

## Newport & Gwent Philately

### Newsletter 22 – November 1999

#### Recent meetings

The season kicked off with the usual *new acquisitions*, including something from the *ebay* auction site. The second meeting saw a visit from Ken Gibson of the Ashford (Middlesex) club. This was billed as *Hungarian inflation* but there was a last minute change to *Spanish Civil War* when Ken lost his material (luckily the missing sheets have now turned up, so next year ??). The third meeting was *philatelic postcards*, which was interpreted fairly widely by the fifteen members who were present.

The last meeting in October was a visit from our Cardiff neighbours. This is always an enjoyable evening and this year was no exception. John Peters showed Guatemala, Ivor Harrison brought along Tonga, Alan Turner displayed WW2 mail and Shirley Baker finished up with "racism and stamp issues".

I had to miss the visit to Bridgend but Newport members turned up in force: Roy, Gwen, Martin, Dennis, Ron and Diane all making the trip.

#### Royal Mail

As you all know, the Newport philatelic counter postmark has not been available for several years. It is also now not possible to obtain special postmarks from the main Cardiff post office.

For Newport members, staff at both Mill Street and at Caldicot PSO have always been happy to provide circular hand cancellations if you ask them.

For special postmarks now, the only way to get them appears to be to write to the:

Wales and the West SHC

Royal Mail Cardiff

220-228 Penarth road

CARDIFF

CF1 1AA

As this information was not readily available at the main Cardiff post office, the postcode may not be up to date.

#### Federation news

The federation AGM took place on 16 October. This was not the original plan but World Cup Rugby took precedence.

The main discussion surrounded the exchange packets. One issue was late payment for purchases by one or two clubs on the circuit. The rules state clearly that payment should be made within seven days of the end of the month. Newport is not one of the offenders but has itself been the victim of late payments. The federation committee will be taking some strong action.

Insurance came up following the massive increase in premiums after the recent claim. Why should premiums increase under these circumstances, when that is why we pay the premium? The federation is looking at alternatives but until then, there is no charge to belong to the circuit, but the insured value of each box is limited to £1000.

One further update, the planned judging seminar is not yet arranged: the federation is waiting for a response from the ABPS (Frank Jones)

#### ABPS

We now have the 1999/2000 edition of the PTS handbook. This lists all dealers who are members. It is always available at meetings. We also have the list of societies and specialist societies and ABPS news.

A list of discounts for members is available, if you have your membership card (just ask if you can't find it).

## Stamp fairs

Fairly quiet recently, but the autumn day in Cardiff was very pleasant for the small group who attended. Autumn days are a mixture of dealers and club tables, so there are lots of bargains. Port Talbot will host the year 2000 autumn day.

The next R J Neil Cardiff fairs are 20 November 1999 in the University building. From 2000, the fairs will be back in the City Hall, on 8 January, 11 March, 13 May and 8 July. The next Chris Doble Dragon Fair will be at the Juries Hotel in Cardiff on 3 December.

The next annual convention is at the Princess Theatre in Port Talbot on **15 April 2000**. Sixteen dealers are planning to be there. The souvenir card will illustrate South Wales ship mail postmarks. The society display will be 8 frames of 16 sheets. Each frame will come from a different society: Barry, Bridgend, Cardiff, Haverfordwest (children's displays), Llanelli, Newport, Port Talbot and Swansea.

Spring Stampex is once at the Business Design Centre in Islington, from 1 to 5 March 2000. At the same time (actually 1 to 4 March 2000), the London International Stamp and Cover Show is at the Horticultural Hall. A bit a quick footwork might make this an interesting day in London.

Another reminder: the London international stamp show is at Earl's Court from 22 to 28 May 2000.

An extensive list of othe stamp fairs can be found at the Stephen Reeves site:  
[homepages.which.net/~stephen.reeves/page2.htm](http://homepages.which.net/~stephen.reeves/page2.htm)

## Internet travels

You have seen the government's plan to loan the poor a computer so that they can surf the internet. What about the phone calls?

There are four main ways to get into this virtual world:

- Pay a monthly subscription by credit card to an ISP (internet service provider) such as AOL. In theory this offers the best service but not necessarily and you do have to be very careful with the credit card deductions.
- Pick up a CD from ASDA, Dixons, Tesco's or other shops and sign up. You still have to pay for phone calls (at local rates) and you need to check the service you get. Quality and speed can be more of a problem.
- Find a totally free supplier, such as screaming.net from Tempo stores. This is free of all charges (you use a 0800 number) but there are catches and response can be very poor.
- Use a mixed service, such as X-STREAM. Here there are no charges other than the local phone costs and at some times the phone calls are free. The problem here is that response is very poor when calls are free. There are lots of variants on this one, just to make life more complicated.

As they say, "there is no such thing as a free lunch", so you may be best off using the freeserve type service. At least there is no tie in and you only pay for the calls. As long as you have an ordinary phone socket near your computer and a modem, it's extremely easy to get started.

Our own web site is at:[www.perry60.freeserve.co.uk](http://www.perry60.freeserve.co.uk)

Many other local clubs and specialist societies have their own sites and there is a lot of other useful information from most of the world's postal administrations (you can usually order on-line as well). Stamp fairs and auctions are also there. One of the most interesting is the ebay site: [pages.ebay.com](http://pages.ebay.com).

If you need information on any subject, it is there. For example, there is a site with copies of picture postcards of Caldicot: [www.caldicot.ukgateway.net/live/nowthen.html](http://www.caldicot.ukgateway.net/live/nowthen.html)

## Other items

Philatelic quotes ...

"There is only physics, all the rest is stamp collecting" - Rutherford, who clearly was NOT a stamp collector (although of course a famous physicist).

"What should I do? I think the best thing is to order a new stamp to be made with my face on it" - Charles Francis Joseph (1887-1922) Emperor of Austria, on hearing of his accession to emperor.

Firstpost2000 ...

a New Zealand charity oriented organisation, is offering the **FIRST MAIL OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM**, posted from Gisborne City, New Zealand on 1 January 2000. Gisborne is officially recognised as the most easterly city in the world and the **FIRST** to see the millennium sunrise.

John Perry

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