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COLLECTOR HANDBOOK

2021 EDITION



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A MESSAGE FROM

THE CHAIRMAN



DEAR COLLECTOR,

It is with great pleasure that we are once again hosting a physical Stampex. The past 18 months have helped us develop and grow the Stampex brand and we are very proud of everything we have achieved.

We are aware that the social side effects of the global pandemic have created new opportunities for many philatelic businesses, and technology in particular has been boldly adopted in new and creative ways. But, COVID-19 has also caused significant disruption, challenges and heartbreak for too many. As countries transition through the pandemic, we are delighted that our hobby is once again able to meet, connect and celebrate together.

Virtual Stampex has allowed us to widen our brand and connect with a global audience. Whilst our international, innovative and inclusive approach to Stampex International is still very much at the heart of what we love to do, physically connecting individuals at Stampex in London is something very special indeed.

For the Philatelic Traders' Society Team, it has been a busy year. We have brought together partnership deals with eBay, launched the PTS Awards, strengthened our social media reach, improved our online Member Directory and increased the size and diversity of our membership globally.

All this activity is helping collectors trust our membership even more. We truly are the International Society for Philatelic Professionals and we encourage collectors to look for the PTS Shield when buying, selling or seeking advice.

At the PTS, our mantra is to promote our members, support the philatelic trade, and boost the hobby. We are a philatelic ecosystem after all. We seek to be bold, innovative, professional and collaborative. Along with our members, our projects and initiatives seek enhance philatelic experiences for the whole philatelic community.

This handbook has been printed alongside Stampex so we can celebrate the hobby together. We hope you enjoy it.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Suzanne Rae'.

Suzanne Rae

PTS Chairman

chairman@thepts.net



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NOT ATTENDING STAMPEX

We are sorry but we shall not be attending the Stampex Exhibition September 2021.

We would be very happy to send scans or photo copies of any items that we have in our stock covering your areas of interest.

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WHY CHOOSE A PTS MEMBER?



#lookfortheshield

In a market filled with many pitfalls,

it's good to know who you can rely on...

Members of The Philatelic Traders' Society have all applied and been referenced prior to joining the society. They then have to abide by a strict code of ethics, which means you can be confident when buying or selling stamps.

The society was founded in 1929 by a group of established dealers who wished to find a society which would act for, and on behalf of its members, for the greater good of philately. This society would not only protect its members, but it would also protect the hobby, ensuring that customers could shop in confidence. Our society doesn't just cover dealers. Nowadays we have expanded and our 300 plus global members include auction houses, magazines, insurance companies and more.

We pride ourselves on the work we do, and our members proudly display the shield, a mark of integrity. A full list of members can be found in the back of this handbook and a further list can be found online at:

WWW.THEPTS.NET

We have recently launched a PTS Trade Newsletter for non members and members alike. To sign up to our trade news please head to the website: www.thepts.net/pts-newsletter



PHILATELIC TRADERS' SOCIETY 2021 EDITION
COLLECTOR HANDBOOK

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WHAT'S ON AT STAMPEX[®] INTERNATIONAL



The Philatelic Traders Society is delighted to be hosting a live show at the Business Design Centre in central London. We are thrilled to let you know that Spink the show sponsors will be working with us for 5 years – you might have noticed the Stampex brand shine purple!

This year the show has been redesigned with a new look and feel and we have combined a little online activity as well, to help bridge the online presence and the physical show.

At Stampex International you will find different zones:



Collectors Lounge in partnership with Bill Barrell

An area run in partnership with Bill Barrell. This lounge is where you'll find the RPSL and London 2022



Delcampe Digital Zone

A huge digital wall, connecting you directly with the online.

SPINK AUDITORIUM

Spink Auditorium

A space where we will be hosting talks from amazing philatelists including Bill Barrell, Richard Morel from The British Library, Chris Harman from RPSL and more.



Youth Zone

The youth area. Includes Stamp Active, StampIT, Postcrossing and more.

You will find a host of new dealers, auction houses and philatelic businesses on the mezzanine all of who are trusted PTS members so you can shop safely.

A full schedule of exciting activity including Talks, Meet and Greet and celebrations most of which will be available online for 30 days after the show.

The next show is Stampex International Autumn 2022
28th September - 1st October 2022.

To be kept up to date you can head online and sign up to the newsletter www.stampexinternational.com or you can follow us on social media @ptsandstampex

WHY EXHIBIT?

By Bill Hedley,
President of the Federation of European Philatelic Associations (FEPA)



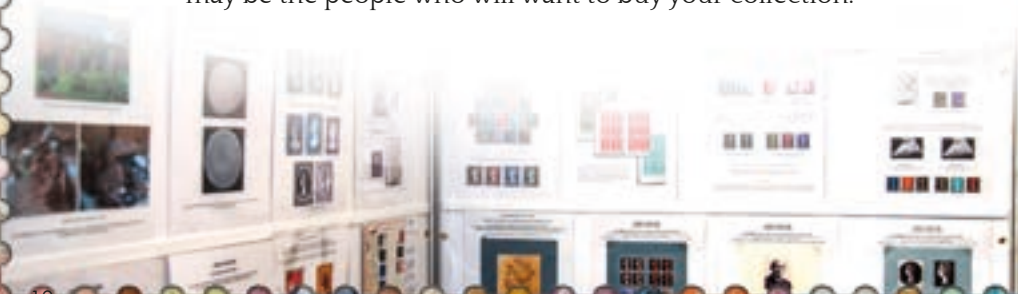
You have spent years, and probably some of your hard-earned money, putting a collection together on a subject that interests you. Why not show it to others so that they too can enjoy the fruits of your labour and perhaps learn from it? Why not also get some recognition for the work you have done, and maybe ideas from friends on how you could take it further?

