



## MACCLESFIELD AND PRESTBURY PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Welcome to the packed second edition of our new newsletter!

March 2008

Well, we had a very rewarding March AGM meeting with several excellent competition entries reported on later and I really regret not being able to put an entry together due to my wife's illness. I may not have stood a chance but could have at least given Peter a run for his money! Seriously, the more contributors to these competitions there are the more fun it is for all of us.

I am still experimenting with the format of the newsletter, the A5 layout looks nice but it is more difficult and time consuming to publish so am doing a A4 one this month. We have an sizeable excellent article by Giovanni Palazzo and welcome more from anyone with a literary bent! (or not..) Unfortunately I may be working away for the next few weeks but hope to keep my hand in at the word processor...

### Packets

Gordon is as keen as ever to get more packets into the circuit but until the existing packets are returned it is difficult to release more due to the problem of control. Please could all members do their best to keep them circulating as quickly as possible. We would also like more packets from members and I am well aware that I need to put some in as well!

### Members Interests

We would like to put out an updated list of members interests as soon as possible. People's tastes change and new areas are found to be explored. You may find a home for that obscure piece of postal history or collection you have been stuck with for years!

### Computers and the Internet!

For the more computer minded our website is updated regularly by Alan Dinnis:  
[http://www.maccweb.org.uk/news/article\\_142.shtml](http://www.maccweb.org.uk/news/article_142.shtml)

### Comments Welcome

Any articles, letters & suggestions gratefully received! Please feel free to let me know you comments, either by email or by letter and I will endeavour to include them in the next edition.

I can be contacted at: [ralphmelville@hotmail.com](mailto:ralphmelville@hotmail.com) or on 07970 636667

*Ralph Melville*

### Latest News - Man conned elderly stamp collectors

AN antiques expert who stole almost £40,000 by conning pensioners out of their stamp collections has been jailed. Philip Clarke, 60, encouraged customers to send him their albums for valuation which he sold. He pocketed the cash and when his 32 victims phoned to ask for their stamps or money, Clarke used stalling tactics to put them off.

Some had spent most of their lives building up their collections, with one losing £9,000 of stamps and £3,000 of Nazi propaganda postcards. Clarke, who ran the Boscombe Stamp Company from his home in Bournemouth, Dorset, admitted 24 counts of evasion of liability by deception and asked for a further eight offences to be taken into consideration. He was jailed at Dorchester Crown Court for 21 months on Thursday. Judge John Beashel called the dishonesty "breathtaking".

The court heard that after Clarke was arrested he made in attempt to pay his victims some of the money back. Carys Owen, defending, said that the father of two had not set out to cheat people but had run his business badly and did it to buy his way out of trouble.

*Daily Telegraph*

## March Meeting

March saw our Annual General Meeting, with an opportunity to recall some of the superb displays we have seen recently. The Society's membership showed its appreciation of the organisation and work done by the officers and committee by re-electing them for another year.

The AGM was followed by viewing members' own displays and voting to decide which should win each of the Society's two trophies.

## Nine Sheet Competition Winner - Postage Due Labels - Peter Kirk

The winning entry for the nine-sheet competition showed the early Postage Due labels. The British Post office first introduced Postage Due stamps (which it has always referred to as labels) on 20th April 1914. Members of the public were advised that from that date they should not pay any surcharge unless postage due stamps to the value demanded were affixed to the mail in question. The stamps acted as receipts for payments by the addressee, and they also provided a check that employees were collecting the money and accounting for it.

The first set of postage dues was issued between 1914-1923 on paper with a watermark "GvR" (the cipher of King George V), and during the next fifty-five years further sets followed with different watermarks being the distinguishing feature. The winning display featured the first set, showing different values and usages.

A first day cover of the 1d value used on a postcard was followed by examples using the two pence value. Postage rates were increased in 1918 and shortage in postage was seen by use of the penny value. The exhibit concluded with postage due stamps used on mail from abroad and other examples on mail with obsolete Victorian stamps used after their demonetisation.

