

Comments about this Wessex Bulletin and Copy for the next by Sept 30th please

# The WESSEX BULLETIN

Journal of the Wessex Philatelic Federation

Visit our website at [www.wessexpf.org.uk](http://www.wessexpf.org.uk)

2012/04

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**Secretary** – Position Vacant (*Volunteers Required*)

**IN THIS ISSUE** – WESSEX BULLETIN by email, Wessex Federation Website, Wessex Federation Competition Entries 2012, Dates for your Diary, Wessex Federation AGM, THEMATIX12, You Need Your Federation, Thoughts from our Chairman, ABPS Exhibitions Committee, A Personal Response, Reports from our Clubs, The Blessed Post Office.

**WESSEX BULLETIN by email** – Requests to be included on the circulation list should go to our webmaster Jim Wigmore at [wessexweb@talktalk.net](mailto:wessexweb@talktalk.net) please include your full name, club and the email address your Bulletin is to be sent to.

**Please Note this is a totally secure process** – *Your email address will remain secure, each copy will reach you on a personal basis without disclosing your email address to the other recipients.*

**BE FIRST WITH THE NEWS**

**WESSEX FEDERATION WEBSITE – OUR WEBSITE IS YOUR SHOP WINDOW** –

Please ensure that the details about your club are fresh and up to date contact our webmaster Jim Wigmore at [wessexweb@talktalk.net](mailto:wessexweb@talktalk.net) with your current club details and programme. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR CLUB DETAILS ON A REGULAR BASIS & NOTIFY ANY CHANGES REQUIRED**

**WESSEX FEDERATION COMPETITION 2012** – The entries will be shown at the **Dawlish Stamp Clubs – Exhibition and Fair** to be held at **The Strand Centre, Dawlish** on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September** from 1000 hrs to 1600 hrs. The information is also available on the federation website [www.wessexpf.org.uk](http://www.wessexpf.org.uk).

Travel to the venue is very easy either by Stagecoach Bus Service 2 or by rail, Dawlish station is just a few minutes walk away. For those travelling by car there is some low cost parking at The Barton Car Park.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2012		
8th September	Exhibition & Fair	The Strand Centre, Dawlish
15th September	Stamp Fair	Exeter America Hall
26-29 September	Autumn Stampex	Islington
27 <sup>th</sup> October	Cornnex	Liskeard
27 <sup>th</sup> October	Thematix	Dartmoor Lodge - Ashburton
1-3 November	Philatex	London
17th November	Stamp Fair	Exeter America Hall
23/24th Nov	Judging Seminar - for full details contact the Chairman	Eastbury Hotel, Sherborne
2013		
16th February	Stamp Fair	Exeter America Hall
28-23 February	Spring Stampex	Islington
20th April	Stamp Fair	Exeter America Hall
20th July	Stamp Fair	Exeter America Hall

*If you have a story for the next Wessex Bulletin we want to hear it.*

## **WESSEX FEDERATION AGM – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2012**

To be held at Emmanuel Church Hall Weston Road Exeter, Clubs will shortly be sent the agenda and details of start times for this meeting. All clubs can send two representatives to all federation meetings. Clubs are asked to make every effort to attend this meeting and come prepared to make some serious decisions regarding the future of our hobby, our clubs and the federation. The federation needs both a Secretary and a Vice Chairman. The federation meets just four times a year and it would be appreciated if the vacant positions could be filled by our larger clubs.

**THEMATIX12** – Will take place at The Dartmoor Lodge Hotel, Ashburton TQ13 7JW on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2012 from 1000 hrs to 1630 hrs. In addition to Specialist Thematic Dealers there will be a WETS meeting to display this years John Hilsdon Trophy Entries. Those who attended this event in 2011 will know that these dealers also provide material to collectors other than thematic collectors, all you have to do is ask. **THIS IS A TOP EVENT**

## **YOU NEED YOUR FEDERATION** - by Jim Wigmore

Most collectors seem to have overlooked the importance of the Wessex Federation, its role and what it both can and does deliver. The federation's role can be summarised as follows:-

- 1 – It is the common voice between individual clubs and National Philately, in our case ABPS.
- 2 – It is the point where clubs can meet, discuss and implement policy that will aid not only our local clubs but philately in general. Each federation club can send up to two delegates to federation meetings. The federation holds just four meetings per year.
- 3 – The federation produces the Wessex Roadshow a bi-annual exhibition featuring some of the best of philately here in the South West.
- 4 – It is an enabling body driven by the needs of philately in general and specifically as driven by local need.
- 5 – It is a co-ordination body for club speakers.
- 6 – It is an enabling body for Philatelic Competition locally and an interface for many national events.
- 7 – By hosting competitions, with dealer presence the federation draws attention to philately at both local and area levels.
- 8 – The federation has an active website featuring all its member clubs, showing details of all meetings as well as dealer events and showing copies of our publications such as the Wessex Bulletin.
- 9 – The Wessex Bulletin is our newsletter produced quarterly. This gives all, the opportunity to comment on items of a philatelic nature, share ideas and knowledge gained.

