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Have you ever tried to recruit a "traditional collector" or friend to look at thematics? They could even try by "borrowing" some stamps, covers, cancels, etc. from their album. Some of a Commonwealth collectors material, for example, might be used to tell the history/life of just a single country- thematically. Lets try Australia. Most Commonwealth collectors surely have plenty of material from the island on the other side of the globe, perfect for trying to turn their philatelic world upside down.

TRY AN AUSSIE THEMATIC TALE TO TURN COLLECTING UPSIDE DOWN

The first people to come to this largest island of the world were the aboriginal's who travelled from S.E. Asia over many thousands of years up to 10000BC using rafts and canoes.

A primitive, nomadic people, they lived by hunting wild animals and gathering self grown fruit and vegetables as they travelled away from the



groups original first landing areas on the north west coast, writes Tony Smith.

In a country with a third of its three million square miles covered by desert plus many high mountains and thick forests elsewhere, the aborigine's were not bothered by their nearest neighbours from the Pacific or Indian Ocean Islands.

It was not until the 17th Century that Europeans saw these wanderers homeland. Dutch Captain Willem Jansz briefly sighted the islands N.E coast in 1606 and 10 years later another Dutch East India Company Captain, Dirk Hartog, found the west coast. Hartog instigated a series of voyages around "Terra Australis". Almost all these voyages have been featured on modern Australian stamps, with the



dedicated explorer Abel Tasman (SG355) renowned.

Britains involvement with the area came during Capt. James Cook's voyages to the Pacific starting in 1770. He found the S.E. coast, the most welcoming part of Australia, and he claimed the land for Great Britain and philatelically is No.1 in the islands stamps (SG357 plus others).

If exploration is your theme, this could make a major display for the country has honoured everyone who has "discovered" it right a way up to the central desserts, and little known western plains.



Long before the Aborigine, or Europeans, Australia belonged to the animals, most of which are found nowhere else in the world, their rarity ensuring they are high on the list of children's favourites when visiting the zoo. Not surprisingly Australia puts its fauna on stamps galore.

Everyone associates Australia with its Kangaroo. The animal that hops on its back legs, leans back on its tail and has a Joey in a pouch on its stomach. It featured on

the first stamp of Australia in 1913 and still appears regularly.

If you need a small bird to suggest Australia how about the laughing Kookaburra (SC189, and more), everyone recognises the cuddly tree climbing Koala (SG188, etc.), the water loving mammal with the wide beak is the well known Platypus (SG188a, etc.), and want a bird that stands six feet high, can run at 30 mph but cannot fly, of course, you have the Emu (SG207, etc.)



Not indigenous but now a part of Australia's animal scene are sheep and cattle. Some 200 years ago early settlers saw the South and Eastern flat lands as ideal for both. Merino was the first breed of sheep imported (SG188), it now regularly appears on Australian stamps along with farmers and shearers working with them. The sheep provide the lands main export and money-maker, along with both meat and wool, while beef wheat, fruit, iron ore, coal, and minerals add to the export trade. All are featured on the countries stamps.

Gold is not quite as important as it was 150 years ago, but the "rush" following the original discovery is a part of the countries history, and appears on its stamps.



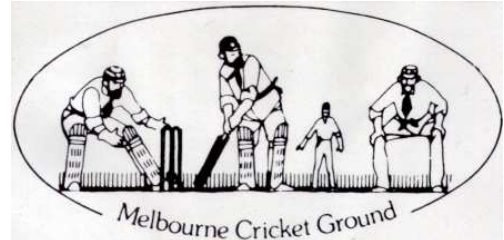
Even before the gold strike, Britain found a "special" use for their new great southern land in the late 18th century when convicts were sent there. Their "sentence" was to provide population to a little used territory.

The first fleet of 11 ships with 750 convicts set up Botany Bay penal colony in 1787-8 and as more followed many men offered to move out and become "free workers". Five stamps tell of that colony.

For 150 years Australia slowly grew, but in post WWII years more immigrants were invited through the "ten pound passage". Between 1945-75 men, women, and children, mostly British, sailed south to start a new life. These too are featured on stamps.

A long-established self governing nation but retaining Commonwealth status and British royal association, the "down-under" brigade have long stressed their sporting strengths.

The British link guaranteed strength at cricket, men like Sir Donald Bradman regularly taking The Ashes from England in superb venues such as Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. More



recently the Aussies have shone in Athletics, Rugby, and Tennis.

The countries stamp issues feature its history, its modern way of life, its flora and fauna, many notable landmarks, such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and the Sydney Opera House, plus its sporting prowess, and they are perfect for forming a thematic story of the country. Every Australian collector you know will be able to provide you with the material to tell the story of life "down-under".