There are many ways in which you can exhibit your collection, from giving a display to a local club to entering international exhibitions. If you prefer not to exhibit competitively you are free to organise your display in whatever way suits you best. But if you decide to enter competitions you will need to follow their rules on frame numbers and classes.

You will also need to think carefully about what exactly you want to show and how you want to construct your exhibit to illustrate your theme to best advantage. There is extensive guidance available on putting competitive exhibits together and on what judges will be looking for. If you would like further information, a good starting point is the ABPS website (www.abps.org.uk).

Exhibitions in the UK are organised by regional Federations and Associations and at national level (Stampex and Northern National). All exhibitors are welcome to enter a national exhibition either competitively or non-competitively. An advantage of entering competitively is that you will receive feedback from the judges on how your exhibit could be developed further.

It is often said that exhibiting is the best way to learn about your own collection as it obliges you to study it in detail. This can be hard work but also very rewarding. Apart from the pleasure that creating your exhibit will give you today, it will stimulate the next generation of collectors. Eventually they may be the people who will want to buy your collection.



LET'S TALK EXHIBITING

David Piercey FRPSC

The One-Frame Exhibit

One-Frame exhibits are increasingly popular in stamp exhibitions, and have had their own competitive Class for quite some time now.

Key to one-frame exhibiting is the choice of subject matter. There must be a self-contained topic that lends itself to material that can only be shown in one frame. Think of an area that can have only a limited amount of material, and you are well on the way to determining if it is appropriate for just a single frame. For example, an exhibit of the Machin series would not be appropriate as the available material is too great, however, an exhibit of a single commemorative issue may fit well in a one frame exhibit.

Similarly, the one-frame exhibit may cover a limited postal history study (say of a small town, or a short-lived rate), or a limited thematic study. Consequently, some of the best one-frame exhibits can appear particularly specialized or especially narrow in focus, and many will be seen to encompass only small slices of a much larger story. As examples, titles of one-frame exhibits recently shown at a Canadian exhibition included: "St. Lawrence Steamboat Mail, Montreal-Quebec: 1819-1858"; and "The S.C.A.D.T.A. System from Canada to Columbia, South America", indicative of the narrowly focused topics, appropriate for one-frame exhibiting.

In developing one-frame exhibits, pay particular attention to your Title Page. The Title itself needs to be carefully crafted to fully describe and contain what it is you will be showing, your Plan needs to outline how you will develop your topic, and the first of your philatelic material and its story line is most often introduced on this page.

Illustrated herein is Montreal exhibitor John McEntyre's Title Page from his gold-medal level one frame revenue stamp exhibit "1876-1897 First Canadian Weights and Measures Revenue Issues". His Title clearly delineates what he will be showing, and he introduces his topic by explaining why these revenue stamps were issued. Then he illustrates the four major type varieties (i.e., size, position and color of the serial numbers), provides a Plan section in which he outlines the types of material he will be showing, indicates how he will indicate rarity, and includes two primary references.

In a subsequent page he shows how the revenue stamps were used, quite appropriately, on a "Weights and Measures Inspection" document. The large document completely fills the entire standard size exhibit page, which necessitated placing his textual information on a small tab that overlaps a portion of the document. Such an adaptation is not only quite acceptable in terms of style and presentation acumen, it often becomes necessary to accommodate such larger philatelic pieces in any of the exhibit Classes.

With One-frame exhibiting your topic is limited only by your imagination and your ability to find sufficient philatelic material with which to fully and succinctly encompass your topic. Otherwise, all the guidelines of multi-frame exhibits apply and, as with any other exhibit, you are being evaluated on Treatment and Importance, Knowledge Study and Research, Condition and Rarity, and Presentation.

Note, this article is adapted from the author's "Let's Talk Exhibiting" column in The Canadian Philatelist Vol 67 No.3

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SORTING OUT YOUR GB IMPERF PENNY REDS PART 2.

Plating the 'Maltese cross' plates by Bill Barrell.



In the PTS 'Collector Handbook' 2020 edition we looked at the first steps in sorting out your GB penny reds, looking at how to distinguish between die 1 and die 2 stamps and how to differentiate between alphabet 1 and alphabet 2 check letters in the lower squares. To recap, those stamps with alphabet 1 are from plates 1 to 131 and those with alphabet 2 from plates 132. If you missed that initial guide and would like a copy please email me at: bill@barrell.co.uk

This second article will start to explore how to plate these alphabet 1 and alphabet 2 1d reds, looking initially at the so called 'Maltese cross plates' from die 1 plates 1 to 45. I will also look at which books and online tools are helpful. Future articles will examine the numeral cancellation plates, the introduction of perforation, how to identify the very scarce 'Archer' experimental issues, the 'C7' and much more.



Fig.1 Maltese cross cancellation.

The first step is to separate those stamps cancelled with the Maltese cross. Fig. 1 is cancelled with the Maltese cross and will usually be from die 1 plates 1 to 45. Fig. 2 is cancelled with a numeral cancellation which usually suggests plates die 1 plate 40 onwards. You will see there is an overlap of plates which can be found with both types of cancellation.



