

## Newport & Gwent Philately Vol. 1 No. 18 November 1997

### Autumn Day

Saturday 4 October 1997 saw the first ever Autumn Day in Newport. The club had been hosts for the annual convention of the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies on three occasions (1976, 1982 and 1991) but not for the Autumn Day. The Convention is now held in Port Talbot every year but the Autumn Day moves around between clubs. It is a stamp fair with a difference: the tables are mainly for members of other clubs, although this year we welcomed some dealers.

The event was held to coincide as closely as possible with the Golden Jubilee of the club, which held its first meeting on 16 October 1947.

Special thanks go to the clubs who took tables: Barry, Bridgend, Cardiff, Carmarthen, Llanelli, Port Talbot, Swansea. Also thanks go to the dealers: Sheila Hart, Chris Doble, Malcolm Harrington, Fill The Gaps and Brian Lord.

A lot of help was also received from members' families. Here Ian and Anne Perry are shown collecting money for entry, the raffle and the two special postcards.

The two postcards showed Newport postmarks (with a design based on that used for the 1997 convention) and the Civic Centre in Newport (a design used on the 1991 convention cover). Two postmarks were used: one the Caldicot undated cancel and one with a date stamp (1 October). A few are still available.

Displays were provided by the visitors. The star item was a display of Austrian airmails by Walter Kohler, who could not come himself. Gudrun Duda brought some German costume material and Brigitte Leysen had some sheets showing postcards of Brussels, her home city. Also on display were Heidenheim twinning covers, some postcard displays of transporter bridges and the Second Severn Crossing (thanks to Anne Perry), and some covers from all round the world from my own collection.

### Recent meetings

Summer meetings were held at Roy and Janice's, at Bill and Ruth's and at Gwen's houses. As usual the hosts had the dual task of making a philatelic display and providing refreshments. All three meetings were excellent with a good turnout of members. Thanks to all who provided the venues. Gwen Hussey showed her new pigeon collection. She had been trying to get some information on the Dickin medal, an award to heroic animals, which has been given to several pigeons for carrying messages during wartime. A quick check of the Internet by your secretary after the meeting turned up trumps with a list of all the medal winners.

The first meeting of the season was the usual "new acquisitions". This was followed by a final planning meeting for the Autumn Day. On the Monday following the Autumn Day (6 October), we arranged a visit by Reg and Margaret Sumbler, who could not come on the Saturday.

The meeting was held to coincide with the final day of the visit by our friends from Germany and Belgium. Dierk Lisdorf and his friend Renate, Gerd and Gudrun Duda and Brigitte Leysen were all present. Roger Leinz had returned to Germany earlier in the day so could not be there. Excellent refreshments were provided.

Just before the meeting, some members and the visitors saw the Deputy Mayor, Herbie Thomas, in the Mayor's Parlour. He showed an interest in stamps, which he recalled collecting in his school days. For your secretary, it was also good to hear that he is a great fan of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (the Spurs).

During the stamp meeting, Gerd Duda presented Gwen Hussey with a souvenir from Heidenheim. Also seen in the picture are Harry Workman, Bill Osborn and Martyn Britton.

Members were also given "Newport and Gwent Philatelic Society - A Brief History 1947 - 1997" at the meeting. A copy has also been given to the Mayor of Newport, the main library, the South Wales Federation and Mr Meaker, who hosted the first meeting in 1947. If you have not got a copy please ask your secretary.

The next meeting was back to the usual Wednesday slot and saw a visit from the Cardiff Society: Shirley Baker showed maps from Africa. Diane Cannard brought the letters "J" (for juveniles), "K" (for medical connections, such as knees and kidneys) and some Red Cross. Ivor Harrison showed early Fiji and postmarks from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands.

### Visits

There has been only one visit so far this season: your secretary, Gwen Hussey and Margaret Harding went to Bridgend at the start of the season. Gwen showed her pigeons, Margaret her perfins, and I had a display of Czechoslovakia during the second world war (this covered Bohemia & Moravia, Slovakia and the Sudetenland).

