



West of  
England  
Thematic  
Society

## Newsletter No.37 January 2010

### Society Officers

**Chairman** – Mary Claydon Tel 01398 331731 email [mary.claydon@bopenworld.com](mailto:mary.claydon@bopenworld.com)  
**Secretary** – Gary Green 3 Arch Cottages Gestridge Rd. Kingsteinton TQ12 3AH 01626 336603  
**Treasurer** – Richard Wheeler 01271 813940 [richard.wheeler@telepuppets.com](mailto:richard.wheeler@telepuppets.com)  
**News Co-ordinator** - Tony Smith 26 Ashleigh Rd. Honiton Devon EX14 1TD Tel 01404 46358  
**Editor** - Jim Wigmore 20 Gilpin Close Dawlish EX7 9SZ  
Tel 01626 864844 email [JamesWigmore@aol.com](mailto:JamesWigmore@aol.com)

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## WHAT TO COLLECT IN A THEMATIC DISPLAY – Part 2 by Richard Wheeler METER MARKS, POST MARKS AND FLAMMES

There is so much material available to add that extra interest to your display. In many cases lateral thinking is required. This advertisement for Wayang Tea comes from my own display as it shows a Wayang puppet on the Side of the canister.



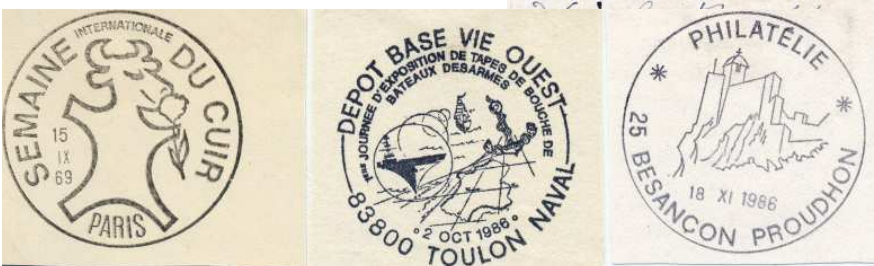
A Doll museum advertisement for automaton figures.



Town Post marks, especially old ones from the USA provide interesting material. I search for names that are going to bring a display to life. Many of these

offices may not have existed for over a hundred years. The two displayed here could be put together describing an event, or coupled with an old post card perhaps (but not for a competitive exhibit) enhancing your display.

Postmarks celebrating an event



Flammes which are mainly French, describe advertising for a host of events, tourist places of interest, carnivals, Shipping, aircraft, the list is endless and can be linked

with your own display. Many of these items can be found on eBay, Delcampe and other web sites at very reasonable prices. More typical cancels of this type follow on page 2.

*(We look forward to the next instalment and seeing some of this type of material appearing in members displays and exhibits. – Ed)*





## QUESTION

1 - Many famous folk have sailed in or out of Plymouth. But which one referred to staying there --"the most miserable days I ever spent".

2 - And who else might have had a reason to say the same .... but didn't?

**Answer** page 3.

## The War in the Pacific

My father wasn't a Hitler of the Pacific War says Japanese Emperor Akihito, Emperor of Japan, marked his 20th year on the Chrysanthemum Throne by speaking in defence of his father, Hirohito, who has long been regarded by many as standing alongside his generals and politicians who launched the Pacific War in 1941.

He was a man of peace ever since visiting World War I battlefield in Europe, said Emperor Akhito recently. He was not like Hitler or Mussolini. Japan's Prime Minister General Hideki Tojo led his nation into war with Far East neighbours from 1931 and it was glory each day. The Emperor backed him and when Europeans and the USA sought an end to conflict Tojo declared he would "purge" Anglo-American influence in the region.

The USA was still talking with Japanese diplomats in Washington when an "undeclared" war began on December 7 1941 as 360 planes bombed Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. Nineteen US ships were sunk, 200 aircraft destroyed on the ground and 2,400 people killed.



The Americans immediately declared war and Winston Churchill quickly put Britain alongside them with Australia and other Pacific Commonwealth countries joining them.

At first the war favoured Japan. In February 1942 Singapore - regarded by Churchill "an impregnable fortress" was lost and thousands of British troops and sailors captured. More

died or became prisoners as the Philippines and other islands fell in a seemingly unstoppable charge through the Pacific.

The United States, now realising the power of aircraft in this warfare, finally checked the Japanese progress as they tried to establish their troops on the Solomon Islands and New Guinea. The costs were considerable, with allied ships sunk and men killed.



It was a different war from Europe. The fighting was largely in the air or with aircraft carriers and battleships often firing at enemies they didn't see. One 1943 five-day-battle saw Japan lose a carrier and a dozen other ships.



The success was a much-needed boost for Americans, Australians and native troops from various islands. They had stopped Japan for the first time. When three Japanese aircraft carriers were sunk soon afterwards, Admiral Chester Nimitz claimed it was "one of the biggest naval encounters in world history".

General Douglas MacArthur was in charge of the overall strategy. In 1944, using vital information from natives hiding in jungles where Japanese soldiers patrolled, he recaptured New Guinea. The Japanese were said to have been so surprised they fled leaving their breakfasts uneaten. The 'watchers' played a key part. Soon after an airstrip guarded by 1,000 men was captured. As the warfare moved north, the Solomon Islands became American/Australian by August. With the now increasing leap from island to island, accurate bombing from aircraft carriers prepared the way for the marines to storm up beaches and into jungles.

