

What a year. What a fantastic year. We had a tiger by the tail for a full twelve months and didn't get mauled, bitten, or overly pooed on. Amazing.

The year 2005 saw us grow in one respect and diminish in another. But dieting aside, I look back with huge pride in our stamp community, all the artists, makers, printers, collectors, and even the perforating pixie. Haven't we all done well.

And you, who read this as collectors, have done better than anyone. You have supported, advised, and taken a real and active interest, not just in the stamps, but in all who have been connected with creating them. From your collective heart, you have created a real community, given it soul.

And this inspires us to do better, to offer a better service, to create little works of art that will become heirlooms because of their quality, not just their rarity. Whatever you do with your stamps, whether you lick and stick, mount carefully in a collection, or swap, or sell, we hope you admire the craftsmanship that goes into their creation.

Hanging onto our proverbial tiger, we were bound to make some mistakes, but it's a real fool that doesn't learn when slapped with a wet haddock, as my old dad used to say. I never knew why, mind; he hated fish.

However I do solemnly swear, (no, with granddaughters of an impressionable age, that's out as well)... I do solemnly affirm that we shall loose no sports on you unless we really have to, and then very few indeed.

We shall not create so many LBE designs until the old one is worn out, and then only with good notice.

We shall give unto the Steve James such information as we can on the programme for new stamps, that he may post onto the web the diary he has been craving from us.

And verily I will not come up with any 'good' ideas in the early hours of the morning after chatting with mates on the forum until I have spoken with the Isobel and the Hilary who have to process all the orders that then plop into the mail without benefit of a wee shopping cart.

DEAR READER,

Welcome to the first issue of 2006, and our second year in print. We have much news to start the year, a special offer, and Helen Hill has once again pulled out all the stops to produce another of her incomparable analyses of Discworld stamps, their sports and variants. Our thanks to her and to all our contributors.

Spare a thought, if you will, for the hapless burghers of Wincanton. Just nipping into the High Street on a Saturday morning for a paper and a packet of fags, only to be confronted by a six foot Nac Mac Feegle, while Death is heading your way complete with scythe. It's enough to make a burgher give up drink. Or take it up. And just when he thinks it's safe to go back in the High Street, he learns that tradition (see Gytha Fiona's definition) and popular demand dictate that there will be another invasion in Spring. Dates for your diaries: April 29, April 30 and May 1. Usual insanities apply, and the Cabbage Growers have again challenged the Flatalists to immortal combat, this time at cricket. We're assuming it will be a Limited Over match, which for the benefit of our overseas readers means it will last somewhat less than 5 days. We've heard already of one Flatalist coming from Australia for the event, presumably with the daft idea of regaining the Ashes. Or possibly creating some new ones.

More diary dates: 8, 9 and 10 December, for the Hogswatch Event.

Readers who can't wait until April to visit the Cunning Artificer, be warned that the shop will be closed to visitors while refurbishments are carried out. This will be in February or early March, so if you are planning to come a long way, please check first. The mail order side of the operation should be

O CONTRO	STAR CONTENTS AND DURA	
Page 1	This is page 1 - go figure!	
Page 2	Stamps, Ancient and Modern	
Page 3	Discworld Stamps - Collectors' Items, by Darren Hill	
Page 4	Stamp Facts - Goings and Comings, Plans for 2006	
Page 5	News from the Green Cabbage Trading Post	
Page 6	Everything in Moderation, by Gytha Fiona	
Page 7	- ditto -	
Page 8	The Inaugural Hogswatch Awards, by Colin	
44	Woodhouse	
Page 9	The Raffle Round-up, by Darren Hill	
Page 10	Kel's Auction Watch	
Page 11	Wincantonbury Tales, by Pat Harkin	

Apologies to subscribers who wrongly received a reminder to renew in the last issue. We've now refined our system, and with a bit of luck, only those who are due to renew will have had a reminder in this issue. If your subscription is coming to its end (the figure 5 will be printed on your address label) and have not received a renewal form, please let us know. For those who renewed earlier than they needed to because of our error, you will not lose out: the extra four issues have been added onto your existing subscription.

Stamps, Ancient and Modern

Looking back over the stamps that have come into being throughout 2005, I am ever more aware of the huge heritage we are now part of. I know that the 'Cinderellas' we produce are really the 'mad Auntie' of serious stamp collecting, and that these days, almost anyone with a reasonable computer and printer can turn out stamps. (Perforating aside, of course.)

