



West of
England
Thematic
Society

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IN THIS ISSUE – WETS News by email, From our Chairman, WETS Day Report, Dates for your Diary, 2016 WETS Roadshow, Wessex Federation 2015 Competitions, Broken Rule, Too Much Spam, How to put together a Thematic Collection, Thematic Material for Sale, Cricket Lovely Cricket.

WETS NEWS by email –If you are not yet a recipient give your name and email address to the Editor. Increases in postal charges, mean it is important to circulate as much information as possible by this means. Look at our website www.wessexpf.org.uk/WETS for examples of the quality. Download time is very fast. **DON'T FORGET TO SAVE WHAT YOU GET.** It is suggested you create a file called WETS News to put them in.

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN – Well done all those members who attended our 2015 WETS Day and if you were one of those who brought along an entry for our theme of “Water” really well done, they were all great and made an interesting follow on to Dr Jean Alexander’s inspirational display on Waterfalls. It was good to hear a speaker interested more in the subject than in competition. While we are well aware of the competitive aspects of our hobby, it is an area that many will not aspire to especially those who are still new to thematics. It is those who are new to thematics we need to reach out to and inspire them to be creative with the topics they are interested in. When WETS first started this was the area we addressed by having themes for meetings and bring along exhibits on the set theme. While some of our members have picked up on these themes and taken the subjects forward to higher levels, which we very much applaud, there are others who still need to be encouraged.

I feel WETS has to be at the forefront of providing encouragement without pushing the competitive element, if members decide to go down this route, we have members who can provide help and support, but it should not be our prime aim.

Membership discussion following our display on “Water” looked at some of the issues above and it was agreed that themed meetings were a good idea. With this in mind we selected the subject of **“Air” for our 2015 Autumn Meeting.**

Our decision to move to Buckfastleigh Town Hall and put on a Buffet Lunch all inclusive in the price seemed to work quite well and we will be doing this again next year.



WETS DAY REPORT

By Martin Ellam

On a sunny Saturday 11th April fifteen members enjoyed a wonderful WETS Day at Buckfastleigh town hall. Coffee was served at ten as members gathered prior to our Chairman Jim Wigmore welcoming everyone and introducing our speaker Jean Alexander. She presented her “Waterfalls of the World” display and explained how her dad told her to choose one subject. This she did and it all sprang to life and flowed just like a steam, picking up material along its journey. The display was arranged in



continents and her search continues for unusual material. Members enjoyed viewing the stamps and a lively discussion ensued. A delicious buffet lunch was provided and Andrew Austen's chocolate cake was a great hit. After lunch members "Water" displays were put up onto the boards and our speaker viewed and gave a critique. There was a good progression of the theme which was both interesting and instructive. During the day Plymouth Philatelic Society's thematic display board was on show. To close the afternoon the chairman thanked our speaker and the members who displayed. We now look forward to the AGM and competition in the autumn.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 5th September – Dawlish Stamp Club Exhibition and Wessex Federation Competition Displays in the Strand Centre Dawlish. There will be dealer presence including Eddie Foley a Thematic Dealer. The exhibition will be open from 10.00 am until 3.30 pm. catering will be available. There is a good train service to Dawlish Station only a few minutes walk away. Stagecoach buses 2 and 11 also stop close to the Station. Car Parking is available in The Barton car park which is also just a few minutes walk away. Go along and have a really good day out.

PROVISIONAL DATES

Autumn WETS Day 31st October, this will include the John Hilsdon Trophy, The PIP Trophy, the AGM and Displays on the theme of "Air", more details in the next WETS News. Please start the process of putting together your entries for the John Hilsdon Trophy competition.

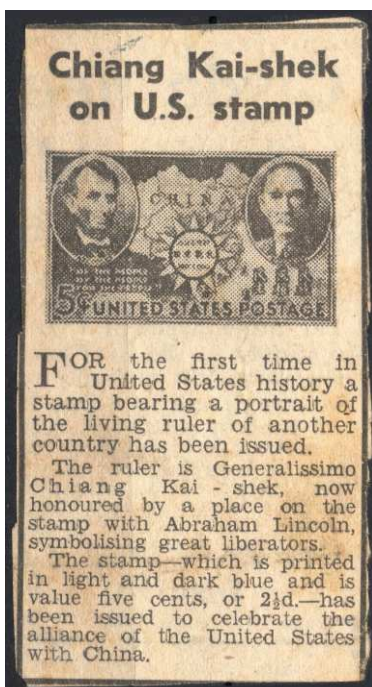
2nd May 2016 – WETS Day – we are trying to book Pat Grimwood-Taylor to talk about Social Philately, more details to follow.