And of course if you, or a "traditional" collector friend want to start a thematic collection, how about the story, of Canada, New Zealand, France, or the U.S.A., or in fact any country appearing in their collection.



(Continuing Leslie Marley's story of banking, the former treasurer of WETS moves on from money matters in England up to the mid-18th century, to the start of the High Street Banks.)

A HORSE WAS NOT FAST ENOUGH

The Growth of Small Banks - By contrast, the pattern of banking that evolved in England in the eighteenth century was that of a growing number of small private banks centred first in London and then in the main market towns. Restricted in their resources, these little banks were naturally very local institutions. They issued notes, which circulated in their immediate area, but rarely far beyond it. In the early part of the 18th century, industrial development was not yet fully begun, and there were relatively few of these small banks outside London. Those which did arise were mainly begun as a side-line by prosperous merchants, who often found that this part of their business grew until it overshadowed their original occupation. Old accounts of these merchant bankers, which still survive, are devoted first to records of transactions in e.g. wool, later to a mixed business, then entirely to financial business. These private or "country banks" as they were called, were family affairs, and their relations with their customers, who were, of course, the local worthies, were close and cordial, and the traditions formed in those days still have their influence on the banker-customer relationships of the banks of today. The Industrial Revolution gave a great stimulus to banking; whereas at the middle of the 18th century there were only a dozen or so country banks, by its end there were over three



hundred. All of them small, not all of them very sound and failures were distressingly common. They usually held reserves in London, with the London private banks, which were larger and stronger, and able to call upon the Bank of England - in case of need. But in those days, when the speed of communication was limited to the speed of a horse, the distance from London frequently measured the likelihood of failure, as reserves might well arrive too late.



The Joint Stock Banks and the Clearing House - A series of financial crises, due largely to the unstable nature of the country banks, led to the withdrawal of the Bank of England's monopoly of joint stock banking when its Charter was renewed in 1833. However, the Bank was allowed to retain the monopoly of note issue within a radius of 65 miles from London. The first joint stock bank (that is, a company rather than a partnership) to be set up in London under the new conditions was the London and Westminster - later the Westminster



Bank. Unable to issue notes, the new banks concentrated upon deposit banking, the banking we know today, and being able to issue shares to the public, they were able to operate on a larger scale than had previously been possible. The use of cheques grew swiftly, but the new banks found that the London private banks, who had operated the Clearing House since its formation about 1770, would not allow them to use its facilities. The Clearing House is an interesting example of the growth of a large institution from private - and strictly unofficial - enterprise. The London private banks had issued cheques for many years, but used what is called today the "walks" method of clearance. Cheques were presented for payment in cash by clerks who went round the City calling at the establishments of their competitors for this purpose. They got into the habit of meeting in a coffee house in Lombard Street, settling the debts to each other over a cup of coffee, and thus succeeded in combining business with pleasure. Their employers got to hear of it, recognised the utility of the practice, engaged a room for the purpose, and the Bankers Clearing House was born. The London private banks opposed the applications of the new joint stock banks for admission to the Clearing House, because of fear of the competitive power of the new type of bank. The joint stock banks published a plan to establish their own Clearing House, at the instigation of J.W.Gilbart, of the London and Westminster Bank in 1840. It was 1854 before the Clearing House was opened to the newcomers. By then the joint stock banks were steadily growing in number and increasing in strength, while the number of private banks was falling rapidly.



(In the next issue we will include the final part of this history - The Modern High Street Bank)

"IMPRESSIONS OF THE PARIS BIENNIAL"

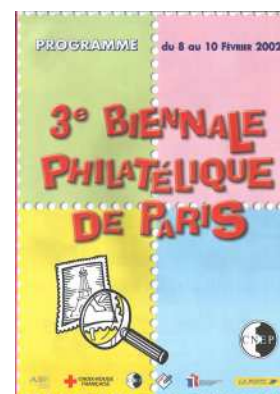
In November and February of every year there are major stamp shows in Paris. They are similar to our own "Stampex" states David Roseveare, but with much more sponsorship. Every two years the February show becomes the "Paris" show - 56 dealers, around 90% resident in the city. There are other attractions, usually a first day of issue of a new stamp, this year it was the Gustav Klimt art stamp with the bonus of the stamp creator turning up to sign covers. An exhibition was staged of the history of the "Stamp Day" issues since 1938 and lastly, and the reason I attended, an exhibition of Pierre Bequet's work, 40 years as an engraver, philatelic and non-philatelic with a video show as well. He was the guest of honour to celebrate his achievements.