My brief from Terry was, as you know, to create stamps that were so 'real' that if placed in a collection of 'proper' stamps, a hundred years from now a collector would be leafing through old atlases looking for Ankh Morpork in the gazetteer. We have, I think, mostly succeeded in that. We've used some very old printing methods, such as offset litho and letterpress, as well as some very new kinds used in the security print industry. Not surprisingly, there have been some, shall we say, 'interesting' results. Looking at old 'real' stamps and some of our 'new' ones, one realises that not all the old ways were necessarily best. Technology moved forward because the results justified the invention.

Also, the design brief itself has changed with the development of our stamps and we've begun to look forward as well as back. From just producing stamps which paid homage to the classic formats of the 1920s and 30s, we now develop stamps that have an original base design. Some worked exceedingly well, such as Koom Valley which was largely the inspiration of Colin Edwards. Others were not so well received. But we had to try new ideas, and will continue to do so - there has to be a dynamic aspect to design, or the end products become stultified and frankly boring.

So what's new in 2006?

As far as printing is concerned, we are hoping to obtain the services of another security printer. We are always on the lookout for small print companies that can offer both technology and craftsmanship - I can drive half a mile and get a local printer to 'run me off' a few thousand stamps, but that would be a betrayal of our charter from Terry, and would compromise all the hard work that goes into the design and creation of our collection.

We are employing the talents of other artists, such as David Wyatt, and will be pleased to show you his work. We are building a small team of experts who encompass all aspects of security printing, so that we might one day even be able to have our own watermarked paper! We are looking forward to putting before you some real gems, some of the finest stamps ever produced, stamps that will stand alongside the very best the roundworld can offer.

Isobel and I were once the finest producers of fantasy sculpture of our generation. We started trends, we won awards, we created a small bit of history. We are too old for that sort of stuff now, and love the small team and collecting 'family' that we have gathered around us these last few years. But we still like to do things as well as ever they can be done, with craftsmanship and pride, to pay homage to the best fantasy writing we'll read in our lifetime. And in a way, the only true way, repay the trust given to us by our collectors. You.

BP

PS In the next issue we will bring you profiles of David Wyatt and Veronica Wilson, two important additions to our happy band of artists and experts.

Diseworld Stamps Collectors' Items.

What a difference eighteen months can make. For most of you now reading this article, had someone said "Discworld Cinderella", you would probably have thought Terry's next plot was revealed, involving a young girl, ugly sisters and a copyright lawsuit from Disney. And had someone said you would be a stamp collector, many would have laughed, been disbelieving or even offended.

But here we are, the fifth edition of the Journal is with us, and the institution we know as Discworld Stamps, or to be more accurate Discworld Cinderella Stamps, is well established. For a select few of us though, this is a happy merging of two pre-existing hobbies, namely Discworld and stamp collecting. For better or worse (or at least financially poorer), we all can now be numbered amongst those who collect Cinderella stamps.

So what are Cinderella stamps exactly? It has been said that they are the poor relation of postal stamps, in that they generally are not postally valid in their own right. The name tends to be used as a catch-all label for stamp-like labels affixed to postage, either for decoration or to denote payment for carriage on things like railways, ships or other transportation. They can also be receipts for payment of things like taxes, or as a donation toward a charitable or business concern.

In the case of our beloved sticky things, they are of course completely postally valid, but only in a world that exists within the literary realm and in our imaginations. But the trading of these stamps is very much a roundworld phenomenon, as can be seen either by perusing the trading thread on the forum or from a brief search on eBay. The selling price for some of the rarer examples more than matches those of other examples of Cinderella stamps, especially those items which are no longer available for retail sale.

This is a double-edged sword, as whilst most established collectors now have collections containing many of these items and are worth a lot of money, it is becoming increasingly difficult for people new to Discworld stamps (coming either from the Discworld or the philatelic Cinderella community) to obtain them. The only way to do this is to spend a large amount of money, which will probably put many potential new collectors off joining our ranks, and some items come up so very rarely as to make getting a back-dated complete set almost impossible anyway.

To take two specific examples, complete collections of either the stamp sheets or the covers would now carry a value well into three figures (at least), presuming they could be sourced in the first place. Even now, with the market for some stamps such as the \$5 Blue Triangle and the Thrupn'y Dreadful having reached its saturation point, they can still command around \$50 and \$25 respectively. But of course currently either can be bought for \$5, if you get the right LBE, so there is still potential for anyone.

So what does the future hold for these items? The popularity of the Discworld novels shows no sign of waning any time soon. Terry has shown his enthusiasm for the stamps with his attendance at the various events, his continual working with Bernard, Colin and Alan to create and produce them, and indeed working them into the storylines of the books. And of course with such a lovingly crafted world as the Disc as described in the past books, the opportunities for stamp inspiration are many and varied, and only now beginning to be tapped. Plus the stamps are gaining a wider audience, not only within the Discworld circles (via many routes, such as the Convention, Wadfest, and various newsletters and websites), but also within more traditional philatelic circles (the Stanley Gibbons article, attendance at Stampex and link-ups with people like Mark Valentine for the Rockall covers to name but three examples).