General MacArthur, typically wearing his sunglasses, took special delight on striding through the water with his officers and men when the Philippines were recaptured.

Australia, whose Northern Territory capital Darwin had been bombed in 1942, now heard Tokyo was being bombed.

All the allies knew they were just 750 miles from Tokyo when a now philatelically-famous group of US marines raised the stars and stripes on the highest point on the Japanese island of Iwo Jima. More men died but now victory was in sight.

An unconditional surrender was rejected by General Tojo and on August 6 1945 an Atomic Bomb fell on Hiroshima, destroying the city and killing over 100,000 people. Tojo again refused to admit defeat and on August 9 another A-Bomb destroyed Nagasaki.

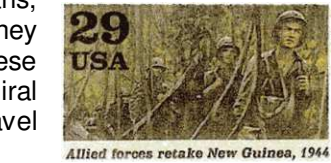
Emperor Hirohito ordered accepting the unconditional surrender and the treaty was signed aboard USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay with General MacArthur watching.

## ANSWERS

1 - Charles Darwin who argued with HMS Beagle Captain, Robert Fitzroy, about his quarters but rarely stepped ashore before sailing off.

2a - Fifteen years-old Catherine of Aragon stayed over a week to recover from a stormy voyage from Spain to eventually marry Prince Arthur (and later King Henry VIII).

2b - General Dwight Eisenhower stayed at Plymouth with General Montgomery to plan the invasion of France but bad weather forced him to delay the Normandy landing until D-Day 6th of June 1944.



**WETS Autumn Meeting at Buckfastleigh**, was a fantastic success with lots of entries for the **WETS Trophy** (shown in *WETS News No35*) The winner was David Roseveare with 'Versailles "A place fit for Kings"' a close second Gary Green with "Bee Keeping and the life of the Honey Bee" and third was Martin Ellam with "German Inflation Years".

*(Comment from our Chairman Mary Claydon - To all our members who attended the October meeting and who brought with them the most amazing entries for the John Hilsdon Trophy and the Roadshow may I give my heartfelt thanks. You have provided what many of us consider to be the best Roadshow ever. I find it extremely heartening to see the amount of support there still is for WETS which you all know I feel to be my particular 'baby' and after the October meeting all of us on the committee feel inspired to go on. The next event is the annual WETS day when John Haywood will be talking on Social Philately which again is a way of showing our collections which I myself have adopted. Please support us on this day and let us have a record turnout.)*

**WETS Roadshow 2010** – has started its journey see the Wessex Federation website [www.wessexpf.org.uk](http://www.wessexpf.org.uk) for the details of where it will be visiting. The Wessex Calendar of events now carries the meeting dates of all clubs and societies in addition to the specials events being held in our area. **Members should note** – the material in this years roadshow is colour copies to ensure that those who submitted material did not lose their material for a year and can continue to develop their theme. This years show has enough material so that clubs can decide what they wish to see.

**Philatelic Research Tools** – We now have to hand two major research tools that will prove popular and very useful to those of our members that have internet access.

**The BTA** have a fantastic library of Books, Philatelic Cuttings and Themescene its in house publication. All this information can now be searched on the BTA website, there is a direct link from our WETS website and the Wessex Federation website. There are both manual and interactive searches are available. Copies of the cuttings are available for the cost of copying, the downside is you need to be a member of BTA, but shouldn't you be a member anyway.

**The Royal Philatelic Society London (RPSL)** have launched a directory of philatelic information most of which is the property of major philatelic groups. The index can be searched by subject and it will tell you what is available and who owns it. This tool is still in its infancy and is being tested by RPSL and the organisations that have so far supplied information to the index. There will be a meeting at RPSL in February to discuss the testing and feedback. Our initial thoughts are that while interesting this index will principally benefit RPSL Members.

The availability and ease of use of the Internet will inevitably bring more information useful to collectors and hopefully raise the profile of our hobby.

**WETS NEWS – The Future** – The rising costs of postage has caused us to review how we can make the best use of our income and keep our distribution costs to a minimum. We would like to be able to email future issues to those members that have email addresses. The format will require that end users will need Adobe Acrobat Reader, this is FREE Software that can be downloaded from the Adobe website. You will be able to read your WETS News onscreen and if you really wish to print it you will be able to do so. The reason for this choice is to ensure that download file size is minimised and transfer time is minimal, probable only a few seconds.

If you wish to receive your WETS News using this process in future email your request to the editor. Posted copies will still go out to those who do not have email or who do not request to go on the new circulation. **PLEASE NOTE having both is not an option.**

**We will be including some of our past issues of WETS News on our website using the PDF format described above, it just might encourage a few more members.**

**DATE FOR YOUR DIARY – WETS DAY** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2010 at the Dartmoor Lodge Ashburton starting at 10.30 am. Social Philately by John Haywood – More details and application forms with the next news letter. **Please note – we are now back in the larger room as the result of significant refurbishment by the new owners of the Dartmoor Lodge.**

**June 2010 will be our AGM** – we need a Speaker/Display for this meeting which will be in Exeter at the usual location – volunteers please contact Mary Claydon as soon as possible.

**Margaret Morrel** – It has recently come to my attention that Margaret who was amongst our founder members has not been having a very good time. She has broken her leg twice in 2009 and is now suffering from severe Osteoporosis. As the result of this she is now unable to look after herself and is now permanently in a Nursing Home in Tavistock close to her two daughters. I feel sure that all who knew Margaret will be saddened by this news. I can provide details of her address if you wish to pop in and see her or write. – Ed.