

# WETS

Newsletter No 3  
APRIL 1997

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We held our A.G.M. at Liskeard; the Cornwall Philatelic Federation very generously allowed us to be part of CORNEX and we had a separate room with a series of Thematic displays ranging from the serious to the hilarious. Lots of our members made contributions and we think we ended up with show which must have put new ideas into the heads of all who came and looked. And a lot of people came and looked.

Mary Claydon was elected as **Chairman**, her address is Hazelhurst, Bampton, Tiverton EX16 9LJ. The **Treasurer** elected was **Lesley Marley** of 38 Chappeldown Road, Torpoint, PL11 2HO and the **Secretary**, **Alison Burden** of Knowles Barton, Bowden Hill, Ashburton TQ13 7RP.

## ENJOYING THEMATICS

You might be excused for raising an eyebrow and asking what a G.B. Collector knows about Thematics. If your assumption is *"not a lot"* you would not be too far wrong. Nevertheless, this article will ask questions of, not only the 90% of us who are "pretty picture collectors" not giving two hoots about competitions, but also the 10% who do give two hoots (or one hoot).

Having hinted that competitions may be discussed, don't throw in the towel. The first aim is to encourage those who may be in a rut to take a fresh approach to a discipline which can be fun. You all have the ability to produce original Thematic thinking. This can be put to

good use entertaining the public whilst promoting, through competitions entries, our splendid Federation and Club events, thus keeping them, not only alive and kicking, but one step above the more mundane Stamp Fairs.

Recently I and a group of others, were privileged to view an Australian collector's "Swan Theme". Incredibly, such an apparently dull subject had, under thoughtful treatment, come alive like an Agatha Christie novel! **Question:-** How does your theme read? Pretty Pictures? A one subject assembly? Or does your material tell a story like a good "Whodunnit"?

A few years ago, partly for the devil of it, I hoisted a radical Thematic kite entitled "How to be your own Thematics Judge". Full of confidence, I entered it in a Federation Competition. It did not sink like a "lead balloon". The public and the Judges recognised that there was a point being made. The title alone showed that the entry would not follow the conventional format. The main plot was, in fact, "The Changing Face of Queen Victoria" plus sub-plot which, hence the title, was a sheet by sheet hypothetical Judge's critique on the Do's and Don't's of Thematics. It had the usual explanatory beginning and middle with, unusually, a logical conclusion containing a sting in the tail. Just like a good "Whodunnit", although it would have been hung drawn and quartered at National level, it was entertaining.

There is much to recommend the much maligned Brian Sole's "One Liner"

theory. Let the material tell the story. Who? What? Where? Why? and When? Clearly, completely, concisely and correctly. How, they all say, does one achieve this? Having, in the past been assaulted by women with their shoes off, I hope two very nice ladies will count to ten. One method is to change conventional titles to something which opens both oneself and others to thought provoking avenues. Example (I will probably regret this) "A Tale of Whales" is a good title, but would not the pulse rate and imagination catch fire if one thought one was about to see "A Whale of a Tale", or, better still if "Royal Families" became "What the Butler Saw" or even "What the Lawyers Banked". The possibilities are breathtakingly endless! Richard Wiggins may even be persuaded to resurrect his brilliant Goongumpus P.S. in stamp form. What an eye opener that might make!

Finally, whatever you do, never blame the Judges. The onus is upon you to present your story so clearly that, even if the Judges were absolute imbeciles, they would still be able to understand it. For those who never judged, it is an immensely time consuming task. Basically, excluding Judges' comments, they have only two minutes to assess an entry and the public often less. So the message is clear. Let the material tell the story. Do not dismiss the Judges' comments out of hand. Due to lack of time they will be scribbled, so make an effort to understand them. They will be helpful even if you do not immediately recognise the point they are trying to make.

In conclusion, the acid tests are:-  
Was the cardinal rule of any Thematic entry followed?

Did the title and introductory paragraph cover the scope of the entry (or, in this case, the article)?

Did you enjoy it? Did it ask questions of you?

Or was the message so deep that, like Judges' comments often do, it left you scratching your head or preening ruffled feathers?

Hopefully, even if controversial, it did make you think and, unlike Queen Victoria's portrait after Albert's death (the changing face of Queen Victoria) did not leave you entirely unamused. Whichever it was, enjoy your Thematics.

*This article has been written to be deliberately controversial; hopefully it will stir up discussion. We would very much like YOUR ideas and reactions.*

### **AUTUMN MEETING 1997**

Our 1997 Autumn meeting will be held at the Town Hall **BUCKFASTLEIGH** on Saturday 15th November; it will start at 2 p.m. and finish at about 5 p.m.

**Come and bring some sheets.**

(With some stamps on them)

**Come for an exchange of ideas.**

**Come for an informal chat** about your collections and everybody else's.

There will be tea and/or coffee and cakes.

**Entry Free - Raffle!**

We hope to have a Thematic Dealer.

To make this event better we need your opinions.

Would you like a **Swap Shop**?

Would you like **Mini Auction**?

We would like to make up a **list of everybody's interests**. Would you like this?