Visits to come are to Cardiff and to Barry. These are open to all. You do not even have to take a display of your own. Cardiff meets at Llanishen Baptist Church Hall, Fidlas Road, near the Inland Revenue building, while Barry meets at the Tynewydd Inn close to the town's main shopping centre.

Your secretary is also due to go to British Rail Cardiff on 8 December. They now meet at Bethel Baptist Church, Merthyr Road, Whitchurch, having moved this season from their city centre building. .

## Federation News

The annual general meeting of the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies took place on 25 October 1997. Three of us went down to Bridgend for the day. The morning was for stamp displays: Gwen Hussey brought some pigeons, while your secretary displayed Norwegian Hell (and Paradise), the wartime London stamps and Svalbard. Only two displays were allowed by each club so Norman Hargreaves played the part of spectator. Several of the clubs displayed some creativity in interpreting the number 15, the maximum number of sheets allowed, with the record going to Swansea with more than 40!

Two displays of particular interest were "Philately for Phun" by Neil Prior and "Stamp design" by Alison Vincent-Davies. Neil's display had won the open class and £200 at Stampex. This is awarded for the entry most liked by the public. Alison, who is herself a graphic designer, showed some lovely artwork for British stamps. It was a pity that Rolf Scharning of Swansea was not present, as his Norwegian Post-horns had won the SG Trophy at Stampex.

With Eric Needs's display included one sheet about the "Cyclops". There were a lot of covers produced for this Arctic research ship. It was later found to exist only in the mind of a Manchester postman, who had fabricated the story and the covers. A word of warning if you are offered any ship mail!

The afternoon's session was devoted to the AGM itself. The minutes of the 1996 AGM had included a reference to the Committee looking into arranging a coach to Stampex. Nothing has been done on this and, with Cardiff no longer running their own coach, it means that members will have to continue finding their own way to London for these events.

Neil Prior produced three Federation newsletters in the past year. Your secretary gets two copies of these. They are always available at club meetings. The Federation has now bought a photocopier out of the profits from the convention. Clubs and members can use it at 4p a sheet.

Sad news from the past year was the death of members Stan Barrow (Cardiff) and John Vincent-Davies (Haverfordwest). Four members lost their wives: Mervyn Rayner, Ray Simpson, Bill Selden and John Beechey. Also John Tovey, from the Bristol federation had passed away before their convention last August.

The treasurer (Eric Needs) reported on the continuing healthy surplus in the Federation accounts. Membership fees remain at £5 a club, which is really only a nominal sum. In exchange clubs are asked to support Federation events! Our club received £72 towards the tables for the Autumn Day (previously the clubs who had tables had to pay). The Federation will also pay for frames for individual clubs, which is something Newport might take up given the age of our own frames. They may also organise a special Saturday event, for example a display by an "eminent" philatelist, if support and a suitable venue can be found.

The accounts for the exchange packet showed an expenditure of £2.50 against DVLA. This is because books had to be posted to them and they have not paid for the postage. There was also a remark about the quality of material in the books: this should be high and prices low to ensure good sales.

Brian Cripps (president) put in a plug for the Welsh Philatelic Society, especially for its June event at Maentwrog (Tan-y-Bwlch). He also mentioned that Llanelli will be celebrating their 30th birthday with a stamp fair at the Stepney Hotel on 4 April 1998.

The 1997 convention had attracted nearly 200 visitors (including all helpers, who all had to pay!). Ark Stamps will not be returning in 1998 but the other dealers will be back. The Federation wants suggestions for a good postcard and a good accessories dealer. The 1998 convention will be at the usual venue in Port Talbot on 2 May 1998. Thirteen dealers have already been booked: D Winstone, J Auld, European and Foreign Stamps, F Lane, Sweetings, K Daniels, Sumblers, Pipe & Tear, Sley, Pembrokeshire Philatelics, S Fennemore, Sheila Hart and Bill Barrow.