## Sixteen Sheet Competition Winner - Stuiver Postmarks of Holland - Philip Longbottom

This trophy was awarded for a remarkable display entitled "3 Stuiver Postmarks of Holland". The Dutch 3 stuiver (1stuiver ~ 1 penny) postmarks were in use on The Hague to Amsterdam route from their introduction in 1667 until their final demise in about 1803. The display included a single example of a cover showing an older form of marking. Covers with these stuiver postmarks are not found in abundance, despite the variety of marks and long period of use.

The stuiver postmarks were used on mail carried on some of the principal post routes in Holland, the routes being served by messengers on horseback. One of main routes with 3 stuiver postmarks was between The Hague and Amsterdam via Haarlem. The Amsterdam Post, the most important in Holland, was organized via its Inland Office on the Rokin in Amsterdam and had offices in other places. The 3 stuiver marks were introduced in order to simplify the charge markings on inward letters, and to speed mail handling to help satisfy the demands of merchants for an efficient service. They were applied upon receipt of the letters in Amsterdam. Marks on the front of a letter indicated the fee due, whilst the much scarcer application of the same mark on the back indicated postage paid.

Adema, who wrote the most recent reference work on about these marks, lists altogether 8 types and 4 sub-types of Amsterdam Post Hague origin 3 stuiver postmarks. These were all shown in the entry. Both winning entries will go forward to the autumn competitions of the North West Federation.

## Sixteen Sheet Competition Runner Up - Lundy (The Puffin Stamps of Lundy) - Peter Kirk

Lundy lies 11 miles off the coast of North Devon in the Bristol Channel. Acquired by Mr. M. C. Harman in Oct 1925 he acquired the responsibility of carrying mail to the Island on the M. CV. Lerina. It was the responsibility of the owner of the Island to appoint a postmaster but as nobody could be found the post office was closed down. For two years Mr Harman carried mail free but due to rising costs conceived the idea of special Lundy stamps. The writer would affix Lundy stamps to out going mail, whilst recipients would pay on taking delivery, and these charges were known as "puffinage" The island had at the time a huge colony of puffins.

The exhibit showed various of the puffin stamps since their introduction through to 1991. Early examples showed Puffin stamps affixed to the same side as the postage stamps, before this was found to be against regulations and were put often on the picture side until relaxed in 1962.

In 1934 an air service was inaugurated through the North Devon Flying Club bringing a more regular service to the Island, and the first mails came from Atlantic Coast Air Services who had their own stamps to defray the cost, this service was superseded by Lundy Atlantic Coats Air Lines Ltd before the service was terminated at the outbreak of the War in 1939, but examples of covers were exhibited. Postcards, incoming mail, and The 1953 Coronation issued were all part of the exhibit which concluded with the 1989 and 1991 issues still featuring Puffins.

*Peter Kirk / Alan Dinnis*

### Thanks from John Mills

I thought I would just send a small contribution in response to the recently received New Newsletter.

I have to say how much I enjoyed the content of the Newsletter, and think it a very good idea for those of us who are not able to attend as often as we would like.

I am hoping to get along to a meeting in the not too distant future, with the help of my daughter, and really do look forward to seeing friends at the Society once again.

I have recently been medically discharged from the local hospital after my illness, and find that I am now able to do things which I was completely unable to do when I was first confined to hospital because of the strokes I suffered, and although I am not able to lead life as before I am grateful for this state of affairs.

My thanks go out to the Officers of the Society for all their hard work in keeping everything running so smoothly.

I must add my very sincere thanks for the Society making me a Life Member - it has been much appreciated.

*John D Mills*

### Macclesfield & Prestbury Visit to Northwich Philatelic Society. Tues March 25.

Peter Scott, David Ripley and myself visited our friends at Northwich on the evening of Tuesday March 25 where we entertained 16 members of the Society with three varied papers.

Peter Scott kicked off the evening literally with a fascinating display of Jules Rimet World Cup football stamps from 1926 -1970 the last year of Jules Rimet competition. Peter told us that the competition started in 1926 when only three teams entered, but by 1930 the first winners were Uruguay, but no stamps were issued. In 1938 France issued just one stamp.

