



Halcyon

The Newsletter of the Redditch Philatelic Society – No. 26: Summer 2015.

From the Chairman



Once again we are facing the start of a new season for RPS, one which promises some exciting talks, visits and members' evenings. It is noticeable that the number of our members is declining each year – not because members are choosing to go elsewhere, but largely for understandable reasons:

death, illness or infirmity.

Therefore, since we are running a Stamp Fair on 17th October, we will have the opportunity to meet stamp collectors from all over the Midlands, members of other clubs or of none. The committee are spending much time and effort advertising the fair in the stamp press, local papers, internet, local radio and to stamp clubs to attract collectors. I would challenge all our members to use this golden opportunity to attempt to recruit new members to our club.

We really need to make a good first impression with our visitors; I plan that we will give each visitor: first, a warm welcome, ask where they have travelled from and if he or she is a stamp club member, offer them a free gift, a plan of the hall (which also has our club programme and meeting details on the reverse), sell them raffle tickets, offer to sell them our special postcards or any of the other products available.

To achieve this we need to operate as a well-oiled machine at the entrance tables to ensure that visitors can pass through without causing congestion, but at the same time they feel welcome and happy to part with their cash! Any local visitors who do not currently belong to a club should be especially encouraged to come along to a meeting. We know that there are many 'closet' collectors in the area, who may take much persuading to come to a club meeting. However, we must take the initiative and try, in order to secure the future of Redditch Philatelic Society.

Alan Godfrey

**SATURDAY 17TH OCTOBER
2015**

**REMEMBER OUR OWN STAMP FAIR AT
ST. BENEDICTS SCHOOL, ALCESTER.**

The President's Piece

Well, for those who came along to the President's Evening back in June, it wasn't too traumatic was it? I didn't lose or forget anything and all of the display sheets seemed to fit in their correct positions, so for me at least a good finale to the year.

The summer seems to have now well and truly receded and we return to another philatelic season. Throughout this newsletter, we are constantly reminded of our forthcoming Stamp and Postcard Fair in October, so without wishing to add too many further exhortations, I will just say that I do hope to see you all there on the day and, equally importantly, the evening before to help with all of the setting up that will need doing. There are plenty of things that will need everyone's support. The good news is that any heavy tasks are being taken care of by much younger people, so we can all concentrate on the easier things to be done. I am also spreading a rumour that before we open on the Saturday, there will be a bacon roll available from our caterers.

Whilst everyone on the Committee has been focusing on the Fair, daily Society activities continue to need some attention. Over the summer I have been fortunate to receive two of our Exchange Packet boxes, and I suspect I will be offered another one at our first meeting which will be the Mini Auction. Do bring along material on that evening. It is always a good season ice breaker and gives everyone the opportunity to build up the finances in readiness for all of those future purchases. The remainder of the season's programme promises to be yet another excellent mixture. I note that we have no less than three guest speakers before Christmas, and all of them will be bringing superb material to show us. Even if not your particular subject there will still be some first-rate items to look at and perhaps many things to find out too. The beauty of Society membership is we get to see many things "in the flesh" rather than just in books if you are not a member.

Finally space has caught up with me again, so it just remains for me to wish everyone a fantastic season ahead and hope that it is further enhanced for you by taking part in all that the Society has to offer.

Malcolm Allinson

EDITORIAL

Hasn't the summer gone quickly, or did it never happen? Certainly if you were outside you could be forgiven for not thinking it was July or August. At work I usually put away all my wet/cold weather gear from about May to October. This year it is all still in regular use, and colleagues are equally grumpy. In addition, rust is replacing the usual sun tan this year for all of us.

The silver lining of course is that we collectors have been able to spend more time in the stamp room – gardening and “days out” being meteorologically curtailed. If like me, you have had that bit of extra time over the holidays I hope you have been able to write up a few more album pages, catalogue a load more of those recent purchases, and perhaps have visited Midpex where even more purchases were possible (and inevitable!!).

Such extra activity already over the summer will also mean that you will now have plenty of time to focus on our Stamp Fair in October, and save up those pennies in readiness to descend upon all of the dealers. More detail is elsewhere in the Newsletter, but do remember to put **Saturday 17th October** in your diary as a MUST DO.