One thing, this isn't a show for GB or Commonwealth fans. Maybe only 20% of the stock available, but for thematics and France and Colonies it's "UTOPIA"!! The show lasted 3 days and there was an awful lot to see in that time.

The show was held in the Espace Champerret, a large underground conference centre in the north-west of the city. These events are well attended by young and old and there were always queues at the post office stands. One always meets people, a new contact asked to see me by using the main broadcast system. I thought there was a fire alert that minute! One doesn't waste time with Parisian dealers-they ask what you want and if they cannot help you they will ring around to find someone who can, Its a pity we don't have a similar system. The show coincided with the introduction of the Euro- everyone had calculators and ready reckoners and it seemed to go off quite well but you had to keep your wits about you. If you ever get the chance these shows are well worth a visit, it is so good to see how other countries manage our hobby.



The picture left shows Pierre Bequet (seated) the celebrated French stamp designer autographing copies of his work.



THE PASSING OF AN ERA

One little aside from the sadness of the Queen Mothers funeral came via the attendance of over a dozen members from European Royal Families. They arrived from Holland, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Monaco.

There are, as we know some WETS members who have "Royals" sections in their collections. How about doing a piece for the next issue of our newsletter giving us an insight into this fascinating group. And are any of the European "Royals" close to Queen Elizabeth II's age or length of reign?

Almost a full turn out of WETS Members were joined by two Dutch collectors (friends of our Chairman) at Ashburton on Saturday 13th April 2002 to hear Sheila Foster talk about Roses.



A ROSE BY ANY OTHER TOPIC - AN INSPIRATION

As a non-gardener and someone who imagines the 15th Century War of the Roses between the Yorkists and Lancastrians whenever the word "rose" comes into the conversation, I went along to Ashburton feeling Sheila Foster would be lucky to engross me with her floral theme, writes Tony Smith. How wrong I was. Sheila proved to be a superb speaker and collector, with a truly engrossing theme.

Offering a splendid narrative presentation, not a pretty, pretty stamps subject display, she told the story of roses with 160 sheets. Her sheets were splendidly set out, they had been carefully written-up, and by talking too she explained an inspiration.

We heard how roses featured in the ancient worlds of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, how they were grown in Middle Age monasteries for medical use, how the once wild flower spread in gardens all over Europe, and with 19th Century horticultural improvement grew to around 2000 varieties. She included how the word "rose" was incorporated into many everyday terms such as rosary, the ceiling rose and its significance in palaces and houses, and even Henry VIII receiving the Order of the Golden Rose from the Pope. Links such as these and others featured in stampos, covers and cancels to emphasis the need to include such things in your thematic collection.

We learned how the name "rose" is incorporated into many place names, and Sheila drew attention to the fact that the rose is the national flower/emblem of Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Iran, Honduras, and of course England.

Endless colour varieties of rose now abound, with many featured on stamps, though a true blue is still missing we were told.

The names of roses was talked about, the best know throughout the world perhaps being the Peace Rose, introduced after the Second World War with the full support of the United Nations.

Sheila's display also included a Belfast letter, OK for display, but not for competition, dated 1875 and ordering 70 Roses for the sum of £3 10s. Other items included in Sheila's display included the pests which trouble roses, and the fact that roses are mentioned 60 times in the works of William Shakespear and all featured philatelically.

Sheila's display was both excellent and memorable, her message to other collectors was simple, continually check the angles of your topic/subject and chase up possible extensions. Always use extra stamps, after all it is quite reasonable to include a stamp showing a pyramid having mentioned that drawings of roses had been found there.

THE AUTUMN MEETING - A request from your chairman is that you all put on your thinking caps and bring something along that is different, controversial or both. How about discussing that project you have always been meaning to do, but don't know how to start. Do you have a criticism of the judging of your exhibits in recent competitions, for instance?



I know we asked for something different or controversial, but that is not quite what we meant

GIVE THE PACKET A BOOST

Our packet secretary Pam reports some good circulation results for the last 12 months, but a shortage of material is looming.

If you are intending to put material into the packet in future, may we remind you we are a thematic society.

As a society we should be using ALL PHILATELIC MATERIAL and this should be reflected in what appears in the packet.

Please submit new books for the packet that contain more than just stamps.

Our Treasurer Richard following committee discussion has pursued those non-members who have submitted books for the packet for a membership fee.

OBITUARY - We are sad to report the passing of member Roy Saunders of St Budeaux, Plymouth on Tuesday 23rd April 2002. Roy had made a good recovery from a recent hip operation, but died suddenly from a heart attack. We extend our sympathies to his widow Mary.