2016 WETS Roadshow

The early birds are already making bookings for the show. We have much to live up to after 2014. Our displays of "Water" plus those of "Air" will we hope be loaned and to this we will be looking to add Material from the John Hilsdon Competitions for 2014 and 2015. Will we also be able to add PIP Trophy material. By this means we will be able to show how we start out and where we get to. We want this show to be as inspirational as our 2014 show.

WESSEX FEDERATION 2015 Competitions

We would like WETS members to have a go at putting an entry into this years competition. Entry Forms are available from Club Secretaries or direct from the Wessex Federation website. There is also a new competition this year for those who have never entered a competition, it is totally open and only needs to be 4 sheets and its FREE to enter. How about getting together with other members from your local club and have a go at the Thompson Cup.



BROKEN RULE



When the USA issued SG903 on the 4th July 1942 (*illustrated left*) it broke one of the countries fundamental rules that their stamps would only illustrate people who were no longer alive.

The stamp shows the head of Abraham Lincoln and that of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek who at the time was very much alive.

As can be seen the philatelic press of the time picked up this point and cited a political alliance being formed between the USA and China. This makes an interesting story for anyone looking at themes relating to politics, the USA, China, or Political Alliances.

The above came from a collection offered for auction where the press cutting had been tucked into the USA section of an album and two pages on was the stamp concerned.

You just never know what you are going to find or the directions in which you will be taken.



TOO MUCH SPAM?

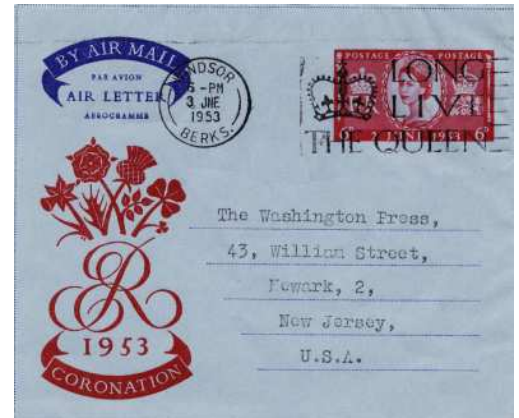
(Spam – being defined as the mass of philatelic junk we are deluged with on a daily basis)

I wonder how many of you feel as I do that maybe we are wrong to encourage the countries of the world to pour out stamps by the hundreds merely to sell to collectors, with no valid reason for the issue in the country of origin. On the other hand how many thematic collectors would be able to illustrate certain aspects of their theme without some of these stamps. I am not always sure when

contemplating purchasing some items whether I could use it in an exhibition, and I have often viewed with suspicion items used even in national exhibitions, therefore I think I have been too careful in the past. From this point of view a seminar on thematics would certainly be of interest to me. Christine Earle suggested this could be arranged, if enough people were interested, and I would be glad to have some feedback from members on this subject. Would those interested please contact Mary Claydon (telephone number etc, at the top of the newsletter).

Such items as the covers I get from a contact of mine in the USA – unaddressed envelopes with special cancels for various women. It seems the word Station refers to post office. The authorities designate one office to use the special cancel and temporarily name the office to co-ordinate with the cancel. Definitely contrived don't you think? However since this is authorised by and done under the auspices of the post office I assume I could use these in competition.

Having said all that, think of the numerous First Day Covers we all tend to use in our collections which these days are frankly only produced to con collectors. I don't think this was the reason for the issue of special cancels between the wars and before. There were special cancels for the Coronation Durbar in India for George V coronation – for the Prince of Wales Camps in the same country and for numerous royal occasions and visits, but when you think of today and the numerous stamps and covers issued by the Crown Agents for the Queen Mothers various birthdays – and what about the Gold Booklet, issued for the Golden Wedding of our present Queen and her Consort. I am sure we could use these.



So perhaps it does not matter – maybe we are all so delighted to get something to illustrate a particular point in our story that we do not care. I am going to a large thematic exhibition in Holland in September – I will take particular note of what is used and report in a future newsletter.

(The above was written by our President Mary Claydon in 2000, is it still true today?)