So your collection, be it large or small, recent or extensive, may well turn out to be nice in terms of potential future value, as well as a source of pleasure and enjoyment. And given the quality of the stamps and the size of the Cinderella and general stamp collecting community, who knows where all this could lead?

Stamp Facts Goings and Comings

The smart folk among you will be able to calculate that about 400 Blue Triangle stamps are now in circulation, leaving just 84 to be found. Since August 2004 we have sold in excess of 20,000 LBEs, and if the present rate of sale continues, we estimate that all the remaining Blue Triangles will be in circulation by the end of 2006.



There are also limited numbers of the Zombie stamp - just 30 sheets of these were produced, and there are about 300 stamps left.

You may have noticed that Helen's stamp breakdown no longer shows a fixed rate of frequency for individual sports and variants to appear in LBEs. We now have in excess of 20 sports, and as each new one is added to the 'pool', the ratio of occurrence of any one type inevitably changes. Rather than mislead you with ratios which are constantly changing, we promise you this: one in five LBEs will contain something unusual. And we will not change the frequency of the Blue Triangle, which will remain at 1 in 50, or the Zombie Thrupn'y Dreadful, which stays at 1 in 40, while stocks last.

The Hogswatch 2005 stamp will be withdrawn from sale at the end of January, and in early February we will replace the original Tower of Art stamp with a new issue. It will be in a different colour to mark the Year of the Signifying Frog, and it will be possible to buy these stamps by the sheet for the first time. A full count of numbers, sports, variants and whatever of the original Tower of Art stamp will be available when Colin and I have worked it out. We'll publish it in the next issue of the journal.

We are also coming to the end of the Military Issue stamp book - a thousand of these were produced for the Clarecraft Event in August 2005, and less than 200 remain.

Plans for 2006

The first new stamp of the year will be issued on February 1 - this will be the Sto Lat penny. At the same time, a special 10 penny Sto Lat stamp will be produced as a limited edition perforated proof sheet - this is available only for Journal subscribers. For more details, see the insert with this issue.

1 March should see the arrival of a Sto Helit stamp, and for the Spring Event at the end of April we will be issuing the much heralded Bad Blintz stamps. These were described in detail in Journal Issue 3 and will be the result of collaboration between Bernard and David Wyatt (the very man who did the cover of the book), with the knobs, whistles, frilly bits and numbers coming from our own Colin Edwards.

You'll note I haven't mentioned an issue for 1 April.... But I can't imagine Bernard not having some cunning plan.

May/June should see another Guild stamp - we think it may be the Alchemists' turn - and in July we hope to issue the Bonk stamps. Then there's bound to be something special for the Convention in August, together with a special LBE edition.

Later in the year there might well be a stamp to coincide with the publication of the Amazing Make it Yourself Unseen University book in October. October also sees the publication of Winter Smith, the Post Office Diary, and Thud coming out in paperback. That should elicit at least two new stamps, and of course there will be a Hogswatch 2006 stamp available from December 1.

These are the plans, drawn up, discussed, argued over, and finally agreed. This is not to say that there might be a couple of good ideas from our sponsor that we just have to do something about.

NEWS FROM THE GREEN CABBAGE TRADING POST

New trading rates

Some of the new stamps introduced in 2005 can now be traded for Green Cabbage trading stamps, and we have also added the rates for the new colour editions.

THE NEW RATES ARE, PER GREEN CABBAGE STAMP 1/2p Gold 16 1p Black 16 2p Indigo 10 5p Ochre 5 5 10p Blue Field of cabbage 10 Seamstress guild 10 Leshp 8 **Zlobenian Zloty** 16 Koom Vallev 8 ILARY TAKES SORTING Thieves Guild THE G C STAMPS SO 10 VERY SERIOUSLY

We will continue to accept the original colour commons at the old rate of exchange.

NEW TRADING GOODS

With immediate effect, green cabbage stamps can be traded for the Vetinari 'Rainbow Sheet', a perforated sheet of 12 Vetinari Pain of Pain stamps of various hues. Careful examination will reveal additional sports. These special stamps are not available for sale and will not appear in LBEs. The trade-in rate will be 10 Green Cabbage stamps for one Rainbow Sheet, or a full book of 50 Green Cabbage stamps for 6 Rainbow sheets. There will be just 500 Rainbow sheets issued.

