



West of
England
Thematic
Society

Newsletter No.32 May 2008

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IN THIS ISSUE – “Faster than a Bullet – The Story of Concorde”, “French Slogan Cancellations”, “Something Scary”, “Dates for Your Diary”, “The Railway Revolution – The Gauge Wars”, “The Holiday Challenge”, “Contacts”.



Faster than a bullet – “The Story of Concorde” – was the subject of our WETS Meeting at Ashburton on Saturday 26th April. Our speaker for the day Brian Asquith (shown left with Mary Claydon) showed an array of covers stamps and postal markings that covered the full spectrum of the development of the aircraft through testing to full use in passenger service. Brian’s 256 sheet display was amply supported by a number of personal anecdotes and various items of literature on the subject. What may have appeared to have been a dull subject, hence the smaller than usual attendance was in fact a very lively and enthralling experience for all.

French Slogan Cancellations (cont.) by David Roseveare

Previously I wrote about the 'FLIER' and 'SECAP' types but we must not forget the circle cancels used on normal mail which were modified for use at important events. One example is the type 04 which was introduced in France in 1904 and was used, in various forms, until late into the century. It was of 27mm diameter and featured the town, department (county) and the date. However, before and during the First World War a number of them were modified to be used to commemorate meetings and exhibitions. The first reported example appeared in July 1904 for a charity

event in the town of Le Mans. So far I haven't found one. The Paris 'exposition de la Cite restituee', which was an architectural reconstruction exhibition, was issued in 1916. They were obviously thinking ahead, the war was still on! Referring to my own interests, the type 04 cancel was used on mail from the First World War Peace Conference at Versailles and the French Presidential elections held in the same town.



Peace Conference 28-6-19;
Election of Raymond Poincare 17-1-13;



Others are very difficult to find, the Versailles 'Exp-Pupilles Nation' which was the conference convened for the treatment of war orphans dated Sept. 1922 is just one example. I have only seen two in ten years, both at overseas events and last November I was fortunate in acquiring one. As



Momier Schloden
5 Rue d'Annam
Paris 20^e

you can guess, it was expensive! Then there are the 'telephone' and 'telegraph' marks, some being used for one day only and these are well sought after by collectors. Collectors of 'Politics', 'Communications' and '1st World War' take note!



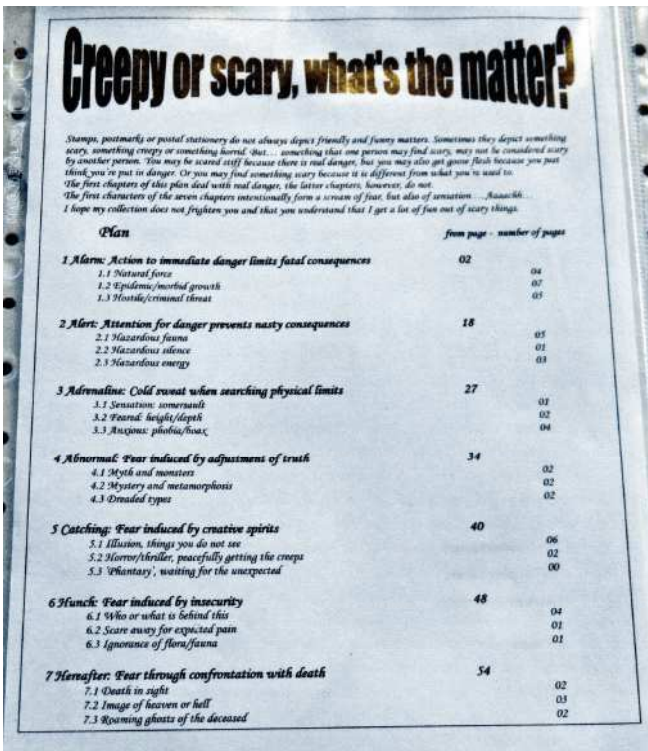
These cancels are listed in the Pothian specialised catalogue and all are graded in 'indices' i.e. numbers, the higher numbers being the more valuable. Telegraph and telephone are rated highly. The early examples are around indice 12 which is equivalent to approximately 56 euros (£40). It is possible to find them occasionally in dealer's postal history boxes.



Then there are the red cancellations...but that's another story. *(Next time ? – Ed)*

It is always worth enhancing your display with slogans as well as using other material. There are so many different types, produced by many countries. Good searching!