By the time the World Cup reached England in 1966, everybody was on the bandwagon from Liberia, Chad, Dubai Sharjah, Yemen just to mention a few. Some 37 commonwealth countries joined in including remote Islands such as the Caymans and Pitcairn's where they could hardly raise eleven people. In addition some 49 cachets from individual venues were issued. The last Jules Rimet competition was held in Mexico and Peter showed a last day cover of England winners, few at the time thought it would be a last day at least for forty years.

David Ripley showed some quite unique Geneva postal history, which had taken some research and finding. Geneva is a unique city due to its geographical location, and had been a hugely important city from early times.

David told that a letter went back to the time of Hadrian's Wall, but his own display started as early as 1669 during the period to 1798 when the posts were administered by the Bureau Francais and he showed some unique postmarks with a "Boxed Geneve" of 1743. Geneva was invaded by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798 and became part of Provence 99 where once more Geneve postmarks were shown with 99.

By 1815 the posts were run by a man called Fisher for a term of 15 years before in April 1830 the postal service was taken over by a Commissioner Des Postes and material for these periods were exhibited. David completed his display with some early local stamps.

Finally I concluded the evening with postage dues both on envelopes and postcards, stating that postage due stamps were introduced in 1914 to help post office accounting and to show the public clearly that a charge was due.

A brief few examples of postage due markings prior to the issue of the stamps were followed by a first day postcard on April 20, and the various reasons why postage dues were levied which illustrated that as rates changed very quickly through the latter part of the century how difficult it was for the public to keep up to date.

Finally postcards which became popular in 1902 were a constant source of confusion as many were contrary to regulations especially the Novelty cards which only permitted the name and address, but which many people wrote about their holidays.

The three speakers were thanked for their most varied and entertaining displays and a certificate was presented to the Society to mark an evening greatly enjoyed by everybody

*Peter Kirk*

### **Is stamp collecting still a popular hobby and a profitable investment at the same time?**

Far too often we are asked, by many people and collectors alike, if nowadays our hobby is still very popular and as well about its financial implications. It is indeed a double difficult question that many of us perhaps have asked to them selves but no proper answer has been found yet. Firstly let me make clear that no matter what type of hobby you decide to do because you need real passion, knowledge and as well money in order to achieve a respectable standard. As all we know the key factor is that driving force that makes you start collecting what ever you have decided to do and at the same time, we got also to bearer in mind, that knowledge is of paramount importance too. The latter can only been gained from years of collecting with the help of books, specialised magazines and catalogues on the subject and as well in sharing information with other collectors and experts in your field, hence the importance to be an active member of a philatelic club will play, without any doubts, a significant role in your future collecting.

I would like to point out that during this learning curve the occasional finger will get burnt but on the other hand there is no alternative as in every walking of life we do mistakes and therefore we should make treasure and just learn and share from any positive or negative experience as well. Sometime all this can be just theoretical because only when you are faced with a problem and you are alone and that "decision-time" you think must be taken. Been a hobby do not let yourself in this kind of situation because in many cases, particularly with novices, usually the wrong decision or option is taken. This is when also you are about to spend a considerable amount of money to buy a collection or that elusive item that you have for a very long time dreamed about.

For rare key-values you must always buy from reputable dealers that are willing not only to guarantee the item as genuine but also in providing you with a certificate. The certificate must have always a recent date of issue because thanks to the modern technology the examination of the items can be properly verified. Also old certificates were issued occasionally wrongly in bona fides or forgery certificates sometime are also issued to take advantage of the less experienced collectors. If you have any doubts, then don't be afraid to ask around because it will cost you nothing.

As far collections concern make sure that firstly are in very good or pristine conditions especially if you are buying a mint one and therefore a close inspection needs in order to see if the materials is priced in relation to the quality. Please remember that what ever you buy, quality is extremely important and perhaps one day you will be rewarded for your wise choice and spending too. Avoid always buying items with rust or second hand albums because rust is a fungus and therefore easily transmitted from one stamp to another. Many collections, particularly the old time-ones and especially those who come from tropical areas, like for example Natal, often have this infamous fungus, nicknamed amongst local collectors as a "Durbanised" stamp or collection.