Limited numbers of the Dragon Sanctuary Envelopes are still available for those wishing to complete their collection, though we will not be producing any more. The numbers of those traded and still remaining are as follows:

No 1	39 traded	4 remaining
No 2	28 traded	3 remaining
No 3	25 traded	4 remaining
No 4	30 traded	3 remaining
No 5	38 traded	4 remaining
No 6	22 traded	5 remaining
No 7	25 traded	4 remaining
No 8	19 traded	8 remaining
No 9	54 traded	4 remaining
No 10	30 traded	5 remaining

Fiona's extra

At the time of writing this, the forum could boast 600 members and we had posted 174559 articles. The maximum number of people on the forum at the same time is 36 and occurred on August 4th at 8.35pm.



Everything in Moderation, by Gytha Fiona

Firstly, I'd like to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year, filled with Flataly. Terry once said something along these lines: 'if something is done only once, it's a tradition; twice and it becomes an old tradition; three times and you have an old and hallowed tradition; four times and you are looking at an old and hallowed tradition going back to before the dawn of time'. We at Discworld Stamps are real suckers for this kind of thing. Therefore, following an old and hallowed tradition, "I say unto thee, verily, so much has happened in the last three months, it's hard to know where to start!!!"

There have been massive changes on the website recently and a bit of a staff shuffle; Steeljam is now the Webmaster for the sales side of the website, giving Tom a chance to actually spend a bit of his free time with his luverly family; he still runs the forum with a big stick, cunningly (a family trait obviously) hidden behind his back, and when we had a recent spammer invasion, he responded promptly to the cries for help. Many thanks to those who gave us the heads-up.

Thud players and their forum have been moved to a totally separate site, and The Kitchen Table has moved into the Society forum, again it just seemed the logical thing to do. We now also have a Market Place where approved traders can advertise stamp related products.

The promised article from Bernard on Discworld Cinderella Stamps turned up in the Special 150th Anniversary Collectors' Edition of The Stanley Gibbon's Magazine. It makes fascinating reading but only 300 of the magazines are accompanied by a Special Edition Cinderella stamp, available exclusively from our website.

The Society has yet again been undergoing transformation; Cara and Marmaduke have stepped down from The Secretariat and their replacements have yet to be named. Luckily for us though they are still forum members and regularly join in with the melee that is forum life.

The Grand Secretary's Assistant; Strapper, was given the task of dispensing the Sodit Awards (in the form of a polished sodalite semi-precious stones) to deserving members, and these have been allocated as follows: to Catch-up for coordinating Hogswatch accommodation for visitors from abroad, to Qviz for selfless acts, Munchkin for her saucy ones and Vampire Cat, just because he is a weird sod!

I've been lucky enough to be around on numerous occasions and have heard Terry and Bernard talking to the crowds, and one of the many things that they have in common is the belief that all this should be fun, and my word it is! There are meetings happening all over the UK now, on a fairly regular basis, and as far as everyone is concerned, the more the merrier. If you can't attend in person, there is even a regular online meeting. There's always a quiz and a raffle, with some great prizes up for grabs.

I would really like to take this chance to thank the special people who so cleverly organise these events: Ptim for London/Essex Meetings, Hansolobiker and The Dude for The Northern Institute Meetings, Illusion for The South Coast Contingent Event, Alohura for The South and East Midlands Lodge, Dragonlady for The West Sussex and Area Branch Meet, Jonty for The Tyne and Wear Area Meet and Kelshandra, who has done a superb job organising the monthly, Everywhere Else online meetings and probably has far more grey hair than her age says she should.

At about the same time that Thud! was released, I was given a tip off by Ku Brick (who works at Ottakars) that a slipcase, limited edition, signed version of Thud! was going to be available the following week. I suggested that he post the info on the forum and there was huge interest. Forum members were already buying extra Waterstones versions of Thud for members who either lived abroad or just didn't have access to a store and now the hunt for the slipcase versions commenced. Some members phoned round (bet they were at work) to see which shops still had copies and then posted the info on the forum for others to use. The gratifying thing about this was that the books, especially the limited edition ones, were appearing on ebay for hugely inflated prices, but everyone who managed to source several copies only charged other members cost price and P&P. Thank you to all of you that participated, you know who you are and I'm delighted to say that there are far too many of you to mention cos you are such a nice bunch of people.

As I said last time the good folk of The Secretariat decreed that we would be having monthly competitions with the prize being three Green Cabbage Trading stamps. The September competition was for a poem/limerick/haiku/or one-page story on 'Your Favourite Stamp', maximum 300 words and the joint winners were Rentawitch (Kris) with a haiku of The Zombie and Ptim, with the poem Midnight on Hogswatch.

