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West of  
England  
Thematic  
Society

## Newsletter No.45 January 2012

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**IN THIS ISSUE** – WETS News by email, WETS Roadshow 2012, Dates for your Diary, Thematics are Catching On, WETS Autumn Meeting & Thematix, Snippet, Delivering the Mail.

**WETS NEWS by email** –If you are not yet a recipient make sure your name and email address are given to the Editor. Look at our website [www.wessexpf.org.uk/WETS](http://www.wessexpf.org.uk/WETS) to see some examples of the quality. Download time is very fast. **DON'T FORGET TO SAVE WHAT YOU GET**. It is suggested you create a file called WETS News to put them in.

The Wessex Federation are now distributing Wessex News by the same process. Did you know the Wessex website carries dates of all meetings and philatelic events in our region, these can be viewed at [www.wessexpf.org.uk/events](http://www.wessexpf.org.uk/events) then open the integrated calendar of club meetings.

**WETS ROADSHOW 2012** – Will be made up of the entries in the John Hillsdon Trophy Competition, see the Full Report below. Could WETS members please check with you club Programme Secretaries that your club has booked the Roadshow for your 2012 Season and that the booking has been made through the WETS Secretary Gillian Gray (*see detail above*), it has come to our attention some clubs have made bookings through the Wessex Federation Secretary and these have not necessarily been passed on to WETS this oversight has resulted in uncoordinated bookings and in one case a double booking.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**22-25th February 2012 Spring Stampex London**. This event totally devoted to Thematics, we are given to understand there will be some really good seminars on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Our Treasurer will be showing 8 frames of his “Evolution of Puppetry”. All WETS members should regard this event as one that should not be missed.

#### Local Events

**WETS DAY** – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April at Dartmoor Lodge, Ashburton, when the Speaker will be Lesley Marley who will be showing her Gold Medal exhibit “A Whales Tale”. Tickets will be £6.00, members are reminded that subscriptions will also be due at the rate of £4.00/member. Early bookings and subscriptions to the Treasurer please.

**THEMATICS are Catching On** – There is a growing groundswell in the clubs that they wish to learn more about Thematics. WETS have had a request from Launceston Club to Talk about Thematics & Social Philately on March 8<sup>th</sup> at the Eagle House Hotel Launceston starting at 7.00 pm this presentation will be given by Mary Claydon, Jim Wigmore and Gillian Gray plus Davis Herrity. WETS members would be welcomed to this event.

Our Vice Chairman Jim Wigmore was invited at short notice to give a talk to Torbay & Teignbridge Society about how to write up thematic displays. The display started by showing early competition entries and pointing out why they had failed in detail, at the break a handout was distributed giving guidance about putting displays and competition entries together. After the break Jim showed the first half of “Along Lost Lines” which follows the guidelines in the handout (*reproduced below*). From feedback on the night plus subsequent comments received this seemed to have gone down really well, we expect some good Thematic Entries in this societies 2012 Competitions.

### HOW TO BUILD A THEMATIC DISPLAY by Jim Wigmore

**What is a Thematic Display** – It’s a story told using philatelic material linked with a limited amount of text. (*the term Philatelic in this instance means, all aspects of philately e.g. stamps, postal markings, postal history, stamp booklets and any other material produced for the purpose*).

**IT IS NOT lots of text linked with a few stamps.**

The material you use for your Thematic Display may be drawn from anywhere and the linking text you use should show both knowledge of subject and philatelic knowledge, not that which appears in a Gibbons Catalogue. You should also seek to show personal research either into your subject or philatelic knowledge gleaned.

Try and incorporate the unusual e.g. an unusual use of philatelic material, a flaw or proof copy etc.

**Remember only material used for the purpose is allowed in competition**, for your own display this does not apply. Hence if it was produced by a Post Office for use in the mail its OK to use, pictures that appear on privately produced covers etc are not allowed in competition.

**HOW DO WE START** – We need a subject, something we are passionate about and a Title that is carefully selected to tell our story. The selection of the Title is often crucial since poor selection will be restrictive or too expansive.

**WE NEED A PLAN** – This is the structure of what we intend to build.

It may during the course of the displays construction need some minor adjustment.

**Only gather material that fits your plan.**

The plan should be constructed like the Chapters and sub Chapters of a book e.g.

1 – Title

1.1 – Sub-Title

Try and write the plan as a short story incorporating the various sections and sub-sections of your final story into your short story plan.

**AN INTRODUCTION** – may be required for collections or displays that exceed 32 sheets.

**HOW DO WE PREPARE AND WRITE UP OUR PAGES** – You pages may be prepared by any method that you are comfortable with, hand written, typed, typed labels glued to the pages, prepared on a computer or any other method. Philatelic material should be arranged and secured to the page by means of mounts, adhesive corners or the use of Hawid type mounts.

Your page layout should make the best use of the full page size with all page titles uniform across each page in your display such that when displayed all titles appear in the same position and line up horizontally and vertically. *(It is a good idea to highlight titles).*

**SOME HOT TIPS**

1 – **DO NOT PRINT BORDERS ON YOUR PAGES** they restrict the area of useable page space and detract from your display.

2 – Try and work only with White Pages (*160 gm Card is best*). If you must use a colour then colours that are very pale and will not detract from your display are best. Remember it's your display that is important.

***Your display is the star not the colour it is mounted on.***

3 – If you use Hawid Mounts only use the clear type. The black type leave a mourning band around the stamp and detract from the colour of the material being shown.

4 - Place a wide line positioning band on your page to position each item on the page.