The astute reader will know that I “came out” in the last newsletter. Please refer back there for the definition of “come out”, as the Mem-Sahib thinks it is that I have simply come out of the Stamp Room at last! Anyway, the collecting is forging ahead with gusto and quite a number of interesting pieces have been acquired (must blame Midpex for something). One or two items have also led me into other avenues of exploration and research, which is quite pleasing if a little daunting. Back into the Stamp Room I suppose. Hopefully, I will soon be able to offer a small display of Cumberland material, which should make a reasonably satisfying change from Blacks, Blues and Reds.

Putting together the newsletter is still a big challenge three or four times a year. Recently only three issues of *Halcyon* have been possible due simply to lack of material. Do please help rectify this and send in articles, especially those about your own collecting specialisms and experiences. This edition features a couple of “Pages from my Collection”. Perhaps you could offer similar scans? Sharing knowledge is a keystone to any successful hobby.

As is now customary, I would like to thank **Alan Godfrey** and **Lyel Swingler** for their contributions to this edition of *Halcyon*.

Finally may I look forward to seeing you at future meetings and especially at our Fair in October.

Malcolm Allinson

SOCIETY PROGRAMME:

This Season our Programme has an exciting array and variety of meetings. Meetings up until Christmas are listed here.

- September 3rd Mini Auction (Annual Subscriptions are also payable tonight)
- September 17th Guest Speaker: Brian Lythgoe – Isles of Scilly and BEA Air Labels.
- October 1st Guest Speaker: M Ray Smith – Early Letters
- October 15th Members Single Sheet competition: Any subject.
- October 17th Society Stamp & Postcard Fair: St. Benedict's High School ALCESTER B49 6PX 10:00 – 4:00**
- November 5th Members Quiz Night: Question master - C. Tenant.
- November 19th Guest Speaker: Austin Meares – Norfolk Island
- December 2nd Society Visit to Leamington & Warwick PS
- December 3rd Displays from Two Members
- December 17th The Committee Entertains for Christmas

Do come along to meetings. Disappointment cannot be reversed!

Other Philatelic Events for the Diary

The next few regional and national events are listed together here*. Please add these events to your diaries, and support them by attending where you can. Only patronage helps ensure these events continue.

16th – 19th September 2015
STAMPEX
 BDC Islington LONDON N1 0QH

17th October 2015
Midland Philatelic Federation
Autumn Convention
REDDITCH PS Stamp Fair
 St. Benedict's High School
 ALCESTER B49 6PX

6th – 7th November 2015
Stafford Stamp Fair
 Stafford Racecourse ST18 0BD

15th – 16th January 2016
York Stamp Fair
 York Racecourse YO23 1EX

* Details may change. Please check with event organiser for confirmation.

SOCIETY STAMP & POSTCARD FAIR
SATURDAY 17th OCTOBER
St. BENEDICT'S HIGH SCHOOL, ALCESTER B49 6PX

The big day is getting closer and closer. As our new season starts, we begin to focus even more on our forthcoming Stamp and Postcard Fair on 17th October. If you haven't already, please put this date in your diary and do come along to St. Benedict's High School, Kinwarton Road, ALCESTER. Being a member of the Society means that support is vital from all of us, but the pay-off is that we all get an absolutely top quality Stamp Fair right on our doorstep.

Top quality means off course having the right number of Dealers; the right mix of Dealers; other attractions and sufficient visitors to make it all worthwhile. Our list of Dealers is impressive in itself; no fewer than 20 top class national and international Dealers and Auction Houses have agreed to come along; all knowing that our reputation for organising excellent Fairs is second to none. This mix of Dealers guarantees a wide and varied selection of material will be available for us to get our teeth into. Every area of collecting will be covered; from all areas of Postal History, traditional and thematic stamps; to covers, postcards, accessories and ephemera. There will be something for everyone; no-one should leave empty handed.

Additional attractions are the number of Specialist Society meetings being held during the day. The Great Britain Philatelic Society, The Scandinavia Philatelic Society and the Midlands (GB) Postal History Society (all nationally based Societies) are all holding one of their meetings at our Fair. This will inevitably add to the number of visitors we get and bring in many specialist collectors too. If you are also a member of one of these Societies, please spread the word and encourage fellow members to come along. They will not be disappointed. If you are thinking of joining a Specialist Society, this will be a good opportunity to take the plunge.