Fig. 2 Numeral cancellation.

The first 1d reds were printed from the black plates and show some very fine printing flaws as illustrated below. These are always worth looking out for because these are scarcer and popular printings with a higher value.



Normal NW square with 7 and 10 o'clock rays present.



Fig. 4 Seven o'clock ray flaw NW square.



Fig. 5 Ten o'clock ray flaw NW square.



Fig.6 The 'O' flaw. Note the 'O' in 'ONE' appears as a 'Q', 1d red plates 8 to 10.

If we look at the star within the NW corner, the 'rays' at 7 and 10 o'clock are present on Fig.3, this is normal. The 7 o'clock 'ray' is absent Fig.4 as found either plates 1b or 2, similarly the 10 o'clock 'ray' is absent Fig.5 also confirming plates 1b or 2, two very scarce to rare plates.

Other key varieties to look out for are re-entries, where the original roller impression has been rocked into the plate in an incorrect position and these incorrectly engraved recesses on the plate take ink creating the appearance of a 'doubling of the design'; double letters, where the letters are by accident inserted twice and appear double; frame breaks at the top of the NE square, a very important plating guide whereby the top line of the NE square is broken to varying degrees; guide lines and guide dots, these were originally engraved on the steel before any engraving occurred and were there to assist in accurate plate layout.

An excellent re-entry is found on plate 5 with doubling of the lower part of the design.



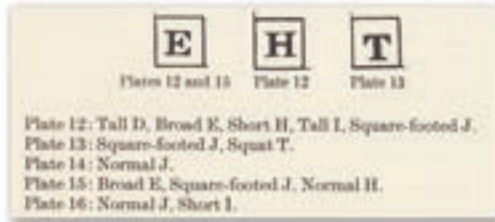
Another excellent re-entry from plate XI, marks in upper squares and what appears to be a 'K' incorrectly struck under the 'B'?



A letter 'P' was incorrectly inserted instead of the letter 'R', noticed and manually altered. This correction is only found on eight plates, but a combination of this variety and the 'O' flaw confirms this stamp as plate 10'



*Squat H
plate 12*



*Short I
plate 16*

Really useful information about distinctive letters from the RPS vol 1 3rd edition.



*I double at
foot plate 14
lettered AI*



*I double at
top plate 17
lettered IE*



Another very useful flaw concerns a break in the top frame line in the North East, which variously occurs on plates 12-16 and also plates 20 to 27. the image at upper left plate 12 small break, at upper right full break plate 14.

Above we illustrate a selection of some of the many varieties that can be found on the GB line engraved stamps. There are many other interesting flaws that the engraver has left for us to find and understand. These varieties help us to understand how the stamps were printed and help us allocate these stamps to the plate from which they were originally printed.

Ok Bill, that is really helpful. However if the stamps do not have such plate varieties how can I plate them ?

That is a very good question and fortunately there is an answer to hand!

After the impression of the Queen's head, surround etc had been rocked into the plate 240 times the printed image was almost complete, except for the letters in the lower squares. The letters in the lower squares were then inserted by hand using a 'punch' as illustrated below. As this was a manual process the position of the letters within the lower squares varies from stamp to stamp and from plate to plate, it is therefore possible to plate the stamp using the position of the check letters in the lower squares.



*Plate 19 both
'A's central.*



*Plate 20 first
'A' lower.*



Letter punch



*Plate 25 first
'A' to right.*



*Plate 28 second
'A' to right.*



*Plate 29 first
'A' far to right.*



*Plate 31 Both
'A's misplaced.*



*Plate 32 first
'A' very low.*



*Plate 34 both
'A's high.*



*Plate 36 first 'A'
low to right.*

To illustrate, I show nine 1d reds all lettered 'AA' with Maltese cross cancellation from different plates, plates determined by the check letters being in different places.

THE IMPRIMATURS. After a plate had been finished, but before printing commenced a proof sheet was taken, the so called 'Imprimatur' sheet. 'Imprimatur' means 'let it be printed' in Latin.

These actual sheets still exist, albeit with approx 22 impressions removed from each sheet. They are a primary plating tool.



What reference material would you recommend ?

1. The Stanley Gibbons QV spec. catalogue is essential.
2. The Royal Philatelic Society volume 1 3rd edition (1967) totally recommended for those who want good background information. Earlier editions useful for cutting out illustrations of varieties!
3. A superb online reference is the Great Britain Philatelic Society website - with much information including Imprimatur sheet images, and a link on their GBPS YouTube channel to my talk on GB line-engraved stamps.
4. If you are seeking a high quality download of the Imprimatur sheets we can help.

Any queries or questions re plating, shades, publications, exhibiting etc do not hesitate to contact me. email: bill@barrell.co.uk website: www.barrell.co.uk

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THE ONES TO WATCH #PHILATELYUNDER40



JAMES GAVIN, 39
The Digital Philatelist

What philately means to you?

Philately to me is about exploring history and exotic places. It is about creating a historical collection of philatelic artefacts and sharing the discovery journey with online audiences through digital mediums.



MICHAEL CORTESE, 31
Vice President of NobleSpirit.

What philately means to you?

Philately to me has been about sharing knowledge, building community, and helping others find the items they need to complete their collections. I'm committed to helping the hobby grow in any way possible.

In the last Handbook we celebrated the bright young sparks from 2021.

