



# THE THATCHAM POSTMARK

THATCHAM and DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY

SUMMER EDITION JULY 2014



We have had quite a full and interesting programme for the last few months. The Thursday evening meetings included Sue Hopson kindly swapping with Tony Jordan and presenting her `Free Fronts` display, explaining just what they were and showing many signatures of quite famous people. We had a good club-stamps auction when all the lots were sold and in the second half members showed a wide and varied selection of their `Favourite Stamp` (or cover). Tony Jordan presented his superb American Independence material `1776 plus or minus a bit` which brought us forward from prehistoric times to almost the present day.

The Monday afternoon meetings continue to be well attended perhaps partly due to the members selecting the meeting topics. The topics included `Queens` (of all sorts) and most of those attending showed at least a couple of sheets to make a good afternoon. Then there was `Marine Life` where once again great presentations were seen with some lovely material.

Colin Lee from the Reading Society was our guest speaker for the Monday meeting in May when the topic was `The Faroe Islands`. Colin showed quite a selection of cancellations, covers and stamps and spoke informatively about the history of these islands.

There are some very interesting meetings organised for the next quarter to include the AGM in September so do please come along.

Barney Bardsley, Chairman.

*Year 48*

*Issue 125*

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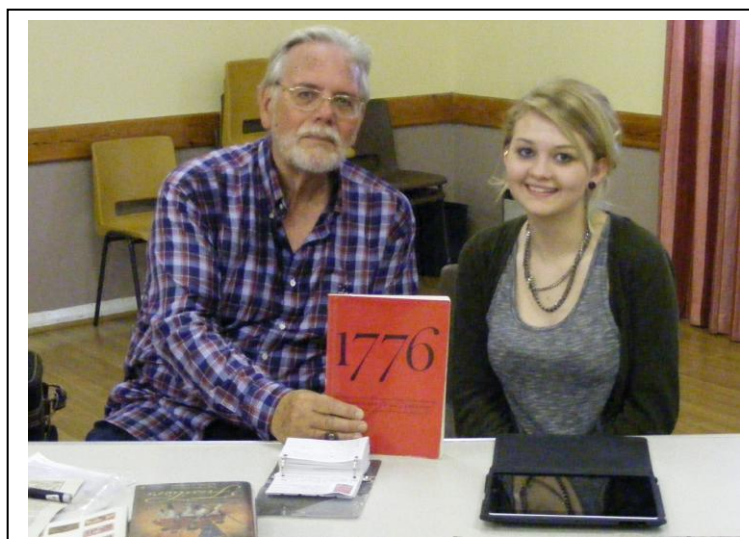
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Tony Jordan and Jessica his grand-daughter assistant

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anything in this newsletter  
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*or*

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*Tel 01635 866942*

# Photo Gallery



Queen Fabiola the 5<sup>th</sup> Queen



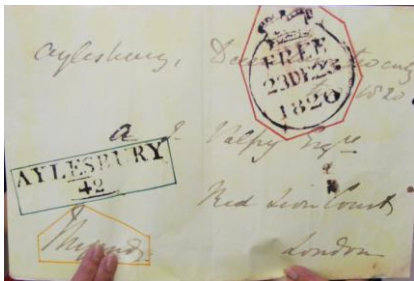
Queen Paola the 6<sup>th</sup> Queen



Queen Mathilde the 7<sup>th</sup> Queen



Sue Hopson and her 'Free Fronts'



A typical 'Free Front'



Some Free Fronts and pictures of the senders



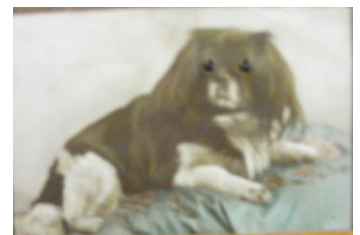
Colin Lee with 'The Faroes' display



Some lovely cancellations and two War-time Faroes Covers



A lovely Ross Dependency cover



Take a pair of sparkling eye cover



Some of Tony's wonderful material that he displayed and a picture of George Washington taken from the top of a Gunpowder keg (not by Tony or so we are to believe).

## PAST EVENTS

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April meeting was on the theme of `Queens` (and all that that implied).

There were just 18 members present but the displays were colourful and interesting.