The other main attraction is that we are hosting the Midland Philatelic Federation Autumn Competitions. The autumn competitions are open to all individual Society members and are 16 sheets. The rules follow national guidelines, as do the Classes being exhibited. Do have a go at entering, and if you would like some help or pointers please ask any other member. Between us all we have a fair experience of competing at Federation and national level to make a jolly good show and perhaps pick up some awards.

Why St Benedict's in Alcester? The simple answer is that sadly there is no longer a suitable venue in Redditch, so we have had to look further afield. Fortunately, St. Benedict's has all that we require to stage a Fair of this importance. It has excellent facilities, with a large well lit main hall and enough classrooms close by for the Society meetings. Parking is also plentiful and free.

We have engaged the professional caterers who normally provide refreshments at the school and we are confident that they will meet the usual high standards of sandwiches and cakes that we would normally offer ourselves. There is a rumour that while we are putting the finishing touches to the venue on the morning before we open, a bacon sandwich will be available.

However much we prepare and plan, there are always jobs that can only be done at the last minute, and for that we need as many members as possible to help out. The evening before is a particularly important time as this will be when most of the "things that need to be done" will have to be done. A major consideration this time has been the fact that we are all getting older. Age slows us all down and makes certain activities much harder. As we are all acutely aware, setting up the Fair will take a lot of effort; bringing in tables, laying them out; setting up meeting rooms and many other things that will require a fair amount of heavy lifting. The good news is that we have engaged the services of the local Army Cadets to help us with all of the setting up. Of course, there will still be all of those "finishing touches" that will need to be done and so your support will be indispensable both beforehand on the Friday evening, and all throughout the day and into late Saturday afternoon in order to put the school back to its normal state. This is your opportunity to help make your Society Fair once again the best in the Midlands.

Finally, it is up to all of us to spread the word. When you next meet up with any fellow collectors, do please let them know of the Fair and cajole them into coming along. No-one who comes to our Fair will be disappointed. If it helps you to decide to come, there will also be a Food Fair in Alcester town centre (approx. 200 yards walk). Do bring the rest of the family and they can go and browse such delights as local cheese, honey, meat whilst you concentrate on perforations, postmarks and all of the many diverse features that contribute to this great hobby of ours.

SOCIETY MEETING REPORTS

Thursday 5th March 2015

Members Evening: Show and Tell

Eight members contributed to this evening with completely different displays. In the first half Pete Elms produced QE varieties including £2 high value with perforation shift, Penny black miniature sheet with colour shift, 25p Robbie Burns and 1st class Mind & Matter stamps with dry prints, the 68p Ice Sculptures and 2003 Christmas issues with colour shifts.

Bob Harper provided a display of Russian aircraft from his aircraft collection. This included photos and stamps showing (among others) the Gakel VII and Gakel X, Steglaw, Sikorsky, Shavrov, Dubovsky and Kalinin (Alexander and Kontantin) aircraft.

Robin Jarman showed us British butterflies on stamps, covers and miniature sheets, displayed with his own photographs of the butterflies.

Chris Jackson's first display was maps of Worcestershire starting with a seventeenth century Van den Keere map. This was followed by a detailed map of Worcester city, 1722 Owen & Bowen strip map and a map drawn by Lt Robert K Dawson RE showing the Worcester boundary changes by the act of 1831.

Lyel Swingler showed a cover from the 1934 flight from Amsterdam to the Dutch East Indies on "De Snip" (the snipe) aircraft, together with photographs of Lyel stood in front of the actual plane.

Robin's second display included two covers from the Chilean Antarctic, covers with "jusqu'a" (carried as far as ...) marks, a BSAA cover from 1949 and an early postcard of 1910 from a Chile flying club.

Ralph Richardson produced a collection of material featuring King Edward VIII, some from 1936 and some later modern commemorative covers. The final items were two photographs of King Edward VIII in his coronation robes (which of course, since he was never crowned, were never used) and his brother George VI in a similar photograph.

Chris Jackson then displayed ephemera from his fishing tackle manufacturers' collection. Material included advertising for Allcocks' reels, Clarke's fish hooks, an ink blotter from Murdoch, together with examples from George Moore, Milwards, Smith's of Beoley Mill and Henry Wilkes of Studley.

