THEMESCENE

December 2024

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Editor:
Wendy Buckle FRPSL
87 Victoria Road
Bournemouth, BH1 4RS

Advertising Manager:
Mike Blackman
45 Kenwood Drive
Beckenham, Kent, BR3 6QY

Printer and Distributor:
Keith Avis Printers Ltd.
68 High Street,
Hadleigh,
Suffolk IP7 5EF

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ADVERTISERS

Membership enquiries:
Owen Green
Email: membership@britishthematic.org.uk

Website:
www.britishthematic.org.uk

EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

Many of you, I'm sure, visited Stampex in October. I went with a degree of trepidation, knowing that the usual layout had been changed, with everything moved from the mezzanine floor to the gallery hall, atrium and bays. In the event, I was pleasantly surprised. The dealers stands fitted comfortably in the space available, and a meeting room and Stamp Active were adjacent to the stands. Having said that, there was definitely an emphasis on GB and Commonwealth in the dealer mix, and not too many dealers with a worldwide range of stock at which us pictorial collectors could just sit down and rummage. Great for an organised wants list, not so good for serendipity. Plus of course Stampex no longer hosts competitive exhibiting, which removes one of the interesting parts of a visit. But it does seem that there will now be a settled pattern of Virtual Stampex in the Spring and in-person Stampex in the Autumn.

Meanwhile there is a most interesting initiative regarding trade stands at ABRIA 2025, to be held in Stendal, Germany, in June. Dealers, auctioneers, and postal administrations attending the the exhibition will not have to pay a stand fee. After the event, they will be asked to contribute a recognition fee that they consider appropriate based on their revenues. Brave or foolhardy by the organisers? We'll find out in due course, but I admire their thinking.

But before that of course, is EuroPhilEx at Birmingham. This will be the UK's first International to be held outside London. Being held at the National Exhibition Centre seems to me to have a lot going for it: good transport links by road, rail and air; everything on one floor with exhibits adjacent to the dealer stands; and space for 2,000 frames of exhibits without the need for changing them over halfway through the event. The BTA will be one of many societies holding a meeting there - put Friday 9th May in your diary now! 🕮

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

Unless you have prepaid for 2025 you will find a renewal slip with this issue of *Themescene*. We would encourage you to pay by PayPal or BACS where possible, as our bank now charges us for every cheque transaction. You have the option of paying the full renewal fee, which entitles you to a print copy of *Themescene*, or paying a reduced fee of £15.00 if you wish to receive the electronic-only version of *Themescene*. The choice of course is entirely yours, but this is a cheaper option, and for overseas members a much cheaper option. Just indicate your choice, either when emailing details of your renewal, or on the renewal form if posting a cheque.

Whichever option you choose, all members have access to the e-version of *Themescene* via the 'Resources' tab on the BTA website. The full text of the magazine is available from 2005 to date. You will need to set up a username and password. Go to the 'Members' tab of the BTA website and click "Request your Password". If you have any problems please email us via the 'Contact' link on the website.

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg

Incorrect design of philatelic items: an annoyance or a thematic gift?

I have heard of collections that just consider incorrect or impossible designs such as a lighthouse located on the wrong cliff or the incorrect naming of a ship on a stamp. Although they sound fun, I must admit that in the past I have ignored such things believing these errors in design as just too 'frivolous' to include in a Pictorial collection. Give me a missing colour any day, but a poor design I would ignore. But I now believe that that decision was wrong and was a missed opportunity.

In the past, when I saw a postcard depicting a daffodil, and the daffodil only had five (not six) petals, I was just annoyed or perhaps disappointed with the artist who clearly had not done their research. If I bought it I rarely showed it in a display or in a competition. But now I believe it is a wonderful opportunity to show your knowledge of the subject, particularly if you are displaying to a club or exhibiting in a competition. I came to this conclusion because a few weeks ago I showed my daffodil collection, including the five-petal daffodil postcard (shown below), to a few colleagues and had more questions on this than the rest of the display!

Looking at some of my stamps and looking for such errors I can find arrows incorrectly mounted on a bow string and parachute harnesses worn so badly that when they opened you would be forced out of it (!) or it would cause you a serious injury. Being a keen gardener the postcard I really like is the scene of a country cottage with every flower you could possibly name all flowering at the same time; daffodils with sunflowers and tulips with asters to name just a few.

Perhaps you could have a look at your collection and see what design errors you can find. I am sure others would be interested to hear about it.

I must mention that it is now ten years since I became the Chairman of the BTA. It has been a wonderful experience, and I have enjoyed every moment. My job has been made easy because of the great work done by others, particularly those of the BTA committee and I thank them for their commitment, dedication, and unbounded enthusiasm without which the BTA would not exist. Let's hope the next ten years are just as much fun! 🕮

WEATHER FEATURES AND PHILATELY. PART 1

Lloyd Hogg

Weather is best described as the changeable outdoor phenomenon affecting our environment's past, present, and future. It is an important part of our lives, and yet one that we cannot control. Instead, it often controls how and where we live, what we do, what we wear, what we eat and much more besides. With the increasing focus on climate change, weather has become one of the most important and controversial issues across the world. In this article we look at what 'weather features' constitute weather.

To simplify what is a complex and comprehensive subject, some form of categorization is required, and to this end, weather features for a topical exhibit can be deemed as either 'invisible' (we can't see them) or 'visible' (we can see them). The invisible features are driving forces for the entire weather system. They are all in balance and the atmosphere is constantly changing to preserve that balance. They are also drivers of some visible features. Ancient civilizations grasped that concept insofar as they believed gods were determinants of weather and, in such belief, recognized the power of invisible. Invisible features are temperature, sunshine, atmospheric pressure, wind, and humidity. Wind is regarded as being an invisible feature because it can only be viewed when it encounters objects which move because of the effects it has on them.

Visible features include clouds, rain, lightning, frost, and snow to name but a few. One of the cornerstones of topical collecting is 'concordance' - making sure that philatelic items match up to the subject under discussion. In my exhibit I use a Botswana stamp which shows Ymir, the God of Frost, which to the casual observer might seem to lack concordance. However, frost is remarkably commonplace in Botswana due to the high frequency of combined cold nights and clear skies which makes ideal conditions for frost.