How to put together a Thematic Collection

– will be the subject of a display by Jim Wigmore to Bideford Stamp Club on 13th July 2015. Support from WETS members would be appreciated both by the speaker and by the club.

Now who would want to read stories in the WETS newsletter when they can listen to a face like that?

THEMATIC MATERIAL ON SALE - Lots of thematic material will be on sale at the forthcoming South West Philatelic Auctions next sale on Sat 6th June 2015 in Exeter. Included are large stock books on just about every subject you can think of. For a catalogue call Richard on 01752 698089



CRICKET LOVELY CRICKET - Philatelically that is.



The British have "invented" most of the worlds sporting activities, soccer, cricket, golf, tennis, and rugby, though we seem to have moved into the "also ran's" category lately. So while waiting for us to grab a few trophies again why not go thematic on the pitch!



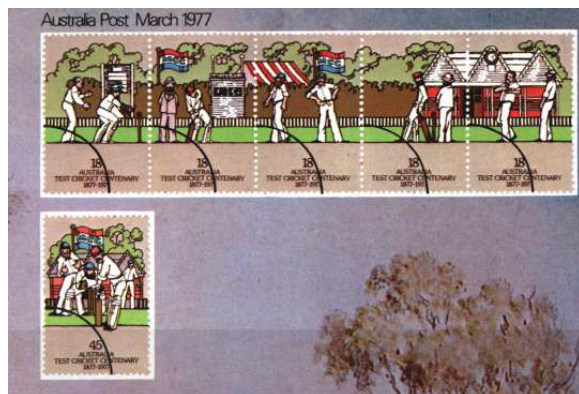
What sport? Well how about pulling on your pads and striding out to the wicket for a cricket collection!

Cricket began in England during the 17th Century and became more organised around 1800. Yet it was 1973 before Britains post authorities batted for the game. Not surprisingly it was the legendary W.G.Grace who appeared on a set (SG928-30) which marked the century of the Official County Championships.

In 1980 a Sports Centenaries set included a 17 1/2p (SG1137) for the first test meeting with Australia, while in 1994 a series on "Summer Sports" included a Lords Test Match (SG1837).

During 1987 four booklets featured Cricket on the covers, but mainly apart from that anyone looking to bat for the game then it has to rely on special cancels and post marks, fortunately there are lots of them.

Australia our greatest and longest cricket opponent introduced (SG572) in 1974, and hammered a six with a 1977 set (SG647-52) to mark the Test History, and in 1992 remembered its Sheffield Shield domestic competition (SG1381-2) reaching a century.



Launching a series of "Australian Legends", Sir Donald Bradman was remembered in 1997. The batsman who scored 309 not out during a test game against England at Leeds in 1930, dominated the game for 20 years and finished with a test average of 99.94 per innings. He featured in a portrait and action photo pair (SG1663-4) and became the first non-royal to appear on an Australian stamp while still alive.



Individual Caribbean countries play jointly

under the West Indies banner for cricket, but many islands offer stamps marking their success on the pitch. Barbados were the first to bat, including the West Indies batting great Gary Sobers in a 1966 "Independence" set (SG358). Guyana, Jamaica, and St. Lucia offered issues two years later marking the MCC Tour. Batsman's style was shown in a 1969 Grenada set (SG344-7), while New Zealand concentrated on schoolboys and girls in action (SG899-900). Samoa included (SG366) in a 1971 set, and India marked the same season with Test success (SG864). The next few years showed many Commonwealth Countries featuring cricket, though the Fijians raised a few eyebrows as a 1974 set (SG492-4) showed men playing in white skirts rather than flannels.

Unexpected countries, New Caledonia, and Surinam, batted during this time, while in 1976 a dozen Caribbean Islands marked the glory of the West Indies in the World Cup competition.

The later 70's and early 80's saw more issues via the expected pitches, though Christmas Island was marking just 25 years since its first match. So why not bat for England via the stamp album! It might even lift the moral of the 2001 season strugglers!

Score a well deserved "ton" if you can name the first country to have a cricketer on a stamp. Well the issue was in



1962 and the pitch.....Cape Verde Island! The inclusion of (SG386) in a sports set was because "sailors who once visited us played this strange game."

If you want a stunning introduction to your collection, well the Marylebone Cricket Club, London, was launched 40 years before the Penny Black was issued, but you might find an entire addressed to the MCC from a hopeful requesting a trial perhaps!

(Inspired by the England – New Zealand match being played at this venue when this was written - Ed.)