



West of England Thematic Society

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IT'S A SECRET

- At least that is what most people believe about Freemasonry. Yet 28 different countries have issued commemorative stamps on the theme since 1935. Masonic symbols and buildings can be recognised in the designs of many postage stamps. Approximately 1000 different people, all of whom are Freemasons, have been depicted on stamps from just about every country in the world. Collectors can, in addition to stamps, find Postal History, Postal Markings, Meter Marks, First Day Covers, Perfins and Cinderella items, all on the theme. Did someone suggest that Freemasonry was a secret society?



Jacob Perkins a freemason was the co-owner of Perkins Bacon, this was the company who printed the first British stamps, issued on the 6th May 1840. The designer of the worlds first triangular stamps for the Cape of Good Hope issued in 1853 was Charles Davidson Bell who was also a freemason.



From the societies earliest days, members of the British Royal Family have been members of the order and as the First Degree Charge says " Have not thought it derogatory to their dignity to exchange the sceptre for the trowel".



King Adolphus Frederick Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Sweden initiated King Edward VII into Freemasonry in Stockholm. King Edward VII was installed as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England on 28th April 1875.

King Edward VIII was initiated into the order on 2nd May 1919 and was made Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1936.

King George VI was also initiated into the order in 1919 and on his accession



to the throne was installed Past Master of the United Grand Lodge of England. He was Grand Master of Scotland until his accession to the throne in 1936. The stamp shown was issued as a symbol of peace after the war and shows the King as well as a number of Masonic Symbols.



Philip Mountbatten, Duke of Edinburgh was initiated on 5th December 1952 in the presence of the Earl of Scarborough

the current Grand Master and Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury.



As can be seen this is a subject that has a great deal of scope both as a stand alone subject, or as a bit of additional interest in an existing collection.

You just need to know what to look for, while it may not be a secret, a bit of insider knowledge certainly helps.

Local Tales - Torquay was the get-together venue in June for men and women who use stamps and postal history to help them briefly relax from their vocation of helping "The Methodist Philatelic Society". Some splendid material was on display when they visited the South-West. The Society, established in 1970, has a membership of some 300 from all parts of the UK. Former Sidmouth minister the Rev Terry Harris, well known in East Devon for his Pacific islands "Tin Can Mail" displays, showed 16 pages titled "Love To Be Beside The Sea" starting with an old postcard featuring Torquay and ending with a Malawi stamp showing Galilee. The founder of Methodism, John Wesley, regularly features at the Society's meetings with special postmarks but they never forget the venue of their conferences, as here being "Torquay 2005".



The folk from **Budleigh Salterton**, East Devon, are finally to get a statue remembering its most famous son Sir Walter Raleigh. But first villagers had to stub out a protest from the group Action on Smoking and Heath. Raleigh's colonists in North America introduced tobacco to England and the British-American Tobacco group offered to pay £30,000 for a life-size bronze statue after Budleigh Salterton failed to bring the original statue from Greenwich Maritime Museum after being removed from its original London sight on Whitehall. The new statue is expected to be erected in the grounds of the parish church. Hampshire sculpture Vivien Mallock came to the village in February 2005 to display a clay version and all felt it will be perfect to honour the Elizabethan adventurer and royal favourite who

lived in nearby home, Hayes Barton, still standing. The local council hope the statue will attract tourists, perhaps some from Raleigh in North Carolina, so a commemorative postmark for the unveiling date is on the agenda.

If it repeats Raleigh as on this 1999 item, it may light up the protest again. Perhaps a simple portrait of the man whose colonists also introduced potatoes may be better. Born c1552 Raleigh was beheaded in 1618 "for treason" on the order of King James. He features on stamps from around the world. Jersey features several telling his tale including John Millais' painting of the young Walter being told about life at sea. Millais is already recalled with a plaque at Budleigh Salterton. Now Queen Elizabeth's favourite court gentleman is to be honoured too.



Oroolong House in **Colyton** is another place with a philatelic connection. It was the home of Captain Henry Wilson of "The Antelope", who, attempted to map a Pirate free trade route to China around Cape Horn in 1783. His ship was driven headlong into Oroolong, one of the islands of the Palau group by the "Blue Green Dragon" as the Southeast winds are known in China. All members of the crew plus the two ships dogs were rescued. When they returned to the UK they brought back Prince Lee Boo the King of the Islands second son, to be educated in England. The Prince caught smallpox and died 6 months later. The Princes arrival is commemorated on a stamp.



BTA ROADSHOW - came to Ashburton on the 24th September 2005 as previously advised in the last issue of WETS News. The number of attendees was well in excess of the 30 booked places. This was a great tribute to our Chairman Mary Claydon who had worked very hard to ensure that all the clubs were aware of the event in addition to WETS members. BTA had organised themselves a similar event in London and only had 6 attendees we understand. So well done Mary.



