

Newsletter No.18 September 2003

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IN THIS ISSUE - That's the way to do it, Royal Women, Up Staged, Yes you can screen more Film Stars, Collector Prince happy to screen Hollywood Wife, **AGM of WETS**, COMMENT, Are you Legal?

"THAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT."

"My first interest in puppets came at the age of five" stated Richard Wheeler, when taken to a lecture at a Women's Institute Meeting by my Mother. I have worked professionally with them since 1942 at the age of nine.

My interest in stamps came about at the same time but it was not until 3 years ago that the - Roadshow came to the Taw and Torridge Stamp Club and Mary Claydon had me hooked onto this line of collecting. I read through the book Handbook of Thematic Philately by W.E.J. Van den Bold and I started with a general theme of "All the World's a Stage". I soon realised that this was too vast a subject and decided to take one section on it's own



for starters. I chose the subject of Puppets and started a trawl of the dealers with little success, particularly so at Stampex. I was met with the fact that there "weren't any puppet stamps, or there was no demand".

I looked to the American Thematic Association who came up with a basic list of stamps associated with puppets, likewise from a book "Theatre Philatelic" by Harrold C. Shiffler. A search of Gibbons World Catalogues revealed a few further items plus help from specialist collectors in other fields. The Internet revealed a few more finds and I started corresponding (and buying!) with dealers throughout the world. I now have a collection getting larger by the moment and exhibited 32 sheets at Thematica this year. Not perfect - but a start and a most constructive criticism from the Chairman of Judges who by the way is to be our speaker at next year's spring meeting. I have heard so many stories to the opposite of my experience or may have been put off exhibiting by virtue of comments received from some 'clever clogs' who say you should have done this or that - or they would have done so and so. Don't be put off.

I mentioned the lack of help from a lot of dealers at Stampex, but not so at Thematica where I spent far more than I had intended to. What was particularly noticeable was the second day of the exhibition when a number of dealers who had looked round the exhibits the night before who when I asked for puppet stamps or those items associated with the subject, were most helpful. One dealer from Belgium was most complimentary and has gone out of his way to help. Perhaps I have been lucky or have taken on board that expression of Mr Punch. "That's the way to do it".

ROYAL WOMEN

Following on my article on women in the November Newsletter I began to think of the influence certain royal ladies have had. Take Victoria - the growth of the British Empire during the long years of her reign was not due to her yet she had an enormous influence on the world - possibly as much as anything through the alliances formed by her children. We do not hear so much of the influence of Queen Mary but she was a strong minded and



intelligent woman yet she remained subservient to her husband because she believed in the position of the King. When Princess of Wales in 1906 she attended at the Queens Hall the Sweated Industries Exhibition. Some of the organisers were far from enthusiastic about the visit - though they saw the publicity use of it. Many of the organisers were to become prominent in the Labour and Socialist Movements one of them was Mary MacArthur who had come to London with one purpose to free women workers from the bondage system of working and organise them into Trade Unions. The Princess's interested and highly intelligent questions impressed those who had scoffed at her presence and during the first World War most of the women involved in staging the exhibition became members of the Central Committee of the Queen's Work for Women Fund and the secretary of that fund was Mary MacArthur who had had no time for royalty. The Queen was a very intelligent woman - interested in everything the women of the country were doing- certainly had she lived in a later decade more might have been heard of the



care for women she always showed. In the Second World War we all know of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's desire to do all she could for the whole country but always at the top of the list the women and children. Many people decry Royal Families but in time of war they often become the focus of the country's loyalty - Wilhelmina of Holland is one example. She practically had to be forced to leave Holland for the comparative safety of England.

In the First World War Belgium's King Albert and his wife Queen Elizabeth stayed on 20 square miles of Belgian soil with their troops and the Queen who was a qualified doctor worked tirelessly among the sick and wounded. At the end of the war on their return to Brussels they were feted. Elizabeth worked always in medical matters such as the tuberculosis crusade and she founded 'Concourse Reine Elizabeth an international competition for composers and performers who might not have had the opportunity of bringing their works and performances to the notice of the public. She was one of the last royal patrons of the arts in Europe. Princess Georgine of Liechtenstein was always involved in welfare work for women and children and at the end of the war her sympathy for the refugees led her to found the Liechtenstein



Red Cross. There are many other instances of royal ladies making their mark but to finish remember the impact carried by Princess Diana as Princess of Wales in bringing the plight of Aids victims - drug takers - and those injured by land mines to the attention of the world.



UP STAGED

- Simon Blumenfeld who writes in the theatrical magazine "The Stage" has recently written two articles featuring members of WETS. The first was about the Hiscocks and their interest in Pirates ([perhaps we can persuade them to submit an article for WETS News? - Ed](#)). The second about Richard Wheeler and his lifelong association with Puppets, see the article on page 1. It just goes to show who takes note, and the oddest places that our hobby reaches.

They do say that "all the worlds a stage", some of our members have already found their way there, how long before others follow.

YES, YOU CAN SCREEN MORE FILM STARS!

Following on from our look at some of the Hollywood stars in Issue 16 of WETS News you can further expand your thematic collection with many other world screen stars.

"Hollywood wasn't the only place to send out great films to the world from the start of the 19th century, what about Pinewood and Elstree", states Tony Smith. And though they are harder to find before the 1950s, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain made great films, and stars. Finding the actors and actresses "stampwise" is however quite a hard task.

In Britain we had to wait until 1988 to feature Vivien Leigh, David Niven, Peter Sellers, and Charlie Chaplin, then in 1990 a "Smiles" gave us half a laugh from Stan Laurel. The "Centuries of Cinema" issues from 1996 shoed Vivien Leigh with husband Laurence Olivier in a scene from "Lady Hamilton", the other stamps showed Cinemas, Tickets, and even the Pathe News sign but no stars.