Now, as far the financial aspect, in my opinion, is often relative because many of us spend a lot of enjoyable time in assembling a collection/s and that is all about when you get involved with any hobby. If large amounts have been spent as an investment, than perhaps we must remember that in philately there is no short-term investments and according to my personal experience I can tell you that are to be considered always as a long-term investments spanning, generally speaking, from at least 25 to 30 years and more. So if you are thinking that you can make a quick and large profit in a very short period of time, you may be wrong.

In the past investors have invaded our field and besides not fully understanding what does mean been a collector/philatelist, they have in fact manipulated the philatelic market with such an adverse effect that

has brought prices up or down because of too many so called "good items" were raked in a relatively short period of time and then later appearing in large quantities on the market, flooding it, very quickly. Please remember that Demand and Offer are normally the key factors governing any market and that includes also the philatelic one. When prices are down, of course is the right time to buy and therefore a real virtue in philately is that if you are patient in a long run you will benefit. A collection value is truly found only when it is up for sale. If you are hoping to sell your "treasure" at a very close catalogue value then think again because it is just a Utopia, hence you must never pay catalogue prices, as these are just a guide line which includes dealers profits.

It is difficult to sell an entire collection because normally the buyer wants only what he/she needs for his/her collection and this means that a lot of common material will be unsold and your best chance is to lower the asking price of the entire collection to make more attractive your offer to as many as possible potential buyers. The other alternative is to donate all the common stamps from the unsold collection to young collectors. If you are a competitive collector and your collections has won some good awards then this can be of great help in demanding a higher price, hence the importance to take part to National and International Exhibitions too. Specialised collections are rewarding from the collection point of view and although takes time to building up one, these are now in high demand as really and truly are serious studies of certain aspects of philately.

There are many ways to sell a collection and usually auction can be one easy and fast option but this will cost you quite a chunk of your "pie" as the premium that you have to pay will be rather high and to limit your expenses it will be a good idea to shop around in order to get the best deal and that should also include terms of payment. Another option is to sell via Internet but this requires, besides up front money, also quite a bit of time to organise the actual sale but on the other hand you will have the benefit of a worldwide market, while you are comfortable sited at home, and therefore more chances to sell all your goodies and at the same time in becoming an expert with the use of the computer which often keep away many of us as we are rather reluctant to use or learn its very useful skills (when does work properly).

We should also remember that the sale packet service of your Philatelic Society could be also used to sell not only much of the low and medium range values but as well better items too and you will have also a very select and interested market for your sale. Your Society auction can be another useful way to sell as well.

Finally we must always remember that this past time, besides offering many hours of pleasure, does also make us more knowledgeable and therefore also responsible to pass these information onto the next generation. Now this leads us to another question. It is not difficult to establish if today philately is still popular. It is a fact that today the young generation is less attracted or interested to philately because of many other attractions of this modern life and often we blame the "Computer's Games". What we can do about? Very simple, we should instead use the same tool to attract them. If you cannot beat them then join them. Special programmes, like for example quiz-games, can be designed and distributed free to schools to propagate philately at grass-root level.

This of course is not a cheap option, but with more commitment and the help from the National Federation, the Philatelic Fraternity (Us) and possibly from the Royal Post Office together with primary schools, we could easily attract a so much needed young philatelic generation. Only with such kind of necessary investments we will be able in seeding the future to the once most popular hobby in the world. The other advantage is that having a programme on disc they will be able to see it whenever they like and therefore initially you don't need to organise a meeting and a place too, although at later stage it will be necessary to meet the youngsters or novices interested.