Let's start by looking at the invisible features. Temperature is the hotness or coldness of a place and is arguably the most important determinant of weather and climate. It is measured using a thermometer - a simple glass tube with a bulb at one end, containing water, mercury, or alcohol. Thermometer readings are expressed in degrees on either of two scales, each named after the inventor (either Daniel Fahrenheit or Anders Celsius). Most countries now use the Celsius scale. Extremes and variability of temperature are important to meteorologists as they help in weather predictions. A baseline for minimum temperature of (-89.2 degrees C) was established globally as being at Vostok station in Antarctica. Routine temperature observations are made using wooden shelters known as Stevenson screens. Painted white to reflect sunlight, they are sited 1.5 metres above ground level and always positioned away from direct sunlight. A front opening door and louvred sides allows stable airflow to circulate over equipment. The Stevenson screen is named after its inventor, Thomas Stevenson.

Energy for weather features comes from the sun, and sunshine is its light and heat. It makes people happy, relaxed and healthy (if they don't over-indulge or forget the sunscreen). People who display happiness can be described as having a sunny disposition. Who would have expected GB to issue a stamp showing 'Little Miss Sunshine"? The duration of sunshine is measured using a Campbell-Stokes Sunshine Recorder. It was

invented by John Francis Campbell in 1853 and later modified by Sir George Gabriel Stokes, and there are several types - including those mounted in wood/metal or with glass domes. Actinometers and Pyranometers also measure sunshine. Actinometers measure the intensity of solar radiation across the infrared to ultraviolet range. A Pyranometer (from Greek πῦρ (pyr) 'fire', and ἄνω (ano) 'above, sky') is used for measuring solar irradiance on surfaces to assess solar radiation.

Ancient civilizations believed that the sun, with its continuous life-giving properties, was created by the gods. They thought gods determined sunshine and resulting weather patterns, which in turn guaranteed good harvests. Sun worship, veneration of the sun or representation of it dates to ancient Egypt. Horus was one of the most significant ancient Egyptian deities, whilst Karna was worshipped in Indonesia and Surya in India and Sri Lanka. There is plenty of material relating to Surya, from double printed stamps portraying him (Fig1) to postmarks that appeared in the 1930s. In Europe the sun gods were Apollo, Helios and God the Father. An unusual piece (Fig 2) shows a 200F French stamp featuring Apollo applied to a Post Office subscription card and paying for new stamp issues.

Air around us has weight and presses against everything it touches. That is called 'atmospheric pressure'. High-pressure systems (anticyclones) generally lead to fair, calm weather whilst low-pressure systems (cyclones) lead to cloudiness, wind, and rain. From the 17th century six notable scientists proved the relationship between pressure, temperature, and the atmosphere. This was pivotal in meteorology. Otto von Guericke, Robert Boyle and Gay-Lussac were amongst the first to undertake experiments that demonstrated the relationship between pressure, gases and temperature, all of whom appear in philately. Most notably the Ukraine Post Office issued an elaborate miniature sheet (Fig 3) which helpfully illustrates the instruments used in experiments. Atmospheric pressure is measured by an aneroid barometer, which is a small, flexible metal capsule filled with liquid (water, alcohol or mercury). Changes in air pressure cause the capsule to expand or contract, which drives mechanical levers so that movements of the capsule are amplified and displayed on the face of the barometer. It was conceived by Galileo Galilei but invented in 1643 by Evangelista Torricelli. French mathematician Blaise Pascal carried a barometer up and down stairs repeatedly to demonstrate that atmospheric pressure is linked to altitude. His fame as a mathematician led to a street in Paris being named after him (Fig 4). Barometers can be attached to arms with pens that plot pressure readings onto paper rolls, as pressure changes over time. The resulting device is known as a barograph. Major manufacturers of barographs were the British companies, Elliott Brothers and Negretti & Zambra. Perfins were employed by both companies.

Wind is the natural movement of air relative to the earth's surface, caused by differences in atmospheric pressure. The sun heats different parts of the earth differently, causing pressure differences and driving winds. At the earth's surface wind always blows from areas of high pressure to areas of low pressure. Laws of motion says that an object once in motion will stay in motion unless acted upon by an external force, hence weather systems are self-perpetuating. To crudely measure wind speed and direction we use a 'windsock' (a large conical textile tube on a pole), often found at airports. For wind direction weathervanes are used - these are pointing devices in a decorative form made of metal in many designs. I used an 1860s USA cover on my title page of my exhibit, which advertises a manufacturer of 76 varieties of weathervane (Fig 5).

In Christian countries cockerels have always been popular as weathervanes on churches. They serve as reminder that the cock crowed when St. Peter denied Christ three times. They can be plain, or with a raised surface with details applied or even cut into.

Fig 1: Jaipur, Indian States, imperf with double printing

Fig 2: France 1948 Post office subscription card for paying for new issues

Fig 3: Ukraine 2022 miniature sheet showing Robert Boyle and Robert Hooke with vacuum pump

Fig 4: France postmark of Rue Pascal, Paris

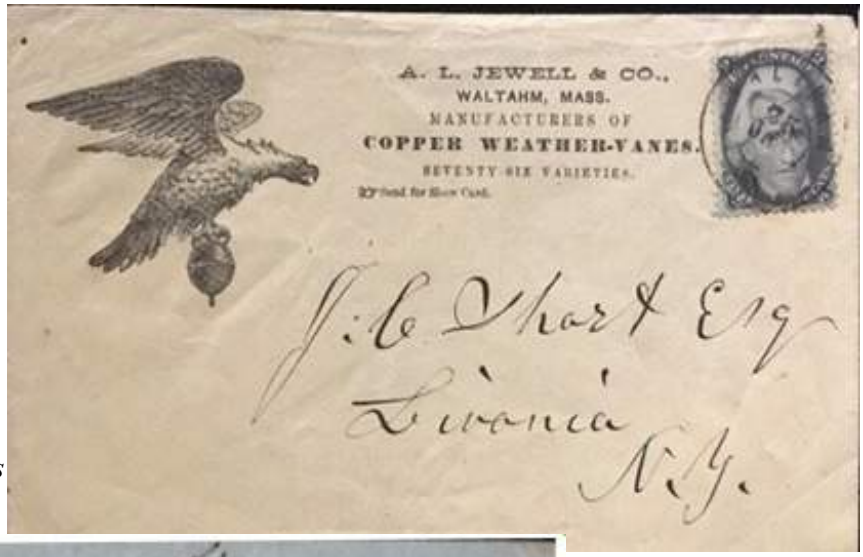

Fig 5: USA c.1865 advertising 76 varieties of weathervane

Fig 6: France 31 October 1870. Via Balloon Monte, 'Fulton', on its 22nd flight. Departed on 2 November 1870, 8:45am from the Gare d'Orléans, arriving the same day at 2:00pm in Chanzeaux

Fig 7: USA weather postal cards of 1970: missing black and yellow - only known error card used on first day - together with missing blue.