Surely there must soon be more British stars screened, and why not some recognition of J.Arthur Rank who prior to his death in 1972 at the age of 84 had played a major role in our film industry. Special cancels and cachets would add to any British movie show, does anyone have one showing the Rank Trademark (*muscular man beating a gong*).

The Republic of Ireland featured scenes from four of its movies in 1996, having featured the Grace Kelly family link the previous year on a single stamp. Surprisingly all the Europeans seem reluctant to feature their screen greats. Anna Magnani, who died in 1973 after many fine films, was pictured in a 1996 Italian set that did not feature any other stars. The year before Italy's legendary silent star Rudolph Valentino appeared in a scene from "Son of the Sheik" years after his death.

France was also slow to screen its stars only showing Romy Schneider, Simone Signoret, and several actors in 1998.

Showing even less favour for its stars is Germany who waited until 2002 to feature Hildegard Knef, and Marlene Dietrich some ten years after her death at age 90.

If you wish to screen the film greats, and they are not all American, you will need to look at the catalogue listing of the lesser countries..

A recent search produced one of my all time greats Sophia Loren in a set from Bulgaria along with several other well known stars. If you want to complete

some pages of British stars who became greats in America, you can find Charlie Chaplin, Bob Hope, and Stan Laurel featured on many World Issues. **GOOD HUNTING FOR THE STARS OF YOUR STORY.**



COLLECTOR PRINCE HAPPY TO "SCREEN" HOLLYWOOD WIFE

So who was the Hollywood star to appear pre-2000 on more stamps than any other star? Of course it was the actress who climbed to "High Society" in Europe - Grace



Kelly. Starring in many films of the 1950's she married Prince Rainier of Monaco in 1956. The Prince a collector himself guaranteed she featured in 34 issues from the Wedding to the Silver Wedding, and often appearing with her three children.



IF YOU FAILED TO ANSWER OUR LAST NEWSLETTER QUESTION - the legend from Hollywood not allowed to appear on a US stamp was Ronald Regan. He went on to become President and is still alive today aged 92 . Only dead Presidents may appear on US stamps.

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUR SNIPPETS AND STORIES INCLUDED IN WETS NEWS - contact the Editor details at the head of the Newsletter.

AGM of the WEST OF ENGLAND THEMATIC SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14th June 2003 held in Exeter. 14 members present.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM. - Were read, agreed and signed. (*These had been published in a previous copy of WETS News.*)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT. - The officers of the society were thanked for doing an excellent job during the 12 months since their election. Members were requested to supply exhibits for the WETS ROADSHOW in 2004, and to bring this material to the November meeting at Buckfastleigh.

SECRETARY'S REPORT. - There was little to report. The bookings for the 2004 Roadshow stand, so far, at 9 Clubs, members were requested to ensure their clubs made booking requests as soon as possible.

Alison said that she wished to retire as Secretary *Who can we get to volunteer as Secretary?* having carried out these duties since 1990.

TREASURER'S REPORT. - (*A copy of the accounts had been issued with the meeting notification*) There are 48 paid up members. The accounts were presented and acceptance was PROPOSED by P McDowall SECONDED J Wigmore that they be approved and AGREED.

Auditor, the Treasurer requested that Mr.A.Potier be accepted into this position. PROPOSED J Wigmore and SECONDED M Claydon - AGREED.

PACKET SECRETARY'S REPORT. - A full report was given and some difficulties were addressed and discussed by the members. **MORE MATERIAL IS REQUIRED FOR THE PACKET**

NEWSLETTER EDITORS REPORT - Tony Smith was thanked for his co-ordination of articles, and members were requested to submit new articles along with associated illustrations for future issues.

ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE.

Proposal of officers for 2003/04 was as follows

Chairman - Mary Claydon
Secretary - Vacant
Treasurer - Richard Wheeler
Packet Secretary - Anne Moorshead
Newsletter Editor - Jim Wigmore
News Co-ordinator - Tony Smith

The above was AGREED unanimously .

ANY OTHER BUSINESS. - the date and time of the next meeting was set as above,



THE NEXT MEETING will be on 15th November at Buckfastleigh Town Hall 1400 hrs to 1700 hrs. Members are requested to bring along material suitable for the 2004 Roadshow. We look forward to a good turn out, and reviewing the material submitted.

COMMENT - the fact that we have a membership of nearly 50 people and that we were unable to appoint a Secretary at our AGM was indeed a disappointment. It was however symptomatic of many clubs and societies in today's world, everyone wants to belong but nobody wishes to do the tasks that keep the society going. As Mary Claydon mentioned at the time of the Election of Officers for our society, many of us are no longer spring chickens, and we need some of our younger members to start to take on some of the responsibilities of keeping the society going. To parody the words of the late John.F.Kennedy **"THINK NOT WHAT YOUR SOCIETY CAN DO FOR YOU - BUT WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR SOCIETY"**. **ALL OFFERS TO MARY CLAYDON**

ARE YOU LEGAL? - "asks Richard Wheeler" Following a Judges comment received in a thematic exhibit that I should avoid using an illegal issue of stamps, I was somewhat puzzled as they were published in a Michelin catalogue but only in the Appendix of Stanley Gibbons. I contacted the UPU in Berne who informed me that they were a legal issue and I have had a great deal of assistance from them. They are keen that all collectors should be aware of the great proliferation of illegal stamp issues made on behalf of various countries, particularly thematic. **A listing from 1996 - 2003 of eight A4 sides of such issues is available obtainable from Richard at a cost of £1.**

Should any Member have doubts about any issue, contact the UPU direct. They will be pleased to hear from you and those with email facilities can be put on the address list.

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