An organisation of this nature can only function when it gets the regular and committed support from ALL its member clubs especially the larger clubs. When was the last time your club was represented at a federation meeting? If you expect to get something out of the federation, you need to be a regular contributor. Paying the annual capitation fee does not mean you can opt out of decision making. For some time now clubs have been taking and not putting any input into the federation. This situation cannot continue. The dialogue needs to re-start, clubs need to get involved, the federation needs to get back to being a can do organisation driven by its members needs. We need a full and dynamic federation committee and both a full and regular attendance at federation meetings, its time to get philately back on the tracks. Stop thinking about what the federation can do for me and start thinking about what you can do for the federation. Philately is not a spectator hobby, it's a people relationship hobby. To be enriched by philately you need to build relationships and share both knowledge and ideas, standing on the sidelines does not work. **YOU HAVE TO GET INVOLVED.**

You do need your federation to bring all this about, more importantly **YOUR FEDERATION NEEDS YOU.**

## **THOUGHTS FROM OUR CHAIRMAN**

Some of you are purists and only collect one aspect or subject but I tend to accumulate anything that appeals which results in a number of mini subjects that are often difficult to classify as anything but a load of junk. I find some of the First Day Covers very attractive and the information contained on the insert can be most useful. I have occasionally found a mint set inside which the dealer had obviously missed which is an added bonus. Some hand illustrated covers are works of art in themselves and are highly collectable. Have you a favourite or interesting item that you could share with us?

Sorting through a box of miscellaneous covers/fronts I came across a couple of miss-sent items, 5 with postage due markings from abroad, 2 redirected covers, 1 GB postal stationery card used from Belgium with Belgian stamp attached, several Official handstamps from various sources so that box should keep me occupied until the weather turns. How many sheets will be written up depends on how distracted I get doing the research needed. That brings me around to books, Stamp Magazines, Specialist Society Journals etc which I find I refer to regularly, which are stored on shelves & I can find easily but I've yet to find a good way of storing cuttings etc. Any ideas please for my several boxes piled around the house each full of cuttings of vaguely similar subject matter without them taking up too much room?

I am still taking bookings for the 2013 Road Show. In the early days of the Federation I believe it was decided to set up the Road Show to encourage & inspire Club members as to what they could do with their collection(s), to show just how many different ways people collected & to give the ordinary members of the clubs contact with a Committee member, Secretary or Chairman. This Show used sheets of actual philatelic material which was out of owner's hands for about 14 months. Over time getting material for the Show became almost impossible & along with the improvement of the quality & reduction in cost of photocopies we tried using photocopies. This reduces the risk of any damage or loss of material when away from its owner & has improved the mix offered. What do we need? Well someone has to present it who is not familiar with whatever is on show so some sort of explanation not necessarily too long of the sheets is preferred otherwise no chat and a scratch of the head. What can be used? The answer is anything, preferably in multiples of 8 sheets, Competition entries of any class, First Day Covers, recent issues, printed Album pages, small accumulations, errors, picture postcards, postal markings, forgeries, phantoms, Cinderella's, ephemera or a combination of everything is acceptable. It will be of interest to club members somewhere. Copies are better done on say 120g paper or card as 80g paper tends to get easily bent and fly off the frames. 2 sheets of 80g paper in the protector will also work and cheap A4 plastic covers are fine. If you enjoyed seeing our 2011 Road Show please help us to continue the variety by submitting something to me (Carol Turner 10 Lower Park Minehead Somerset TA24 8AX) by the **middle of Dec 2012**. It would be helpful if you can tell me by early Nov what you are prepared to offer. Your copies will be returned a.s.a.p. after the last Show has been given. Variety is the Spice of Life so please let me have at least one offering from each club to make this a truly representative selection of all aspects of our hobby.

**THE ABPS EXHIBITIONS COMMITTEE** sent a discussion document about competitions and the need to unify the approach to judging and marking. Wessex Federation set up a sub-committee to look at the proposals and they have reviewed the suggestions against our current rules and marking structure and have made a formal response to ABPS as directed by the Wessex Federation Committee. Their recommendations will be presented to the next AGM for discussion and adoption if agreement is reached.

The discussion document by ABPS did cause one of the sub-committee members to write a personal response. Having heard the contents attendees at the last Wessex Federation meeting made the decision that this letter should be circulated to all philatelists in our member clubs. The content is as follows.