**Martin Farr** started the afternoon by showing some of his Chinese legends material that included some `Beauties` of old China (beauties were just another name for the Emperor`s concubines) and several colourful sheets of the ladies from the magical story `The Dream of Red Mansions` which tells the story of several generations of the same two families. (A Red Mansion in China has the same meaning as a thatched cottage with roses around the door has in England).

**Graeme Stewart** then followed with sheets of his Victorian post boxes and their current locations as well as QEII boxes with aperture changes. Then some pairs of post boxes that showed King and Queen relationships.

**Mike Gurr** followed with some Queen Alexandra and King Edward postcards, some cards and covers of Queen Elizabeths 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with Windsor postmarks. Then items commemorating 100 years of Queens with some envelopes posted on the royal train in Rhodesia when Elizabeth and Phillip were on their royal tour.

At half time there was a mini auction where 9 from 23 items were sold.

**Tony Hillier** started the second half with pictorial and stamp displays of the Belgian Royal Family showing 7 Queens from 1831 to 2002. The display included stamps, MS sheets and postcards of the various dynasties showing the Kings and Queens and their families. All rather informative with nice material.

**Ian Keel** then showed Machins and other material relating to the design of the QEII machin head which must be the most reproduced item in the world! Ian showed lots of examples to illustrate this theme.

**Juliet Keel** then showed us cards and sheets of Queen Mary 1<sup>st</sup>, Queen Victoria, Queen Alexandra, postcards of the Queen Mother and then postcards of the ships the Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth and the Empress of Britain and the Empress of France. Quite a nice slant on the subject.

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April was a swap event as Tony Jordan was unable to attend and so Sue Hopson very kindly exchanged evenings to present her `Free Fronts` display.

Sue started off by defining what exactly Free Fronts are. They are the cut out or torn out address panels from an entire letter that was originally carried free – not having to pay any charges - as the sender had the privilege of the free system that was given to the Monarch down to, for instance, a clerk in the Navy Paymasters office or to members of both Houses of Parliament. As a result one can find some very exciting and interesting autographs on them.

The enlargement photograph shows just what elements go to make up a standard free front – the place of posting and date in full, the red box which contains the FREE hand-stamp struck in London which took many forms from the earliest – a circle with FREE inside it and no date, to some very complicated and short-lived designs which are illustrated in her displays, and on to the later standard type of Free hand-stamp in the picture. The green rectangular box is the town hand-stamp (not always present) and the orange box contains the senders signature.

So why do Free Fronts still survive? For that we have to thank both the Victorian craze for collecting autographs and the postcard collecting mania of WWI. There were three collections in Sue`s display starting in 1776 and ending in 1840 when the privilege was terminated. The first was a collection of Free hand-stamps followed by Instructional and Explanatory hand-stamps, and a London and Counties postal history section. These showed many different types of hand-stamps and coloured inkpads that were used. For part two Sue showed sheets with places of posting, town hand-stamps and lots of sheets with very collectable signatures of the senders. These Free Fronts were not collected for the whole item but for the signature of the sender. Sue`s sheets included autographs, pictures and potted biographies of the Prime Ministers from Pitt the Younger to Palmerston, including Wellington, plus some well-known personages of the period such as Congreve, Huskinson, Willberforce and Whitbread. Finally Sue displayed items from local `worthies` including Lord Caernarvon of Highclere and Charles Dundas from Kintbury.

What a great evening`s entertainment it was. Most enjoyable. Thank you Sue.

On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May we had a guest speaker **Colin Lee** from the Reading Society who gave us a talk and display on `The Faroe Islands` and Graeme kindly took some pictures and notes for me.

The Faroe Islands are situated 200 miles north of Scotland and just below the Arctic Circle. They cover 18 islands, have a population of 45 thousand and their capital is Torshavn. Colin is a member of the Faroes study group that has about 80-100 members. The islands had been under Danish control since 1380. In 1948 the islands were given self government with their own flag but Danish stamps continued to be used until 1975 when their own were issued. Surcharged Danish stamps were used from 1940-45 when Britain occupied the islands to prevent seizure by the Germans.

Colin showed many examples of early and internal covers to and from Denmark with Faroes postmarks and cancellations. He showed several examples of the 1919 Danish provisional issues plus a nice selection of censored covers of WW2.

