



West of  
England  
Thematic  
Society

## Newsletter No.30 September 2007

### Society Officers

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**IN THIS ISSUE** – Obituary to Pearl Buxton, Dates for your Diaries, Dates for your Diaries, A Little Bit of Local Interest, Minutes of the WETS AGM, More Railways, Hero or Postage Stamp Villain, Masonic Astronauts, French Slogan Cancels.

## OBITUARY

We are sad to have to report that Pearl Buxton died on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2007 after a period of three months in Torbay Hospital. WETS extends its condolences to her son Maurice on the loss of his Mother.

Jim Wigmore our Vice Chairman has written the following tribute to Pearl. "I have known Pearl philatelically for more years than I care to remember and during all of this time she was always involved with many of our local philatelic clubs and events. Pearl along with her son Maurice were early members of WETS and many will remember her earliest thematic work "An Invitation to Dine" which did very well in Wessex and SWIPEX Competitions. This work had stemmed from Pearls interest in cookery. Pearl went on to produce "The Peoples War" the story of the home struggles during WW2. Many clubs and societies will have seen the display and appreciated the efforts to put it all together and the charming manner in which the display was delivered. "The Peoples War" was also very much a National Competition piece that did very well in National Events as recently as Torquay 2006 where she won Silver. We are delighted to learn that Pearl has asked Maurice to keep this display together and to make it available to clubs and societies as a display

Many will have their own memories of Pearl who was a stalwart not only of WETS but Torquay Philatelic Society where she was a past President and the Wessex Federation where she had worked in many roles. I was particularly grateful to Pearl for acting as my secretary during the time that I was Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Wessex Federation, we were a good team overseeing the Federations 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. We achieved much, I had the ideas and she was able to twist arms and smooth the troubled waters to get the desired results. My abiding memory of Pearl will be that of a bubbly lady with a cheery smile and a ready wit, she may be gone but she certainly will not be forgotten".

Mary Claydon Chairman of WETS added the following "Pearl was one of the founder members of WETS and a staunch supporter of me when I was trying to get WETS to be more than the small group with which we started. All of us pulled together to get WETS going. Pearl was always ready to help in whatever way she could and we will all remember that she happily took on the task of running raffles at our meetings and helped raise money towards many of our events. Always smiling and as Jim says 'bubbly' our last 'natter' together was at Torquay 2006 when we did duty at the WETS table and reminisced about the start of WETS. We shall all miss her very much".

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

**WETS** next meeting will be at **Buckfastleigh Town Hall** on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October** starting at 2.00 p.m. we will be showing the material for the next WETS Roadshow to test the format and presentation. This will be preceded by a presentation from Richard Wheeler on putting together a thematic collection and the points that need to be known when exhibiting. We look forward to seeing as many of our members as possible.

**Eurothema** will be held at **Carisbrooke Hall Seymour Street London** on **November 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>** our Treasurer Richard Wheeler is one of the participants for the UK.



**A little bit of local interest.** On looking through a box of covers recently for "Versailles" items David Rosevere found the following example. Dated 22nd December 1931 it was addressed to a Miss Winifred Penn-Gaskell at Scobitor, near Widescombe but had been redirected to Rock End, Torquay. Being intrigued, he set about trying to find out who she was. She was once a member of Torquay Philatelic Society who amassed an internationally recognised collection of Aerophilately, amounting to 66 albums. She died in November 1949 at the age of 73 and her collection was transferred to the Science Museum at South Kensington.

## WHAT IS IN YOUR COLLECTION?

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the West of England Thematic Society** held at Emmanuel Church, Exeter on Saturday June 30th 2007. *(reported in the August issue of Stamp Magazine)*

**Present.** Mrs. M. Claydon (*Chairman and Secretary*) Mr. J. Wigmore (*Vice-Chairman and Newsletter Editor*) Mr. R. Wheeler (*Treasurer*) Mr. T. Smith (*Publicity Officer*) Mrs. A. Moorshead (*Packet Secretary*) Mr. D. Herrity, Mrs. G. Grey, Mr. N. Claydon, Miss E. Rees, Mrs. P. McDowall, Mrs. V. Wigmore, Mr. G. Green, Mr. R. Sambell, Mr. K. Ramsey.

**Apologies.** None.

**Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting.** These had previously been circulated and were passed unanimously. : Proposed Mr. D. Herrity seconded Mr. T. Smith.

**Matters arising from the Minutes.** There were no matters arising.

**Chairman's Report.** The Chairman started her report by thanking all those who have done so much for WETS in the past year. Jim Wigmore, Richard Wheeler, Anne Moorshead and Tony Smith and also all the membership who supported the WETS day. Those who did attend enjoyed our extremely good and interesting speaker. As a consequence of the low attendance this year we have booked the smaller room for next year's meeting this holds 30 and it will be a case of those who apply early getting the seats. She said she would like to take this opportunity to point out that when some years ago she agreed to do the secretary's job she did not intend to do it permanently. There was an item for election of officers later in the agenda and a volunteer for this position would be very welcome. Support from the membership is extremely important. All the efforts of the committee are of no use unless the membership backs them.