Philatelically we must remember how the presence of wind was vital at the time of the Siege of Paris (19 September 1870 to 28 January 1871), during the Franco-Prussian War, since residents of Paris could only communicate by balloon and relied on wind power. Weathervanes were vital in achieving successful launches. A balloon monté cover is shown in figure 6.

Wind speed, its pressure and direction, are accurately measured using an anemometer (from the Greek word, 'anemos' meaning wind). Invented by Leon Battista Alberti in 1450, it consists of a rotating vane fitted with integrated cups (usually three or four), in various configurations. Rotational speed of the cup turbine is proportional to wind speed. There are lots of different types of anemometers, but a popular variety is one which combines a weathervane, as appearing on the US 1970 Weather postal card. This had production difficulties and figure 7 shows a card with missing blue and another with missing black and yellow. The latter was given first day service and is the only known example.

Jules Richard invented an electrical wind speed recorder as an alternative to the anemometer, but it did not gain popularity. A stamp issued by the Maldives, showing the device, embarrassingly contained an incorrect spelling of 'meteorology'.

Wind gods have been celebrated in many cultures. The Greeks associated them with all eight compass directions and portrayed them as male or female winged creatures that lived together in a cavern on Mount Haimos (Haemus) in Thrake (Thrace). All eight Greek wind gods appear as reliefs around the top of the octagonal 'Temple of the Winds', which is a 50 BC Pentelic marble tower in Athens. It is the earliest meteorological station and now a UNESCO World Heritage site. One of the most interesting sets of stamps issued by Greece depicts all the wind gods, but was subject to a huge number of printing errors - wrong colours being used, magnificent triple printings (Fig 8), offsets, major perforation shifts and problems with inking.

Fig 8: Greece 1942 triple printing

Humidity is the amount of water vapor in the air, so if it's a warm day it will feel very close and muggy if humidity is high. It is measured using a hygrometer, the principle of which was proposed by Leonardo da Vinci and developed by Nicholas of Cusa in the 1400s.

In 1783 the climber Horace Bénédict invented the world's first proper hygrometer, using human hair to calculate humidity. This relied on the fact that organic substances expand and contract according to changes in relative humidity. Antonie Lavoisier established a meteorological network for measuring temperature and humidity to support weather prediction and Jons Berzelius developed a dewpoint hygrometer in the 1840s. Both are shown on stamps. Humidity is important in our atmosphere, influencing water vapor and rainfall. Higher humidity increases water vapor, hence rainfall. It also affects human health, being related to arthritis and rheumatism. The effect of humidity on stamps is to cause topicalisation of gum. 🕮

To be continued in March 2025 Themescene with 'visible' features.

INSULIN, A MORE THAN 100-YEAR JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY. PART 2

Johan Diesveld

Composition of insulin

Because of the importance of the hormone insulin, people were naturally very curious about its composition. Initially it was thought that hormones were relatively small molecules. In 1924 it was shown that insulin was a protein (relatively small proteins, such as insulin, are actually called peptides. For the sake of simplicity, we will continue to use the term protein). It was not until 1935 that some of the constituent amino acids were identified. This showed that insulin was not a small molecule. The molecular formula is $C_{254}H_{377}N_{65}O_{75}S_6$ (Fig 16a and b), there are 777 atoms in the molecule, far from being small chemically.

Now take a few steps back. Amino acids are chemicals found in all living cells. The first was isolated from asparagus (Fig 17) by Nicolas-Louis Vauquelin (1763-1829) in 1806 (Fig 18) and Pierre Jean Robiquet (1780-1840). This first amino acid was aptly named: asparagine.

The human body uses about 22 different amino acids, the last common, normal one being discovered in 1935. A very exotic amino acid was not identified until 1986 and in 2002 one which, however, occurs only in methane-producing organisms. Amino acids generally have a similar structure: a carbon atom (= C) with an acid group (HOOC) and an amino nitrogen group (H_2N) attached: HOOC-C(H)R- NH_2 (Fig.19,). Each amino acid has a different R group.

The H_2N-group is basic; it is a happy coincidence that acids and bases react with each other. This makes it understandable that a number of amino acids can react together to form a polymer chain; this then gives a protein. A protein can be thought of as a string of pearls, with the individual pearls being the amino acids, and thus the amino acids connected in series (Fig 20).

Now, it turns out that one particular amino acid has a different extra reaction. It is a sulphur (= S) containing amino acid (= cysteine) with a thiol group (-SH). This has the property that it can easily react with another thiol group: X-SH + HS-X → X-S - HS-X (this then becomes the amino acid cystine) (Fig 21). Proteins therefore have an unprecedented potential for variation.

The Englishman Frederick Sanger (1918-2013) was a molecular biologist with a keen interest in protein chemistry, particularly insulin. After graduating in 1943, he immediately began twelve years (!) of highly disciplined, very persistent and very inventive work to solve the amino acid sequence. He had to develop all kinds of methods to complete this piece of the puzzle. Remarkably, it turned out that insulin is not one protein chain but two: an A chain of 21 amino acids and a B chain of 30 amino acids. The two chains are also doubly linked by S-S bridges (Fig 22). This work was considered worthy of the Nobel Prize in 1958.

Fig 16a and b: Insulin molecule with its formula shown on the enlarged image of the syringe. Brazil 2021.

Fig 17: Asparagus. Netherlands 2002 tab.

Fig 18: Postmark on FDC of Vauquelin Frankrijk. The place name in the cancellation - Saint-André d'Hebertot (Calvados) - was Vauquelin's place of birth and death.

