) with lots of attractive items and the opportunity to win a Penny Black (the world’s first stamp)
- Stamp Art Workshops where children can create stamp cards or pictures
- Free Prize Draw for adults bringing children to the Show
- “Ask the Expert” sessions where both children and adults can ask any questions about collecting including how to get started, exhibiting and much more...

Stamp Active will have a booth in the Gallery Atrium to give out goodie bags and to receive donations. Some material will be on sale to raise money for the group’s activities.

The children’s displays, activities and the popular free children’s Saturday auction will take place in Meeting Room C near the main hall.

# BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION 2024 ONE-FRAME COMPETITIONS

**The South of England Stamp Fair & Sussex Convention, Norfolk Pavilion, South of England Centre, Ardingly Showground, Ardingly, RH17 6TL**

**SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 2024 10.00am – 4.00pm**

*Competition categories are:*

## **BTA CUP**

16-sheet One Frame competition subject to the Rules and Regulations for National **Thematic** Philately competitions

## **JOHN FOSBERY TROPHY**

16-sheet One Frame competition subject to the Rules and Regulations for National **Open** Philately competitions

## **BRIAN SOLE TROPHY**

16-sheet One Frame competition for **Picture Postcards** subject to the Rules and Regulations for National Picture Postcard competitions

## **BTA CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS**

16-sheet One Frame competition for **Pictorial Classes**; open to previous winners of the BTA's annual competitions. Subject to the Rules and Regulations for National Pictorial Class competitions.

*See next page for Rules*

**Please complete the Entry Form and send it to –**

Andrew Millington, Flat 4, 87 Shurdington Road, Cheltenham, GL53 0JQ.  
Tel: 0770 8356757. Email: [competitions@britishthematic.org.uk](mailto:competitions@britishthematic.org.uk)

**Closing date for receipt of entry forms: Saturday 30th September**

Please send sheets to Andrew Millington:

- From Saturday 30th September (or earlier if you notify him) but **no later than Tuesday 8th October or deliver them to the Fair** (first floor) by 10.00 on 12th October. Scanned entries from overseas members (see Rule 3) to be sent by **Tuesday 8th October**.

## **RULES**

### **All classes**

1. Every exhibit must have an Introductory Page as the first sheet. All sheets must be enclosed in protectors and the pages numbered at the foot of the page.
2. There will be an entry fee of £10 for each competition. A receipt will be issued and must be produced if collecting the entry after the Exhibition has closed.
3. We accept entries from overseas members. These should be sent as scans (300 - 400 dpi, pdf format) to:  
competitions@britishthematic.org.uk (deadline as per instructions for this year's competition).
4. Judges will be appointed who are qualified in judging Thematic Philately and/or Open Philately and/or Picture Postcard exhibits at Federation or National level.

### **Thematic, Open and Postcard Class**

The winner of any of these competitions will not be allowed to enter the same exhibit in the same competition at any time in the future.

### **Championship Class**

1. The Championship Class will cover all aspects of theme-based philately: i.e., Thematic Philately, Open Philately, and Picture Postcards.
2. The Championship Class is open to past winning exhibits of any of the BTA's competitions: The BTA Cup, The John Fosbery Trophy and The Brian Sole Trophy. Exhibits will be based on previous winning exhibits but can of course be modified. Past winners who are exhibiting new subjects should enter the other classes in the BTA's Annual Competitions.
3. Entries will be one frame (16 sheets), regardless of whether the qualifying winning exhibit was one or two frames.
4. A person may only enter one exhibit in The Championship Class.
5. All entries will be judged to national standards using the appropriate marking schedule (Thematic, Open, Picture Postcard) on the next page. There will be one winner and that will be the entry with the most points.

*All previous winners of all competitions can be found listed on the BTA website at*

[www.britishthematic.org.uk/kcfinder/upload/files/Composite%20winners.pdf](http://www.britishthematic.org.uk/kcfinder/upload/files/Composite%20winners.pdf)

**AWARDS.** The Minimum points required to achieve LARGE GOLD level is 90.

For Gold level is	85	For Silver level is	65
For Large Vermeil level is	80	For Silver Bronze level is	60
For Vermeil level is	75	For Bronze level is	55
For Large Silver level is	70	For Certificate of Participation below	55

### **MARKING Thematic Philately – BTA Cup**

Treatment	Title and Plan	15	
	Development	15	
	Innovation	<u>5</u>	35
Knowledge, Study & Research	Thematic	15	
	Philatelic	<u>15</u>	30
Condition and Rarity	Condition	10	
	Rarity	<u>20</u>	30
Presentation		<u>5</u>	
TOTAL		<u>100</u>	

### **MARKING Open Philately – John Fosbery Trophy**

Treatment	Title & Plan	10	
	Treatment	<u>20</u>	30
Knowledge and Research	Philatelic	20	
	Non-philatelic	<u>15</u>	35
Material	Condition	10	
	Rarity	<u>20</u>	30
Presentation		<u>5</u>	
TOTAL		<u>100</u>	

