



Halcyon

The Newsletter of the Redditch Philatelic Society – No. 32: Winter 2019.

From the Chairman



Dear All. It is the time of year when the backroom work is going on to generate the catalogue for our annual Stamp and Postcard auction. Over the years the club has built up a good reputation for

the efficient running of the event which is appreciated by many collectors from all over the midlands. Currently I have received vendor sheets from 10 different vendors with 250+ lots. Only 4 of the vendors are club members so I am looking for sheets from members at our last two meetings. Do remember it is a first come first served basis, members have the advantage of receiving the vendor sheets a few weeks before they are sent to non members as first and foremost the auction is an event for club members. *(The Auction is fully subscribed now. Ed.)*

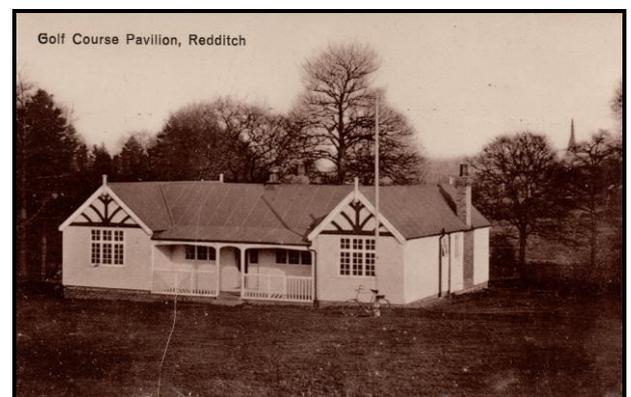
My attendance at philatelic events, other than club meetings, has been much less than normal over the second half of this year, which is a pity as I always enjoy trips to MidPex and Stampex. The upside of course is that funds are not depleted, and the downside is that I may have missed that really important item which I have been seeking for years and has probably now been snapped up by another collector.

We have all been in the situation where we see something we have been pursuing for ages on a dealers stall, or list, or in an auction catalogue and decide not to buy it, only to regret it later and if we are lucky enough to find another to have to pay much more for it. In my situation I can only hope I haven't missed anything. Certainly, I am grateful to other members who attended these events and kept an eye out for material which I may be interested in. I hope to resume attendances in 2020. I will be at the January club meetings for the first time in about 7 years so that's a good start.

It is gratifying to know that both Christine Jarman and Ineka Swingler are intending joining us for our annual dinner at the college restaurant, For those of you that haven't been to the dinner please consider joining us, it is a relaxed evening with friends over an enjoyable meal. Even though it is a college training restaurant the standard of food and the service compares well with commercial establishments, the main difference being the much-reduced cost.

If you haven't done so already, now is the time to put together a nine sheet entry for our competition night in January, we need a reasonable number of entries to make it worthwhile getting an accredited judge to come and assess them. There are categories for stamps, thematics, postal history, postcards and an open class for mixed items which can include non-philatelic items so whatever you decide to do it will fit a category. If you would like some advice on putting an entry together speak to me or one of the other members who regularly enter competitions.

Chris Jackson



Picture postcard of Redditch Golf Course Pavilion.

This card and many others will feature in our forthcoming Stamp and Postcard Auction on 21st March.

ROBIN JARMAN 1946 – 2018

Robin with his Gold Medal Exhibit of Chilean Airmails at Perth 2012.

It was a real shock to hear that Robin had passed away very suddenly on 28th December.

Robin had been a member of the Society since 1976 when he and Christine came to live in the area, and in that time had built up a number of respected stamp and postal history collections.

Robin was born in Chipstead, Surrey, a small village near to Reigate on 19th June 1946. After completing his schooling, his first job was as an Apprentice at Morris Motors in Cowley near Oxford, eventually moving to Longbridge at “the Austin” where he met Christine.

Robin’s passion was for motor racing – visiting local tracks and also being a member of the Stourbridge Slot Racing Club. He built a Mini from “unroadworthy” to racing standard and raced it at Curborough near Lichfield. The arrival of children curtailed his racing experiences but he still liked to watch racing.

In 1976 Robin and his family moved to Studley and as an avid collector of stamps he soon joined the Society. His collecting tastes were both eclectic and unusual (to most of us). He had a very good collection of Norway stamps and soon branched out to an equally obscure area – Chilean Airmails, which over the years we all saw grow into a fantastic collection, culminating in the award of a Gold Medal at the ABPS National Philatelic Exhibition at Perth in 2012 (*above*). In addition, his philatelic objects included cacti, butterflies and aerophilately in general. He was very quickly asked to join the Committee and when Fred Pritchard our Secretary passed away in 2011, Robin took on the role with great enthusiasm, keeping us all on our toes if we failed to undertake what meeting minutes said we would!

Robin’s Postal History field of collecting was becoming wider, so a couple of years ago, a few of us persuaded Robin to join the Midland (GB) Postal History Society, and he began to collect picture postcards relating to both Croydon Airfield, and Chipstead, and given time would have undoubtedly expanded into the pure postal history of the area too.

Robin loved the outdoors and having a holiday caravan near Aberaeron meant that coastal walks, butterflies and fauna were all rolled into one. Of course, visiting the caravan regularly meant a highly tuned calendar in order to be back home for Society meetings.