Fig 19: Protein. Iran FDC 1975 detail. Both the stamp and the cancellation have an error, it reads: -CooH, whereas it should be: -COOH (in capitals)

Fig 20: Polyvinyl meter mark. Netherlands 1984

Fig 21: Protein on FDC cancel. The different atoms are shown as coloured balls; a yellow ball represents S. Japan 1967

Fig 22: Insulin structure. Cancel shows schematic insulin molecule. Portugal 1997

Fig 23: William Hague and William Lawrence Bragg. Guinea-Bissau 2009

Fig 24: Max Von Laue. West Germany 1979

Fig 25: Bragg's NaCl. GB 1977

Fig 26: Arthur Patterson. Portugal 2014

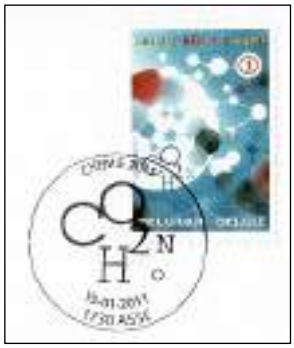

Fig 27: Belgium 2011. Joint issue Slovenia: Chemistry; FDC cancel

Fig 28: Zinc in Arkansas, USA. Zinc was mined here from 1890 to about 1950; the current population is about 100. The post office was open from 1900 to 1975

Fig 29: Insulin crystal. Denmark 1990

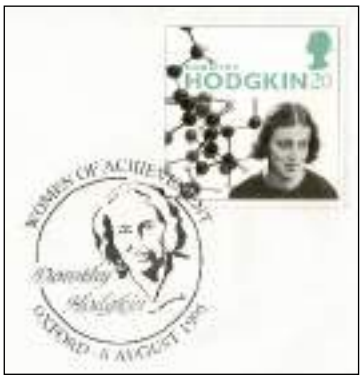

Fig 30: Dorothy Hodgkin. FDC cancel. GB 1996

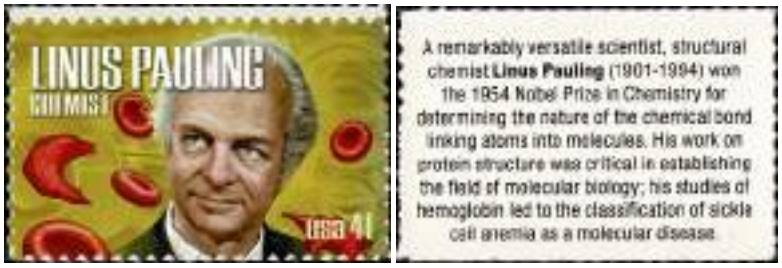

Fig 31a and b: Linus Pauling. USA 2008 Information about Pauling is on the backing paper of the self-adhesive stamp

Fig 32a: Insulin. Switzerland 2021

Fig 32b: Haemoglobin helix. Portugal 2014

In the 32a and 32b pictures of proteins the helix shape is indicated by the helical ribbon; this is also clearly visible in the Brazilian stamp of Fig.16a

Fig 33a: Insulin. Belgium 1971

Fig.33b: Paulescu. Romania 1999. The chain of white dots is the C-chain part of proinsulin

Fig.34: Eli Lilly, founder of the pharmaceutical company. France 1976

Fig.35: 35 Insulin synthesis. China FDC cancel 2015

Fig.36: Insulin pen. China FDC cancel 2015

Structure of insulin

However, man's curiosity was still not completely satisfied. Sanger had elucidated the two-dimensional structure, but what did the three-dimensional structure look like?

Atoms are too small to be seen with a light microscope. Instead of visible light (wavelength: 380-780 nm (= billionths of a metre)), you can use X-rays (wavelength: 0.001-10 nm).

Now, both father (William Haig) (1862-1942) and son (William Lawrence) (1890-1971) Bragg had done research with X-rays (Fig 23). By directing X-rays at a crystal, the scattering pattern can be used to determine the type of atoms in the crystal and also the distances between them (Fig 24). They worked this out in 1915 for table salt, NaCl, which is about the simplest molecule (Fig 25). But even for such a simple molecule it was a tedious and lengthy calculation. But the reward was the Nobel Prize in 1915.

Arthur Patterson (1902-1964) reached out with a mathematical tool in 1935 (Fig 26), but this could only be fully realised with the help of computers. So for a long time it was paper, pencil and a lot of patience.

It was also essential to work with a good, large crystal, one then had a simpler diffraction (scattering) pattern from which to calculate. This work on large organic molecules (consisting mainly of carbon (= C), hydrogen (= H), nitrogen (= N) and oxygen (= O) (Fig 27)) was also made easier if a (heavy) metal atom was present. Now it so happens that insulin is stored in the body in the form of a zinc (= Zn) complex (Fig 28). This Zn-insulin complex crystallises into beautiful crystals (Fig 29).

It was with this in mind that the English crystallographer Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin (1910-1994) (Fig 30) began her work on insulin in 1935. She had made and published excellent X-ray images, but the interpretation for a molecule with 777 atoms eluded everyone.

The difficulty was that people did not suspect a specific phenomenon in proteins. The great chemist Linus Pauling (1901-1994) (Figs 31a and b) was also engaged in protein structures in general. In 1950, 'playing' with ruler, pencil and paper, he drew protein structures as he knew them from the then-known data on the bonds between different atoms. He came up with a helical (= spiral) chain (Figs 32a and b). On further investigation, this proved to be the solution. This made the radiographs a little easier to understand.

Notwithstanding these insights, Dorothy Hodgkin continued to work until 1969 to fully elucidate the three-dimensional structure; 34 years of persistent work! For her other work in crystallography, she was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1964.

Some more facts about insulin

In the body, it is unlikely that two single strands of amino acids can be joined together to form insulin. The chances of error are too high. Nature has found a simple and error-free way to do it. It makes proinsulin (= precursor insulin), which is a protein chain in which the A and B chain parts are linked together by a C chain part (containing 35 amino acids) to form a long chain of 86 amino acids. The structure that proinsulin naturally adopts puts the A and B chains in a good position relative to each other, allowing the thiol groups to be linked together in a good and simple way. Then the C-chain part of the proinsulin is taken out between them and insulin remains. This C-chain part is clearly indicated on the stamps of Belgium and Romania (Figs 33a and b).