### **MARKING Picture Postcard Class - Brian Sole Trophy**

Idea, Plan and Treatment of the Topic	Idea and Plan	10	
	Treatment	<u>20</u>	30
Knowledge and Research			35
Condition and Rarity	Condition	10	
	Rarity	<u>20</u>	30
Presentation		<u>5</u>	
TOTAL		<u>100</u>	



## British Thematic Association Competitions 2024 Entry Form

*I wish to enter*

- A. 16-sheet BTA CUP  
Thematic Philately Competition (please tick) ☐

*AND/OR*

- B. 16-sheet JOHN FOSBERY TROPHY  
Open Philately Competition (please tick) ☐

*AND/OR*

- C. 16-sheet BRIAN SOLE TROPHY  
Picture Postcard competition (please tick) ☐

*AND/OR*

- D. 16-sheet CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS  
Thematic, Open or Picture Postcard (please tick) ☐

Name .....

Tel No.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....E-mail.....

Title of Entry (A ).....

Title of Entry (B).....

Title of Entry (C) .....

Title of Entry (D) .....

*Please indicate* ☐ Thematic ☐ Open ☐ Picture Postcards

The material is submitted entirely at my own risk and I undertake to make my own arrangements with regard to the insurance of the entry whilst it is out of my possession; this includes all transit risks, temporary housing of the entry and its display at Ardingly Showground. I confirm that all information on this form is correct.

I am transferring £10 per entry to British Thematic Association, Sort code 40-03-29, Account 71157701 by BACS. Overseas competitors to pay by PayPal: peter.wood95@btinternet.com

*Please tick to indicate how your entry will be delivered:*

☐ By post beforehand ☐ Hand in on the day

Signed.....

Date.....

# BTA ONE PAGE VIRTUAL COMPETITION 2025

**W**e are delighted to announce the fourth edition of our one-page thematic competition. It is open to non-members as well as members and previously we have received more entries than anticipated; so to make the judge's burden manageable we are limiting this year's competition to 100 entries or thereabouts. Entries will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis, and we cannot guarantee accepting multiple entries from one person.

Entries can be submitted to [competitions@britishthematic.org.uk](mailto:competitions@britishthematic.org.uk) between 1st September 2024 and 31st January 2025. An entry form (on page 106 or available on the [BTA website](#)) should be submitted with each entry. There is no entry fee.

A previous entry needs to show significant differences to be accepted. Entries will be given Diamond, Ruby, Emerald and Opal grades. Best in class winners will be announced, and all Diamond award exhibits will be judged for Best in Show awards. Entrants can anticipate receiving results and feedback by 31st March 2025.

The Best in Show (BTA member) will receive a full credit for their next year's membership of the BTA. The Best in Show (non-BTA member) will receive one year's electronic membership to the BTA. In addition, all Youth entrants will receive one year's electronic membership of the BTA, and all entrants will receive a pdf of the edition of *Themescene* carrying the competition report.

## Rules

1. There will be seven philatelic classes:
  - Thematic Philately – Nature
  - Thematic Philately – Science and Technology
  - Thematic Philately – Culture
  - Open Philately
  - Topical
  - Picture Postcards
  - Youth Philately. Split into:
    - Up to and including age 9
    - Ages 10 – 14
    - Ages 15 – 17
2. All entries require an application form to be completed.
3. The exhibit must tell a story (with the exception of Topical entries). Not a list of stamps or a procession of stamps but material that is linked to tell a story.
4. The exhibit page must have a clear title on it.
5. The entry may be on A4 or A3 size white or pale cream paper. A3 entries must contain a greater range of material and the story should have more content than A4 entries.

6. An exhibit (apart from Postcard entries) will be expected to show more than just stamps. Cancellations, air letters, telegrams, stamp booklets and postal stationery are but a few alternatives. Using a variety of material makes the exhibit more interesting and gives the exhibitor a greater range of material to tell the story. The Open Philately Class gives the opportunity to supplement the philatelic material with a variety of non-philatelic material rather than just postcards.
7. The exhibit must be in English.
8. The exhibitor will be expected to demonstrate good presentation, but grammar or spelling will be disregarded; particularly from those for whom English is not their first language.
9. Every item must be shown full size. Scanned reduced images of the reverse of covers etc. are permitted, shown next to the full-size front, with a note that they are being shown at a reduced rate.
10. The exhibitor must own all the material exhibited.
11. Awards will be in 4 categories:
  - Diamond: all the elements listed in rules 3 – 10 achieved to a good standard;
  - Ruby: all or most of the required elements, either to a fair standard or with one of the requirements missing;
  - Emerald: some of the elements included, but with perhaps one or two of those elements missing;
  - Opal: an exhibit which failed to meet all or many of the elements.