Malcolm Allinson announced he had started a new collection: Cumberland postal history. He displayed some of his new acquisitions: a Maryport 318 mileage mark on cover and a mileage removed mark and also the curved town mark of Wigtown; a railway cover carried on the Dumfries to Carnforth and then to Whitehaven route. He also showed an

unusual 1840 "Id PAID" mark from Carlisle during the star of the Uniform Penny post period; an Alston picture postcard and an underpaid letter from Millom to Switzerland, which was returned with a Swiss postage due charge.

Finally, Alan Godfrey produced a collection of Post Office "odds & ends": a postman's whistle, postman's buttons, cap and collar badges, temporary postman's armband (2) and postman's cap from the 1960s. Then a collection of handstamps and cancelling machine dies from Stratford upon Avon, including an unused "NOT AT / LONG COMPTON" datestamp, together with an unusual bag seal of Ordnance Road, Coventry.

Once again a members' display evening allowed those present to see an amazing array of fascinating material all with philatelic connections.

Alan Godfrey

Thursday 7th May 2015

**Annual Three Sheet Competition:
Letters E and F**

This year's three sheet competition for the Ian Crickmer Trophy saw 8 members put up 15 widely varied displays all under the heading of 'The Letters E & F'. As non-entrants David and Paul found themselves elected to the post of judges. After a period of deliberation David announced the top six.

Roger Wood was proclaimed the winner with his excellent entry on the Queen Victoria 1876 4d colour trials. Just one point behind came Chris Jackson's John English needle maker of Feckenham and a further point behind was Robin Jarman with his entry on The Farman F220 aeroplane.

Aerophilately also filled the next two places with Bob's Flight of Man followed by Lyel's Paris to South America flights. Our chairman was declared sixth with his entry on Falkland Island Birds.

As usual there was a wide variety of other subjects, these included, King Edward the seventh through footballers, Christmas, Police, Antarctic explorers and the First World War. A good evening which gave an opportunity for members to show some of the subjects they collect.

Thursday 4th June 2015

Change to the programme.

Tonight's meeting has been a change from that originally planned. Richard Farman was unable to visit us, so your Chairman and Treasurer stepped into the breach. We are assured Richard will be coming some time during the next programme.



Chris began by showing us the postal history of Tenbury Wells. Tenbury was in days gone by, and perhaps still

is, an important crossing of the river Teme. It received its 'Wells' suffix in the 1840's after mineral springs were found and spas became fashionable places to visit. Postally though Tenbury only became Tenbury Wells in 1914, shortly after the railway station had added 'Wells' to its name in 1912. We began with a straight line TENBURY of 1721 and carried on through all of the subsequent Tenbury marks up to 1900. We also saw a 1d Black and a 1d red posted from Tenbury, items that Chris is in the process of collecting "one of each of" from all Worcestershire offices. Chris then moved county to Warwickshire - Studley in fact; but he did explain this geographical aberration by pointing out that Studley came under Redditch for its postal service. Again we saw most if not all of the available type of Studley postmark, including the rare 141 duplex mark.

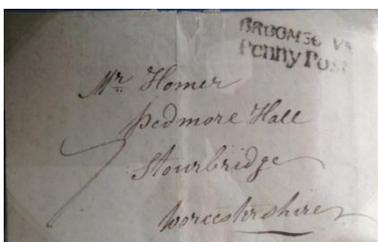
Picture postcards feature heavily in Chris' collecting



and we were shown cards of the then hospital at Tardebigge (left) and some recently acquired examples of Redditch. All were in very good

condition and it is a pleasure to be able to see them at last in Chris' collection, rather than just copies of them in books.

Chris ended his half of the evening with the Penny Posts of Worcestershire. Penny Posts were set up privately, but with official sanction, to serve areas where there was no local delivery from the Post Office - this usually meant rural and outlying areas. The rules were that all of the Post Office costs had to be covered and some profit made. Invariably the local gentry acted as guarantor for the expenditure



in order to receive their own post, and at the same time show at least some benefice to the local village. Penny Posts in

Worcestershire were Worcester,

Bromsgrove (above), Malvern, Malvern Wells, Feckenham, Shipston on Stour, Great Malvern, Ombersley and Powick.

