



West of
England
Thematic
Society

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IN THIS ISSUE - Very Social Philately, Roll Up Roll Up for the Greatest Show on Earth, AGM & Display, The Packet, Publicity Officer, WETS Auction No.1, Letters to the Editor, Autumn Meeting, Early Theatre, WETS Roadshow.

VERY SOCIAL PHILATELY -

Mary Claydon came up with a winner for the Spring gathering at Ashburton when 'Social Philately' Gold Award holder Mrs Pat Grimwood-Taylor delighted the 25 members present with her presentations and words on how she presents pages for a display or a competition.

Sometimes thematic collectors feel they are the 'odd ones out' in philately. At the end of the day it seemed we have a fellow soul group in Social Philately. "We tell a story, we connect through our material but with a free spirit" she said. "Show it is a hobby to enjoy". Did that sound familiar to the WETS members present.



Ephemera was everywhere - even a ladies large fan - alongside material which had a postage connection and perhaps the only major difference from a thematic display was the absence of mint stamps.

The life of a Victorian Gentleman opened her display, leading off with a large picture of a splendid country house owned by the upper classes. Details of a son's entry to Eton in 1844 followed and another item showed the 1818 income of a landowner-- £261.16d from tenants. Alongside letters dealing with a gentleman's business and pleasure there were pens which wrote such letters.

Pat said that to tell a story nothing was exempt when she presented a display as here, but in a competition regulations put postal material to the fore. The same situation continued in her display frames dealing with Victorian Ladies. WETS who use booklets in their own pages felt a mix of pleasure and envy when shown a pair of cross-stitched containers for Victorian stamps The ladies who created them in c1845 even remembered to 'thank' Rowland Hill on the front.

Samples of material for the ladies were sent through the post so one was included, Valentine cards were shown too. A section featured Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling.

In her third display Pat moved forward a century to World War II and the superb 'extras' included seldom seen Press Passes for wartime journalists from national newspapers.

After lunch our WETS visitor included family history in her Social Philately Gold Award frames -- 'South Australia, The Earliest Days' She told how around 1836 men were needed in this untouched region of Australia. But not convicts. Free men who had £50 and a trade or business made the long journey. Her own great, great grandfather, Abraham Scott, left Devon in 1840 and settled in Adelaide. There were photos of him and a relative who also sailed away and became mayor of Adelaide.

Splendid postal history in the display including an application - dated 1838- by a man wishing to go to South Australia and a letter back to England - dated 1845 - confirming a passenger had arrived in his new life. It was only in the page on the exploration of the area that showed a couple of mint stamps.

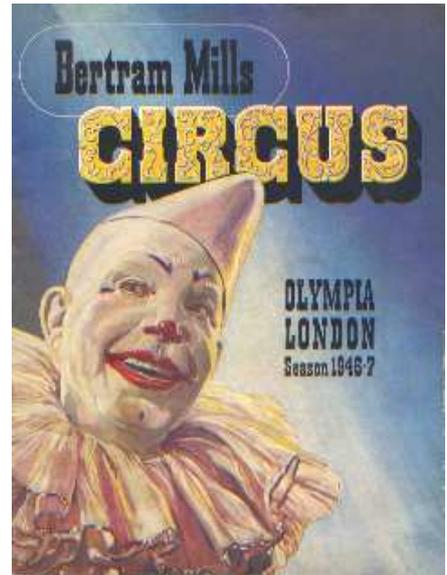
WETS chairman/secretary Mrs Mary Claydon thanked the society's visitor for a splendid and intriguing series of frames. We would like to thank member David Rosevere for supplying the photograph used with this article.

Roll Up, Roll Up for The Greatest Show on Earth

- Following on from Pat Grimwood-Taylor's interesting display of Open/Social Philately, where there appears to be virtually no rules other than to tell a story and forget the philatelic knowledge, (I hope I've got that right), I thought I'd try my hand – even if there are a lot more stamps than ephemera! Those that are included are meant to depict the type of act as they appeared on the programme.

CHRISTMAS TREAT - After the shortages of wartime, my Mother took me to see the return of the famous Bertram Mills Circus at Olympia in London for the post war return of that great show.