This year we once again look at those rising stars within the industry and find out what philately means to them.



CHARLES EPTING, 28
President/CEO, HR Harmer GPN Inc.

What philately means to you?

For me, philately is an opportunity to keep the past alive--not only by contributing to a hobby that has been around for a century and a half, but by preserving the written records of men and women who might otherwise be forgotten had they not left envelopes and letters behind. Philately allows me to connect with history in a very tactile and tangible way, placing me inside the subject matter rather than simply reading about it in a book.

THE ONES TO WATCH

#PHILATELYUNDER40



ANDREW TITLEY, 33
Vice President, Philatelist
Robert A. Siegel International

What philately means to you?

Philately plays a large part of my life. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to turn a passion into a profession and still enjoy working on stamps just as much as I did when I was much younger.



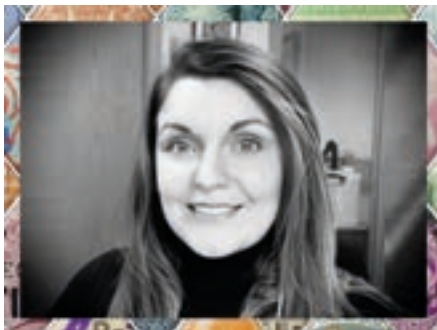
RICKY VERRA, 35
Philatelist at David Feldman

What philately means to you?

Philately is not only my profession, it's my passion. I spend many an evening, weekend and holiday working on my own collection. But philately is also a very sociable pastime which is why events such as Stampex are great because a big part of the hobby is the relationships you build when you're meeting clients, attending society meetings, or having a beer or two with the other dealers at the end of the day!

Have we forgotten someone?
Have your say and tell us on social

#onestowatch
#philatelyunder40



AMY SMITH, 37
Director, Tony Lester Auctions Ltd

What philately means to you?

If I could sum up philately in one word, I think I would have to choose the word community. I've never met a group of people who are, as a whole, so welcoming, friendly and helpful. Whether people are just starting out or have been collecting for 70 years, their passion really shines through, and the passion that comes across creates an inviting atmosphere that makes you feel like you are part of a wonderful, large philatelic family.



THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS...

Matt Hill, editor of www.allaboutstamps.co.uk and Stamp Collector magazine, reflects on the great strides forward philately has made in recent years, as collectors embrace the online world

The unprecedented situation we found ourselves in back in early 2020 brought heartache, frustration, and uncertainty, and yet stamp enthusiasts determined to keep their glasses half full not only negotiated the obstacles, but leapt over them. As the world went into lockdown, more and more collectors joined together to hold online meetings and organise virtual events in a bid to share their passion for the hobby and their willingness to reach out; the American Philatelic Society's Virtual Stamp Show was followed by the first 'Virtual Stampex', both interactive, innovative events that brought together collectors from around the world. On our www.allaboutstamps.co.uk website we launched a series of online 'collectors' conferences' as well as the All About Stamps one-page display competition, which continues to be hugely popular.

It's fair to say that the pandemic pushed us all into the virtual world, but that's only half the story. Stamp collecting has long been both a physical and an online hobby, with thousands of stamps being bought and sold online every day. And even before 'you're on mute!' became a common phrase during society meetings, a growing number of collectors had taken to YouTube, social media and their own websites to share their enthusiasm for our wonderful hobby. We have videos dedicated to stamps, with thousands of views, podcasts which allow us to meet philatelists from all corners of the globe, and websites offering guidance, news and inspiration for our collecting.

Put simply, we now have the best of both worlds.

There is a renewed sense of purpose within the world of stamps, with both virtual and physical interactions allowing us to share and celebrate our hobby. This 'hybrid' world began to come to life as vaccinations edged us toward a safer world. Stampex returned to the Business Design Centre but cleverly retained an online offering, giving collectors across the world the chance to join in. Stamp Collector magazine has gone from strength to strength as more collectors subscribe to the publication, whilst we've also had the pleasure of running a series of 'Adventures in Philately' webinars with Museum of Philately experts Marcus Orsi and Devlan Kruck (keep an eye on the website for news of future talks!)

If all that wasn't enough Stanley Gibbons are working on the idea of allowing multiple collectors to share the world famous British Guiana One-Cent Magenta, which they purchased in June 2021 – it's another example of the online world helping to expand the hobby in innovative ways. No doubt there are many more exciting twists and turns to come as the appeal of our hobby reaches enthusiasts around the world, in person or online.



Matt Hill is editor of the www.allaboutstamps.co.uk website and the monthly magazine Stamp Collector which is available to read in print and digital editions.



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In 1890 London held its first international stamp exhibition: it marked the 50th anniversary of the introduction of Universal Penny Postage and the issue of the world's first adhesive postage stamp the Penny Black. In 1950 began the tradition of London hosting an exhibition with worldwide participation at the start of each decade (an exhibition was planned for 1940, but the Second World War meant the event had to be aborted, although a smaller exhibition was staged). The Business Design Centre was first chosen as the venue for a London 'international' in 2010 (see opposite).



For reasons that all fully appreciate, the event planned for 2020 could not be held. The good news is that London 2022 will take place, at the Business Design Centre, on 19 to 26 February next year. As with Stampex, there will be a mixture of dealers and exhibits – but so much more. Many may not realise that, alongside the space used for each Stampex exhibition, is a second, similar hall. Both areas are fully used for the 'internationals'.