*Comments about this Wessex Bulletin and Copy for the next by Sept 30th please*  
**Personal Response to the ABPS Exhibitions Committee**

27<sup>th</sup> July 2012

Dear Chris,

The request by the Exhibitions Committee regarding Competition Rules suggests to me that ABPS has lost the plot

You will have received a formal response to the request from the Wessex Federation, what follows is very much my personal view.

The falling ABPS Capitation Fees should be setting off alarm bells about the dire state of our hobby, it is quite literally dying on its feet. Unless something is done to raise the image of the hobby at a National Level and encourage people to take up philately and more importantly to join their local clubs in 10 years the current crop of philatelist will be dead along with the hobby.

Here in the South West we have lost the following prominent philatelist Dr Adrian Almond, David Chamberlain and David Herritty and there are more to come. Mary & Norman Claydon are now out of action due to a severe motor accident. This has put Plymouth Club, the Wessex Federation and the West of England Thematic Society (WETS) into dire but hopefully recoverable states. Many of our societies have an increasingly older membership with no sign of new or younger members to keep the hobby alive.

The present emphasis on Competition at Federation & National Level is simply giving credence to the popular view of the Closet Collector that Philately is a hobby for very rich people and not for them.

If we wish to grow Philately we need to change the image to draw in the Closet Collector and make them feel comfortable within the hobby rather than putting them off as at present.

We need to be encouraging a good well informed Press with a view to making our hobby "COOL", we never see our hobby mentioned in the press these days unless it is in disparaging terms.

Britain seems to be the only country in the world where the hobby is moribund, elsewhere the hobby thrives, "what are they doing right that we can learn from, and more importantly why are we not already doing it?"

I hope these views will be made known to ABPS as I believe the hobby is in a crisis state and action needs to be taken as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely

**Jim Wigmore**

*Vice Chairman – WETS, Secretary – Dawlish Stamp Club, Wessex Federation Judge & Wessex Federation & BTA webmaster.*

**OBITUARY – DAVID HERRITY** – We are sad to report the sudden and quite unexpected death of David on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at home. David has been a well known philatelist especially for his knowledge of early GB stamps. For many years David was the Federations Exhibition Manager and he was also involved with SWIPES in the same role. David was well known around clubs with his partner Gill and their display "An Evening with David & Gill" and his own display on "Early GB Stamps". Both David and Gill were involved at Federation level and with both WETS and Plymouth Club, his wry humour will not only be missed by his partner Gill, but also by his very many philatelic friends.

**OBITUARY – PETER BURDEN** – We are sad to announce that Peter died peacefully on July 30<sup>th</sup> aged 93 at Rowcroft Hospice. In addition to being the Husband of Alison he was also a Father Grandfather and Great Grandfather. Peter was a long time friend of philately here in the South West he was a past Chairman and President of the Wessex Federation and he was a driving force in the setting up and running of SWIPEX. Peters philatelic passion was Postal History especially the Postal History of Devon and not surprisingly he was heavily involved with the Society of Devon Postal Historians. Peter was always a perfect gentleman ever ready to share his extensive knowledge with others, he will be a sad loss not only to his family, but also to his many friends in philately.



## **REPORTS FROM OUR CLUBS**

### **EXMOUTH CLUB - AGM 18th JULY 2012 SECRETARY'S REPORT**

We have sustained enthusiasm within the Branch with much humour, though attendance numbers have fluctuated during the year. The [new-style] programme seems to be appreciated and the variety of speaker specialty and experience, both from visiting speakers and from members has been impressive and amazing. Certain members are faithful in ensuring we keep to time, on target and motivating. Judge not lest ye be judged could become Club motto. Our thanks to Barry for carting the A-frames to and fro each meeting and to Dickson for fetching and carrying Miriam! And to Rogers Catering Services for refreshments.

This season and last we enjoyed presentations on Dutch Lettering, Machins and Maritimes, Seychelles, Line-engraved plate defects, Long Lost Lines, Paintings on Stamps, The Falklands and China plus a plethora of topics from members' 4 and 8 page selections. We are grateful to all for their time and preparation. Competitions have not featured as much as we would wish and next season's programme seeks to address this challenge. Over to members to make this work. A merit certificate is being planned. Other ideas to boost membership and innovation are welcomed.

The Annual Club Dinner was enjoyed at Noble House Chinese Restaurant in December but it was felt that a post-Christmas event is easier and a different venue is being actively sought for this coming season, pitched for Wednesday 16th January. Mick's February Team Quiz yet again proved a fascinating test of knowledge – or lack of it - and ability at being hoodwinked so pleasurably. Good job he was never a forger – as far as we know!