For the second half Colin displayed some Christmas seals, ship mails to Norway, Germany and Denmark and paquebot hand-stamps and cancellations. Then he showed the first definitives issued in 1975 with maps and views of the island and then finished off with most of the Faroes issues up until 2000.

A most interesting and informative afternoon on a country that few of us know much about.

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May was an auction evening for the first half when 110 lots of items from the Club Stamps coffer that is well managed by **Dave Tanner** were put up for auction. **Tony Jordan** was the auctioneer with **Mike Gurr** as the scrutineer, **Mike Ward** doing the finances with **Reg** and **Colin** looking after the lots. All of the lots were sold and realised a total of £130 for club funds. Very good!

For part two the theme was `my favourite stamp` (or stamps or covers or cards etc).

**Tony Jordan** showed his latest collecting interest which was illustrated advertising covers. He displayed several lovely covers including a Massey Fergusson one sent to Canada (by tractor of course)

**Ian Keel** brought part of a fantastic collection of first-day covers that he got from Ebay – not realising just how much (in quantity) would actually turn up! They were all presented in lovely expensive albums as well. Quite a collection.

**Martin Farr** showed a large MS of the first Air Mail flight (by plane) from Allahabad across the Ganges to Naini railway junction – (did you know that the first ever air mail flight was in 1870 from Paris when it was besieged by the Prussians. The French army sent up a balloon with 227lbs of mail. The Prussians did not like this and so Krupps invented the anti-aircraft gun).

**David Beddoes** brought some New Zealand covers from 1996-2000 which had the best stamps of that year on each cover. Very nice sets they were too.

**Graeme Stuart** then displayed his special covers from Newbury showing postmarks and cachets, the earliest being from 1757. Then he showed some of his special Antarctica sheets as well that included a cover of Scott`s Antarctica base and sheets from the Ross Island Dependencies.

**Bob Patterson** brought along some of his favourite West Indies material including items from Granada, St Lucia, Dominica and the Turks and Caicos islands. Quite a nice pictorial set of items.

**Simon Dickson** then showed items from Kuwait and the Central African Republic which included his most favourite letter sent to his grandfather – Lt. Col. Dickson, that is covered in cachets and directions and sent from Somalia via Aden to finish up in Kuwait.

Then **Alan Cross** showed his great collection of Australian items which included printer marks, plate and sheet numbers and their variations, and general information of `marginal interest`, i.e. information that is inserted in the sheet margins!

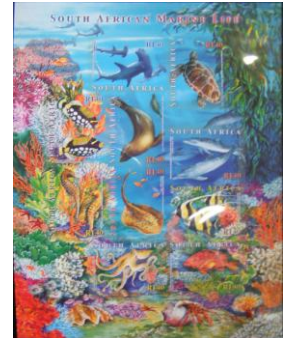
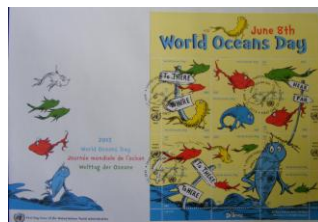
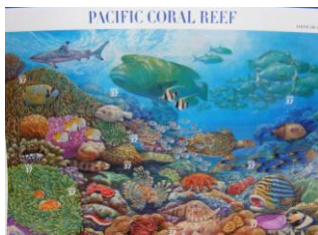
Finally **Juliet Keel** showed some of her favourite post cards including one of a Pekinese dog in three layers whose eyes just sparkled.

What a very interesting hobby we all do have. Its amazing what you can learn – should have lessons in schools on this sort of thing!

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June and the theme was `Marine Life` with 19 members present for the displays.

To start off **John Shambrook** showed N.Z whale sets, some marine covers from the Falklands and the GB FDC fishes cover from 1983. **Jerry Wilson** continued with a mixed bag (his words) to include Guernsey marine life sheets, a nice `Fisherman` MS from S. Africa, and a selection of very nice marine life sheets and whales issues. **Bob Paterson** then showed sheets of marine creatures to include turtles, sea slugs, sea shells and starfish varieties. **John Taylor** showed fishes stamps from USA, fishes from deep down in the ocean and a large sheet of marine life. To finish the first half **Martin Farr** then interpreted marine life somewhat by showing three ships – the SS Montrose that Crippen and Ethel la Neve sailed on to Quebec, the faster RMS Laurentic on which inspector Drew overtook them and arrested them and the SS Megantic on which they all travelled back to the UK.