Robin was a much loved and gregarious member of our Society, whose enthusiasm and obvious interest rubbed off onto us all. We will all miss his infectious smile, his sometimes lugubrious comments, his interesting conversation, his many collections and above all his company.

Robin’s funeral took place on 17th January at Studley Parish Church, attended by many Society members, followed by interment at Westall Park Natural Burial Ground at Holberrow Green.

Malcolm Allinson

RALPH RICHARDSON 1936 – 2019

It is sad to report that Ralph Richardson passed away on January 9th. Ralph had been taken into hospital for an urgent operation at Christmas but suffered a post-operative stroke from which he never recovered. He was a man of many parts. His interests were wide and varied and his warmth and humanity were unlimited.

Ralph was born in Beverley in Yorkshire on 31st July 1936. After school, university, and marriage to Joan, they moved to Redditch in 1964 where Ralph began teaching at The County High School. Indeed, five years later I was briefly one of his many pupils and even at a young age, one could tell that Ralph was a more engaging and interested teacher than many of his colleagues. At school he ran a Friday lunch time stamp club, which if nothing else, fanned the flames of my own nascent interest in philately.

Ralph only became a member of our Society in the early 1980's. I was delighted, when he turned up at a meeting, as both I and others had been cajoling him to join for many years. He joined the Committee in 1988 and became Secretary from 1994 – 2000. It was understandable that Ralph took his time to join us, as he was very much involved in the early 1970's with setting up a completely new High School in the town – Arrow Vale, of which he was proud to be it's first Headmaster in 1976.

Ralph's collecting area was mostly based around politics. He collected Free Franks and his aim was to obtain an autograph of every Prime Minister he could upon a 'Free'. I understand that he was only one or two short of completing this task when he died. He was well into postal history and would often put us mere mortals right if we made an historical mistake in any displays we showed, as his historical knowledge was vast, if not perfect on occasions. Ralph was great company especially on trips to Stampex and York, when conversation flowed in abundance, usually about some historical gem linked to postal history, or simply the history of Redditch.

Ralph was also a member of the Richard III Society and a long-time member, Chairman and President of the Redditch Society. He was connected with Beoley Church and was always involved in their annual snowdrop weekend. He was well known by near enough everyone in Redditch and if you didn't know Ralph directly, you had certainly heard of him. He had a dry sense of humour, a sharp wit and, when he wanted, a booming voice. His local history talks were a tour de force and we are all the better for having heard him at a lectern somewhere espousing the merits of some long-forgotten person he had meticulously researched.

His greatest passion was supporting children and young people in need of help; a fact brought home to me on a trip to London with him. He and I were walking along the South Bank when he stopped by a young man sat on the floor wrapped in just a blanket and gave him a donation saying "Use it wisely".

Ralph's Funeral took place on 24 January at St Leonard's Beoley, attended by many Society members, followed by Committal at Redditch Crematorium. Our thoughts go out to Joan, Martin, Sarah and Ralph's grandchildren, but with a Latin language background Ralph would probably say "Gaudeamus"!

Malcolm Allinson

EDITORIAL



Once again, just one issue for 2019, mostly due to lack of material but also, I have to confess, my own self inflicted heavy workload. That area is easing off a bit now so we can perhaps look forward to more issues of *Halcyon* this year BUT, and a big BUT, the meeting reports and articles still need to be sent in

by you the members..

As for this edition of *Halcyon* there is a lot to get through. However not all meetings have been reported upon. A report can only be added if it has been written, so please do make the effort to offer a report in future.

Spring is almost on it's way, so lighter evenings lift the spirit and also mean that coming to meetings is less likely to be fraught with bad weather.

Finally, many thanks to **Paul Veal, Chris Jackson, Bob Harper and Pete Elms** for their contributions to this edition of *Halcyon*.

Malcolm Allinson

SOCIETY PROGRAMME 2019-2020

The second half of our season promises to keep members interest all the way to the summer break. Meetings until the end of June are listed here. Do come along; disappointment cannot be reversed!

- January 2nd Annual Society 9-Sheet Competitions
- January 16th Guest Speaker: Lawrence Kimpton - New Zealand Airmails
- February 6th Visit by Banbury Stamp Society
- February 20th Annual General Meeting & 1-sheet Display - Members
- February 27th Annual Presentation Dinner (Archer's Restaurant) Members & Guests
- March 5th Quiz Night - Members
- March 16th (Mon.) Auction Lotting Up – Members
- March 19th Auction Preview – Members
- March 21st (Sat.) Annual Auction
- April 2nd Guest Speaker: David Hutchins From Tonga to Togo
- April 16th Member's Displays – "The 40's
- May 7th Guest Speaker: Peter Pugh – Another Bloody Railway Part 2
- May 21st Three Sheet Competition for the Ian Crickmer Trophy "Letters E & F." – Members
- June 4th Guest Speaker: Alan Squires – Tristan da Cunha
- June 18th Chairman's Evening

Meetings recommence on Thursday 3rd September 2020 (7:00pm for 7:30pm)

Other Philatelic Events for the Diary

The next 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.

(Details may change. Please check with event organiser for confirmation.)