There will be around 125 booth holders from around the world, with stamp dealers, auctioneers, publishers and postal administrations including Royal Mail. All collectors will find something of interest, whether it is stamps or postal history, thematics or Cinderellas, stationery or revenues, plus the opportunity to buy literature and accessories.

The competitive displays will be equally international, providing the cream from the world's top collections. These will be on display in the 'second' hall. There is always a huge demand to exhibit at a London 'international', and many potential exhibits have to be declined. Even so, to ensure as many exhibits as possible are shown, the exhibition will be divided into two halves.

Half the exhibits will be shown during the first four days (19 to 22 February), with the remaining on display from 23 to 26 February. The exhibits will range across all the recognised classes, namely Traditional, Postal History, Aerophilately, Revenues, Postal Stationery, Thematics, Picture Postcards, plus Open Philately, Modern Material, One-frame, plus an extensive array of Philatelic Literature. There will also be exhibits from young collectors up to the age of 21.

Among the booth holders will be The Royal Philatelic Society London. In addition, many specialist societies will be having a table in one of the large meeting rooms on Wednesday, 23 February. Societies will also be holding meetings throughout the exhibition using the available meeting rooms.

Details about the booth holders, exhibits and society events can be found by visiting: london2022.co



Visitors to Stampex know that the area around the Business Design Centre is full of fine eating places and other shops. Its excellent transport links (buses and Angel Underground Station nearby) makes for a perfect break in London.

Those wishing to stay in London can take advantage of the special arrangements that have been made with HotelSmart to secure the best deals at convenient hotels. Go to london2022.co and click on 'Visits/Hotels' to find out more.

See you next February at London 2022.

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“bringing the virtual realm into focus in the physical world”.

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C.G.

CONVERSATIONS
with
PHILATELISTS

9 CONVERSATIONS WITH PHILATELISTS MEMORIES

By Michael Cortese and Charles Epting

CONVERSATIONS
with
PHILATELISTS

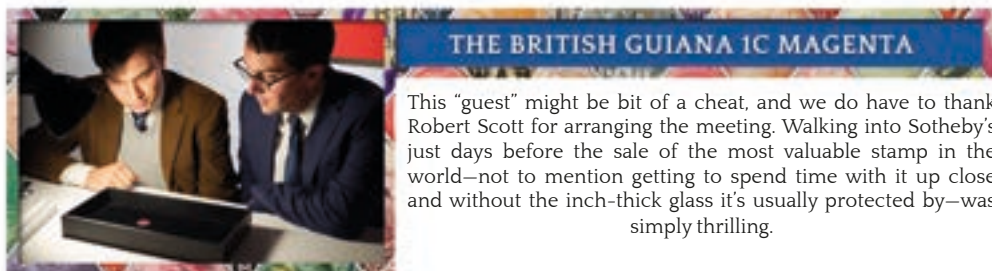
It would be unfair for us to pick our top 9 favorite episodes of Conversations with Philatelists because undoubtedly we would have very different lists and would inevitably end up leaving a very deserving guest off the list. So in lieu of that, we have instead decided to highlight 9 very memorable moments, in no particular order, that we feel encapsulate the first year of our show.



Alex had to make our list, if for no other reason than the fact that he was the first one to agree to speak to us when we still had very little idea of what we wanted Conversations with Philatelists to be. The two of us owe a lot to Alex for supporting us over the years, and we were honored to make him our inaugural guest.



We both knew that Karl Rove was a stamp collector, and had seen his exhibit in the Court of Honor at New York 2016. However, we were still taken aback not only by Karl's enthusiasm, but his deep knowledge of the subject matter. His show-and-tell was certainly one of the highlights of the first year of Conversations with Philatelists.



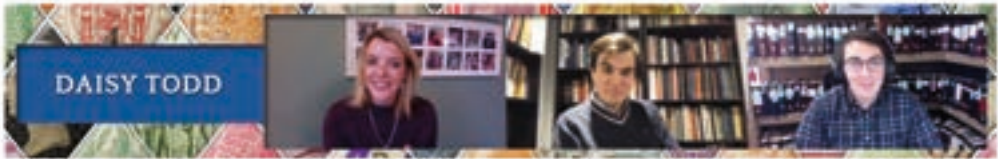
This "guest" might be bit of a cheat, and we do have to thank Robert Scott for arranging the meeting. Walking into Sotheby's just days before the sale of the most valuable stamp in the world—not to mention getting to spend time with it up close and without the inch-thick glass it's usually protected by—was simply thrilling.



Having both attended MonacoPhil owing to the generosity of the Club de Monte Carlo, having the opportunity to speak with club president Patrick Maselis was very humbling. Patrick has done more to involve young people in the hobby than arguably anyone else, and the advice he offered in this episode is something that will stick with us for a long time.



The fact that a member of the Doobie Brothers—someone responsible for some of the greatest classic rock songs ever recorded—shares our passion and interest was very exciting to learn. And the story about the black market stamp dealer in the Soviet Union is one of our favorite anecdotes we have heard thus far.



When we started Conversations with Philatelists, we knew that we wanted to explore all aspects of the hobby—not just dealers, collectors, and exhibitors. Daisy’s career path as an expert in paper and stamp restoration was exactly the type of story we hoped to highlight for people unfamiliar with that side of philately.



Cameron Blevins has managed to incorporate the history of the post office into his historical research, proving that one does not need to even be a stamp collector to make an impact on philately. Cameron’s passion and enthusiasm made the both of us wish we had had him as one of our college professors.