October was an intriguing one; the contest to create a costume for a paper, dress-up dolly (don't know where they come up with ideas, I really don't) was won by Worbleook (Jean) with his design for a wizard's costume. In November, we went back to a reasonably sane competition and it was to create an illustration to accompany a poem/story/haiku from the September comp, as expected the quality of entries was superb, but a winner was finally declared and Qviz was 'the man' with piece of artwork to accompany Mooresey's poem.

The December or Hogswatch one was, (if you'll excuse the 'punne'), a real cracker!! Forum members were asked to write a letter to The Hogfather and the entries flew in thick and fast. These ranged from cute kids asking for cute things, to threats by not so cute kids against The Hogfather's boars, and a rather touching one from Hex aged 4. All the entries raised either a laugh or an ahhh, but the winner was declared to be Skyhigh, who submitted a letter in written and spoken Djelibeybian from Pteppic, and cos it was Hogswatch he got five Green Cabbage trading stamps.

Which leads me nicely onto the last, but by no means least subject. A forum Hogswatch. Silmaril started proceedings with a list of people willing to do a special Hogswatch card exchange and the list grew and grew. Doc Brown wasn't far behind with his Secret Hogfather present list. The thing that became obvious to me was everyone took so much time and care, opening the smallest envelope became a delightful adventure and made the season so much richer. I wonden if we can better it next year, I do hope you're all up for the challenge.

7

"Ruddy Flatalists. as if ? aint got enough to deliver"



THE INAUGURAL HOGSWATCH AWARDS

The Chairman of The Ankh-Morpork & District Society of Flatalists made a number of presentations of Awards at the 2005 Hogswatch Glee Club Celebration Sausage Supper.

Mr Terry Pratchett was presented with a framed fragment of an historical Tapestry Logo of the ancient and honourable Ankh-Morpork Flatalist Society, together with a Certificate of Provenance of the artefact, as discovered following extensive research by The Grand Secretary of the AM&DsoF.

The Ankh-Morpork Flatalist Society was, of course, the forerunner of our current Society.

During the year, The Grand Secretary had also proposed that Awards should be given to those Members of the Society who had made outstanding contributions to the Society during its first year. Gold Loupes, with Citation, would be awarded for "Outstanding Contributions to Flataly and The Society". Siver Awards, with Citation, would be awarded for "Outstanding Work in Supporting Charitable Activities". The recipients of the Gold Awards were decided by your Secretariat ... and a very difficult decision it was. A number of individuals have contributed greatly to the fun and games that we have all enjoyed during the year, but ... after much debate, we decided that the first two awards should be given to :

Colin Edwards - for his efforts in producing those little works of art and great beauty that are the stamps themselves, and in generating a high level of 'interest' in the Collectors with the sporty variants. Colin was not present at the sausage supper, but in the true 'Oscar' style, his award was collected by Alan Batley.

Steeljam (Steve James) - for his outstanding work on development of the Flatalists Society website (http://www.flatalists.org), and in keeping The Cunning Artificer site up-to-date.

The recipients of the Silver Awards were selected by The Grand Secretary himself, with a little help and advice from his Assistants (and others). A substantial amount of money has been raised for a wide variety of worthy Charitable causes during the year, and many people have been involved. However, four individuals were thought to have made outstanding efforts:

Darren Hill (for organising various successful raffles).

Pat Harkin (for ably assisting The Cunning Artificer himself in a thoroughly entertaining Comedy Auctioneering double-act at The Spring Shower and Wadfest).

unohoo aka Peter Chapman (for the Matt Hampson fundraiser, and a record Charity Auction at Wadfest).

Waddy (Vic Wadmore) for his vision, inspiration and driving energy behind Wadfest, which has raised considerable funds for charity over it's four years of successful growth into the premier Discworld camping event.

We hope you will all agree that all the recipients are worthy winners indeed!

Your Secretariat would like to thank the Grand Secretary for producing the Awards and Citations, beautiful little objects of desire indeed.

Thanks are also due to all the Members of The Society who have contributed to the success and growth of the Society in its first year, and to The Cunning Artificer himself, his trusty sidekick (the wonderful Isobel). Vince the Perforating Pixie, Alan Batley, Hilary and all the other wonderful folk who have made life so much fun!

Perhaps we will do something similar at the next Gathering.

Oh, I almost forgot ... many thanks to Mr Pratchett too, without whom none of this would happen, and also for his most appropriate naming of our little Society ... I am sure it is no accident that we are A MAD Society of Flatalists.

The Raffle Round-up

everyone was a winner!