For the second half of the evening Alan Godfrey displayed some of his vast collection of Polar Explorers of the Antarctic. We began in 1773 and ended in 2008 and fairly rattled through stories of many of the Explorers who are famous names to us

all. Captain Cook was the first to cross the Antarctic Circle in 1773, and also was the first to land on, and thus name and claim, South Georgia for King George III. A good thing really as George was about to lose a lot more land in the Americas and needed every acre he could find to make up for it.

Alan provided copious material and narrative relating to all of the early explorers; von Bellingshausen, Brown, Davis, Ross, and more, and enlightened us as to their particular feat(s).



For example Ross was the first to discover the magnetic Pole and has the Ross Ice Shelf named after him, together

with Mounts Erebus and Terror after the ships he used on his voyage.

We moved on to perhaps the most famous pair of polar explorers, Amundsen and Scott, and the successful attempt on reaching the South Pole. Amundsen first visited the continent as part of the Belgian expedition in 1898 so knew what conditions to expect. Scott had also been before, and in December 1902 had set a new 'Farthest South' record of 82° 11", just 540 miles short of the Pole. History tells us that Amundsen gained the honour of first reaching the Pole, and Scott died during the return journey, having also reached the Pole just 11 days after Amundsen.

However, both expeditions had set out with very different agendas; Amundsen's goal was solely to reach the Pole first. Scott's was too but he also undertook many scientific experiments during the expedition that benefited future exploration, unlike Amundsen.



Ernest Shackleton featured next, with many stories of his exploits including the dramatic escape to Elephant Island and then to South Georgia, following



the failure of the 1914 Transantarctic Expedition. Sadly Shackleton died during his next expedition in 1922 and is buried on South Georgia.

Alan then showed us much material relating to all of these explorers which added to a fine varied display.

Congratulations to both speakers for standing in at a moment's notice and for such excellent displays.

Malcolm Allinson

Thursday 18th June 2015 President's Evening: Malcolm Allinson

This biennial event always proves to be an interesting evening. This year it was Malcolm's turn to entertain us, which he did admirably, although the turnout was fairly low, no doubt a result of the sunny and hot weather keeping members occupied elsewhere.

Malcolm's first half was a comprehensive display of postcards and photographs of his native village, Astwood Bank. Even those members who did not know the area well would have learned much from this display. For a relatively small place, it seems a wide variety of postcards were produced; almost 100 on display tonight.

The second half of the evening was divided between Handstruck 4's, the classic and extremely scarce postmarks that heralded Rowland Hill's postal reforms, and a wide ranging collection of "£1 Values", drawn from Great Britain and the Commonwealth.

Handstruck 4's first appeared after the introduction of the Uniform 4d Post in Great Britain for the very short period, from 5th December 1839 to 10th January 1840. The first items in the display were the Acts of Parliament that set up Uniform 4d Post followed by twenty-four examples of Handstruck 4's. The Scottish marks are of a uniform shape and design, as a result of all being ordered from the same supplier, Alexander Kirkwood & Son of Edinburgh. English and Irish "4's" show more variation due to them mostly being produced locally and privately on individual postmasters' instructions.



The smallest example we saw (above) was the "4" used in Nottingham. Seeing so many of these iconic marks on cover at one time was a real privilege.

One pound stamps have been issued since the reign of Queen Victoria. Until the 1960's these stamps were considered to be high values, but in later years usage of the one pound value has become more commonplace. Malcolm's display managed to combine both the classic and the modern. The earliest example he showed was the King Edward VII green £1 issued in 1902 followed by an eye-catching complete sheet of King George VI 1948 £1 Silver Wedding. The 1929 PUC £1 was matched with the only un-numbered block of four

from an exhibition of old printing techniques at the London Guildhall Art Gallery by Enschede, held in conjunction with the London 2010 International Stamp exhibition.



Just fifty numbered examples of these reproductions were also printed, so we saw a rare addition indeed.**

There were a large number of £1 Machin definitives shown, mostly in blocks of four, issued in a variety of colours from the large format 1977 issue in green to the 1995 Mauve (small format) in two blocks of six, and the later Ruby in blocks of six and eight of both the gummed and self-adhesive types. The Castles high value set was also reprinted as a miniature sheet, including the £1 value, as was the classic Seahorse design of 1915.