One of Cheryl Ganz’s quotes—that we need to stop targeting only collectors in order to grow the hobby—has resonated with us a great deal since she joined us on Conversations with Philatelists. It is the passion and dedication of people like Cheryl that gives us confidence that this hobby has a long and bright future ahead of it.



The intersection of technology and philately will only grow more important in the coming years, so being able to take a look at Tobias Huylmans’s methodology while expertizing stamps was something like getting a glimpse of the future. Having that sort of knowledge is one thing—but being willing to share it so freely is even more important.

New Issues: 01 September 2021

Sepac: Old Maps



John Speed was one of the most famous British mapmakers of the seventeenth century, and possibly the most popular of all with map collectors around the world. Our SEPEC Old Maps stamps depict the decorative style Speed adopted on his maps.

Celebrating The life of Prince Philip



From a successful career in the Royal Navy to becoming the longest-serving consort of a reigning British monarch, Prince Philip was a remarkable man who lived a fascinating life. We are proud to honour his life with our commemorative stamps.



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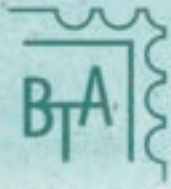
Centenary of The Royal British Legion

We are proud to mark the centenary of the Royal British Legion with our commemorative stamps and souvenir sheet. Each stamp has been released independently throughout the year and we will conclude the series on Armistice Day, 11th November 2021 with the issue of stamp four and the Souvenir Sheet.

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BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

The British Thematic Association is the UK's national association for theme-based philately and postcard collecting. Collecting thematically involves following a chosen theme (for example ships, birds, or medicinal plants) or relating a story (such as the development of the bicycle or the history of flight).

Collecting thematically is growing in popularity, and looking round the frames at Autumn Stampex it is easy to see why. Visually stamps can be very attractive, clearly illustrating the subject of the collection. There are few subjects not covered to a greater or lesser extent by modern stamp issues; and you don't even need to wade through catalogues to find them, the Internet has many resources listing stamps thematically.

Many collectors choose a theme about which they already know a lot, be it as part of work or another hobby. There are doctors who collect medicine and model train enthusiasts who collect railways, for example. Starting with a subject you know about really helps you start off a collection, as it gives you ideas and themes to develop. But equally you can choose something completely new and enjoy learning about the subject while putting a collection together.

People collect in different ways. Most collectors start with stamps, and for many that is a pleasure in itself. Some go on to add in other philatelic material which shows their theme, such as

illustrated postal stationery, booklets, maxicards, greetings telegrams and cinderellas. Some postal history lends itself to thematic collecting, such as mail carried by transport, or mail to and from war zones.

Then there is all the ancillary material which adds information and interest to a collection, such as maps, photographs, letters, press cuttings and postcards. Today postcard collecting as a subject in itself is becoming very popular. The Edwardian vogue for postcards means so many themes were produced, not only topographical views, but transport scenes (they loved crash scenes!), industrial views, and many other aspects of social history.

Collecting thematically has no limits. You choose your subject, you develop it in any direction you find interesting, and along the way you learn a lot about it. If you want to know more about thematic collecting, or be put in touch with others who collect your theme, join the British Thematic Association, whose website is a mine of information:

www.britishthematic.org.uk





JARGON BUSTERS

We asked the team at Buckingham Covers to help us understand just some of the philatelic words you might here when you start collecting. Here are a few just to help get you started.

Air Letter

These are the special lightweight sheets you use to write letters on that are then folded into envelopes to post. Like normal envelopes these are collected when postmarked on the first day of their issue.

Bisect

A Bisect is a stamp cut in half with the Post Office's permission. The best example was during the World War II occupation of Guernsey, when they ran short of 1d stamps; permission was given to cut 2d stamps in half to make two 1d stamps.

First Day Cover

This is a cover featuring new postage stamps, postmarked on the first day that those new stamps are on sale.

Cover

The term "cover" goes right back to the very start of the postal service. It was another word for an envelope. When the Victorians first started sending letters, they wrapped them up in paper (the "cover") and wrote the address on that. In 1840, a Penny Black was stuck on a cover to put in the post and cancelled on that day. This was the start of the "first day cover" and they have been collected ever since.

We still use the word "cover" to refer to a collectable envelope. Of course, more

specifically there are two types of cover: first day covers and commemorative covers.

Signer

Someone who has signed one of our covers. The correct term of course is "signatory" but it doesn't trip off the tongue so well, so with apologies to the Oxford Dictionary, we use our own word instead!

Phosphor

This was a new way of automatic letter sorting tested in the 1960s. Phosphor is a type of coating that was put on the stamps and could be recognised by machines. During the experimental period in the mid-1960s, commemorative stamps were issued two formats: with phosphor bands (phos) and without (non-phos). These days all stamps have phosphor coating (if it is missing it would count as an error). To see the phosphor you need to hold up any recent Royal Mail stamp to the light. The phosphor appears as dull strips on the stamp.