There was a mini auction at half time in which just four lots from 20 were sold.



Some of the lovely maxi sheets of marine life that were shown

To start the second half **Graeme Stewart** showed whales issues from New Zealand plus seals, sea birds, petrels and fulmars, and of course penguins. Then some issues of sea birds from Ross Island and FDC`s of whales. **David Beddoes** showed us lots of covers of marine life to include dolphins, seals, whales, and sea-shore creatures and then several cards showing fishing boats.

**Ben Hampton** showed a 1998 UN issue `Year of the Ocean` and from 2010 `One planet one Ocean` sheet – (they were very nice) and then some large MS from the UN Geneva for `World oceans day`. A lovely set of material. **Dave Tanner** finished off the afternoon by showing marine life from the Faroes, Barbados and Tristan da Cunha issues, then from the Indian ocean – shell sets, fishes and crabs and plankton and food chains and to finish off creatures from the Caspian sea and turtles that are under threat. A good and very pictorial afternoon.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June** we were in for a treat! **Tony Jordan** came along with his grand-daughter **Jessica** as his assistant, to talk about `1776 plus or minus a bit` with a very good computer aided visual display and some wonderful and diverse display material to illustrate each point.

`Minus a bit` took us back to prehistoric times and the various migrations of humans to the Americas, from the Home Sapiens across the Bering straits to Chinese, Japanese and Pacific migrations up to tribal Indians, early settlers and explorers, the Viking Leif Ericson, Columbus in 1492 and Cabot in 1498. Then Tony continued with East coast violence, British vs French hostilities and up to Benjamin Franklin who was a real English gentleman.

For part 2 Tony then talked about the trouble brewing due to high taxes, the Boston massacre of 1772, the Tea Party of 1773 and George III declaring open rebellion in 1775. Tony then mentioned Paul Revere and Lexington (both in 1775) and Bunker Hill in 1776 when Independence was declared on July 6<sup>th</sup> in Philadelphia and the `Stars and Stripes` flag was adopted.

Tony then went into `Plus a bit` which included George Washington, Lafayette in 1777, Valley Forge battles of 1777-8, many naval battles and the final British Army surrender of 1782. Then he mentioned the Bill of rights of 1788 and the first president George Washington with lots of lovely sheets about his life and family and also about George III and his family.

This was a brilliant evenings entertainment with Tony`s usual way of relating stories and information. The 20 people that were present had a great time and didn`t miss the football at all! (we lost anyway).

THE POSTCARD PAGE

Thanks to Mike Gurr for these lovely postcards and information



The Cistercian Abbey of Flaxley was founded in 1748. This was their very early hand fire pump dated to 1750. It was operated by four men filling the bottom tank with buckets.

A Dennis Pump Escape built by Dennis fire pumps at Guildford in 1949. It is powered by a Rolls Royce engine with a 50ft Bailey wheeled escape ladder. This appliance went into service at Caversham Fire Station, Reading, serving until 1973. It is now owned by the Veteran Fire Engine Society.



This Merryweather horse-drawn steam pump was built in 1892 and was a big step forward and became very popular world wide. This one was purchased by Arundel Castle for £450. In 1949 the Duke of Norfolk presented it to the Wessex Fire Brigade. Locally, Englefield Estate had the same pump which is now preserved .

‘An interrupted feast’  
A light-hearted card of Badger and friends with a more modern fire engine.



### **USEFUL WEBSITES**

Tony Bray for World new issues at [www.tonybray.co.uk](http://www.tonybray.co.uk)

Royal Mail for all past and new issues at [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com)

The society website with lots of data and links at [www.tdps.co.uk](http://www.tdps.co.uk)

Avion Thematics – one of the best organised sites at [www.avionstamps.com](http://www.avionstamps.com)

\*\*The Avion website now incorporates the stock listings for Phoenix International\*\*

Portsmouth stamp shop for awkward items and covers at [www.portsmouthstampshop.co.uk](http://www.portsmouthstampshop.co.uk)