17th – 18th January 2020

YORK STAMP & COIN FAIR

York Racecourse
YORK
YO23 1EX

7TH March 2020

Royal Sutton Coldfield Society Stamp and Postcard Fair

The Collingwood Centre,
Collingwood Drive,
Pheasey,
Birmingham B43 7NF

2nd – 9th May 2020

LONDON INTERNATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION

BDC Islington
LONDON
N1 0QH

13th June 2020

SWINPEX

St Joseph's RC College,
Ocotal Way,
Swindon,
Wiltshire, SN3 3LR

17th – 18th July 2020

YORK STAMP & COIN FAIR

York Racecourse
YORK
YO23 1EX

If you know of any similar sized Fair that you think should be listed here please let your Editor know.

SOCIETY ANNUAL DINNER.

Once again our Annual Dinner is nearly upon us. Please do not forget 27th February and if you have not yet booked your place please speak to our Treasurer, Alan Godfrey as soon as possible who will require your choices and payment in advance please, and by 6th February at the latest.

MIDLAND PHILATELIC FEDERATION

It is always pleasing to report members' successes at Federation and National competitions. Firstly, at the Midland Federation Inter Society Competitions held in Rugby on 19 May 2019, **Alan Godfrey** attained a Silver-Gilt for his Postal History entry on *Leamington Spa Sub-offices 1840 – 1860*, and followed that up with a Silver award AND Class Winner in the Postcards category with an entry titled *West Midlands*

Baptist Churches. In the Traditional Class **Pete Elms** also gained a Silver-Gilt with his entry *Errors and Varieties*.

At the Federation Individual 16 sheet Autumn Competitions held this year at Banbury's Festival of Stamps on 19th November 2019, **Chris Jackson** achieved Gold with his Postal History entry on *Upton on Severn*.

Congratulations to all three members. Let us wish that it encourages others to enter these competitions and in doing so support the Federation.

Malcolm Allinson

SOCIETY MEETING REPORTS

Thursday 15th November 2018 Visit by Cheltenham Society

The evening commenced with the very sad announcement by Bob Harper that Lyel Swingler had died that afternoon. A minute's silence took place.

After this, Mike Jelbert from Cheltenham addressed us on 'Rhodesia', more specifically his splendid collection from 1890 to 1924, in three sections: the early stamps, the 'double-heads' and 'the admirals'.

In 1890 the British South Africa Company was chartered to explore the region and its first stamps appeared in 1892. Mike's first exhibit was a card of the first stamps planned by Bradbury and Wilkinson, a set going up to £10, for postage and revenue applications. However some low value stamps were soon needed but the 6d overprints were all sold to dealers in London and not sent out. In 1896 Bulawayo was besieged by local tribesmen and ran out of stamps; overprints were supplied by the Cape. One stamp was in use for just one day. Forgeries of the stamps occurred. In 1900 (Boer War), cards with stamps on were used as money (Marshall Hole cards). In 1901 a few £100 stamps were printed, a proof was on display in cherry red. The first commemoratives featured the opening of a bridge at Victoria Falls in 1905.

Next, the double-heads, from 1910, the first to have RHODESIA on them; these were intended to feature King Edward and Queen Alexandra but changed to King George V and Queen Mary, perf 14 and 15 and some rare imperfs. An imperf sheet was nabbed by a customer at a post office. An authenticated example of a great rarity, a £1 mint perf 15 by Waterlow was on display.



The 'admiral' issues from 1913 featured a portrait of the king wearing a naval cap, four dyes were used. 1923 issue: used examples unknown, not sent out. In 1924 SOUTHERN RHODESIA appeared on the stamps and there were new designs for Northern Rhodesia. In 1965: RHODESIA again, until 1980: then ZIMBABWE.

After the break it was Barry Stagg on his eclectic collection on the theme of archery, some examples: the first exhibit: Cupid, the Roman god of love. The first bow and arrow was a breakthrough in hunting, complementing spears, clubs and knives etc. St Sebastian is the patron saint of archers as pictures of him show him covered in arrows but he survived only to be beaten to death on a later occasion.

The best bows are made from British and European wood, Asian wood is less suitable. Crossbows are looked down on by archers, deemed to need less skill to use. Most contrived illustrations of archers are inaccurate and if real would cause some injury to the archer. The phrase broken arrow means a lost or disabled nuclear weapon, six are unaccounted for somewhere in the USA said Barry. Accessories include quivers, wrist guards and finger guards...arrows wobble as the travel through the air.

Shooters Hill in SE London takes its name from medieval archers. William Rufus was killed in a hunting accident when an arrow bounced off a tree, but was this how it was? Also, the Battle of Hastings...did Harold really die from an arrow in the eye? An amusing postal slogan: "Hastings, popular with visitors since 1066". Agincourt: fearsome



barrages of arrows slaughtered the French, a good bowman was so fast he could have six arrows in the air at once, said Barry. Danielle Brown, British Paralympic winner. Stamps

with archers were on display, seldom on GB.

Paul Veal

Thursday 7th February 2019 Guest Speakers: Steve and Maggie Bence Northamptonshire Miscellany and Penguins.

Tonight we were entertained by husband and wife team, Steve and Maggie Bence.

Maggie started off with the penguins. She has been collecting 'penguinalia' for thirty years since seeing penguins at Edinburgh Zoo. Her presentation took the form of something for every letter of the alphabet, a struggle at times. She told us there are 17 or 18 species of penguin, ten of which are endangered or vulnerable and only one indigenous to the northern hemisphere (just), the Galapagos penguin - the islands straddle the equator. Some of the names are unexpected yet descriptive...chinstrap, jackass (aka the African penguin), macaroni, rockhopper, yellow-eyed. Only the Emperor penguin breeds and nests in Antarctica through the frigid winter.