Definitives

These are the very familiar, everyday postage stamps which feature the monarch's head and are sold over a long period of time. The first low value definitives picturing Queen Elizabeth II are called Wildings because the portrait was taken by the firm of Dorothy Wilding, Ltd. The current portrait Queen's Head has been used on definitive stamps since 1967 and is probably the most reproduced portrait of all time. This portrait was designed by Arnold Machin, so current definitive

stamps are also known as Machins. What was less well known until recently is that Machin designed his sculpture using a photograph of the Queen taken by Professor John Hedgecoe. In 2001, however, Professor Hedgecoe successfully took Royal Mail to court after it denied his part in designing the stamps. If you are interested in this history, you will enjoy our Wildings cover signed by Professor Hedgecoe. From 2005, Buckingham Covers has produced covers marking new definitives.

Souvenir Sheet

This is a form of miniature sheet where small sheets are joined together inside a specially designed frame. These are usually se-tenant.

Special Handstamp

These are pictorial postmarks, applied by trained Royal Mail staff in Special Handstamps Centres across the country. See postmark for more information.

Thematic

A single cover or a collection of covers that relates to a particular theme. Many collectors prefer to only collect covers that fit their passion. For example, we produce a series of railway, military and motor-racing covers. All these are themed covers. Themed covers are usually commemorative covers.

Pane

A block of stamps and pictures that make up a page of a Prestige Stamp Booklet or normal Stamp Book.

Perforations

This refers to when a sheet of stamps has a line of small holes at the edges to make it easier to tear the stamps out of the sheet without damaging the rest. Perforations are something of a tradition. Even recent self-adhesive stamps have

had perforations for decoration although they do not need to be separated as they peel individually from backing paper. Perforations are a very important part of a cover's condition. Most of our stamps arrive from Royal Mail in sheets of 25 or 50 and so one of our team has to separate all the stamps ready to be stuck on the cover. This can be a nerve-racking job when you first start!

Error

This term refers to either a stamp or a cover with an unintentional mistake, such as a printing or design fault. Very occasionally you may find an error stamp on a cover. More often, an error on a cover is due to a mistake on the envelope or the postmark design. Errors on covers include: missing colours, missing gold blocking and an incorrect postmark. Errors on stamps include missing perforations (imperforate) and missing colours. Sometimes, the Queen's Head is missing. Cath and Tony Buckingham once found a whole sheet of the 1972 churches stamps missing the Queen's Head and used them to produce just 6 first day covers - something to watch out for! Errors are phenomenally collectable. Due to Royal Mail's very high standard of inspection, very few stamps or postmarks with errors slip through the net. At Internet Stamps, we try to inspect all our covers just as thoroughly so hopefully you won't ever get an error from us - but if you do, keep it safe!

Loads more on the Buckingham Cover website. Check it out here.

<https://www.buckinghamcovers.com/glossary/index.php>





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Antarctica – a great theme to collect

The fastest growing area in philately today is thematics. Everybody has a stamp subject or theme which particularly interests them eg scouts, cricket, cats, music, or birds – it is only limited by your imagination! Your local stamp dealer can help you with stamps, catalogues and suggestions.

Antarctica is one of the most interesting themes, and stamps on this subject have been issued by countries all over the world. Famous explorers, wildlife, ships, space, aircraft, meteorology and ice formations are some of the subjects portrayed on the ever-popular issues. Antarctica is the last frontier on Earth – remote, inhospitable, and largely unexplored. Its incredible scenery plus the heroic deeds of its early explorers grips the imagination of many collectors, most of whom will never go there. It is the driest, coldest, windiest, and highest continent on Earth, and its ice cap contains two thirds of the world's freshwater. Stanley Gibbons now issue an Antarctic catalogue listing all the issues.

Currently 30 countries have a combined total of 80 permanent Antarctic scientific bases. The Antarctic Territories of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and France, all issue stamps valid for use at their bases. Many other countries especially Chile and Argentina have issued stamps



supporting their Antarctic claims and research. The first stamp issued for use in Antarctica was from New Zealand. It was overprinted King

Edward VII Land and used by members of Shackleton's 1907 Nimrod Expedition and will be on display at the Antarctic Festival Stamp and Postcard Exhibition in Hobart Australia, 2022 amongst other interesting items. In 1901 Scott's Discovery Expedition used a Cinderella label as publicity on their correspondence. His second expedition from 1911-13 saw him reach the South Pole with his 4 companions and all of them perished on the return trip. Two New Zealand stamps overprinted Victoria Land were issued for this expedition.



It is wonderful to think of the stories these stamps could tell you when you hold them in your hands. Next year there will be two dedicated Antarctic Exhibitions held in Australia and Europe.



Tony Shields, Shields Stamps and Coins, Australia

Contact us for further information and to see our stocks of Antarctic stamps and covers.
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For more information about the Australian Antarctic Festival Stamp and Postcard Exhibition go to
www.antarcticstampexhibition.com.au

For more information about the European Stamp Exhibition and Polar Salon "LIBEREC 2022"
www.liberec2022.eu

What you should look for when trying to find a trustworthy Stamp Dealer

With thanks to Tracy Chandler, Empire Philatelists

First, and foremost, whether you are looking to buy from, or sell to, a dealer **“Look for the Shield”**. This tells you the dealer is a member of the Philatelic Traders Society (PTS). Those stamp traders using the shield are PTS trusted and abide by a strict code of conduct. As a collector you can be confident when buying, or selling, stamps with a trader displaying this shield.

The PTS is a Philatelic Trade Body that has your back should your dealing with any of its members goes wrong.

Buying from a Stamp Dealer

Do they have a website that is easy to navigate, describes the items clearly and shows good, clear, high res images of what you are buying?

If they have an eBay store, check their eBay Feedback. This is a good indication of buyer satisfaction.