Well it's that time again, to review the generosity of the fine folk of the forum (ie you lot!), having contributed to and superbly supported not one but three worthy causes. Since the last issue we have had the Birthday Raffle (to celebrate the Artificer maturing slightly), the New Orleans Raffle (to help a Pratchett fan in need) and the Yoseikan Raffle (to buy new mats for the dojo where Maxie's son James is a student). So without further ado, let's review!

The first off was the Birthday Raffle, which was in mid-September and coincided with a certain birthday (just as well really!). There were 10 prizes, namely lovely envelopes produced in collaboration with Steve James (cos his printer's better-behaved and generally superior to mine). Each carried a 1p Patrician stamp, cancelled with the Ankh-Morpork Diplomatic frank in gold, plus a specially produced Royal Mail Smiler stamp featuring the man himself, cancelled with a special "Happy Birthday" frank dated 13th September. As an extra feature, (a birthday gift if you will), half of the covers contained one of the original "Wincanton Wrinkly" stamps used with the kind permission of Colin Edwards. These are the first version of the now ubiquitous "Blue Bernard" stamp, these being slightly larger and have rough-cut edges rather than perforations.

With the usual but most wonderful generosity of the flatalist community, the chosen charity (the Wincanton Church Roof Fund), received a cheque to the tune of £1000. Ten deserving flatalists won the covers, half being further blessed by 'The Lady' with the extra presents. Thus such a deserving cause got a nice boost, to balance some of the twice-yearly chaos that descends on the town when we all come a-visiting.

Following closely on from this came the New Orleans Raffle, in aid of April "Beebop" Sexton and her lost Pratchett collection. April is a member of a sister forum to ours and a resident of New Orleans. During talk with Rob Lupine and Dave Hodges she revealed that Hurricane Katrina had claimed her entire collection, along with so much else. So they and Jason "DWMoook" Anthony came up with the idea of replacing her collection with donated secondhand paperbacks from we fellow Pratchett-fans. The idea was an excellent one and under Jason's guidance was swiftly achieved. However one question still remained, namely how to fund getting them over to her, as Mr P has written a lot of words in his illustrious career.

As usual, Bernard came up with a most generous idea. He volunteered to produce a special oneoff prototype cover, to be raffled to raise the funds. As Jason was busy organising the books, we offered to assist with the raffle part. People were being generous in offering books, and some also wanted to offer prizes for the raffle as well. We of course were more than happy to accept these and to open the whole venture up. In the end eighteen prizes were donated, and a wonderful \$850 was raised to support the cause. Of this \$150 was spent in completing the book-list (she received a copy of every book Terry has written) and in the shipping itself (by DHL, although Jason did offer to put them in his suitcase and take them over personally). The remaining \$700 was initially offered to April to help get everything else sorted for her, but she said she wasn't in need of it. Hence she chose which charities should receive it, those being the Salvation Army, the Louisiana SPCA, Toys for Tots and the Orang-Utan Foundation, with each getting around \$175. She also posted an extremely touching thankyou on Elton's Forum to everyone, which was reposted to our forum.

Then to round off the year nicely came the Yoseikan Raffle, run with superb skill by xxMaxiexx. It was run in support of the Yoseikan Karate Association, the dojo where her son James learns the martial art. Bernard again supplied a worthy prize, this time a one-of-a-kind specially produced LBE. Maxie herself donated a further five prizes, including a blue triangle! As if that wasn't enough, she produce

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Her extreme generosity was again matched by forum members, who dug deep into their already depleted pockets to support the raffle to the tune of $\pounds 540$. This was enough to purchase 6 new training mats for the dojo, to be enjoyed by over 100 children who attend the club. The excellent total was presented by James, to the Shihan (leader) of the dojo, who was aware of the fundraising but not of the total achieved (he was expecting about $\pounds 100$ or so). There was even a special certificate made by Steeljam and Doc Brown, signed by the Shihan and presented to Bernard as a thank you.

All in all an excellent result for the charities and good causes involved, and of course a big thank you to all members of the forum who generously gave to support them. DH

Kel's Price Watch

The trends in stamp prices is for sports and rare stamps to initially sell for a high price, then for the price to drop over time. The exceptions to this rule are when the stamp is very rare in which case the price is high and will tend to remain high! Whether you are buying or selling, on ebay or privately, the most important thing to do is to research what the stamp is worth. A good place to start is the price guide on my web page. This is based on me every now and then trawling through the completed listings of auctions to see what stamps sold for. It is by no means definitive, as I have better things to do* than spending all my spare time looking at auction listings (instead I spend all my spare time looking at the forum!), but it will give you some idea if the stamp you have or want is worth \$4 or \$40 or \$400!