Soon after the discovery of insulin, people began to 'make' it in large quantities by purifying the pancreatic glands of cattle and pigs, which were available in large quantities from slaughterhouses. Eli Lilly and Company (Fig.34) worked on this.

The ultimate goal was of course to copy insulin This was achieved almost simultaneously in 1963/64 by two university research groups in Pittsburgh (USA) and Aachen (Germany). Chinese researchers copied bovine insulin in 1965 (Fig 35).

Today, insulin is produced by genetically modified bacteria; this was first achieved in 1978. Eli Lilly and Company played a leading role. Today we have a range of insulin analogues, some with a very rapid action, to be taken just before meals and others with a delayed action, to be used for constant performance throughout the day.

We have come a long way in 100 years: from the primitive dose that had to be administered by a doctor to simple pens that allow you to determine the amount you need and administer it yourself (Fig 36). 🕮

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The Dutch Association for Thematic Philately

NEDERLANDSE VERENIGING THEMATISCHE FILATELIE

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. The NVTF was founded in 1952 and is aimed at thematic stamp collectors, philatelists and postcard collectors.

NVTF has 285 members, mainly from the Netherlands and a few from Belgium. As with thematic collectors a wide spread of themes are in vogue. There are five regional groups that meet a few times a year to discuss members' collections in small groups. There are also four national meetings a year. They publish a quarterly magazine *Thema* of about forty pages, with thematic articles on members' subjects, news from the exhibition front, and, very popular, how to fit philatelic items into your thematic collection.

There is also a website, https://www.nvtf.nl/, with the history of the Association, its activities and a digital library of the articles published in *Thema* magazine (unfortunately only in Dutch).

275 YEARS OF THE CAMBERWELL BEAUTY BUTTERFLY AND THE HISTORY OF ITS UNUSUAL JOURNEY IN PHILATELY

Vladimir Kachan

The English company Samuel Jones and Co was founded in 1810. In 1905 the company started producing non-curling gummed paper in its factory in Camberwell, South London. This was blank paper with a gummed back, as opposed to putting the gummed adhesive on printed sheets. The gummed paper was predominately used for posters but also used on stamps. In 1912 the company adopted the Camberwell Beauty butterfly emblem as its logo, because two specimens were first caught in England in 1748, in Coldharbour Lane, Camberwell, South London (Fig 1). They chose the logo to demonstrate the possibility of printing several different colours on one piece of paper (Fig 2). The Camberwell Beauty, as the company logo, features in the company's meter mark (Figs 3 - 4). By the 1960s Samuel Jones paper factory in Southampton Way had become a very large building, making gummed paper in various colours and fancy stationery, as well as cardboard boxes for packaging. At the top of this large building was a mural made of coloured tiles, showing the Camberwell Beauty butterfly. For this reason the company's building was named Butterfly House.

The first 'free form' self adhesive stamps in the world were issued by Sierra Leone on 10 February 1964 to commemorate the World's Fair in New York. The set comprised fourteen stamps and were printed in combined intaglio and lithography by the Walsall Lithographic Company. The stamps were in the shape of the country. They were issued in sheets of 30 on backing paper which had a butterfly logo of Samuel Jones & Co Ltd on the reverse. This butterfly was of course the Camberwell Beauty (Fig 5). The backing paper varied in colour - it was either green or yellow (Fig 6). Because of the hot climate, this type of adhesive proved more practical than the conventional gum. A First Day Postcard with the world's first self adhesive free form postage stamp of Sierra Leone 1964 and advertisement of Samuel Jones & Co Ltd with illustration of the Camberwell Beauty butterfly was also issued (Fig 7). On 12 November 12 1966 Sierra Leone issued a set of self adhesive stamps depicting coins; several stamps in the set have the butterfly logo on the reverse (Fig 8).

A special set of 'shaped' stamps was issued by Sierra Leone in 1969 in honor of the fifth anniversary of the world's first free form self adhesives. Three stamps in the set have the butterfly logo printed on the back of the protective paper (Figs 9 - 11).

In 1974 Gibraltar issued a stamp booklet commemorating the centenary of the Universal Postal Union, containing a set of three stamps illustrating letter-boxes. These stamps are also self adhesive, the backing paper of which illustrates the logo of Samuel Jones & Co Ltd – thus giving us another representation of the Camberwell Beauty butterfly (Fig 12). Samuel Jones' factory was one of the most prominent manufacturing premises in the area of South London. In 1981 the company left the area and moved to

Fig 1: Corporate envelope of Samuel Jones & Co Ltd posted 1936 with perfin SJC

Fig 2: Advertising letter 1948 of Samuel Jones & Co Ltd with the Camberwell Beauty logo

Fig 3: 1955 cover from Samuel Jones and Co Ltd with Camberwell Beauty butterfly on meter mark

Fig 4: Meter mark of Samuel Jones and Co Ltd, London 1970


Figs 5 - 6: Self adhesive stamps of Sierra Leone 1964 in green and in yellow

Fig 7: First Day postcard posted 10 February 1964

Fig 8: Sierra Leone 1966

Figs 9 - 11: Sierra Leone 1969

Fig 12: 1974 Gibraltar booklet

Fig 13: 1998 meter mark

a new building in St Neots, Cambridgeshire. When the factory was demolished in 1982, the enormous Camberwell Beauty butterfly mural was carefully taken down and placed on the blank wall of another building in Wells Way. The work was carried out so skillfully that the butterfly looks as though it has always occupied that position. Samuel Jones & Co Ltd became part of the Wiggins Teape Group and, in turn, part of Princeton Packaging. Samuel Jones & Co Ltd was integrated twice into other companies, but came back into business as a private company - and still with a butterfly logo (Fig 13). The self-adhesive laminator Samuel Jones UK Ltd (the company with more than 200-years history) is in business now as a private and independent company located at purpose-built facilities in Sawtry, Cambridgeshire.