The displays featured stamps, covers, cachets, postcards, labels, adverts, cartoons, maps and other ephemera, all with a penguin connection. One cover

didn't have a picture, but the postmark was "PENGUIN, TASMANIA". The material also had a strong historical element – thirty governments have bases in Antarctica since 1903, the numerous expeditions since the Greeks hypothesized the presence of Antarctica to correspond with the Arctic, the Antarctic Treaty and related agreements banning military and mining activity... Some of the stamp issues seem designed to publicise the issuing nation's presence in Antarctica. One of the attractive stamps on display was the Falkland 5/-. (Right)



Finally, there were sheets to display covers of a host of towns in the county and evidence of the South Midland Mail Centre in Northampton.



Maggie and Steve Bence in front of their displays

Paul Veal

After the break, Steve took charge and enthused about his subject, Northamptonshire, its towns and railways and in particular Raunds, his early home. The county lies just the other side of Warwickshire and is the southernmost county in the East Midlands. As Steve said, not many people know the county but many have passed through it, for instance the M1 cuts across it.



Thursday 21st February 2019 AGM and Members One Sheet Display

Following the Annual General meeting a number of members displayed one sheet of material and provided some supporting information.

David Gillespie showed us two pages from a Trieste Allied Military Government Occupation collection - "AMG-FTT" overprints on Italian stamps used in Trieste "ZONE A", which occupation ran from 1947 to 1954. (Zone B was the Yugoslav sector; whose occupation ran from 1948 to 1954.) Shown were the first sets of ordinary postage, and the first sets of Airmail stamps. Trieste sits on the border of Italy and what was at that time Yugoslavia, now Slovenia. .

Paul Veal showed most of the slogan postmarks received by him in the post in 2018 including a mystery Australian one.



Northampton has had a post office since 1646 and Steve's first displays evidenced its postal history since 1807, showing postmarks such as a Duplex type D of 1859 and a 'squared circle' of 1904 and bold slogans from 1963: PLEASE USE LESS WATER and NORTHANTS COUNTY SHOW. Curiosities included a 1944 letter from Lady Anne Spencer to a Mr King, thanking him for a wedding present and a cover addressed to the singer and actor Gene Autry but refused as it didn't have a stamp on it. Northampton was famous for its boot and shoe manufacture but little of this remains. A curiosity is a 418 foot tower known locally as the lighthouse, actually it was built to test lifts in 1980.

Paul commended collecting slogan postmarks – as they are postal, topical, and perhaps the most important factor - FREE. A second display comprised a selection of souvenir postcards from the big stamp exhibitions including the very recent Stampex Spring 2019 and some foreign ones.

Then Steve moved on to the Kettering to Huntingdon line evidenced by a copy of an Act of Parliament of July 1862 and attractive old photos of stations on the line...Kettering, Cranford, Thywell...then, the town of Raunds, once famous for (1) its contract to make army boots, (2) the onetime home of David Frost (his dad was a Methodist preacher there), (3) its record as the hottest place in England, 98.06F one day in 1911, a record not broken until 1990, (4) having the shortest zebra crossing, only three white bars, and (5) an Anglo-Saxon burial ground unearthed in 2002. The town is also proud of a pioneering nurse Hannah Hankin-Hardy and disappointed she didn't appear on the 2015 Serbian stamp series *British Heroines of WW1*. In 1905, workers from the boot factory marched to London to campaign for a living wage during the fall in demand for army boots after the Boer War. A man on crutches could not be persuaded to miss the march.

Pete Elms showed a number of errors and varieties in British stamps:- the Europa issue of May 1985 featuring British composers. There was a missing dot between the words "seventeen" and "pence" on the top left hand stamp; the September 1984 "British Council Promoting the Arts" stamps showed a perf shift to the right on the 22p giving a larger gap between the Queen's head and the edge; the September 1985 stamps "Printing of Sir Thomas Malory's Morte d'Arthur" showed hairline streaks dominating the 17p stamp, going through the gutter margin, Merlin's sleeve and a line across Merlin's mouth; the November 1986 Folk Costumes 13p. contained a shift of yellow on the kneeling woman's bonnet leaving a white patch on her bonnet – PLUS a dry print on the shadows around the tree.

7th March 2019

**Guest Speaker: Frank Walton
Chinese Airmails**

Our society was privileged to receive a visit and display from Frank Walton. Frank is a past president of the Royal Philatelic Society, London, holds a degree in mathematics and is a signatory of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. His display was on Chinese Airmails.

Frank began by advising us that the corrected title was Chinese International Airmails, since China did not use air for inland deliveries. Material displayed was from the beginning in 1931 and running up to the 1949 communist revolution. The covers shown ably informed on the six routes used by the airlines, all foreign, such as KLM, Air France and Imperial Airways who flew via Hong Kong and India into Europe. The competition for business at this time was very intense. In November 1935, Pan American introduced the trans-Pacific route, using their four-engine Martin M130 seaplanes, later called the "China Clippers", island hopping via Hawaii, Guam and the Philippines. Two years later, the service was extended to Hong Kong and China. The Northern route went to Russia where it connected to the Trans-Siberian Railway and thus to Europe.