We continue to be active members of West of England Thematic Society [WETS] and Wessex Philatelic Federation, though their request to present speakers from our Branch to others requesting visits has only been taken up by one member this year. We provided stewards at their annual Dartmoor Lodge Hotel event, with dealers, and welcomed two speakers back as a result of that co-operation. The Association of British Philatelic Societies [ABPS] have invited us to re-affiliate but at £1.10 per paid up member that cost could prove too great for our modest funds. We seem to be one of the most successfully paid-up Branches in the region, for which we thank the Treasurer - and all members for coughing up when requested. Box participation revolves smoothly thanks to Barry's guiding hand, meticulous checking and occasional chivvy or chiding.

We miss having the Library on site for our meetings but Mick Donaghue is always helpful in supplying what members need from the store. We express our thanks to St John Ambulance for the co-operative use of their Hall, though a venue with more available cupboard space, still in central Exmouth, would be an advantage.

We have lost a few valued members through death or moving away, during the year and have sent condolences to other societies following news of their losses. Keith Haws, Ron Perry and seemingly off the radar Gurt Ziemer and Mrs Whitton.

Mr McKie resigned due to a competition misunderstanding but we hope to persuade him to rejoin. The new programme is ready for us and promises to be as varied as before. PLEASE do all you can to encourage others to come and join us and persuade existing members to come occasionally, if not regularly, to Branch Meetings. I wish to express my immense thanks to the Treasurer for his unfailing support in all aspects of my term of office, over little and large enquiries and to Barbara and Barry for their encouragement too. Ed Elsey - Hon Secretary July 2012

**DAWLISH CLUB** – Are working hard to make their Annual Exhibition a success. The club is acting as the host this year for the Wessex Federation 2012 Competitions, see the details earlier in the newsletter. The clubs Annual Auction will be held at their October Meeting, details can be found online with many lots available for viewing. All the lots will be available for viewing at the forthcoming Exhibition and a Printed Catalogue will be available then. Postal Bidding and email bidding will be accepted. The range and quality of this years lots should generate some keen bidding.

**WETS** – The postponed AGM will now take place at THEMATIX on 27<sup>th</sup> October at 11.00 am. in the Small Meeting Room at Dartmoor Lodge, WETS members will get the agenda in the next issue of WETS NEWS. The John Hilsdon Memorial Trophy competition will be displayed in the main venue. A new trophy has been given to WETS by Richard Wheeler to be called the PIP Trophy where the emphasis will be on the Plan Introduction and Presentation, more information in the next Bulletin. As part of its support for the Federations Open Class Competition WETS has given the Federation a Trophy for the class to be known as the WETS Trophy and this will be presented for the first time at Dawlish on the 8<sup>th</sup> September.

## **THE BLESSED POST OFFICE** by Ed Elsey

No, not a frustrated expletive of dissatisfaction. I actually BLESSED a new Post Office. Working in the Klein Karoo in South Africa as a church organ recitalist – 91 nightly performances over 3 months, my clerical collar was observed on Sundays at the Dutch Reformed Church and I was thus invited to bless the new project, a retired Christian couple seeking to give folk reassurance and trust in a society where such values are not always in evidence.



The new Post Office was due to open Monday 5th September morning at 0830, just up the road from the Museum where I was standing in as daytime curator. 0830 came and went. Three workmen turned up with wheelbarrow and picks, as the building was still not quite finished. Their white 'foreman' had a



mobile phone so I pointed out to him Henni Smit's phone number on the front door notice informing us of the opening, when telephoned he announced it 'might be 9 o'clock'. He and his wife arrived at 0845 and I photographed their arrival.



I was determined to be the first customer, the first Englishman and to take photos of the new postmaster, Henni and wife Mara. They were thrilled. But no stamps had arrived by the African delivery van. I would have to buy stamps 40kms away in Oudtshoorn. Friends duly bought me some there when shopping. But I got the postcards stamped on the second day for the first day of stamping, together with the new rubber stamp Calitzdorp cancellation.

So my batch of postcards awaited the first 'mailing' and the distinction be both the first customer and the first

English customer and the first to request a postmark of the occasion on my copy of the African National Anthem and my UK Royal Mail redirection notice I took to be franked. I was still the first in all those, even though I couldn't make a mailing to prove it.

A certain provenance by default and pyrrhic victory, methinks! I offered the new Office a Blessing which they delightfully accepted Trainer Curtis van den Heever from Cape Town was also delighted – first ever Blessed Post Office for him - and came that evening to my organ recital.

*Lord of all correspondence and friendship, of communication, love, grief, compassion and well-wishing, I ask you to send down a Blessing on this project, its facilitators, its staff, its premises and its intentions, that where people come to maintain links with friends and family at home and abroad, they may know the confidence and confidentiality of their business and know that here there is trust and co-operation. In the Name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit - AMEN. [and a sprinkling for good measure!]*

But so much for the power of prayer. A week later the Office closed as the ANC ruling factor refused to pay Henni the agreed contract amount. This is Africa at the moment. What a shame. Maybe someone else will start it up again later. Meanwhile it continues in a tiny corner of an African supermarket.