Most Commonwealth countries using sterling currency have issued 'One Pound' values and a number of examples were displayed, although Malcolm admitted he had stockbooks full of items still to be mounted. Items that stood out included the Chinese New Year miniature sheets issued by Jersey over twelve successive years, illustrating each of the animals making up the Chinese horoscope. Other countries represented included Gibraltar, Falkland Is. and Falklands Dependencies, Ascension, Australia, Bahamas, Nyasaland, St Helena, Tristan da Cunha, BIOT, many Caribbean Islands and South Georgia.

Malcolm was thanked for his display by the Chairman, who commented that we had had an excellent evening's entertainment with something for all tastes.

Alan Godfrey

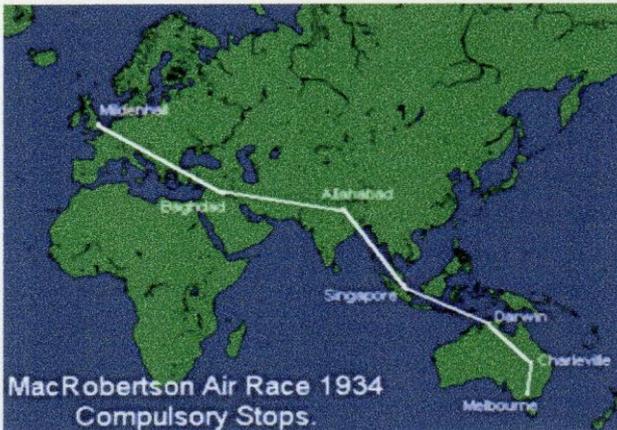
PLEASE PUT IN YOUR DIARY
SATURDAY 17TH OCTOBER
2015
OUR OWN STAMP FAIR AT
ST. BENEDICTS SCHOOL ALCESTER.

** For more information refer to:
<https://postalheritage.wordpress.com/tag/postal-union-congress-1929/>

Pages from a collection. Lyel Swingler has sent in two sheets from his growing Netherlands Airmails.

**The Great 1934 Air Race
Mildenhall to Melbourne
20th October 1934**

The race was sponsored by the Melbourne confectionary giant Sir Macpherson Robertson to celebrate the centenary of the founding of Melbourne in 1835. The prize fund was \$75000. The Royal Aero Club of England was to oversee the event. The race was in two parts, the speed division, the first aircraft to arrive in Melbourne and a handicap division. There were no restrictions on the size of aircraft or power but no crew changes were allowed en-route. Initially there were 64 entrants from 13 countries but this had been reduced to 20 aircraft from 7 countries for the start. There were 5 compulsory stops at Baghdad, Allahabad, Singapore, Darwin and Charleville



The route stretched over 19 countries and 7 seas and apart from the compulsory stops competitors could choose their own route.

Cover from London to Sydney.



The Uiver became lost en-route to Melbourne and with the help of locals lighting up the runway with car headlights at Albury the DC-2 landed safely. On the morning of the 24th Parmentier found the Uiver stuck fast in the ground and again the local populace came to the rescue and hauled the plane out of the mud. Parmentier had to leave two crew, the passengers and the mail to carry onward by train to Melbourne and Sydney

Netherlands Air Mail Stamps

1921



A gull flying over the sea

No watermark. Perf 12 $\frac{1}{2}$

These stamps were issued 1st May 1921 and were originally intended to pay the air tax. On 1st June 1922 the plates were decommissioned. This is the only Dutch stamp produced from a wood block design.

In February 1923 they were made available again and the complete printing issue was sold out.

End of validity 31st March 1935

1928



G.A Koppen

*1st flight Netherlands-
Netherlands Indies & return 1927*

A.N.J. Thomassen a Thuessink van der Hoop

*1st post flight Netherlands -
Netherlands Indies in 1924*

Watermark rings. Perf 12

Issued 20th August 1928 in settlement of the air tax. From 29th April 1931 also valid for ordinary franking.

End of validity 31st March 1944

1929



Head of Mercury

No watermark. Perf 11 $\frac{1}{2}$

Issued 16th July 1929 to settle the extra air tax. From 29th April 1931 also valid for ordinary postage.