The *Nymphalis antiopa* butterfly, known as the mourning cloak in North America and the Camberwell Beauty in Britain, is a large butterfly native to Eurasia and North America. It was the first described by Carl Linnaeus in 1758 and received the Latin name *Nymphalis antiopa* (Fig 14). It is a large, unique butterfly, with special markings that do not match those of any other butterfly, making it easily distinguishable. It can have a wingspan up to 70 mm. The dorsal side of its wings are a dark maroon, or occasionally brown, with ragged pale-yellow edges. Bright, iridescent blue spots line the black demarcation between the maroon and the yellow (Fig 15). The ventral side of the wings have grey striations, with the same pale-yellow edges. These butterflies have a lifespan of eleven to twelve months, one of the most extensive lifespans for any butterfly. Mourning cloak butterflies are seen throughout the year because they do not participate in long-distance migration. Instead of migrating, the adult butterflies will hibernate during the winter. Typical locations of overwintering include tree cavities and underneath loose tree bark. This process is advantageous for the butterflies because they are able to immediately start mating in the spring, rather than having to migrate back prior to mating. They are often one of the first butterflies seen in the spring. But the yellow band on the wings of the butterflies becomes whitish after hibernation (Fig 16). Adult mourning cloaks feed on sap and decaying matter, less commonly they are seen taking nectar from flowers. To protect themselves from the cold weather of their habitats, mourning cloaks will find areas under direct sunlight. This behavior, in conjunction with their darkly-colored wings, allows for maximum heat absorption. These butterflies love to sit on the roads, spreading their black-velvet wings with a yellow border. And if they put them together, they always turn so that the sun shines down on them directly from above. Their wings, folded over their back, are directed to the east in the morning, to the south at noon and to the west in the evening. A live compass is obtained! 🕮

Fig 14: Hungary 1966 imperf

Fig 15: West Germany 1962, almost missing black lettering on the edge

Figure 16: Artwork for FDC of San Marino 1993

ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH PHILATELIC SOCIETIES' CONGRESS 2025

In April 2025, the Glasgow Thematic Society will be host to the annual Scottish National ASPS (Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies) Congress to be held on Friday 4 and Saturday 5 April at The Vine Conference Centre, 131 Garvock Hill, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 4JU. This event attracts dealers and visitors from across the UK and helps promote philatelic collecting in all its forms. The theme for Congress in 2025 is the centenary of John Logie Baird, the Scot who produced the first working images on what came to be known as 'television' in 1925 - a creation that has had global impact. As host society, the Glasgow Thematic Society will be producing a souvenir cover to mark the centenary and providing over 40 framed exhibits on various themes. There will be the usual attractions - the Tom Reilly display, the Alan Watson (open) competition, junior displays, other society displays, and exhibits for other high level competitions. Many of the usual philatelic dealers will be present and a dinner will be held on Friday evening, with good food and the usual highly entertaining after-dinner speech. The 2025 Congress is the first to be held in Dunfermline, proud city, ancient capital of Scotland and the birthplace of Andrew Carnegie, the Scottish-American industrialist and philanthropist. The Glasgow Thematic Society hopes to help make this a highly memorable event.

For information - the Glasgow Thematic Society was founded in May 1948 and is the only thematic philatelic society in Scotland. It has approximately 20 members and meets monthly to show displays, host visitor societies, exchange philatelic materials, etc. It has its own website which can be accessed at www.glasgowthematicsociety.org.uk/ 🕮

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GOOD KING WENCESLAS

Wendy Buckle

The hymn *Good King Wenceslas* is always a favourite at Christmas. The story of the king who, with his page, braved terrible weather to deliver food and firewood to the poor is based on a real person, though not a king. In real life he was Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia. Born around 907 there was a power vacuum following his father's death. The country was split in two with half ruled by Wenceslas when he came of age, and half by his younger brother Boleslaus, who shortly afterwards arranged for the murder of Wenceslaus, resulting in the latter quickly being seeing as a martyr and canonized. The date of his murder, 28th September, was adopted as his Saint's Day. The Holy Roman Emperor Otto I gave him the title King a few years after his death.

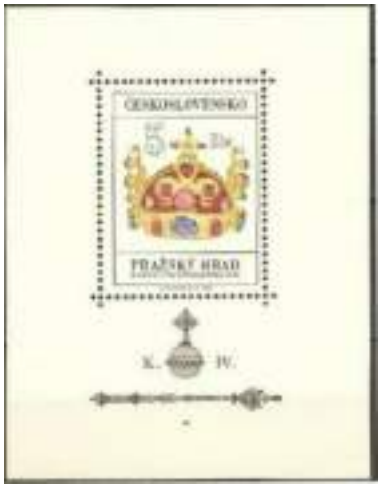
Within a few decades, four hagiographies of him were in circulation, which had a powerful influence on the High Middle Ages concept of the rex justus (righteous king), a monarch whose power stems mainly from his great piety as well as his princely vigour. People in Bohemia and England in particular began to venerate St Wenceslas. One 12th-century preacher said:

> "His deeds I think you know better than I could tell you; for, as is read in his Passion, no one doubts that, rising every night from his noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, he went around to God's churches and gave alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison and afflicted by every difficulty."

He is buried in St Vitus' Cathedral in Prague and his Saint's Day is a public holiday in the Czech Republic.

Every country needs a hero who will come to its rescue. Britain has King Arthur, and the Czech Republic has King Wenceslas. It is said that if the country is in danger, the statue of King Wenceslas in Wenceslaus Square in Prague will come to life, raise a sleeping army and reveal a legendary sword to bring peace to the land.

While the melody to the carol is old, being a 13th century tune called *Tempus Adest Floridum* (The time is near for flowering), the words are relatively modern. They were written in 1853 by the English hymnwriter John Mason Neale for the Feast of St Stephen, better known as Boxing Day, celebrating the long tradition of charitable giving on the Second Day of Christmas. 🕮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EXHIBITING PAGE

BTA ONE FRAME COMPETITIONS

Disappointingly we only received three entries this year: two in the Open Class and one in the Picture Postcard Class, but lack of numbers was compensated for by the quality of entries. Barry Stagg swept the board, winning both classes, with Andrew Millington second by only one point. With Barry not being present on the day, Janet and Nick Nelson were invited to make the presentations when giving guest displays at Barry's local club.