A.B.P.S for all the latest philatelic news, events and links at [www.abps.org.uk](http://www.abps.org.uk)

### **Recent and Future Royal Mail Issues**

|                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| July 17 <sup>th</sup>      | Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games |
| July 28 <sup>th</sup>      | The Great War                   |
| September 18 <sup>th</sup> | Seaside Architecture            |
| October 14 <sup>th</sup>   | Prime Ministers                 |
| Post and Go                |                                 |
| September 17 <sup>th</sup> | Symbolic Flowers                |

### **Sales and Wants**

You are able to advertise your items for sale or your `wants` on this page. Please feel free to contact the editor, Martin Farr, at club meetings, by email or by `phone.

I have a Brass Horn Gramophone for sale with lots of spare needles. Any reasonable offers?

#### **A recent missive from the Daily Mail of Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June (D-Day)**

Anyone looking for an investment could do a lot worse than giving Philately a go.

Stanley Gibbons, the worlds longest established rare stamp merchant, has released its latest Rare Stamp Indices, the GB30 and GB 250. The former shows that stamps delivered annual growths of 9pc while the latter a growth of 11.8pc.

Since 1995 you`d have done better putting your money into stamps than in the UK and US stock markets, gold or property. You could say that stamps have most other investments licked !

Collectables such as wine, fine art, classic cars and stamps tend to do well due to fairly simple supply and demand economics. If there are only a handful around it stands to reason that they get pricier over time.

For example, the QV 9d stamp known as the 9d pale straw rose in value by 33% in the past year, up from £15,000 to £20,000. You won`t find a return like that in many places.

Learn more by consulting the GB Concise Stamp Catalogue.

It is a riveting read!

### **VERA TRINDER HAS MOVED**

Sadly they are no longer able to occupy premises in Bedford Street off of the Strand – redevelopment !

With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July they will be re-locating to:-

Vera Trinder Limited, Unit 3A, Hayle Industrial Park,  
Hayle, Cornwall, TR27 5JR

Phone 01736 751910, contact Jonathan Butt, accounts Joanna Roberts

# THE BACK PAGE

## “Club Stamps” corner

**Club Stamps** are well looked after by **Dave Tanner** who will be present at most of our club meetings. There will usually be a Club Table at all stamp fairs held at the Memorial Hall.

### Accessories.

Dave is also the contact for the purchase of all philatelic accessories – most of which are available to be ordered at a small discount.

Stamps of the World Catalogue set (normal price - £200 ) – TDPS price £155 + p&p

Collect British stamps (normal price - £12.95 ) – TDPS price £10 + p&p

GB Concise (normal price - £30) – TDPS price £23.50 + p&p

A small percentage always goes to club funds. Give Dave a ring on 01256 780467

## Future Programme and Events

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> July                | Philatelic Quarters – members displays  |
| There is no Monday meeting in August          |   |
| Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> August              | Stamp Fair in the Memorial Hall   |
| Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> August              | ‘Something of interest that I have found’<br>members display – stamps or otherwise  |
| Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> September              | ‘Sports’  |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> September | Autumn STAMPEX  |
| Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> September           | A.G.M. Social evening and mini auction  |
| Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> October                | ‘Transport’   |
| Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> October             | 31 <sup>st</sup> Annual Stamp Fair at the Memorial Hall<br>Thatcham. 10am – 4pm. in conjunction with<br>the Festival of Arts and Leisure.<br>Auction lots for November on view. |
| Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November               | ‘Literature - Authors and Characters’   |

### Officers of the Club

|                   |                 |               |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>President</b>  | John Baron      | 01933 650093  |
| <b>Chairman</b>   | Barney Bardsley | 0777 0376 235 |
| <b>Vice Chair</b> | Ian Keel        | 01488 681500  |
| <b>Secretary</b>  | Graeme Stewart  | 01635 866942  |
| <b>Treasurer</b>  | Mike Ward       | 01635 864307  |

### Committee

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Ann Martin        | 01488 682728 |
| Tony Jordan       | 01189 302279 |
| Colin Bartholemew | 01635 865457 |
| Mike Gurr         | 01635 43398  |

|                  |              |                |                   |                  |             |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>Archivist</b> | Julia Wilson | <b>WestBex</b> | Graeme and Martin | <b>Publicity</b> | Martin Farr |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------|