There was also a route to Japan although the majority of its mail was from the occupied sections of China such as Manchuria. This brings us to the Second World War where the airlines had to vary their routes to avoid conflict zones. One such route was nicknamed "Over the Hump" which crossed the Himalayas to Calcutta then to the Nile and Cairo. Mail for the US went to Lisbon or Lagos before crossing the South Atlantic to Brazil and beyond.

The end of the war saw the introduction of BOAC's 'Dragon Route' and by 1946 many European airlines were flying daily from China. All of them carried mail and were paid by weight. It was a time of rampant inflation when exchange rates changed weekly. In 1947 for example the rate was \$1 = 3 million Yuan. This made study of the mail rates very difficult. All changed in 1949 though when Mao Tse-tung, and the Communists took over and the system closed.

Bob Harper

Thursday 4th April 2019

Members Displays: My Favourite Country

Bob Allard started us off with the Solomon Islands, a former British protectorate about a thousand miles NW of Australia and east of New Guinea, a place that had three post offices supplemented by numerous postal agencies who forwarded letters to the main post office. The agencies had oversize postmarks, then there'd be another postmark added by the post office. This was amply evidenced by covers in the display.

Malcolm Allinson followed with a splendid selection from his GB collections: a cover with no less than six Bishop marks on it, a cover charged 4d on the last day of the uniform 4d postage in 1840 which would have

only cost 1d if posted the next day, a page of 1d. Blacks, Mulready covers, 1d reds and 2d blues. Then a Cumberland cover, £1 stamps, the 1935 Silver Jubilee issue – mounted on a card signed by its designer Barnett Freedman, a sheet of Wildings, strip maps showing old mail routes, a mileage chart, postcards of Astwood Bank, and a sample tome from his philatelic library. Quite a variety!

David Gillespie said his favourite country was probably Australia but chose to display a new collection of Vatican City which he had only started on Tuesday! This micro-state first issued stamps in 1929 making use of the infrastructure already in place c/o the Italian Post Office. They even issued airmail stamps but don't have an airport. Most of the stamps were of a rather conservative style employing intricate detail.

John Coombes put up a selection of philatelic postcards featuring nostalgic pre-war adverts ...Pears Soap, Fry's Chocolate, Cadbury's, Bovril etc. John read out potted histories of the companies in question.

Paul Veal displayed USA, his second favourite country, as GB would be well-displayed by other members. The selection majored on the 1938 Presidential Series and its quirks plus several sheets of typical commemoratives up to 1961.

Bob Harper chose Lundy, not exactly a country, just an offshore island but one that had enjoyed unusual privileges like not paying taxes. A London financier Martin Coles Harman purchased the island in 1925 and issued stamps in 1929, attractive stamps in puffin currency (1 puffin = 1d). Bob also showed us a puffin coin and a half-puffin. Harman was fined £5 plus 15 guineas costs for this – infringing the state monopoly. In 1933 though he was imprisoned for fraud. An air mail service was set up with air mail stamps. *(Left: 1929 ½ puffin)*



Pete Elms presented nine sheets of errors, starting with two sheets of Victoria: three penny reds with varying perf shifts and a Jubilee half penny orange showing an unlisted play crack plus the government parcel officials on a sixpenny purple/rose red. The government parcels leg of the letter 'P' is short. The other seven sheets featured QE II examples, 1958 postage dues, fraction bar and 'F' errors, graphite lines shifts of 1960 and other problems with stamps from 1970 to 2003.

Bill Belford had a problem choosing a country from his 17,000 stamp collection and settled on Hungary. His display featured some interesting stamps focusing on differing styles and printing processes. One set featured some female nudes, rare on stamps.

After the break **Alan Godfrey** displayed the Falkland Islands, firstly outlining the early history of the islands under changing colonial powers finally settling under British rule in 1833. Black or red franks were used from 1869 before the first stamps were issued in 1878, designed by Hubert Bourne and quite a few fine examples of his work were on display including a giant

Tasmanian beer duty stamp – 1/3 overprinted 1/8. For a while the Post Office used bottle corks for hand stamps. The display covered the early issues up to 1904, the first Edwardians.



*Falkland Islands
1898 high values.
2/6s blue and 5s.
red brown*

Chris Jackson concluded the evening with a fine display of covers with penny blacks and 2d. blues with red Maltese crosses, all from or to Worcestershire towns including Mulreadies. Some of this material hadn't seen the light of day for ten or more years. Finally Chris thanked the contributors and exhorted all members to put something up on evenings like this.

Paul Veal

**Thursday 18th April 2019
Member's Display: Bob Harper - Barbados**

On the 18th April last, I was privileged to display my Barbados Collection to the Society, replacing our late friend Robin Jarman. I have been collecting the stamps from this island for over 40 years and the collection is quite specialised by now but first, a little about the island itself.

Barbados was known by the Portuguese who regularly stopped there for fresh water on the way to Brazil. At that time, circa 1500 AD it was covered right down to the waterline by bearded fig trees thus the Portuguese named it "Barbadoes" which translates as "The Bearded Ones". It first appeared on a (Spanish) map in 1508. The British connection began in 1605 when a ship was sent from England with the purpose of colonisation, but winds and tides carried it on to Brazil. They turned about but found St. Lucia instead where all were killed by warlike Caribs. The island was visited by Sir Thomas Warner in 1620 and 1624. Sir Thomas reported it to be uninhabited and still tree covered. Eventually a successful landing was achieved by Sir William Courteen from his ship "The William and John" in 1627.