PROGRAMME - The show opened with a Cavalcade of Artists and Animals.



CAVALCADE - The show open with a cavalcade, followed by The Sylvans – a bare back horse riding act.



After holding our breath at the horsemanship, The Tovarich Troupe were next to enter the ring in a gymnastic display of twists and turns



Horses made a return with a Symphony in Grey presented by Peggy Holt.



Juggling upside down had us in wonderment at the skill shown by the Reverhos.

Another riding act followed in a quieter vein in the style of Louis 14th



With a great deal of barking and excitement, Louise and her Dogs ran into the ring and thoroughly enjoyed showing off their tricks.



It was then time for laughter as Charlie Rivels, billed as the Scream of Ring-history, in the guise of a Charlie Chaplin figure caused mayhem on the low trapeze. He is featured on the stamp left.

With a swirl of the Pipes, in true highland manner, The Dagenham Girl Pipers marched into the ring. *(Not one male piper as illustrated here).*



Closing the first half, the cages were assembled for the Kings of the Jungle, Nicolai and his Lions.

THE SECOND HALF COMES IN THE NEXT ISSUE.



AGM & Display - will take place on **Saturday July the 8th at Emmanuel Church Hall Weston Road Exeter starting at 2.00 p.m.** Following the meeting there will be a display by Gillian Gray of her prize winning entry and associated philatelic material and ephemera on "Shells". We will try and keep the AGM as short as possible to ensure adequate time for the display and viewing.

The AGM Agenda will be as follows.

- 1 - Apologies for absence.
- 2 - Minutes of the previous meeting.
- 3 - Matters arising from the minutes.
- 4 - Report from the Chairman.
- 5 - Report from the Treasurer.
- 6 - Report from the Newsletter Editor.
- 7 - Packet Secretaries Report.
- 8 - Election of Officers.
- 9 - Any other business.
- 10 - Date of the next meeting.

Please ensure that you advise the Chairman in advance of any issues to be raised at the meeting to ensure that decisions can be taken at Committee level and brought to the meeting if necessary.

DO TRY AND MAKE THE EFFORT TO ATTEND.

THE PACKET - We are concerned that not enough of our members currently take our Packet. In order to address this situation we have created a listing of all members interests with a view to feeding this information to our packet vendors. We expect this action to encourage our vendors to target all the interests which you have expressed at the time of joining and by so doing improve the packet quality and provide you with the material which will fill your collecting requirements. **PLEASE SUPPORT OUR PACKET**

PUBLICITY OFFICER - our growth as a society and our success at STAMPEX has prompted us to appoint Tony Smith as our Publicity Officer. Tony's journalistic knowledge will ensure that we get regular reports about WETS into the philatelic magazines, ABPS News and Themescene. Along with our web site these reports will do much to raise our image and further extend our ever-growing membership. This appointment by your committee will be formally ratified at the AGM.

WETS Auction No.1 - Our thanks go to those members who contributed material for this auction and to those members who contributed a great deal of thought and effort into producing the auction list and posting it out to our membership. We are sad to have to report that it was all to no avail, as the profit from the lots sold did not cover our costs we therefor feel we cannot afford to repeat this experiment. The balance some of the material submitted will be offered at a live auction when we have our Autumn Meeting.

Letters to the Editor - we are glad to report that we have received two letters copied as follows. Pamela Hiscock writes - *I've just read the March newsletter and was very interested in the article by Tony Smith about Tapestry. May I, through you, remind members and secretaries that I give a display on "Textiles" which includes, amongst many other things, a section on the Bayeaux Tapestry, complete with an example of the method of embroidery used. Incidentally, this is not the only example of embroidery being called a tapestry, but the basic difference is that a tapestry is woven on a loom. The display is listed in the BTA Handbook as "Social Philately" as I include samples of the various types of yarns, threads, needles, embroidery, patchwork, tools, etc. etc. There is also a good selection of Postal History items. I have shown this at Plymouth a couple of years ago and also half an evening at Southampton, sharing with David and his lighthouses. Comments included "I wish I'd brought my wife" from one man and "I'm so glad I came with my husband" from a lady.*

Well worth viewing and I'm open to offers!