The top category in each class will be scored as follows:

<u>Adult entries</u>			<u>Youth entries</u>		
Title and Introduction	<i>max</i>	10	Story	<i>maximum</i>	20
Presentation		15	Knowledge of the material used		20
The story		40	Variety of material		
Quality of material		10	(both philatelic and non-philatelic)		20
Non-thematic information		15	Presentation		40
Variety of material		10			100
		<i>100</i>			

# BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION 4TH ONE-PAGE COMPETITION, 2025 ENTRY APPLICATION FORM

Name: .....

Name as you want it to appear on your certificate (*if different from above*):

.....

City and country of residence: .....

e-mail: .....

Age, if 17 or under: .....

*Please include proof of age as a separate file*

Exhibit title

1<sup>st</sup> exhibit:

.....

2<sup>nd</sup> exhibit\*:

.....

*\*Please note 2<sup>nd</sup> entries may not be accepted if more than 100 exhibits are received.*

How did you hear about this competition?

.....

.....

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Send exhibit and entry form to [competitions@britishthematic.org.uk](mailto:competitions@britishthematic.org.uk) This form can be downloaded and completed electronically *or* printed out, completed by hand, and scanned.



Just4Kids by Lise Whittle

www.stampactive.co.uk

## A group of Brownies in Scotland are compiling a **CAMPFIRE SONGS STAMP BOOK**

*Join in a Campfire Singalong at home!*



### CAMPFIRE'S BURNING

(same tune as 'London's Burning')

Campfire's burning, campfire's burning  
Draw nearer, draw nearer  
In the gloaming, in the gloaming  
Come sing and be merry.



*Stamp quiz 1. Where was Ciskei?*



### A SAILOR WENT TO SEA SEA SEA

A sailor went to sea sea sea,  
To see what he could see see see,  
But all that he could see see see,  
Was the bottom of the deep blue sea sea sea!

*(Repeat several times, singing faster and faster!)*

*Stamp quiz 2 - where are the Grenadines?*

## KOOKABURRA

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,  
Merry, merry king of the bush is he.  
Laugh Kookaburra, laugh Kookaburra,  
How good your life must be.



Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,  
Eating all the gum drops he can see.  
Stop Kookaburra, stop Kookaburra  
Save some gum for me!

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,  
Counting all the monkeys he can see.  
Stop Kookaburra, Stop Kookaburra,  
That's no monkey, that's ME!

*Stamp quiz 3 - what family of birds does a kookaburra belong to, hawks or kingfishers?*



## ALICE THE CAMEL

Alice the camel has five humps,  
Alice the camel has five humps,  
Alice the camel has five humps,  
So go, Alice, go. Boom Boom Boom  
Alice the camel has four humps ...  
Alice the camel has three humps ...  
Alice the camel has two humps ...  
Alice the camel has one hump ...

Alice the camel has NO humps,  
Alice the camel has NO humps,  
Alice the camel has NO humps  
'Cause Alice is a horse, of course!



*Stamp quiz 4 - can camels really store water in their humps?*

## THE QUARTERMASTER'S STORE

*A Quartermaster is a regimental officer, or person responsible for laying out a camp, and looking after food and other supplies.*

*You can make up your own rhyming verses for this song, but here are a few favourites.*

There were bats, bats, as big as alley cats  
In the store (in the store), In the store (in the store).

There were bats, bats, as big as alley cats  
In the Quartermaster's store

### **Chorus:**

*My eyes are dim, I can not see,  
I have not brought my specs with me,  
I have not brought my specs with me.*

Mice ....	running through the rice
Snakes ....	as big as garden rakes
Beans ....	as big as submarines
Gravy ....	enough to float the Navy
Cakes ....	that give us tummy aches
Eggs ....	with scaly chicken legs
Butter ....	running in the gutter
Bread ....	with great big lumps like lead
Cheese ....	that makes you want to sneeze
Goats ....	eating all the oats
Bees ....	with little knobbly knees
Flies ....	swarming round the pies
Apes ....	eating all the grapes
Turtles ....	wearing rubber girdles
Fishes ....	washing all the dishes
Moths ....	eating through the cloths
Owls ....	shredding paper towels
Bears ....	with curlers in their hair
Foxes ....	stuffed in cardboard boxes
Plums ....	sitting on their ... and so on!!



*Stamp quiz 5 -  
what is the  
English name for  
Deutschland?*

**To receive a FREE album and stamps (children only), write to us with your quiz answers and tell us your favourite songs and stamps.**

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



### AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

SEPAC, the Small European Postal Administration Cooperations, holds a popular vote competition each year for the most popular stamp in its omnibus-themed issue. The 2023 theme was Traditional Markets. Åland won with its imagining of a Viking Market.



*First*



*Second*



*Third*

*A selection of other entrants:*



The award of first place at the 54th Asiago International Prize for Philatelic Art went to the Czech Republic for this miniature sheet commemorating William Shakespeare and his works:

