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West of  
England  
Thematic  
Society

## Newsletter No.52 December 2013

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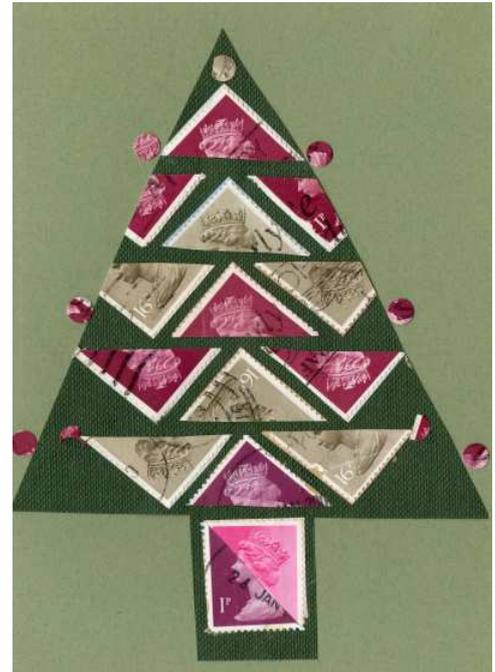
**IN THIS ISSUE** – WETS News by email, TIS the Season to be Jolly, Thematix 2013 & WETS AGM, Post THEMATIZ Report, Endeavour, The WETS Roadshow, An unusual Christmas Stamp.

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### TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY



WETS member Val Robbins produced a splendid Philatelic Christmas Tree shown right and Vice Chairman Jim Wigmore painted a Devon Winter Scene for his 2014 Christmas card.



### MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

#### Thematix 2013 and WETS AGM.

by Martin Ellam

On Friday 25th October WETS officers, committee and members collected together at the Dartmoor Lodge Hotel Ashburton to hold their AGM during Thematix 2013. The Chairman, Mary Claydon, flanked by her



retiring secretary, Gillian Gray, Vice Chairman & Webmaster Jim Wigmore and Treasurer Andrew Austin looked out upon the members. There being no contentious issues (most disappointing: Damn it) the AGM passed quickly through the reports stage to the election of Officers. Mrs Gillian Gray resigned as secretary after



long service and Mrs Sally Ellam, also from Plymouth Philatelic Society, volunteered to become the new secretary. Any other business raised several points and lively discussion followed until Mary closed the meeting.

After the meeting members went to scour the dealers boxes and stock books to try and find any little gem lurking there. YES!! There were some, I came away with a gorgeous Victorian Plymouth 620 cancel on cover, postmarked 'Plymouth E march 8th 1868' and a postcard to Germany with clear '94 in diamond' London cancel of 1876. Maybe? there are "other things" in the world beyond my passion for German early postage. Then we were called to lunch. As always the Dartmoor Lodge served up a splendid meal downed with various fancy wines and beer.

The WETS competition was judged by Richard Wheeler during the morning with the PIP Trophy, a lovely decanter, going to David Roseveare and the John Hilsdon trophy to Jim Wigmore, Mary Claydon presented these awards to the winners. The raffle was successfully run by June Chamberlaine and Gillian Gray, probably making a vast profit for the society. I enjoyed the day, looking through the dealers stock and the company. Now looking forward to the next WETS meeting.

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the West of England Thematic Society**

held at the Dartmoor Lodge Hotel, Ashburton on Saturday October 27th 2013 at 11 am.

**Present** - Mrs. M. Claydon (Chairman) Mr. J. Wigmore (Vice Chairman and Newsletter Editor) Mr. A. Austin (Treasurer) Mrs. G. Gray (Secretary) Mr. R. Wheeler, Mr. M. & Mrs. S. Ellam, Mr. D. Roseveare, Mrs. V. Wigmore, Mr. T. Fray, Mr. G. Green, Mrs. L. Marley, Mrs. A. Burden.

**1 - Apologies** - Mr. T. Smith.

**2 - Minutes of the previous A.G.M.** - These had been published in the WETS Newsletter and were proposed seconded and agreed by all.

**3 - Matters Arising** - None

**4 - Chairman's Report.** - The Chairman said in view of her personal circumstances she had nothing to report but wished to express her gratitude to Jim Wigmore, Gillian Gray, and Andrew Austen for all their work during the year.

**5 - Secretary's Report.** - Our AGM and Thematix 2012 at the Dartmoor Lodge, Ashburton on 27th October proved very popular with much material to be found from the Dealers. The same day members entered a Thematic Competition with Ron Sambell winning the John Hilsdon Trophy with his entry 'Going Under Cover' and Gary Green won the PIP Trophy with 'Bee Keeping and the Life of the Honey Bee', this being a new Trophy donated by Richard Wheeler

The Secretary then stated that reluctantly she was tendering her resignation due to the fact that she would be leaving Plymouth to return to her home town of Falmouth.

After some discussion Mrs. S. Ellam agreed to take on the post temporarily pending a permanent secretary being found. The Chairman expressed her thanks to Mrs. Ellam

On the 13th April 2013 our Annual WETS Day at the same venue took place when Wendy Buckle, The President of the BTA entertained us with a superb display and talk on the subject of Paper and Paper Making entitled the "Write Stuff".

Societies have been submitting their dates for the next WETS Roadshow in 2014. This is going well with only a couple more to come. (i.e. Mid Devon, Launceston and Dawlish)

Finally I would like to thank the Committee members for their hard work and to everyone for supporting WETS.

**6 - Treasurer's Report** - The Treasurer reported that the accounts were virtually in the same position as last year and he did not think there was need to raise the subscription There was some discussion and it was finally agreed the subscription should rise to £6.00. proposed by Mr. Richard Wheeler seconded Mr. Gary Green and agreed by all.

**7 - News Editor's Report.** - The News Editor said that WETS News continued to be popular with some members joining the Society just to receive it. However members were requested to send in both articles and illustrations. Illustrations to go with the articles are very important and give WETS News its unique look and feel. Most members now get WETS News by email which keeps our costs to a minimum.

**8 – Publicity Officers Report** – None given.

**9 - Election of Officers.** – Other than the Secretary all the other officers had agreed to stand. It was proposed, seconded, and passed unanimously that the officers be returned en bloc.

**10 – Any Other Business - The WETS Day on 12th April 2014**, it was reported that there would be two speakers BTA Speaker, Barry Stag will be showing “Parachuting” and our Vice Chairman Jim Wigmore will be showing “Along Lost Lines”. More details in the next news letter.

The Chairman thanked all for attending, the meeting closed at 11.45 am

## Post THEMATIX 2013 REPORT.

The dealers attending this event were most unhappy. Despite significant advertising attendance was quite poor. The dealers were most critical of the fact that when WETS members went to lunch everything came to a stop. Dartmoor Lodge prices have significantly increased for 2014, this plus the low attendance may have brought this relationship to an end. Will this be a case of **“if you don't use it you lose it”**? We will just have to wait and see.



**ENDEAVOUR** by Tony Smith - Did you stride up the gangplank to discover how James Cook and his men lived aboard H.M. Bark “Endeavour” when they sailed from Plymouth on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1768 to voyage to the Pacific? This was the “Endeavour Replica” but I was in Weymouth when it docked in October 2000 and it was a special birthday treat from my wife and son.

Even the sun was shining as I walked the deck, looked up at the three masts, imagining firing one of the ten 4-pounder carriage guns and being one of the 83-strong crew perhaps one of the officers rather than the lower deck men who slept in 14 inch hammocks.

Looking up the 69ft main mast (*too old at 62 that day to consider climbing aloft*) I already knew the “Endeavour Replica” was 106ft long, 29ft wide and had a gross tonnage of 366 tons. All these statistics I knew as a member of the worldwide



Captain Cook Society.

In 1988 Australia decided to build the replica and the keel was laid in October that year. Historical authenticity was the prime concern and thanks to records of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century bark being provided by Britain's National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. Apart from present safety regulations -- auxiliary engine, modern bilge pumps even an electric galley. The replica also had 20th century communication and navigation systems. Having none of these 200 years before Captain Cook really must have been a Supreme Navigator.

The “Endeavour Replica” was 95 per cent identical to the original and was launched in December 9 1993.

It sailed around Australia, New Zealand, many Pacific islands then up the west coast of America before, after a brief return to Australia, she headed into the Atlantic for British waters known to the original “bark” and Cook's birthplace, Whitby, plus the county he always sailed from, Devon.



As small groups followed a guide around the “Endeavour Replica” mine said we were aboard his land's "ultimate tribute to the man who discovered Australia". I knew Cook DIDN'T DISCOVER Australia. But I knew they had “adopted” him with countless statues etc.

Twelve years later I discovered something else which might be that "ultimate tribute" to Cook in Australia. Looking through some “down under Kiloware” I spotted a cancel for “James Cook University”.

Contacting the university I discovered it really had a tale to tell.

It was established at Townsville, north Queensland 19 degrees south of the equator. In April 1770 James Cook (*Lieut. not Captain at the time*) sailed “H.M.S. Endeavour” past the area where Townsville now stands. Coasting and charting the east coast of Australia (*or New Holland as it was then known*) he didn't pause but named the region Cleveland Bay.

A century later a wealthy Sydney investor, Robert Towns, bought the land seeing it's grassland was idea for grazing cattle. He named the area after himself Townsville.

Modern Townsville is very different. A major inland city with a population of Australians, Pacific people and indigenous aborigines, so when in the mid '50s there was a call for a second university for the state of Queensland local authorities pressed Townville's claim.

They opposed a suggestion it be called “North Queensland University” and certainly didn't want to remember Robert Towns. From the beginning many of the people enjoyed talking of Australia's maritime history and pressed for a link with the son of a humble Yorkshire farmhand who put their

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nation on the world map.

Today James Cook University education establishments. In Times survey listed JCU in the tropics in its early years it

departments with modern buildings covering 386 hectares and over 12,000 students. The coast township Cairns now has a campus linked to JCU. “Endeavour” anchored there in June 1770 and actually went ashore, confirming naming the university after him was perfectly chosen. The Great Barrier Reef is close enough to both campuses to allow students relaxation outside term time by snorkelling with ever-present tourists.

Those who had pressed for the man who sailed from Plymouth to explore the Pacific had to battle for many years to overcome state politics before the name of their university was proudly finalised.

*During her visit to Australia in 1970 Queen Elizabeth II visited the Townsville campus and signed the Distinguished Visitors' Book.*

**THE WETS ROADSHOW** will be starting its travels shortly. This years show has a theme “Aspiration & Achievement”, we are after all a Thematic Society. The aim of the exercise is to show how thematic collectors begin with a plan and how if they follow their plan they can achieve fascinating and interesting collections. For those of a competitive nature they may be able to use parts of their collection in WETS, Federation or even National Competition. As always we will be attempting to recruit new members. We are attempting to deliver this years show by zone in an attempt to reduce travelling costs and speaker time in transfers of material. Our Secretary has done an excellent job in booking the show into all Wessex Federation Clubs bar one and they may still book late.

**AN UNUSUAL CHRISTMAS STAMP** – arrived on a card from America, something for the USA & Christmas collectors to look out for, we do not see very many round stamps. Your editor would be interested to hear of any others members may be aware of, don't forget to include scans. *(Note the inscription GLOBAL, presumably the rate for mail to destinations outside the USA.)*

