

Society Officers

Chairman – Mrs.M.Claydon Tel 01398 331731 email marv.claydon@btopenworld.com

Secretary – Alison Burdon email piburden@talk21.com

Treasurer – Richard Wheeler 01271 813940

News Co-ordinator - Tony Smith 20 Bracken Close Honiton Devon EX14 2YS Tel 01404 46358

Editor - Jim Wigmore 19 Riversmeet Appledore Bideford Devon EX39 1RE

Tel 01237 476859 email JamesWigmore@aol.com

Packet Secretary – Pamela McDowall Tel 01392 430782

WHY NOT PORE OVER YOUR STAMPS WITH A DRINK - "FANCY a Cuppa"?

Yes, it's the timeless invitation to share a drink of tea when chatting to a friend - maybe perhaps when poring over some stamps. But don't expect to pick up a cup and saucer on a Great Britain issue in your album.

The "friendship" drink has been a traditional part of life here for some 300 years, but to find a setting to use in a tea time display I had to go to New Zealand's 1999 "nostalgia" set, writes Tony Smith.

Historically, tea goes back to China, the evergreen bush or tree having been used to make a drink from its leaves 3000 years ago. Today tea is the most popular refreshing drink in the world.

Chinese Emperors, having discovered the taste of the leaves, encouraged the growing of the plant on plantations on the humid hillsides but decided to keep the drink a secret. Seemingly the Chinese continued to discourage spreading the story of their "secret" because it wasn't until 1994 that the first cups appeared on its stamps (SG3900-4). An actual tea plant appeared (SG4182) on a 1997 set showing the drinks history and in 2001 a pre-stamped postcard featured a modern plantation.

Having then taken over Hong Kong territory and stamps, the Republic also issued a set showing different ways to prepare and pour tea.



Near neighbours Japan first "stole" tea around 700 AD and in 1991 a stamp (SG2169) marked the 800th Anniversary of its first large plantation appeared. Earlier in 1985 Japan featured teapots and kettles (SG1805-8), while in 2001 two stamps showed its magnificent Tea Ceremony houses. India and Ceylon were the next countries to import tea plants. They had a similar weather and soil to that of China, so quickly large, hillside plantations developed and poor workers toiled endlessly gathering the leaves and cutting them up ready to make the drink.

Around 1600 AD Dutch traders began importing the leaves, both brown and green, into Europe from China, Japan, and the Indian Continent. Soon the English were also making



long sea voyages east to collect tea, and by the 1700's the "Coffee Shops" in Britain and elsewhere in Europe were offering more tea than coffee to those who wished to sit around and talk.

Today parts of Africa and Latin America also grow tea, with three million tons produced world wide each year, led by India (950.00 tons), China (750,00 tons), Sri Lanka (350,00 tons), Kenya (250.000 tons) and Japan (100,000 tons).



Stampwise, Ceylon has publicised its gathering of tea with more issues than any other country. Showing old style gathering 1935 (SG375), it also issued stamps for 1938, 51, and 64. Having changed its name to Sri Lanka it showed more aspects of its tea industry in 1983, 84, and 92, while India decided that the huge production from its plantations were more important than advertising, it only issued stamps in 1965 (SG1181-4) and 1993 (SG1557)

Kenya showed its increasing harvest with inclusion in a 1963 "food" issue (SG12), Pakistan featured a similar issue in 1854 (SG69) and Bangladesh in 1973 (SG30) also featured a brew up of cha - or as the Chinese first named their bush leaf, "Chajing". You can find the key word for the theme on a 1973 USA set looking back to the "Boston Tea Party" (SG1501-4) which recalled the refusal to pay a British tax on independence seeking folk's when they imported tea via the Atlantic. Perhaps that's why in the USA coffee remains the No1 drink ahead of tea? Latin wise one can order "Camellia Sinensis" to get your tea and it is surely the only drink in the English language to have given its name to a whole meal - "What time will we be sitting down to tea?"



(Continuing Leslie Marley's story of banking, the former treasurer of WETS moves on from the earliest beginnings to cover the growth of money matters in England up to the mid-18th century.)

YOU DON'T HAVE A BANKA IF HIS BENCH IS BROKEN



An example of a modern money transfer note.