Geographically, Barbados lies at 13° 10' N x 59° 40' W. It is a similar size to Jersey (14 x 21 miles). It is outside of the main chain of Caribbean Islands at the confluence of the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Unlike its neighbours it is not of volcanic origin but is of coral limestone which had been thrust upwards some 20 to 30 feet above sea level. Many a Bajan (The residents own name for Barbadians) has said to me that the Bajan air is the cleanest on the planet having blown over 4,000 miles of ocean to get there.

Barbados was the third British Empire territory to issue stamps, after Mauritius and Trinidad. They approached Perkins Bacon & Petch direct and asked if the Mauritius and Trinidad die could be used for their island, to save money! Lord Grey of the Windward

Islands agreed and the stamps were delivered in February 1752.

The first "Britannia" design was an NVI (No Value Indicated) using colour to indicate its value. The first issued was Blue (1d) followed by Green (½d). A proposed purple value (2d) was unissued as the



so called purple was much too close to the blue to distinguish. A Brown-Red (4d) for the overseas rate came 2 years later. These imperforate stamps were shown including a number of shades and different perforations.

Next we saw a few 'Pin-Perfs'. These were from when Perkins Bacon were trying to introduce perforation machines. The pin holes did not really help, and collectors find most copies have been cut by scissors and the pin holes ignored. Finally, by the end of 1860 we began seeing good clean cut perforations. These were shown in multiple colour varieties.

The design was altered in 1858 to include the value. A 1/- then a 6d value for use on packet mail now that Post Office Packet boats were in use. The values were engraved at the foot of each stamp. The aforementioned stamps were shown in several shades and perforations all from the period up to 1870. In that year watermarked paper was introduced, Large Star and Small Star which was originally used for South Australia. Here we saw several pages showing these stamps, including the last printing of the old NVI design. The Britannia with value shown design began with a 3d, 'THREE PENCE' was added at the foot of the stamp. These new designs were laid out in a format of 10 rows of 12 for easier perforating though the Small Star paper had to be fed sideways to fit. Finally, the ½d, 1d and 4d all had new plates engraved and Perkins Bacon produced a full range of these (except the 4d) on Small Star paper.

1873 saw the issue of a 5/- value. The centre was from the Britannia die, then a border was added to increase its size to that of the British 5/- as requested by the colony. Three examples were shown. I like provisional issues and was pleased to be able to show two examples of the rare "one penny on half of five shillings" provisional of 1878. At this time 1d stamps were exhausted, ½d's were sold in pairs again to exhaustion, and to tide them over Barbados P.O. asked a local printer, West Indian Press to produce a 1d stamp by overprinting 100 sheets of 5/- stamps which were little used and plentiful. What W.I. Press did was to overprint "1^D" twice, on each stamp, separate the two halves by vertical perforations and then slice off the "FIVE SHILLINGS" panel at the foot of the stamp. Some were vertical, some inverted and three varieties of 1 or D were found.



The end of the contract with Perkins Bacon was orchestrated by Crown Agents at the close of 1874. PB had to hand over the plates and dies to De La Rue

& Co. (DLR). DLR printed supplies of ½d, 4d, 6d and 1/- in 1875 using line perforation 12.5. The following supplies were perforated 14. Paper was watermarked "Crown over CC" The plates were not compatible with DLR's perforators nor the spacing of watermarks so some manipulation was needed but DLR were able to print these engraved issues up to 1882 before changing to surface printing that year. I was able to display the full range of these issues.



In 1892 Barbados began using a design known as the Seal of The Colony based on the public seal granted to the colony in 1663. Neptune is represented by the British monarch., so Victoria is shown with crown and trident. The design was also used set within a diamond frame for the 1897 diamond jubilee of the queen. Because the island continued to use this design after the death of Queen Victoria, they never issued a stamp showing her successor, King Edward VII. In fact the design was not re-engraved until 1914 when it was enlarged and King George V was shown seated.

The display continued throughout the reign of King George V and then in the second half with George VI and Queen Elizabeth II. The later stamps were very much the same style as the issues of the bulk of the Commonwealth countries handled by the Crown Agents.



I ended the display with a Stamp issued to celebrate past West Indian Cricketers from Barbados. Within a set of 5 the wrong cricketer was displayed on the 50c value which should have been the fast bowler Charlie Griffith. The day before the issue his family noticed the error and it was withdrawn but not before 111 stamps had been sold! I was lucky enough to obtain one. The stamp was corrected and re-issued a couple of weeks later.

Bob Harper

Thursday 5th September 2019 Member's Displays - New Acquisitions

This first meeting of the 2019-2020 programme was well attended by fifteen members. The meeting title is taken to include material not seen before.

Pete Elms kicked off with a mixed bag of postmarks, price lists from the Mitre Nail Works of Eyre Street, Birmingham and some errors.

Len Bruton showed a stylish mini-sheet featuring 'Australia in the Antarctic'.

Paul Veal showed his slogans of 2019 so far and some curious postmarks on covers received in the post this year including an 'election communication' and 'advanced mail'.

Bill Belford concentrated on some attractive Spanish issues of the 1930s including air mail stamps.