**Secretary's report.** Since this post is held by the Chairman the same report applies.

**Treasurer's Report.** The Treasurer presented the accounts saying that he felt it presented a basically satisfactory picture The WETS day had paid for itself because of the speaker's small expenses and at the end of the financial year we were in a better position than 12 months earlier. We could no longer look to any grants from the A.B.P.S. for our WETS days which would have to be self financing. Our membership was now 52. He explained the reason for the change of wording in the accounts i.e. they would not appear as 'audited' but certified in future due to the fact that auditors costs would be prohibitive. It was proposed by Mrs. Moorshead seconded by Mr. Herrity that the accounts be accepted and agreed unanimously.

**Newsletter Editor's Report.** The Editor said that as in the previous year material was not forthcoming from the membership. We need more input and a discussion followed during which it was suggested that if people had an idea but felt they could not contribute a full article they should contact the editor with the basic idea from which an article could be written. The Newsletter continued to be well received.

**Publicity Officer's Report.** Mr. Smith said reports on WETS activities appeared in the Stamp magazines and in Themescene. And since he was also News Co-ordinator he would be willing to flesh out ideas sent to him and turn them into articles either for our own Newsletter or the Philatelic Press.

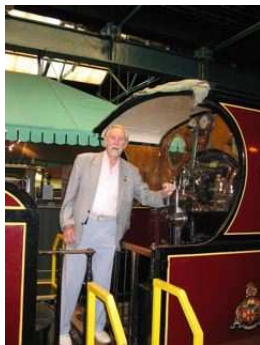
**Packet Secretary's Report.** The Packet Secretary said during the twelve months since the 2006 AGM 4 packets had completed the circuit and three more are at present on their way. This reduction in the number of packets circulated is partly explained by the lack of material and partly by the hiatus occasioned by the insurance glitch nevertheless the value of the items included was £1,740.08 an average of £290.01 per packet which was higher than last year. This high value material creates its own problem since 2 packets have been sent out with only 7 or 6 books to comply with the insurance strictures. Out of the total membership seven people contributed to the packet - three contribute but do not themselves receive the packet. The circulation list contains 18 names. One cannot but question the viability of the packet if no more material is contributed by members and no more names are added to the circulation list I feel the game is scarcely worth the candle. The Treasurer said the packet existence was in question since the insurance costs had risen because the packet does not always pass by hand but by post. It was suggested that the people who supply material might be willing to put a lower valuation (i.e. money they would receive in the event of loss of the packet) which would reduce the cost of the insurance. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to these people raising this question. It was agreed by the meeting proposed Mr. Herrity seconded Mrs. Wigmore that the Committee would decide on the viability of the packet when the insurance came up for review next April. Carried unanimously.

**Election of Officers** The Chairman asked Mr. Green whether he would be willing to take the post of Secretary to which he agreed. The rest of the officers were then re-elected en bloc proposed Mr. Herrity seconded Mrs. McDowall and carried unanimously.

**Any other business** There being no other business the meeting closed at 3.10.p.m. A fascinating and enjoyable display was given by Gary Green on the Leipzig Messe to round off the meeting.

### **MORE RAILWAYS**

Our Treasurer Richard Wheeler has been out and about again, doing a bit of training at the National Railway Museum, "Does this mean he is going to do a Thematic on Railways?" The recent series of articles on Railway Evolution will continue in the next issue of WETS News and we can look forward to more on Railways from Norman Claydon.





**HERO OR POSTAGE STAMP VILLAIN** by David Herrity - Recently the USA Post Office issued three small stamps each depicting a famous Sioux Indian. One was Red Cloud, who was he, and what did he do to gain such an exalted position? The early life of Red Cloud (*known as Mak Pia Luta in his native tongue*) is shrouded in mysteries. Even the account written by a full blooded Sioux Dr. Eastman, is riddled with absurdities. Old time Indian informants said ~whatever they thought the interviewer wanted



to hear, the better the presents offered, the taller the story they told. Such fanciful stories can be checked against Sioux tribal historian Winter Counts" - such pictographs of the 1860 - 70's era depict Red Cloud with a red cloud above his head. One explanation for this is that from a distance his followers red blankets, looked like a red cloud, on the other hand scholars have pointed out

that the 1821 - 22 'Winter Count' (*his supposed year of birth*) depicts a fiery meteorite, an event recorded at Fort Snelling on the night of 20th September 1822. Sadly the "Winter Count" of 1833 shows a similar event, but this time involving shooting stars. However, Sioux names were earned or based upon dreams experienced during a boy's manhood initiation ordeal, rather than events at birth. The truth is, no one really knows. Most Indians agree that by 1865 Red Cloud was not a paramount chief but a "Shirt Wearer" or Head Soldier of the Oglala Sioux - "Bad Face" hand. This is where he would probably have remained, lost to history and philately. The discovery- of gold in Montana changed everything, catapulting Red Cloud from obscurity into the pages of history. In the 1884 Senate documents, First Session, references are made to a profiteering "Indian Ring" which had pressurised Washington into offering the Sioux lavish annuities, which the "Ring" could siphon off in return for a peace treaty; permitting free passage for pioneers and gold prospectors and permission to build