The Lombards and the derivation of "Bank" and "Bankrupt"

- From the fourteenth century onwards the Lombards and Caursines had begun to establish themselves in London, in sufficient numbers for Lombard Street to be named after them. Their custom of sitting on benches at their places of business had given us the word bank, from Italian "banca" - a bench. It is also said that when one of these Lombards was unable to meet his engagements and "failed" his bench was broken, and from this custom we get our word "bankrupt" - a broken bench. These Lombards carried on the business of money-changing and lending, partly to the merchants of London and others in need of finance, but also to the kings of England who had frequent cause to borrow. The Lombards also played an important part in the finance of trade between England and the Continent by means of the bills of exchange drawn between them and their agents abroad.

The Tudors and early Stuart's

- The expansion of trade at home and abroad in Tudor and early Stuart times brought about significant changes. Land was no longer the sole form of wealth - both country gentlemen and the rising class of town merchants began to hold a far larger part of their wealth in the form of cash. The problem of where to keep this wealth became urgent, and was solved by many merchants depositing it in the Tower of London or with the "broggers" (brokers), money scriveners, and other merchants who were laying the earliest foundations of native English banking in the Elizabethan period, by borrowing or taking money on deposit and occasionally re-lending it to others. For many years a considerable proportion of the ready cash of that increasingly powerful group, the City merchants, found refuge behind the grey walls of the Tower. But conveniently stored accumulations of cash are a standing temptation to government and monarchs. Nationalisation is not a new idea, merely an old one brought up to date, and in 1640, Charles I seized over £100,000 in bullion which had been lodged in the Tower, much of it silver left by Spanish or Genoese merchants at the Mint for coining, and prohibited the issue of coin. The merchants of London, naturally enough, looked elsewhere for safety. Now they increasingly turned to the London goldsmiths, who were of course accustomed to holding valuables, and who therefore had strong-rooms of a kind.



The ultimate money transfer note for the traveller is the modern day travellers cheque

The Goldsmiths

- The goldsmiths first entered banking by dealing in foreign exchange, and from about 1630 they had begun to take money on deposit, giving receipts for the sum lodged with them. This habit of leaving money with the goldsmiths rather than with the scriveners grew steadily after the Civil War and two developments took place. Firstly, the receipts began to pass from hand to hand, like money, and were soon made out to 11bearer11 to avoid the bother of altering or adding to the document. They thus became fore-runners of the bank-notes. Secondly, the goldsmiths soon realised, like the money scriveners before them, that it was fairly safe for them to lend a proportion of the cash lodged with them to other people. A further development was that the goldsmiths, instead of charging a fee for accepting deposits, began to offer interest on

money placed with them. Finally, the cheque made its appearance, about 1670, in the form of an order to a goldsmith to pay money to a specifically named person. The business handled by the goldsmiths was probably a general mixture of pawnbroker, gold and silver smithery, money changing, and banking, but in

the activities of the goldsmiths in the middle and late 1600's are to be found the true origins of modern English banking. These were not times of uninterrupted financial progress, however, there were occasional shocks. For example, in 1672 Charles II borrowed heavily from the goldsmiths and then repudiated the loans and, as a result, a number of the goldsmiths were unable to meet their obligations. A feeling grew that they were not being as prudent as they might be, and it was probably not without foundation, these gentlemen were, after all, pioneers in their field, and they had to find out the perils of the business by trial and error.



Bank of England -Growing distrust of the goldsmiths, and the emptiness of the Treasury led to the taking of a most important step. The Government decided to set up a bank, to be known as "The Governor and Company of the Bank of England". The sum of £1,200,000 was raised by public subscription, under the authority of the Tunnage Act of 1694, to found the Company. The money, once obtained, was lent by the new bank to the Government, in return it received the right to conduct a variety of banking operations. The loan to the government was made in the form of notes issued by the new bank³ whose subscribed capital thus remained available for business.

The new Bank of England found the going very hard at first, as it had to compete with its rivals without any form of protection, but in 1707, the Government, more deeply in debt than ever to the Bank, prohibited the issuing of notes by any other concern having more than six partners. The effect of this was to give the Bank of England a virtual monopoly of large scale, or joint stock, banking in England, for at that time the issue of notes was a necessary activity for any bank wishing to expand its business. Any bank set up after that could only be a small partnership, whose capital was simply the personal fortunes of the partners.