JOHN FOSBERY OPEN TROPHY

Andrew Millington	Falu Gruva: the mine that made a nation	Gold
Barry Stagg	Messenger of peace: the life and legacy of the missionary John Williams	Gold

BRIAN SOLE PICTURE POSTCARD TROPHY

Barry Stagg	Daffodils '101'	Gold

ABPS LONDON NATIONAL COMPETITIVE EXHIBITION 2025

The next UK competitive exhibition will be held from 27 February to 01 March 2025 at the Royal Philatelic Society, London. It will feature 14 different classes including Thematic Philately, Open Philately and Picture Postcards. A competitive entry may be 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 8 frames each made up of 16 standard display sheets or equivalent. No pre-qualification is needed for one to five frames.

If you have not competed nationally before, this is a very good time to start, since first-time entrants will not be charged an entry fee, thanks to the support of ABPS and the Philatelic Fund. The only qualification for this is that you must be a member of a society affiliated to ABPS, or a Friend or Patron of ABPS. Since the BTA is affiliated, you as a member of the BTA will not have to pay. Those entrants who have exhibited before will be charged £25 per frame.

Closing date for entries is 31st December, and entries should be submitted on the ABPS website under the 'Exhibiting' tab.

EXHIBITING PAGE 2: HAFNIA 24

Jan Nyeki

Hafnia, held in Copenhagen, was a nice exhibition, with some really excellent thematic exhibits. The exhibition hall was an old covered cattle market with real character; just the cows were replaced by frames with stamps and heating was added. There was plenty of space between the frames. Dealers occupied the perimeter and central corridor of the exhibition hall; everything was distributed on the same (ground) floor. Under special permission, I helped the Slovakian national commissioner and allocated volunteers to install and collect the exhibits. The whole process was very efficient, secure, and organised almost with military precision.

My "rhino" this time got 87 points*, one less than at EFIRO. I had added a few "better" items in between the two exhibitions, so I was initially a bit disappointed. The next day I changed my opinion/mood after the feedback from the jury. All four !! jurors (Jury team 8 for Class 7 Thematic Philately: Messrs Bracke, Maras, Seydoux, and Hansen) came to my exhibit and gave me a really comprehensive, positive, and constructive feedback.... and I agree with everything they pointed out how to get more points. A very productive 10 minutes.

In the official exhibition program there were also two 2-hour blocks reserved when exhibitors were invited to present their exhibits to visitors. I enjoyed those interactions and feedback from non-thematic collectors and members of public (ranging from an artist/designer from Denmark who had his own rhino-themed art exhibition few years back, through a professional biologist and postal stationery collector, a press reporter to "just" a visitor whose dad collects stamps).

PostNord Denmark issued a limited edition (5,000) numbered miniature sheet for the occasion (HAFNIA 24 Newsletter #14 .) It was sold out before the last day. I used up my two miniature sheets as postage on postcards to friends and family before realising how scarce they might be.... The "medal" itself was a beautiful 3D decorative object - BLOOM bowl by Georg Jensen (see HAFNIA24_Palmares.pdf). Every exhibitor got the same "medal" and a Certificate of Award specifying the grade.

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

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ZOOMING ALONG

Barry Stagg

Jean Alexander. ***Supermarket Philately part 2***. 18th September

At our September meeting members and guests of the BTA were treated to the 2nd part of Jean Alexander's 'Supermarket philately'. And what a treat that was. A wonderful and colourful presentation showing Royal Mail's journey into philatelic promotions from 1982 until 1994. The promotions promised a large variety of items ranging from stamp booklets to an address book, from postcards to writing paper and envelopes. It even included a set of small Bear ornaments which were clearly Jean's favourite items.

There was also a promotion that provided a letter pack: this contained draft letters for complaints or job applications (and a variety of other types of letters)! Another promotion provided recipes on five postcards. The one I liked the best was the Valentine offer with the catchy line of 'send a Bear and show you care' with a promise to have it delivered on Valentine's Day. I wonder how many were late!

Thank you Jean a fun, fascinating and informative presentation.

Les Ashton-Smith. Alfonse Mucha, his life and work. 21 November

Les Ashton-Smith entertained us with a colourful and highly informative presentation on the life and work of the Czech artist Alphonse Mucha. Born in 1860 in Ivancice in what is now the Czech Republic, he was self-taught and became a leading proponent of the Art Nouveau movement.

He lived his early life in Ivancice. He became a book illustrator, and Les showed stamps and postcards of both his home town and examples of his work as an illustrator. Mucha's big break came when he won a six-year contract in 1894 to provide Sarah Bernhardt with posters, stage and clothing designs for her shows. These were all shown in stamps from across the world. To say Mucha's designs and the subsequent stamps were beautifully designed would be an understatement. Lots of Mucha's work has been reproduced for many country's stamps and especially for Austrian and Czech issues over the past 80 years.

Mucha visited the USA five times in six years and took many commissions, including one to promote Maude Adams as Joan of Arc in a one-night gala performance, arguably one of Mucha's greatest poster paintings and often depicted in stamps. When Mucha returned to Bohemia he started work on his life's ambition to record the history of the Slav people. These paintings were huge (10m by 10m)! In 1918 he designed the first stamp for Czechoslovakia using his famous castle design. This design has been used many times on stamps and postal stationery to commemorate Mucha by lots of countries and Les showed a number of such stamps.

Mucha's talents were not confined to just paintings. He designed a coat of arms for Czechoslovakia, jewellery, a bank note (even managing to show his daughter within the design!), and a stained-glass window. All wonderfully shown by Les in colourful stamps.

Today Mucha is known as the man who gave Czechoslovakia its 'identity' and a pioneer of Art Nouveau. A truly talented man so wonderfully presented by Les. If you love art but missed this presentation, then this must be on your bucket list to watch.

THE LIMERICK

Roger West from Avion stamps

A limerick is a type of humorous verse of five lines with an AABBA rhyme scheme. The poem's connection with the city in Ireland is obscure, but the name is generally taken to be a reference to Limerick city or County Limerick.

What is a limerick, Mother?
It's a form of verse, said brother
In which lines one and two
Rhyme with five when it's through
And three and four must rhyme with each other

Edward Lear, the English artist, illustrator, author and poet, is today known mostly for his literary nonsense, especially his limericks, which some say Lear invented. Indeed, the earliest known use of the name 'Limerick' for this type of poem is an 1880 reference in a newspaper, published eight years before Lear's death.