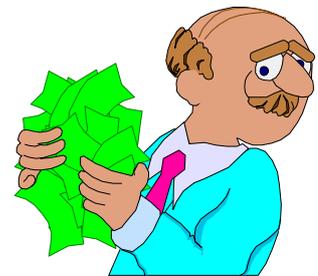
Mike Watson writes on the subject of Peoples Republic of China.

Local Post Surcharge Labels (LPSLs) - LPSLs are slowly gaining recognition and have been displayed at several of the clubs in the SW of England. SG mentions them, but the complexity of the subject prevents detailed analysis. The ACPF (All China Philatelic Federation) has refused to acknowledge or permit exhibitions of LPSLs but thanks to the perseverance (worldwide) of Charles Ouyang (Wuhan) LPSLs - have now been recognised, as collectable theme and subject philately.

A 20 page monthly magazine: "SURCHARGE PHILATELY" is to be edited and published in Guangzhou, commencing May 2006. Unfortunately the magazine will be printed in Chinese. But, since more Zhongguoren speak English than English speakers speak Putonghua, perhaps we will see an English version soon!

Our thanks to Mike and Pamela who decided to fill a space that was suggested could be filled by you, lets hear from more of our members on subjects that interest you.

AUTUMN MEETING - Will be held at **Buckfastleigh Town Hall on Saturday 21st October 2006** starting at 2.00 p.m. There will be an Auction and a Bring & Buy. This is an opportunity to get rid of your swaps and acquire some interesting items for your collection.



**THIS SPACE
IS FOR YOU**

EARLY THEATRICAL BEGINNINGS - based on researches made by Richard Wheeler.

In the Western Civilisation before 2500 B.C., peasants sang in praise of Dionysus (Bacchus) the God of wine and fertility, in rituals of wild dancing and celebration at harvest time. They formed a type of mask upon their faces with dregs of wine and Holy men gained power by moving statues of Gods to amaze worshipper.

From these beginnings, the religious ritual became increasingly dramatic. Between 600 and 200 BC, the ancient Athenians created a theatre. The golden age was between 500 and 300 BC when for the first time plays were written in honour of Dionysus and were either Comedies or Tragedies. According to legends around 650 BC, a man named Thespis of Attica included an actor in a performance who interacted with the chorus and was the chief character in the drama. To this day, actors are known as 'Thespians'



All the actors were male and played many roles. A mask was used to show a change of character or mood from happiness to sadness.

As the actors couldn't use facial expressions, the actors had to use different ways in expressing their character and changed masks. They conveyed a kind of emotion totally different to that which we would see in a theatrical performance today. The masks and costumes were greatly exaggerated conveying an easily identifiable character in a large amphitheatre. The masks were made from clay, wood or linen with a wig attached. In order for their voices to be heard, large open mouths were incorporated and some had a form of megaphone built in. The plays



were performed in daylight in vast outdoor amphitheatres seating over 10,000 people. Euripides was one of the great playwrights and wrote some 92 plays, seven of which survive today.

In the stamp sheet 'The History of Theatre', there is an error showing terra-cotta figures of actors attributed to 3000 BC – this should read 300 BC. The masks of comedy and tragedy are now accepted as the universal symbol for drama. They represent the two sides of Dionysus



as the comedy refers to the effects of revelry and the tragic mask for the sorrow that a bad harvest brought.

According to research on the internet, tragedies were traditionally very musical whilst the comedies were very different. In comedy, the actors wore little or no clothing, which in the 4th century BC became more respectable.



WETS ROADSHOW - Our Roadshow has now visited Tiverton, Brixham, Torquay, Barnstaple, Mid Devon, Sidmouth, Dartmouth and Dawlish on its travels and still has a number of booked stops before the end of the year.

It is a fantastic insight into how thematics evolve from initial attempts right through to what you will need to achieve if you decide to compete at both local and national levels. To date it has been very well received in the clubs and we have recruited several new members as a result.

IF THE SHOW IS NOT IN YOUR SOCIETY PROGRAMME - PLEASE DRAW TO THE ATTENTION OF YOUR MEETING SECRETARY THE QUALITY OF THE SHOW AND ITS AVAILABILITY UP TO THE END OF DECEMBER 2006.

DONT FORGET THE AGM