In Scotland, the joint stock banks founded in the late seventeenth, early eighteenth century continued to be allowed to issue notes. By reason of the resources they were able to command, they succeeded in developing a system of branches throughout the country which enabled them to spread their risks more satisfactorily.

(To be continued in the next issue - with the creation and growth of the High Street Banks)

COFFEE BREAK CHALLENGE No2?

Christopher Columbus has a special place in stamp collecting. Even though most people now know he was the first European to reach America, the Vikings beat him by several hundred years. Columbus is the man to have appeared on more different stamps from countries around the world.

Before, during 1992, and afterwards, he beats royals and heads of state staring back via envelopes from Aden to Zaire.

But who rates as second "seen on everywhere" postal lists?

Perhaps Cook, Rembrandt, Einstein, Churchill, replies to the editor of WETS News.

If your collection is based upon Ladies, why not tell us who is the top of that list. not including Royalty of course.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

There will be a meeting of WETS on Saturday 8th June at Emmanuel Church Hall Western Road Exeter.

The meeting will run from 1.30 to 5.00 pm. You are invited to bring material to display, any material for sale, and we hope to have a dealer present.



Not in our packet - Hope you were luckier.

SPRINGTIME IN PARIS ?

By David Roseveer



Just the time for a walk through the outdoor stamp market situated in the Avenue Gabriel, just off the Champs Elysees.

In 1887 a landowner who was fond of stamp collecting bequeathed a stretch of land to the City of Paris with the proviso that it was used for a stamp market. Markets were run on Thursdays and Sundays. During the Second World War it was very popular with

German Soldiers who were garrisoned in the city, their strong purchasing power inflated prices. After the war a Saturday Market was added, and professional dealers invited to attend.

The Markets popularity was greatly increased in 1962 when it was featured in the film "Charade" starring Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant.

Nowadays more than 50 dealers can be found there, offering all the worlds stamps, postal history, postcards, and more recently phone cards. It is very much a meeting place for collectors, especially in the spring and summer, when they can be found sitting on the park benches exchanging and talking stamps.

(A good spot for a WETS meeting perhaps?- Ed)



WELL NETTED - The World of Thematics gets bigger.

Our web site has been a great success, we have enrolled our first new member via the direct joining facilities available, and we welcome Vincent McDermott to the Society, his theme is the Royal Navy. If you can offer any help or material which may interest Vincent please contact the editor who can supply an address and email address. Incidentally Vincent lives in Huntingdon.

We have also heard from Jim Cropper and Andree Davis who live in Merseyside

- Jim states "I found your web page yesterday and was most interested in your society's approach to thematic collecting. Both I and my partner are interested in promoting thematic philately, Andree is also working with the Stamp Active programme to promote youth philately on Merseyside. Currently we find the local club approach (*meetings at night in cold dusty church halls with talks mostly on classic collecting*) somewhat unsatisfactory both to keep our interest alive and to promote the hobby. We would like to investigate the possibility of forming a group similar to yours for the North West of England. Is it possible for you to send us a copy of your news letter together with any thoughts and advice you or your members may have to give us on the subject." Replies have been sent by both the Editor and Mary Claydon.



We have heard from Sumit Gosh of West Bengal - he is an avid collector of Stamps featuring Paintings since 1980 We have also heard from Veniamin Kramer in the Ukraine he is interested in making contact with other thematic collectors interested in Soviet, or Ukranian stamps, covers, postcards etc. on themes.

The editor can supply contact details if you would like to follow either of these up.

A new development on our site is the addition of some of the illustrated articles from previous newsletters as web pages, the site is obviously being found and responses are being made, so lets keep up the momentum. Watch our links page as we add new links to other sites of potential interest, the registration of our site on other sites means we do need to return the compliment, it does however mean your search times are considerably

cut if you use the hyperlinks from our links page.

FORGOTTEN THE ADDRESS its www.geocities.com/westofenglandthematics - once you have found it press the heart key and add it to your list of favourites.

NEWS - Jim Floyd of Travellers Tree Thematics is about to start quarterly auctions - if you would like to be included on his mail list he can be contacted at - Jim Floyd, 12 Burystead Rise, Raunds, Northants NN9 6RZ

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT NEWS LETTER - by the end of May 2002 or earlier please - and don't forget - we need the originals of illustrations or good quality colour copies - all items to the editor - name and address at the head of the newsletter.