three forts to protect the Montana Road (*better known as the Bozeman Trail.*) The Peace Commissioners Meeting with the Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapaho was plunged into disarray when Red Cloud stormed out of the meeting taking 2,000 hostile warriors with him. Nevertheless the three forts were built, and soon after, the wagons began to roll. Red Cloud began to probe here and raid there. On 6th December 1866 he struck a devastating blow. Colonel Fetterman's eighty one men were ambushed and massacred only four miles from Fort Phil Kearny. This



paralysed all traffic on the road indefinitely, and Fort C.F. Smith had to be abandoned. The U.S. Government shamefacedly admitted it had been militarily defeated, and was forced to cede vast tracts of Wyoming, Montana and the Dakotas as the price of peace. Although nobody told the Indians, the Treaty was never ratified. The "Indian Rings" corrupt politicians saw to that. It has been claimed that this was the root cause of the Custer Massacre ten years later. Red Cloud inadvisably allowed himself to be persuaded to visit Washington, as a result of which he lost much of his influence, which was now confined to Indians on or around the "Red Cloud" Agency. In July 1894 he was arrested and fined \$66 for killing game out of season. He had no money, but two ponies from his herd settled the matter. In 1903 he abdicated his Chieftain ship. He passed away on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1909. Latterly he had embraced the Catholic faith and was buried with the full rites of the Catholic Church at Holy Rosary Mission. He is reliably reported to have said of himself " / as many others have done before me, have made mistakes in not doing something I should have done and what I should not have done". **The thoughts of a very wise man indeed.**



**MASONIC ASTRONAUTS** by Trevor Frey - Brother Walter M, Schirra made six earth orbits in Mercury 8, followed by Brother Leroy G. Cooper in Mercury 9 who made 22 orbits during which he took colour photographs and films, and sent back the first Television pictures from an American spacecraft. There was drama when automatic devices failed, but Gordon Cooper calmly took over the controls and manually piloted the capsule to safety through the earth's atmosphere.





**French Slogan Cancellations** David Rosevere states that many collectors incorporate slogans, or 'Flammes' as they are known in France, in their displays but how many know their value? Some were used over a long period of time whilst others only briefly. Some years ago I obtained copies of some pages from the "Catalogue des Obliterations Mechaniques de France" from the French Postal Museum which I have found invaluable in tracking down the more difficult examples. Each slogan has a number and the logo, machine type and value are stated.

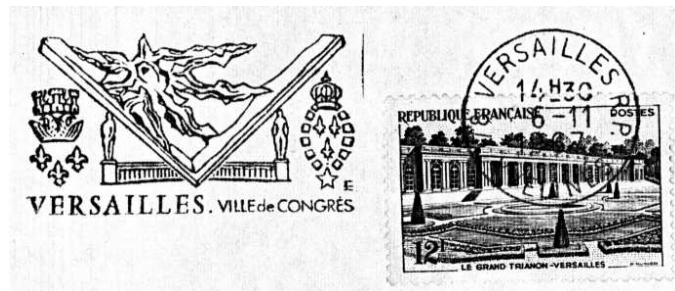
Many slogans were produced by the stamp artists and a number of philatelic magazines list the latest examples. Then there are the machine types, Daguin, Flier and SECAP being just a few, my own study of Versailles using these.

I consider the subject to be underrated. How many times do we see examples in a display and pass them off as of little importance. I'm sure someone could compile a decent competition entry using only slogans (*complete on cover of course*). For those who use the internet, especially 'Delcampe' there are some very good sellers

who understand the catalogue and the subject. The American "FLIER" Machine Cancel Machine was introduced into France in 1898 but was not used at Versailles until the 1920's with the slogan being placed to the right of the Date Die as shown in the early example right. The machine lasted into the 1950's reference the example shown below of a cancel for Trade Week and used for just 3 months.



Some examples are shown left and below of the SECAP Machine all dating from the 1960's, the Garden Party Cancels were only used during a 2 month period.



The scope for the use of slogan cancels within a thematic exhibit or competition entry is indeed vast and examples can be found from around the world on whatever your subject, you just need to look. It is interesting to note that most post offices around the world are able to produce nice clean cancels that enhance the mail as opposed to the British Post Office who seem to have a manic desire to obliterate. *Your editor would be interested in publishing your thoughts on this matter provided of course that your comments are suitable for publication. Richard Wheeler definitely agrees with David.*

**YOUR STORIES SNIPPETS ETC. NEEDED FOR THE NEXT ISSUE  
By end of November 2007.**