The guild merchant sports have an average price of about £5. Prices for the original Tower of Art stamps had stabilised at about £10 when the new sports were introduced. The price of the new TOAs looked to follow the same sort of trend, but since the packing ratios of LBE are reported to have changed, this may mean that the new TOA sports will be some of the rarest stamps currently available and the price may increase.

Dragon Sanctuary envelopes have an average price of £63, but some numbers are more common than others (possibly due to certain people trying to be sneaky and obtain envelopes with civic sports on them and selling the unsuccessful attempts!). There may be a price increase as designs run out. (See Green Cabbage Trading Post report. - Ed)

Notable auctions (those auctions that cause me to shake my head in wonder!) Antidote stamp: \$76.53 Skunk stamp: \$205 Harper Collins LBE: US\$400 Twinning FDC (2 auctions): \$123 and \$155 Sheet of 2004 Hogwatch stamps: \$335

* Editor's note: Kelshandra took time out of preparing her PhD to write this report, which is presumably one of the better things she should be doing with her time. Thanks, Kel.

Things to Do with Stamps (2) an occasional series

When the next wedding invitation thuds onto your doormat, be of good cheer. Yes, this could get expensive: the outfit, the hat, the shoes, the shoes that are even nicer than the first shoes and besides, a girl can't have too many shoes, the hotel, the journey, the giftwrapped pair of Tesco mugs for the happy couple.

But here's a clever way to economise. Simply cut your surplus commons into suitably romantic shapes hearts, bells, horseshoes etc then wait for the admiring comments when you throw your highly original confetti over bride and groom. Guaranteed to amase and astonish friends and relatives! Yet another witty and innovative thing to do with stamps!

PS In the event that rain is forecast, commons confetti should not be deployed. No bride will thank you if small pieces of sticky coloured paper gum themselves to her décolletage.

From "Ye Wincantonbury Tales", one of Chaucer's lesser known works and believed to be the only DVD created during the fourteenth century. The full disc, which includes moving images of the Hogswatch 2005 "Foote-The-Ball" competition, will be available for purchase at the 2006 April Shower, all profits to the Auction Charity.

The Auctioneers Tale

In a roome behind the pubbe Bernard our hoste hys handes did rubbe,

Saying "An auctionne I hav for you Whych shall go on till lots are few!"

Many items hav we here For whych having now consumed thy beere

Ye shalle bidde with gratest glee For it is alle for charity!

Patrick, mine aid, wille hold in view

Each item which we have for you Ye highest bydder will each item gain,

And thence we shalle begin again!

So itte began and through the nite The auctionneres did talk their patter

Two thousand two hundred and thirty three

Pounds were raised by our revelrie!

Shoulds't thou wishe to know just what

Each and every item gotte A liste is here for thine eyes

pleasure

And each and every one a treasure;

Untille next year my tale is tolde, Of items bought and items solde, And I must thank Bernarde and Ysabel

For giving me a chance to tell My storie in thys simple rhyme And say "Let's raise even more next tyme!"



WHAT MADE WHAT.

Serenity poster - £30 Where's My Cow? Book, signed by Mel Grant - £60 Hogthwatch Beathty - £120 Cabbage Rock in display case - £35 Square Inch Of Hell - £55 Post cards from hell = 7 (a) £6 each Round The World Little Brown Envelope - £60 Wadfest Large Brown Envelope prototype - £30 Two special Discworld cards from Hell - £35 Assassins 3p print - £66 Morporkia 10p print - £46 Twoshirts 2p print - £46 Miscellaneous stamps print - £35 Hogswatch stamp paperweight - £40 Sonky tin - £45 Handmade Xmas cards - £26 Travel Thud! Set - £20 Where's My Cow? print signed by Mel Grant - £200 Anoia, Rising from the Cutlery, framed print - £45 Two joined Blue Triangles - £200 Colin Edwards Envelope Collection - £46 Koom Valley FDC - £75 Dragon Scatter Cushion - £55 Hogswatch 2004 FDC - £45 Hogswatch Cake £35 Dwmook envelope - £45 Hogfather program cover (about which no-one, especially Terry, knows anything and hence cannot say anything) £350 Ceramic Vetinari - £50 Jigsaw £20 Assassins Kit £60 Borogravia Joining Up Kit £35 Hogfather Stocking £35 Morningstar £40 Books of Discworld Haiku £10 Hodgesarrgh T-shirt as not worn by Hodgesarrgh £41 Terry's Limited Edition Colour Auction Catalogue, numbered "1" and signed by Terry, Bernard, Isobel, Colin Smythe & Trevor Truran - £55

A report (of sorts) is also viewable in the Discworld Stamp Forum at

http://www.discworldstamps.co.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?t =3506 and pictures and fuller descriptions of some of the items can be seen at

http://www.discworldstamps.co.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?t =3230

FREE WITH THIS ISSUE - THE WIDOWS MITE.