SOMETHING SCARY



Last month Norman and I were in Holland spending a few days with our Dutch friends and on the Saturday we went to the "The National Railway Museum" at Utrecht. It was an open day for the Railway Museum and a children's stamp day. There were crowds of enthusiastic children round the tables at which people were selling stamps and offering advice. Oh that we could see children over here in such numbers taking an

interest in our hobby. There were also entrants in a thematic competition many of which were extremely good by even adult standards, but the Gold Award was one that I, and I think the other three, found exceptional. The entrant was a boy of 17 and his entry was in English. The title was "Creepy or scary, what's the matter?" The paragraph headings were:-

- 1. Alarm: Action to immediate danger limits fatal consequences**
 - 1.1. Natural force
 - 1.2. Epidemic: morbid growth
 - 1.3. Hostile/criminal threat
- 2. Alert: Attention for danger prevents nasty consequences**
 - 2.1. Hazardous fauna
 - 2.2. Hazardous silence
 - 2.3. Hazardous energy.
- 3. Adrenaline: Cold sweat when searching physical limits**
 - 3.1. Sensation somersault
 - 3.2. Feared height/depth
 - 3.3. Anxious phobia/hoax
- 4. Abnormal: Fear induced by adjustment of truth.**
 - 4.1. Myth and monsters
 - 4.2. Mystery and metamorphys
 - 4.3. Dreaded types
- 5. Catching: Fear induced by creative spirits.**
 - 5.1. Illusion, things you do not see
 - 5.2. Horror/thriller peacefully getting the creeps
- 6. Hunch: Fear induced by insecurity**
 - 6.1. Who or what is behind this
 - 6.2. Scare away for accepted pain
 - 6.3. Ignorance of flora/fauna
- 7. Hereafter: Fear through confrontation with death.**
 - 7.1. Death in sight

- 7.2. Image of heaven or hell.
- 7.3. Roaming ghosts of the deceased

All told 59 pages and the contents matched the titles.

The paragraph at the head of the page stated:-

Stamps postcards or postal stationery do not always depict friendly and funny matters. Sometimes they depict something scary, something creepy, or something horrid. But, something that one person may find scary may not be considered scary by another person. You may be scared stiff because there is real danger, but you may also be goose flesh because you just think you are put in danger. Or you may find something scary because it is different from what you are used to. The first chapters of this plan deal with real danger, the latter chapters however do not. The first characters of the seven chapters intentionally form a scream of fear, but also of sensation.....Aaachh.

I hope my collection does not frighten you and that you understand that I get a lot of fun out of scary things.

(The most scary aspect of this display, is just how weird modern youth is becoming – Ed)

Dates for your Diary

WETS AGM - Will be held this year at Emmanuel Church Hall, Western Road, Exeter on Saturday 21st June 2008 starting at 1.30 pm the AGM will be followed by a display by Jim Wigmore plus a **"Bring and Buy"** session.

The minutes of the previous AGM were published in Newsletter No.30 dated September 2007.

Agenda

- 1 – Apologies for Absence.
- 2 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting.
- 3 - Matters arising from the Previous Minutes.
- 4 – Chairman's Report.
- 5 – Secretaries Report.
- 6 – Treasurers Report.
- 7 – Newsletter Editors Report.
- 8 – Publicity Officers Report.
- 9 – Packet Secretaries Report.
- 10 – Election of Officers.
- 11 – Any Other Business (*The secretary should be advised of any items prior to 18th June 2008*)

There are a number of issues we need to discuss with our membership regarding our future as a group and in particular how we deliver on our membership expectations. It is important that we evolve as a group, we are now the largest club within the Wessex Federation and are increasingly being looked at to provide both leadership and direction at federation level. Please try and make the effort to attend as your views are important to your committee in making some of the decisions we will need to be taking during the coming year.

Autumn Meeting – will be held on 25th October 2008 at Buckfastleigh starting at 2.00 pm. Members are asked to bring along 6-8 sheets on the subject "A Day Out", a Bring and Buy will follow, plus a raffle.

Spring Meeting – will be on 25th April 2009 at the Dartmoor Lodge, we hope to have David Griffiths as our speaker showing "Hear be Dragons". David is a thematic dealer and he will be dealing after lunch.

2009 AGM – is likely to be on 20th June 2009 at Emmanuel Church Exeter.

The Railway Revolution – The Gauge Wars

We have previously looked at how the railway became established, the process of raising finance and the need for an Act of Parliament in order for a railway to be built. Many other factors needed to be resolved not the least of which was the track the trains would run upon and the width the rails would be set to.



George Stephenson when building the Stockton and Darlington and the Liverpool Manchester had set the rails at 4 ft 8 ½ inches

apart, this being the width of cart wheels and judged by Stephenson to be a reasonable width.

It was a width adopted by many railways who recognised the need for inter operability both in this country where it was to become the main line standard as in many other countries around the world.