Bob Harper displayed a set of souvenir covers with matching stamps featuring aircraft, also a splendid GB album that would grace a gentleman's library.

Chris Jackson raised the bar with a display of rare Worcestershire postmarks, penny blacks on Redditch covers and two impressive invoices from local factories, also a fine postcard of Yew Tree House on Astwood Hill (still there).

Alan Godfrey talked us through a splendid display of covers to and from the Bagot baronets and their family of north Warwickshire from c. 1655 including images of the people and their stately homes. Also some rare Coventry postmarks - as Alan summed up: " Bagots, undated circles and straight lines".

After the break **John Coombes** showed a colourful set of WWF info sheets of endangered species and FDCs.

Pauline Stroud displayed a selection of 'Nostalgia' postcards featuring, occupations and social history, also an album of bridges - stamps and postcards.

After a jolly jape about the imagined possibilities of a blank sheet of paper **David Gillespie** explained the history of San Marino, the third smallest country in Europe and the oldest nestling inside north-east Italy just inland from Rimini. The stamps were attractive semi-postal and special delivery issues.



Malcolm Allinson showed an interesting miscellany, a cover to New York at the time of the Civil War, a tracing rescued from a flood – the design of a £1 stamp of Ascension Island, proofs of the GB Bridges set and the stages of processing, Machin forgeries, eight penny blacks, a splendid 16th Century map by Gerhard Mercator of northern England, and six postcards of Buttermere Post Office.

Alan Godfrey's second display featured undated circles, two Mulreadies, Coventry postage dues – 4/6d on one cover!, a cover marked "too late", a letter from an overseer of the poor, 1778...

Chris Jackson's second selection concentrated on the postal history of Upton on Severn, recently put together while taking it easy with a hernia. An unusual item was a toll ticket for a rider (on horseback) from the Pool House Gate, a penny halfpenny charged in 1867. This gave you access to Little Malvern amongst other places.

Paul Veal

Thursday 19th September 2019 Society Visit by South Birmingham

This evening we were entertained by three members of South Birmingham P.S. - Roni Dhaliwal, Tony Grives and Bill Pile.

First up Roni showed us a part of his collection of Stampless Entires and mourning covers all with a black border. Most of our members had seen mourning covers before but this was the first time that we had seen a collection dedicated to these covers only. Roni started in the mid 1800's showing covers and entires from the Netherlands, France, USA and GB. The next items were telegrams with the black borders associated with mourning. The black borders were always thought by our members to vary in thickness according to the length of time since the subject of the letter became deceased. However Roni showed research by an American collector of mourning mail which disproved this theory. Despite this, the writer still clings to his original belief.

Next up was Tony Grives with his display of Early airmails. GB material was scarce as GB did not use special markings for airmail (and still does not) so the majority of the material shown was from the USA. Although slow to start, the USA soon became prolific with services which were known as 'Contract Air Mails' or CAR. Early routes across the continent were marked out with fire beacons every 20 miles or so and, being night flights they were mostly in total darkness. The early covers shown were from 1924 although the Government CAR contracts began in 1926. Pilots included many who later became famous, including Wiley Post and Colonel Lindberg. When the contracts were extended outside of the USA they were termed 'Foreign Air Mail' or FAM. Tony finished his display with a number of airship covers carried by the likes of Hindenberg and Graf Zeppelin.

After the break Bill Pile gave us a remarkable display of Japanese postal history. Bill had worked for a business which sent him to Japan from time to time. During each visit he was able to buy much material at face value from different parts of the country and he also visited stamp dealers there. Bill had many marks called 'Bota' cancellations, both large and small (23x18mm and 13x15mm). The Bota looked like the old cork cancel but was in fact made from wood. Bill recounted several anecdotes about his collecting such as causing traffic jams in some town post offices whilst getting the most obliging clerks to go through every sheet of stamps in their books and removing just one stamp from each. Bill finished up by giving us a list of numbers of stamps issued since the late 1990's. for instance in 1999 there were 19 commemorative sets and 6 miniature sheets, 60 prefecture issues, 3 self-adhesive panes, one booklet, 4 stamp sheets, 56 postcards (New Year issues) plus postal Stationery postcards and 12 other pre-paid items; all in one year! As a result of these excesses Bill decided to cease collecting modern Japan. He has however what must be one of the best collections of Japanese material we have seen.

Pete Elms and Bob Harper

Thursday 17th October 2019 Guest Speaker: Julian Tweed GB Express Mail

Julian introduced himself as an ex auctioneer who sold his Australian collection when he gave up auctioneering and started collecting Express Mail.

He started his display by explaining that the official Express system did not come into being until 1891 and that prior to that time various means were used by people to try and get letters delivered more quickly. A letter from Berwick to Alnwick in 1787 had an extra shilling paid "For the Postboy" with the note "To encourage him to perform his duty!". The shilling amounted to 6d per stage a substantial amount in 1787. Another had a note "Bearer to receive 5/- if delivered prior to 8am on Tuesday". After the introduction of the railways it became common to tie a letter with string and send it as a parcel.

When the official scheme was introduced in 1891 there were 4 Express services and Julian explained and showed examples of them all. Service 1 was for short journey's, mainly within cities, where a charge of 3d per mile meant that the letter was sent by messenger. A form E4 accompanied the item which carried the stamps/charges, explaining why very few Express items under service 1 show any charges.