The design for the card will be paquebot marks of South Wales, unless there are any better ideas. Volunteers were

requested to provide eight 16 sheet displays (Newport provided them for the 1997 convention) but no offers were received. There will be no private treaty table but the Post Office should be there. Entry will be 50p (up from 30p this year).

There was heated discussion over the rules for the exchange box. A copy of the revised rules will be provided to all members making up and buying from boxes.

Also discussed was the issue of competition entries. There was some concern that some displays had not been written up by the member entering. The committee will ponder on this.

There were no volunteers for the 1998 Autumn day.

A judging seminar may be arranged jointly with the Bristol and Three Counties federations. The Welsh Philatelic Society is holding a meeting near Crickhowell on 15 November 1997.

The new committee for 1997/8 is:

Neil Prior - secretary

Eric Needs - treasurer

Eiron Morgan - chairman

Shirley Baker - vice-chairman

Buster Shimmen - auditor

Alan Rosser - exchange packet organiser.

Once again there is no youth officer.

## **ABPS**

This stands for the "Association of British Philatelic Societies". Newport is a member and all paid up members of our club should now have an ABPS membership card. Ask your secretary if you have not got one. We have recently received some posters from the ABPS to advertise the club. I have put one in the library and Roy Bentley is working out whereto display the others - watch out for a flood of new members!

The ABPS produces a newsletter. This is quite a substantial publication. A copy is available from our librarian (Gwen Hussey). If you take the exchange box, you will sometimes see a copy there. Current and back copies are always available at club meetings - just ask!

## **STAMP FAIRS**

I can report that the Symes fairs in Cardiff have now moved from the City Hall to the University.

Chris Doble's fairs in Cardiff continue at the Diplomat Hotel by the station, the next being on 1 December.

Ann Scott's Bristol postcard fairs at the BAWA centre are every two to three months: the next is on 6 December.

Please keep an eye open for other fairs.

## **Stamp news**

The death of Princess Diana meant that the Golden Wedding stamps for the Queen that were due for issue on 7 October were postponed. That means we have only the 26p and 1st class gold Machin stamps that we used on our own cards for our Golden Jubilee.

The Newport Scouts and Guides are once again issuing a stamp for the Christmas postal service that they run in the Newport area. As in 1996, the cost is 12p and most of this goes directly into Scouting.

## **Computers and stamps**

The computer age has finally arrived in the stamp world, with post offices now advertising their services and taking orders on the Internet. The US postal service has even started downloading stamps to customers who have accounts. The customer prints the stamp locally.

I know of one postal administration, Norway, that has produced a CDROM catalogue. The Yvert and Tellier catalogues are also available on CDROM. Will Stanley Gibbons follow or will it stay in the 19th century?

Privately-produced stamp catalogues are also available on the Internet. I managed to download a Ukraine catalogue couple of weeks ago. The beauty of this system is that it is easy to keep the catalogue up to date. Will we soon see the end of paper catalogues?

Writing up a stamp collection is now easy, even with a simple word processor. Pictures and colour can be added using scanners that cost less than the price of a Penny Black on cover.

A brief glossary:

Internet - There are essentially two services. For these you need a modem and a computer. The first service is Email. You are given an address, a bit like your own home address, and can send and receive mail over the normal telephone line. The second service is the World Wide Web. This is essentially a huge number of linked sets of data. You can browse through an index, a bit like that in public libraries, to find what you are looking for.

Modem - This is a box that allows your telephone to be used to send and receive information that computers can read.

Download - This is just taking data from one computer onto another, for example, the one in your bedroom.

CDROM - This is the same as a music CD but it contains information that your computer can read. One CDROM can store the whole of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Scanner - This attaches to your computer. It allows you to take pictures into your computer, alter them and print them.

### **Postscript**

Although the season is not yet half-way over, now is the time to start thinking about the 1998/9 season.

Your secretary proposes to stand down for a (well-earned?) rest at the end of the season as does the treasurer (Margaret Harding). Volunteers to fill these (undemanding) posts are required. Please think about it now.

John Perry

Honorary Secretary