In this country Brunel had other idea's and set his rails to a width of 7 ft 0 ¼ inches, the argument being that both locomotives and rolling stock could be built with a lower centre of gravity making them both safer and capable of greater stability at speed. The Great Western Railway built a very extensive network all with the tracks set to this gauge. They were a lone force and despite their size, they had to change their whole system to what had become Standard Gauge.

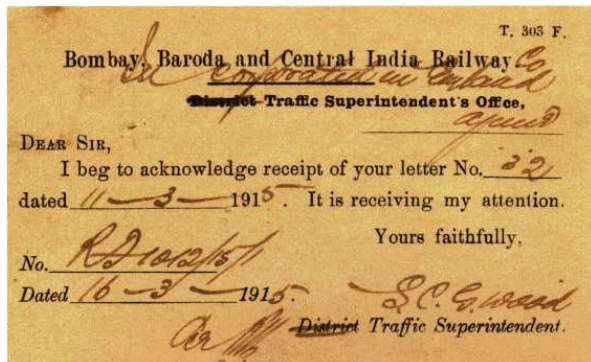
In the UK not all new railways were built to main line standards, many narrow gauge railways were built for transporting both people and goods where the need was less than a full size railway. The favoured gauge was 1 ft 11 ½ ins. Examples are the Lynton & Barnstaple (*one of just two narrow gauge railways to end up in the hands of one of the big four after the railway grouping of 1926*).

The Welsh Slate Quarries built some similar lines that still survive today in preservation. The narrowest gauge public railway in operation in the UK and in the whole world is the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway with a gauge of just





15 inches. If this is the smallest, then the extensive railway system operated in India is almost certainly the largest gauge of railway in current operation at 5 ft 6 inches. This railway system was both built and operated by the British and all the locomotives and rolling stock was originally sourced from the UK, most of the railway equipment today is built locally.



Ireland adopted almost as wide a gauge set at 5 ft 3ins along with some really odd examples of railway, including a monorail. There are of course lots of other examples of other than standard gauge around the world and examples can be found illustrated philatelically.

THE HOLIDAY CHALLENGE – WETS has teamed up with Dawlish Stamp Club to encourage the young and their families to look to and use philately to tell a story.

THE RULES

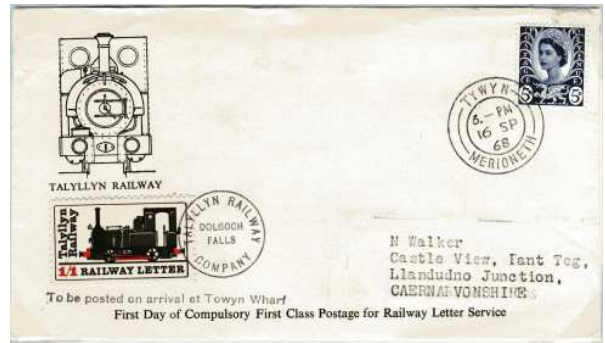
- 1 - You are challenged to produce a story of your holiday illustrated with stamps, postal markings and any other philatelic material that tells of your journey and holiday experiences. The story must contain the following elements, how you travelled, the places you visited, some background history of the place(s) and what they are best known for.
- 2 - Each entry should be up to 8 sheets and a minimum of 6 sheets.
- 3 - Entries may either be hand written, typed or produced with the aide of a computer.
- 4 - All entries are to be produced on A4 white card (160gm) and submitted in protectors.
- 5 - Sheet numbers should be on the front at the lower RH corner and the entrants name and address should be on the rear of the first sheet.

More on the Dawlish S.C and WETS websites.

www.geocities.com/dawlishsc

www.geocities.com/westofenglandthematics

All entries will be displayed at Dawlish in 2009 – Please promote this event its prime aim is to get new collectors into clubs.



CONTACTS by Richard Wheeler

I felt that it would be a service to our members to give any thematic contacts to like minded collectors.

Useful web sites

This is not a comprehensive list by any means and other members may have favourite sites to add to the list.

- www.ebay.co.uk and www.ebay.com
- www.delcampe.com
- www.stampsbythemes.com
- www.stenquist-thematics-telia.com
- www.auktionen-gaertner.de

Other useful contacts

sini27@tiscali.it This is an email address for the catalogue of Centro Italiano de Filatelia Tematica. It is an auction site and to get it requires membership of 30 euros

Christian Wapler, Postfach 30 37 69 d-10726 Berlin This is postal a address only. Very big catalogue. Look at their site on Google. Catalogue costs 20 euros.

(Any other useful information such as this will be added into future newsletters, providing you let me know. – Ed.)

SEE YOU
at the
A.G.M.
Sat 21st June 2008
see details above.
DON'T FORGET
the
BRING & BUY