If we fail to promote philately we will not be able to pass or sell our collections and therefore each one of us must make an effort at every given opportunity and perhaps our hobby will continue to prosper. Philately is not an individual hobby but on the contrary is a social one because through our collections we are putting together the past, something that is gone but that can be still seen and preserved for future generations. If you do not want sell your collections then pass them on to someone that will appreciate and look after them, but please do not give away to a museum or library because that will be the end of it. No one will make any effort in spending any time or showing them and beside not been looked-after properly, we will have also less material around to improve other collector's collections in order to maintain our interest alive.

Over two decade ago I actually did literary stumble over once a superb collection piled up on a very dusty and humid floor in the underground archives of a museum. I did a lot of fuss about it because I knew this "classic" collection and when finally I had permission of inspecting it closely I found out that much of the postal history and stamps as well, were so much deteriorated beyond any imagination. One

extremely rare item was not any longer there but instead a photocopy was on a very rusted page and although I was told that the item was locked in the safe unfortunately I was not able to see it again. This collection was mounted on black pages and therefore the rust accumulated over the years was not visible at first. Avoid mounting stamps on black pages particularly if you do not use clear protective strips for your collections.

Eventually after a lot of pressure some of the early postal history was restored to my great relive, but the majority of the collection unfortunately was basically lost. You may say that possibly this was a unique case but my point is that part of the history of that country is not any longer with us because no one in the museum was really interested. This very sad and hard story hopefully will teach us that collections should be housed properly and only passed onto interested people that will preserve, enjoy and show them.

*Giovanni Palazzo*

### Future Programme 2008

7 <sup>th</sup> Apr:	Guest speaker who will present a display on Errors and Varieties.
17 <sup>th</sup> Apr (Thurs):	Visit to Buxton Philatelic Society.
12 <sup>th</sup> May:	Visit from Buxton Philatelic Society.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Jun:	Guest speaker who will present a display on 1940 Stamp Centenaries.
Following the summer	break, the 2008/9 season will begin with the following:
1 <sup>st</sup> Sep:	Guest speaker who will present a display on New Zealand.
6 <sup>th</sup> Oct:	Guest speaker who will present a display on GB Pre Machin Decimal Coils.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov:	Guest speaker who will present a display on Canada 1927-1937.
1 <sup>st</sup> Dec:	Guest speaker who will present a display on the New Hebrides.

### What's On

Please confirm all event dates and venues with the vendor before travelling!

Fri 4/Sat 5 April	York Postcard Fair	York Racecourse
Sun 6 April	Altrincham	Cresta Court Hotel
Sat 12th April	Sale Grammar School	Fair & AGM North West Federation.
Sat 12th April	Derby	Nunfield House, Boulton Lane , 01226 360190
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup> April	Altrincham	Quality Hotel
Tue 15 <sup>th</sup> April	G.B. New Issue	Insects
Sun 20th April	Altrincham	Cresta Court Hotel
2nd & 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	ABPS Harrogate	Harrogate International Centre, Hall Q, Kings Rd
13 <sup>th</sup> May	G.B. New Issue	Cathedrals
10 <sup>th</sup> June	G.B. New Issue	Classic Carry On and Hammer Films

### About Our Society

The Macclesfield and Prestbury Philatelic Society was formed in 1966 to promote stamp collecting in the Macclesfield area of East Cheshire.

The Society is very friendly and informal, with a varied programme of speakers, displays and society evenings. Anybody may join. The annual subscription is currently £8 (payable in September), which includes the cost of coffee and biscuits at meetings.

The Society runs its own internal packet scheme and also participates in the packet scheme of the North Western Federation of Philatelic Societies, allowing members to look at a wide choice of stamps and philatelic items in their own homes.

Everyone is welcome, regardless of age and from beginner to expert, as all members benefit from the experiences of fellow collectors.

**MEETING PLACE:** The Heritage Centre, Roe Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire. Meetings are held upstairs (first floor) but a lift is available. The Heritage Centre has a strictly no smoking policy.

**TIME OF MEETINGS:** 7.45pm

**DATES OF MEETINGS:** Mainly the first Monday of each month from September to June.

**CONTACT:** Peter Kirk Tel: 01625 829119

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