The day started with Carol Turner being presented with the BTA Trophy by Christine Earle, that she won at Thematica as previously advised in the last issue. Attendees were then given the opportunity to put up 12 sheets and talk for no more than 2 minutes, the session was well over subscribed. The day's main session was Colin Mount displaying "Pig in the Post". Those who have had the pleasure of seeing this most informative display will know that while some of Colin's stories and quips could be described as "hog wash"; he is definitely not a boar.



The day finished with the WETS members who had achieved awards at Thematica showing their displays. From a WETS point of view this was a most successful day and we extend our thanks to BTA for their efforts in bringing the day to Devon.



We thank BTA Vice Chairman and WETS member Lesley Marley for the pictures of the day shown above.

An Apology - In the last issue we failed to mention that WETS member Ken Ramsey gained a Silver at Thematica. Sorry Ken nobody told us until you did. *(Please, please keep us informed - Ed.)*

WETS Auctions - As a move to bring more thematic material to our members, especially material that may be difficult to include in the packet, we have decided to run a Postal Auction at dates and times to be announced and depending upon the volumes of material we obtain.

Join auctioneers are Jim Wigmore and Norman Claydon who hope to publish the first catalogue for March 2006, we need details of any material to be included by mid February 2006.

**THE AUCTION FUTURE
DEPENDS ON YOUR INPUT**

Album PageMaker - Review

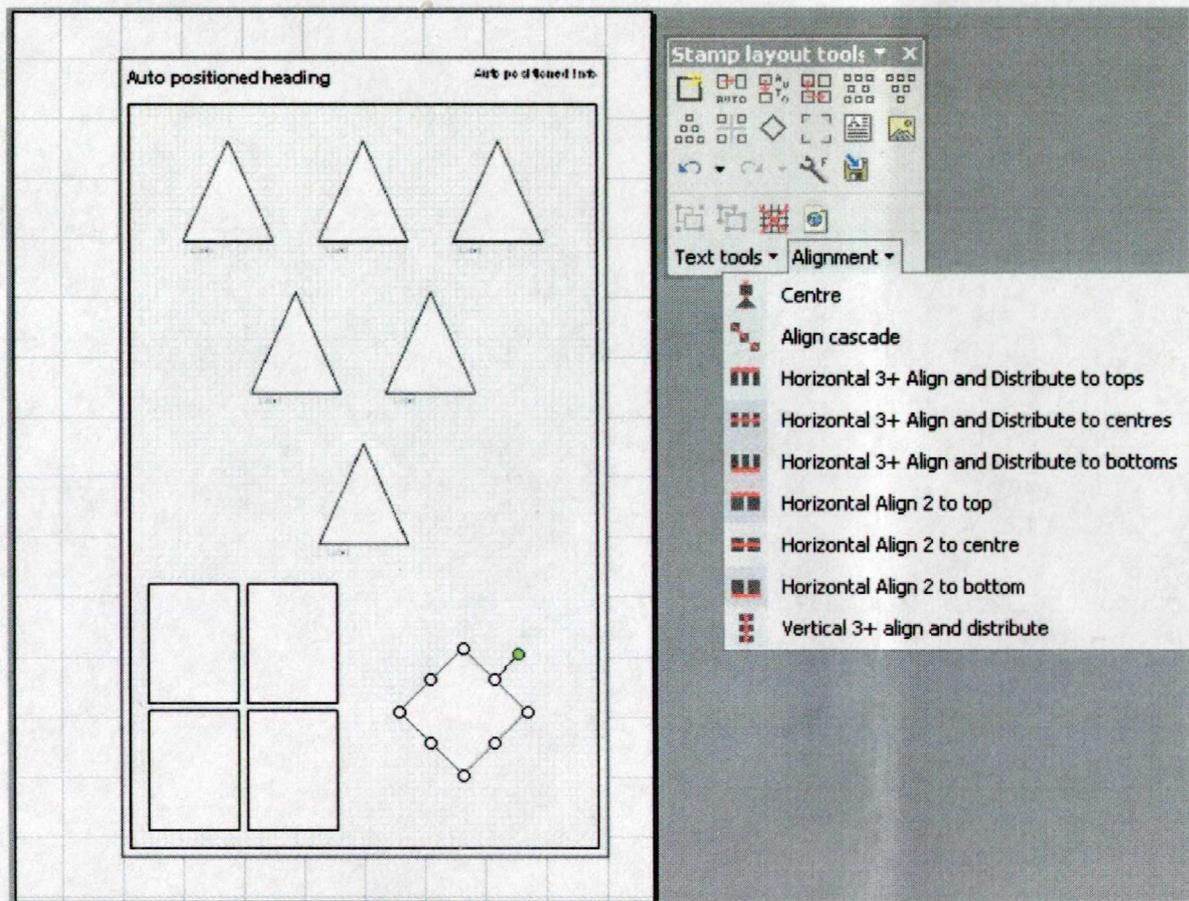
By Jim Wigmore

At the recent BTA philatelic event at Ashburton I was given a copy of a piece of software to assist in the creation of album pages and the positioning of the various stamps and other philatelic material on them. Having used the computer for this purpose for some time with excellent results, I was somewhat sceptical of the need, but accepted the item with good grace.