End of validity 31st March 1944

All Airmail stamps printed by Joh. Enschede & Sons

Do please send in scans from your own collections to include in future issues of *Halcyon*.

WARWICK ROYAL SHOW 1931

The Royal Agricultural Society of England's annual show, known as the 'Royal Show', was first held in 1839 and was held at a different location each year until it found a permanent home at the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh, near Kenilworth from 1963 to 2009. During the nineteenth century Warwickshire had hosted the Royal Show on four occasions: 1859 at Warwick Racecourse, 1876 at Aston Park, next to Aston Hall, 1892 at Castle Park in Warwick and in 1898 at Four Oaks Park Sutton Coldfield.



The next occasion, the ninetieth Royal Show, was from 7th to 11th July 1931 again situated on a 90 acre site in Castle Park, Warwick. This event was to coincide with the centenary celebrations of the Warwickshire Agricultural Society. At first there were concerns that show might have

to be cancelled as there had been an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, but fortunately the animal movement order to and from the show was lifted on Tuesday 30th June, allowing the show to go ahead.

Visitors included the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VIII), who flew in and landed at Warwick Racecourse. The Warwick Advertiser of 11th July reported that the cheers from the public were "at times almost deafening" and the Prince's mode of transport had "just that touch of adventure about it that appeals to everyone". As a result of popular demand, the royal route to the showground was changed to go through the town centre so that more people could catch a glimpse of the Prince. As well as visiting the show, he took tea at the castle and planted a tree in the grounds.



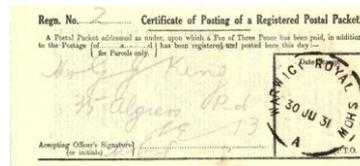
Postcard of visitors to Warwick Royal Show in 1931

The general depression in the country meant that the number of implement exhibitors was lower (only 388 stands) and the visitor attendance was also lower: just 1,867 on the first day (despite fine weather), 11,273 on the second day and 24,198 on the third day. However, 3061 animals were

exhibited. Admission cost the public 10/- (50p), which was seen by some as excessive in the prevailing economic climate.

Most of the animals and equipment for the show were carried by rail to the Great Western Railway's Cape Yard in Warwick (including those brought to the town by the LMS). Specially constructed platforms (700 feet long by 35 feet wide) and a siding (for 22 vehicles on each side) were made available to allow two trains to be unloaded at once, and a 6 ton crane was provided for lifting heavy items. About 590 vehicles of livestock in 32 special trains were received between 3.00pm on Friday 3rd July and 3.00pm on Monday 6th July. To meet the requirements for returning the animals after the show special trains were scheduled at hourly intervals from 7.00pm on Saturday 11th July to 9.00am on Monday 13th July.

Post Office services were also provided for the use of visitors and exhibitors. Mail was cancelled by a special hand stamp showing the place of posting as "WARWICK ROYAL SHOW". Initially two cancellers



with identification 'A' were used at the main entrance between 30th June and 13th June, one was a circular stamp

for cancelling registered letters and dating receipts (first day example above left) and a rectangular one was for cancelling parcels (in violet ink)

Three additional hand stamps with identification 'B' were in use from 6th July to 11th July. One (28.5mm diameter) showed the date in one line, another 30mm diameter showed the date in two lines, the third was a rectangular hand stamp for use on parcels. The circular hand stamps were 'skeleton'



stamps made up of loose type; this style (left) was frequently used in temporary post offices. Small coloured stickers (sometimes known as poster stamps) were also made available to visitors to use on mail and so publicise the show. (example at beginning of this article.)

Although the Warwick Royal Show did not receive as many visitors as the previous Royal Show in Manchester had achieved, probably because of the poor weather during the show and the economic situation in England, it was still judged a success by RASE.

Alan Godfrey

Halcyon is produced for members of the Redditch Philatelic Society and anyone else with an interest in stamp collecting. If you are not a member of the Society and are interested in joining, please come along to one of our meetings, on the first and third Thursday of the month (September to June) at St. Luke's Memorial Hall, Headless Cross, Redditch B97 4JX. Visitors are also welcome to any of our meetings.

You are welcome to visit our website www.redditch-philatelic.org.uk for our programme, news and other Society activities. Articles and statements made in this Newsletter are by individuals and are not necessarily the views or policies of the Society.