You may recall the passage in 'Going Postal' where Moist Von Lipwig finds a pile of money under 'divine guidance'

"Well, then it all seems very clear to me," said Vetinari, sitting back. "It is not often a mortal man achieves such a moment of glorious epiphany, but I am assured by the priests that such a thing could happen, and who should know better than they? Any anyone even suggesting that the money was in some way...obtained in some wrong fashion will have to argue with some very turbulent priests and also, I assume, find their kitchen drawers quite impossible to shut. Besides, you are donating money to the city" he held up his hand when Moist opened his mouth, and went on "that is, the Post Office, so the notion of private gain does not arise. There appears to be no owner for the money, although so far, of course, nine hundred and thirty eight people would like me to believe it belongs to them. Such is life in Ankh-Morpork. So, Mr Lipwig, you are instructed to rebuild the Post Office as soon as possible. The bills will be met and, since the money is effectively a gift from the gods, there will be no drain on our taxes. Well done, Mr Lipwig. Very well done".

Once stamps were being produced and the Post Office functioning again, the convocation of priests suggested that some stamp or stamps might be produced for the exclusive use of their various congregations.

After all, prayer had been seen to work, and not ones to stand in the way of progress, after progress was no longer new, the postal system could be a boon to the worshipper in a hurry, or unable to attend the temple of their choice. Consequently the Post Office introduced two stamps which it felt covered the religious spectrum.

The first issued was 'The Widows Mite' a small black stamp, block printed and bound into small booklets that would, for a modest sum, deliver any letter or card that carried a written prayer or supplication to any temple in the city.

The other stamp is far grander, much more 'High Church' than the simple supplicant's hands depicted on the Widows mite. Whereas the 'Mite' is placed in any post-box for distribution in the normal way, the Gods Stamp is carried from the sorting office only by Senior Postmen who are certificated by the Convocation of Temples as being ' Men of good standing within the community, upright and honest, who neither spit nor swear and have abjured the demon drink. Needless to say this stamp is considerably more expensive, not to say more visually opulent. Which is why we are only giving away the widow's mite.



UNCLE HENRY'S PROBLEM PAGE

This issue is so stuffed with information that there is no room for Uncle Henry's Problem Page, except for this urgent advice:

Dear PJ

The condition you describe is known as lambo fusculitis or licker's tongue, and is a common but unpleasant affliction in your line of work. If your employer won't agree to the use of a damp sponge in place of your tongue, change your employer immediately.

Your Editorial Team

Editor in Chief Mr Stanley Howler

Sub editor & envelope stuffer Hilary Daniels

Roving reporters Narelle Cairns Darren Hill Helen Hill Colin Woodhouse Resident bard Pat Harkin

Art editor, important utterances & bookies runner Bernard Pearson

Everything else Granny Pearson

Coming Soon:

Supplemental pages for the Stanley Howler Stamp Album

The Cunning Artificer's Discworld
Stamp Catalogue Volume 2

Competition Winner

Readers of Journal 4 were asked to suggest how many pipes are currently in the possession of the Cunning Artificer, him not being too sure himself at the time.

A full audit having now been undertaken, Bernard will admit to owning 54 pipes.

Some of you went from the ridiculous - Kevin Griffiths suggested 6 (oh Kevin, you have much to learn!) - to the sublime - Maxie plumped for 278. (In Bernard's dreams, Maxie, you would be right on the button.)

Joint nearest with 42 (life, the universe and everything except pipes) were Martin Stewart and Martyn (Doc Brown) Ransom. Prizes will be winging forthwith.

This Issue's Competition

You are invited to suggest your own ideas for exciting and inventive things to do with stamps. Not only will the best three win special prizes, but will also have the honour and pleasure of seeing their efforts featured in forthcoming issues of the Stanley Howler Journal.

Post your suggestions to: The S H Competition, The Cunning Artificer 41 High Street, Wincanton, Somerset, BA9 9JU



Number ALL ABOUT STAMPS FROM THE HOME OF STAMPS

Free with this issue:

Stamp Description Addendum 2 Special Offer order form The Widow's Mite Stamp Booklet

If any of these items are missing from your journal, please contact the editor, who will make the usual excuses.

Kindly address all correspondence, abuse, valedictory communications, or marriage proposals to:

Hilary Daniels. The Stanley Howler Stamp Journal. c/o 41 The High Street, Wincanton, Somerset. BA9 9JU

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> Back Issues of the Journal, together with free stamps while stocks last, £4.00 per issue.

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