Having got the software onto my computer and had a good look at its capability, I have changed my initial view and find it could be a most useful tool especially for the less computer literate.

The software works in conjunction with Microsoft Word, so providing you have MS Office/Word 2000 or a later version this tool will work for you.

The tool is an extension of MS Word with a view based upon the standard MS Word screen. You are provided with a sub-menu box and action menu illustrated to aid the addition of your philatelic items to the page you are creating. Users of versions of MS Word will know that the use of text boxes and graphic boxes in versions beyond Office 97 have become increasingly unfriendly, this tool puts the friendliness back. The addition of text such as page headers or captions for the boxes placed is a very easy task. The boxes you add can be very precise and equivalent to the mounts you use and a vast variety of shapes are available that you can size as you add.



Whatever your theme you should be able to use this tool to obtain perfect pages.

Printing can be to your own paper/card or commercial blank album pages such as Safe, Davo, or Stanley Gibbons. To print to other than A4 you will need a wide printer of which there are now several choices that will print up to A3.

This product can be obtained from TMS Stamps PO Box 291, Stevenage, SG1 1ZW UK phone 07981 309580 or fax to +44 (0) 870 7061105 and costs just £10 view this and other software tools on their web site at www.tmh-stamps.com



Break a Leg - the old theatrical saying became reality for our Chairman just prior to our November Meeting when she was bowled over by a large dog (not her own) on a beach in Cornwall. Mary you didn't need to go to such extreme lengths just to get out of chairing the November meeting. We all love you and hope you get well soon.

The November 2005 Meeting - was a bit like Mary's broken leg, a disaster, with only eight members actually making the effort. Its a bit dispiriting for those such as Ken Ramsey and Richard Wheeler who make two hour journeys and Tony Smith who relies on Public Transport to get to the meeting to find those who live almost on the doorstep can't be bothered. The massive turnout last year and the various displays that were shown were all supposed to have been included in this years WETS Roadshow (**Where were they?**).

Apart from three members all those promises have been defaulted upon and your committee have had to make alternative arrangements in order that as a society we can fulfil our obligations of supplying the Roadshow and meeting its first engagement on January 4th 2006.

Well done all those you did get to the meeting, thank you for your efforts, we had an excellent series of displays. Letters D,E and F produced the following displays.

Magic, *challenged as not being either of the letters*, we were informed it was DECEPTION.

Fire Services.

Dogs Life

Destruction of the Environment

In addition to the above, three of the displays destined for the Roadshow were also shown.

WETS Roadshow - Due to our membership failing to honour their commitments, your committee have had to beg borrow and steal displays in order to get a full compliment of displays for the show. The resultant show, started its journey on January 4th at Tiverton, followed by Brixham on January 9th. Future stopping points are Torquay February 2nd, Mid Devon March 24th, Tav and Torridge March 30th, Sidmouth April 24th, Dartmouth May 2nd, Dawlish May 10th, Exeter June 2nd, Minehead June 15th, Exmouth June 21st. If you wish to find out what the resultant show consists of, visit one of the venues near you. **The show is being well received and we have to date two new members as a result.**

WETS at Stampex Village Green - we will have a significant presence at this event. We were asked by BTA to submit a display for the Spring Stampex to be held at the Design Centre Islington, the usual venue for Stampex. The whole event is featuring Thematics and we urge all our members to try and visit. The dates are Wednesday February 22nd 2006 to Sunday 26th.

For your information our total display will be as follows, with each frame containing 16 sheets.

Frame	Title	Exhibitor
1	Roll up for the Greatest Show on Earth	Richard Wheeler
2	Roll up for the Greatest Show on Earth	Richard Wheeler
3	From Grandeur to Gravure	David Roseveare
4	From Grandeur to Gravure	David Roseveare
5	Man and Malaria	Carol Turner
6	Man and Malaria	Carol Turner
7	The Peoples War - WW2	Pearl Buxton
8	The Peoples War - WW2	Pearl Buxton
9	The Ruling Families of Europe	Mary Claydon
10	The Ruling Families of Europe	Mary Claydon
11	Aphrodite's Island	Jim Wigmore
12	Aphrodite's Island	Jim Wigmore

We hope that you will visit this event and if you do you will consider giving up about an hour of your time while you are there to help man the help desk. Please contact Richard Wheeler in advance if you are able to do so.

Happy New Year to all our Members