5 - Mount mint stamps in clear Hawid Mounts on a separate card matched to the colour you use for your page positioning band. This ensures they are easily moved without damage to your stamps.

6 – If you window covers lay down a wide positioning band to show off the finished job and provide a cutting guide.

7 – Try not to use small photo corners, the large type look better and hold your material more securely.

8 – *Philatelic knowledge or specialist knowledge should be shown in a separate colour and or in italics. This draws the attention of the viewer to this important information.*

9 – **Make sure that text does not overwhelm the philatelic material and is kept to an absolute minimum.**

10 – If you are using a computer, the pages attached on this subject may be helpful. *“How to Write Up your Display/Collection on a Computer” previously printed in the WETS News was also included in the handout.*

11 – Double width pages are allowed and may be useful to show very wide items. Try not to turn long covers sideways. This is an expensive solution and only the really keen competitor will wish to go down this route.

*This guidance was put together to both guide and encourage those who currently do not appreciate what Thematics is all about. If the experience gained at Torbay & Teignbridge is anything to go by we will start to see better understandings of Thematics this needs to be built upon with this years WETS Roadshow.*

## (WETS) Autumn Meeting & Thematix

*This article was originally prepared for and published in Themescene*



The Autumn Meeting of **WETS** was held at the Dartmoor Lodge Motel in conjunction with Thematix on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

Everyone had a really fantastic day and judging by the number of people visiting the dealers (see left) so did they.

In addition to **WETS** members we were delighted to welcome many club members from South West Clubs as well as **BTA** members and others from outside the area. Also being shown at the venue were the competition entries

from the Wessex Federation.

**WETS** displayed the John Hilsdon Memorial Trophy Entries all were 16 sheets listed as follows:- **The Cyprus Government Railway** by Jim Wigmore, **On the Square** by Trevor Frey, **Living in a Whorl** by Gillian Gray, **Now You See It Now You Don't** by David Herrity, **Grandeur with a little more Gravure** by David Roseveare, **Man and Malaria** by Carol Turner and **The Transportation of Mail** by Val Robbins. The entries were judged this year by **WETS** Treasurer Richard Wheeler who is shown right hard at work.



**The John Hilsdon Memorial Trophy** – John was one of the early **WETS** members from Cornwall who had a keen interest in Birds hence the Humming Bird on the trophy pictured left.

When John died in 2008 his family in conjunction with **WETS** member Lesley Marley a family friend donated this trophy to **WETS** as a perpetual memory of John and his love of both Birds and Philately.

This year the award went to David Roseveare for his entry **Grandeur with a little more Gravure**, Lesley

Marley is pictured right presenting the trophy to David. THANK YOU ALL FOR SUPPORTING THIS EVENT IN 2011.

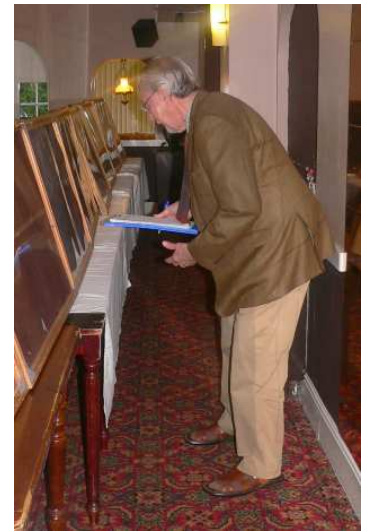
**Thematix 2012** we have been given to understand that this event will take place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2012. Make this a Date in your Diary we need lots of support once again to keep this event here in the South West.

### SNIPPET

I wonder what John Hilsdon would have thought about the “Kingfisher” reproduced left. Have any of our members got a Bird based thematic on the go and does it include a section on the Kingfisher. If so we like hear about this or any other part of your bird collection and how you have put it together. There are similar birds to our Kingfisher in other parts of the world “are they portrayed on stamps?

### WE NEED YOUR STORIES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

By End of February 2012



## DELIVERING THE MAIL by Jim Wigmore

For anyone looking at methodology of getting mail to its destination as a theme you would need to look at TIN CAN MAIL. This was brought to mind by a lot that appeared in the recent Dawlish Club Auction, both front and back are illustrated. An interesting item and moderately priced at just £25.00 it failed to sell, if you are interested it could still be yours, any offers to the above



The story of TIN CAN MAIL begins back in 1882 when William Travers, a plantation manager, found himself 'marooned' on this tiny doughnut-shaped island half way between Fiji and Samoa. It is nothing more than the tip of a volcano jutting out of the vast blue waters of the Pacific. Just a couple of miles out, he could see the passenger liners steaming past, but none ever called because the island had no Harbour and no beaches. In fact the steep sides plunge six miles down to the bottom of the Tongan Trench making it impossible to anchor and hard to land even a rowing boat.

The only white man on the island, Travers resented being unable to communicate with the outside world. So when the need to contact his company in Australia became desperate, he came up with an ingenious plan. He wrote to the Tongan postal authorities asking them to seal his mail in a ship's biscuit tin, and arrange for the captain of one of the Union Steamship Company vessels to throw it overboard as they passed the island on their way between Suva and Fiji. These ships traded regularly between the islands of the Pacific. If the captain would give a hoot on the ship's siren, he would send a swimmer out to collect the tin.

Carefully he wrapped his own letter in grease-proof paper and tied it to a short stick. He approached the strongest swimmer on the island and asked him to swim out to the next ship and hand his letter to the captain. In this way Tin Can Mail was born. It was to become a regular happening after Arthur Tindall set up as a trader on the island some years later.

There is a considerable story to be followed up on the various cancels that appear on this type of mail along with the associated history.