Service 2 was for longer journeys, normal mail was used for the journey to the town of delivery where a messenger delivered the item, at first this was charged at 1d for the first mile and 3d thereafter but this was soon changed to 1d for the post plus 3d for the Express, i.e. 4d minimum.

Service 3 was at the behest of the recipient, normally a company, who pre-arranged with the local Post Office that all their mail would be treated at Express from the local Post Office to the addressee.

Service 4 was a Telephone Express Service where you went to a Post Office who sent your message by Telegraph and that was delivered by Express messenger from the Post Office nearest to the addressee.

Julian covered the Express service that was used by Royalty and showed a letter written by Queen Mary from Balmoral to Windsor in 1954 which still contained the original letter. He also explained how the C.O.D (Cash On Delivery) service developed out of the Express system and showed examples of such items. Combination covers where an Express fee and a late fee had been charged were followed by examples of the use of aircraft for mail to Ireland when there was a rail strike in 1919 which incurred a 2/- charge.

The second half covered Express Mail to Foreign Countries which also offered an Express Service. Express newspaper wrappers and Postcards were shown, the latter was mainly used in Europe very few examples exist used in the UK. A most unusual item was an Express item from Birkenhead from the 3rd World Scout Jamboree on 6th August 1929 which had a camp cancellation.

Air Express was charged at 2/6d: 2/- postage and 6d Express, introduced in 1919 from London to Paris which was reduced to 2d on 22nd July 1920. Early service to Belgium had a 6d Air fee.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening of superb material simply explained by an expert on the subject.

Chris Jackson

**Thursday 21st November 2019
Members Displays; Bob Allard and Pete Elms**

Bob Allard started off with the stamps of Czechoslovakia, a state created in the heart of Europe by the Treaty of Versailles after World War I. It brought together the Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia with the Slovaks and Ruthenes formerly under Hungary. Adding to this, three million Germans and 700,000 Hungarians, makes an altogether an uneasy mix.



Bob chose to display stamps from the beginning up to 1925 featuring postage dues, colour trials, newspaper wrapper stamps, the 1st anniversary of independence, 'the legionnaire issue' with column prices on the bottom edge of the sheets, air mails, 1920, stamps illustrating Tomáš Masaryk, the country's first president, 'the Dove issue' (a stylized carrier pigeon), trial prints, tete-beche examples from a booklet printing layout, plate numbers, a large proof of the symbol of the nation, 'The Chainbreaker' - a woman breaking free from bondage (left), essays, Agriculture and Science issue. Sadly the young nation dissolved in WW2 to re-emerge in 1948 in the Eastern Bloc, finally splitting into two nations in 1993. This was a high class selection from a serious collector, most impressive.



By way of complete change Bob's second country was the British Solomon Islands (now it's just 'Solomon Islands' since 1978 after independence). A former British protectorate it consists of six major islands and over 900 smaller islands in Oceania lying to the east of Papua New Guinea, the scene of fierce fighting in WW2. The first stamps were issued in 1907. However,

this display comprised modern covers from 1969 and the 1970s illustrating the system of agency sales of stamps and forwarding to post offices of ordinary and registered mail for dispatch. The agencies applied a handstamp to the body of the cover for audit purposes and the stamps were later cancelled by the post offices. The displays of covers had intriguing titles...Tulagi, Santa Isabel Island, Dala Malaita Island, Emu Harbour, Ranonga Island, Guadalcanal Island, 'United Ships' Western District, White River, also some official covers – banks, OHMS... etc. The Duke and Duchess of Kent visited the islands in September 1969; special hand stamps were used by 4 post offices.

After the break Pete Elms took the floor with a potpourri of curiosities starting with two Free Franks displayed in the style of the sadly departed Ralph



Richardson. Then an 1829 letter from the Old Crown Inn at Deritend posted at the Deritend Receiving House where it received the number 5 hand stamp. The cover also has a Birmingham Penny Post hand stamp applied at the main office. The Old Crown Inn is still in existence. Then we saw a nice print of the Swan Hotel, Birmingham and 'Fast Post Coach Times'

from the same Swan Hotel (left) in 1830 (London, Bath, Liverpool etc.), a good 1d black on cover Birmingham to Redditch, (coveted by more than one other member!), a Mulready (also coveted), a penny pink embossed envelope - an example wrongly folded, 6 1d reds on cover cancelled by a Birmingham 75 roller cancel, and a Victoria Cross free post. The Victoria Cross dates from January 1856, made from captured bronze Chinese cannons. Further items included a copy of a Mulready reprint of 1911, a drop-down catalogue of Powell's Cartridges, a USA error sheet – the Jefferson Memorial set of 1973, old postcards of the Lodge Pool, a postcard of pet labels, a London scenes 'blow up card', a letter offering to buy a large Indian collection of guns, a collection of 1942 Birmingham PO cancellations, a cover of 1831, triangle cancels, a lovely album of old Christmas cards, heavy BM (Birmingham) hand cancels, inspectors' inverted triangle cancels, a miniature atlas, a small brooch containing a book of souvenir seaside views from 1902, errors of the 1976 social reformers set and others, more local postcards - Birmingham, Northfield, West Heath, pubs and churches. Indeed Pete's collection is more than eclectic!

Paul Veal

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.