Check their returns policy. Do they offer no quibble returns?

What is their policy if your purchase gets lost in the post? Will they refund you? Do they offer a guarantee if your purchase is not as described? Is there a certificate with the stamp? If not, do they offer this service, or will they pay for the certificate if you want one? Phone the dealer or send them an email. Do they reply? Do they answer your questions? Do they have time to help you?

Google the business name. Does the business exist? If there is a Google Knowledge Panel on the left of your screen this means Google has verified

the business. Another indication of a reputable business

Selling to a Stamp Dealer

First and foremost, a reputable stamp dealer will not charge you to value your collection if you are looking to sell. Choose a dealer that gives you piece of mind that they understand what you want. Are you looking to sell your inheritance or do you just want your prize collection valued?

Most dealers would ask you to send images and a brief description of your collection to get an overview of what you have. Some dealers are also offering Zoom meetings where you can virtually meet the dealer and show them your collection

A reputable dealer will arrange to meet you and would be able to tell, almost instantly, if the collection is of value or whether it requires further investigation. If the collection is, what the industry calls “a school boy collection” then they would either make an offer there and then or point you in the direction of where you can sell it (we usually give names and phone numbers of auction houses close to the seller)

If the collection requires further investigation then the dealer will arrange for the collection to be left with them in order for them to give a better valuation. A receipt for the collection will always be given. If the seller is not close (in proximity) they would arrange for the collection to be collected from the seller, value it and then, either make an offer, or return it. Some will also offer a Zoom meeting to view the collection virtually, if that is your preference.

Finally, trust your instinct. If you think something looks fishy, you are in the wrong place!!

FIND OUT.....

The country the stamp is from.



The continent the stamp is from.



When the stamp was issued.



Why the stamp was issued.



The name of the person, place, object or animal on the stamp.

1. The best place to start is to look at the stamp with a magnifying glass.
2. Use the information you've found out to look up the stamp in a stamp catalogue (either hardcopy or online).
3. The entry in the stamp catalogue should provide most of the information



The stamp was issued in China in 1995. Catalogue information will inform you that this was part of an Endangered Animals set. The other stamp features a koala and there is an Australian issue exactly the same. It may also inform you of the scientific name for giant panda which is *Ailuropoda melanoleuca*.



The stamp was issued in Spain but the year of issue is not on the stamp. However the words "1st Centenario Instituto Geografico y Catastra" appear on the stamp which translates to 100th Anniversary of the Geographical and Statistical Institute. A quick online search provided an article on the history of the institute which started in 1870. Therefore the stamp was issued in 1970.

STAMP INFORMATION



How to find out which country a stamp is from:

1. Look on the stamp to find the country name. It may be written in English or the language of the country it is from.
2. For those that are difficult to understand, look up in a Stamp Finder (these are available both in hardcopy or online).

Some points to note:

There will be old stamps with names of countries that don't exist today.
Stamps from the UK do not have the name of the country on them. They have picture of the reigning king or queen.

Deutschland - Germany
Eire - Republic of Ireland
España - Spain
Helvetia - Switzerland (historic name for Switzerland)
Magyar Posta - Hungary (Hungarian post)
Malagasy - Madagascar
Nippon or 日本 - Japan
CCCP - Soviet Union

Norge - Norway
Polska - Poland
RSA - Republic of South Africa
Sverige - Sweden
ΕΛΛΑΣ - Greece
БЪЛГАРИЯ - Bulgaria
中国 - China
भारत - India

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With thanks to Sandie Robb
scottishphilately.co.uk/moodle



Can you Spot the Error?



Answer: Bottom right corner letter missing



Answer: Bright Green Partially Missing



Answer: Pale olive-grey omitted

Thanks to Mark Bloxham Stamps Ltd



Answer: Face value 47p instead of 57p



Answer: Bronze (Queen's head) omitted



Answer: Vermilion printed Double

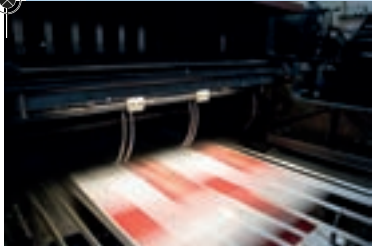
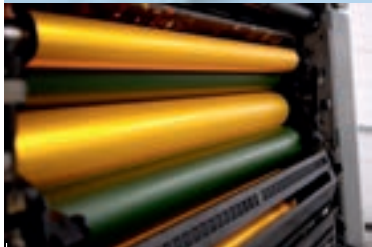
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PTS Guide Introduction

The Philatelic Traders' Society was formed in 1929, it was created for the greater good of philately and to support those passionate about the hobby. Our reputation for honesty, integrity and professionalism spans the globe and the PTS shield is instantly recognised by collectors.

Collectors who spot a stamp trader using the shield instantly know that these traders can be trusted and what's more they agree to abide by a strict code of conduct. Ensuring they are confident with buying or selling stamps.

Information regarding The Philatelic Traders' Society, the code of conduct and activity can be found on the website www.thepts.net. The attached 10 pages is just a snap shot of information, our full directory listing is available online. We also have our gold members, these individuals pay more for their membership.

As well as a great selection of approved global dealers, the PTS also offers expertising. The PTS expertising committee offer a

rapid and cost effective expertising service for stamps of Great Britain, which will give you an expert written opinion on the items genuineness and condition. For more information please do head to the website.

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