The limerick packs laughs anatomical
In space that is quite economical
But the good ones we've seen
So seldom are clean
And the clean ones so seldom are comical

But then Langford Reed came along and made the Limerick respectable

Langford Reed saved the limerick verse
From being taken away in a hearse
He made it so clean
Now it's fit for a queen
Re-established for better or worse

By George Bernard Shaw

The following limericks testify to the poem's popularity, with examples taken from many walks of life:

Bugs and insects

Two spiders were noisily playing
Their mom came and gave them a flaying
She said "Stop that riot
You have to be quiet
A mantis is here and he's praying!"

A fly and a flea in a flue
Were imprisoned, so what could they do?
Said the fly "Let us flee!"
"Let us fly!" Said the flea
So they flew through a flaw in the flue

By Ogden Nash

Sports

A good tennis serve is an ace
As it lands in the court at a pace
Backhand or forehand
It may need some more hand
So your shot will not end in disgrace

Mohammed Ali carried a punch
Could spar from breakfast to lunch
A real heavy blow
Could produce a KO
That punch before lunch was the crunch

Animals

There was a young lady from Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger
They returned from the ride
With the lady inside
And the smile on the face of the tiger.

By Edward Lear

Do beware, I declare, the rhinoceros
Whose temper is truly atroceros
So do not, for Pete's sake
Ever stupidly make
An obstroperos rhinoceros croceros.

Reptiles

There once was a gastronaut croc
Who pan fried his fish in a wok
With consummate skill
He filleted brill
And boiled up the bones to make stock.

Of all the world's myriad fauna
There's nothing quite like the iguana
But you must understand
That they hail from a land
With a climate that's much like a sauna.

Desert tortoises stay in their shell
They move slowly, and burrow as well
This is all for the best
In a desert southwest
Even reptiles find hotter than hell.

A further selection will appear in a future issue of Themescene.

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BTA ONE PAGE VIRTUAL COMPETITION 2025

We 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 between 1st September 2024 and 31st January 2025. An entry form (on page ……. or available at www.britishthematic.org.uk/bta-one-page-virtual-competition.htm) 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 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:

Adult entries		
Title and Introduction	*max*	10
Presentation		15
The story		40
Quality of material		10
Non-thematic information		15
Variety of material		10
		100

Youth entries		
Story	*maximum*	20
Knowledge of the material used		20
Variety of material (both philatelic and non-philatelic)		20
Presentation		40
		100

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

1st exhibit:

……

2nd exhibit*:

……

**Please note 2nd entries may not be accepted if more than 100 exhibits are received.*

How did you hear about this competition?

….....

….....

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

BTA PROGRAMME 2025

14 January 19.00 for 19.30	**Zoom meeting** Dr. Jean Alexander *Supermarket philately. Part 3* In the third of a four-part series of presentations Jean will illustrate how Royal Mail produced items of philatelic interest for individual companies such as Reader's Digest and Boots Chemist.
20 February 19.00 for 19.30	**Zoom meeting** Sue Burn *Flying boats and the Empire Airmail scheme* The presentation covers the introduction of the iconic Short Brothers Flying Boats to carry the mails on the British Empire Routes under the Empire Airmail Scheme. Particular reference is paid to the Imperial Airways Eastern route to Australia and NZ, making use of a substantial amount of supporting documentation that gives an insight into the development of the route and the extension onto NZ.
4 April 19.00 for 19.30	**Zoom meeting** Dr. Jean Alexander *Supermarket philately. Part 4* In the final part of her series of presentations Jean will explain how Royal Mail aimed to sell products in a Supermarket Style, such as Format Packs.
7 - 11 May	**EuroPhilEx** Hall 9, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Including: Court of Honour featuring the 1856 1 cent British Guyana, plus eight other world-class exhibits; specialist society meetings throughout the five days (25 confirmed so far including BTA); plus over 60 dealers confirmed so far, including Royal Mail stand and a free souvenir sheet each day.
9 May. 13.00 to 15.00 Room 4	**BTA meeting at EuroPhilEx** Guest speaker: Peter Cockburn, Immediate Past President of the Royal Philatelic Society, London *Postcards of British North Borneo*
14 June 11.30 - 13.00 Studio Room	**Annual General Meeting** **Guest speaker:** Barry Stagg *Daffodils* To be held as part of Swinpex 2024. The Grange Leisure and Community Centre, Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon, SN3 4JY

BTA PROGRAMME 2025 continued

20 June 19.00 for 19.30	**Zoom meeting** Wendy Buckle *A history of writing materials: animal, vegetable and mineral* Codified writing systems began around 6,000 years ago. Before the invention of paper, cultures used whatever raw materials were plentiful in their area, and this presentation will look at the surprisingly wide range of materials which have been used.
19 September 19.00 for 19.30	**Zoom meeting** Lloyd Hogg *Talk like a pirate* Ahoy me hearties. Shiver me timbers that Lloyd should be giving this talk to all you lubbers. He shall be taking yarr through 'is booty in the exhibit. Avast, or e'll have you down Davy Jones's Locker! It won't be scuttlebutt either, but rather a fun but seriously philatelic journey. Fair winds to you all.
25 October 12.30	**BTA meeting at Stampex** F*ull details to follow* Business Design Centre, London
October 10.00 - 16.00	**BTA One-Frame Competitions** *At* South of England Stamp Fair & Sussex Convention Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL.
November 19.00 for 19.30 Date TBC	**Zoom meeting** Les Ashton-Smith *Albert Einstein*

Advance Notice of 2026 event:

BTA Weekend at Oxford Spires Hotel

17 - 19 April 2026

THEMESCENE INDEX 2024

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10. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Have a go doing your own!

ANSWERS: 1) Chicken Run. 2) Lion King. 3) Spider Man. 4) Singing in the Rain. 5) Jungle Book. 6) The Wizard of Oz. 7) Kung Fu Panda. 8) Frozen. 9) Lady and the Tramp. 10) Happy Feet.

To receive a FREE Stamp Active album and stamps (children only), write to us and tell us about your favourite films and stamps. Just4Kids,c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth BH1 4RS.

We wish all our readers a very happy Christmas