

# NEWPORT AND GWENT PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Newsletter

May 1992 (No 7)

Welcome to number 7. To save on postage, I hand these out at meetings where possible. If you are missing number 6 please tell me. I am now putting the newsletters together twice a year, one in November to follow the Federation AGM and the other at the end of May to follow our own AGM.

We now have 25 paid up members. This is the maximum for the "small societies" reduced subscription to the BPF. Attendance this season at meetings has been around 18, which is a high proportion of the total. I hope that means that the programme has been interesting. With this newsletter you will receive a copy of the 1992/93 programme, which I think should be as good as this year.

Welcome to Neil Jones, our newest member, and to Colin Cresswell and Grace Shutt, who we hope we will see again in the new season. Roy Bentley is working in Libya but will come along to meetings when he is back on holiday. In the mean-time, Janice is keeping up his collection. Bill Osborn is taking things easy while recovering from his recent illness.

## . Recent meetings

At the end of November Vic Sheppard entertained with a polar evening. Something different in February was the philatelic library evening. Another new venture was the display of revenue stamps from the Robson Lowe collection. These were well written up sheets that are supplied by post with a short script. It was a chance to see some very unusual items at close quarters for the first time and is an experiment that would be worth repeating.

The first visit of 1992 was from the Patent Office. For the evening Alan Blunt took on his other role and showed us some Russian stamps as a member of the Patent Office club. Next season he will be "visiting" as a member of Hereford! Just to confuse their secretary David Brunt displayed a collection of postal mechanism belonging to Graham Lindsey who could not attend. Mike Blackman showed Heraldry and their chairman put up a feast of Italy. The Patent Office shares the same site as the Central Statistical Office where I work and has invited CSO collectors also to their infrequent meetings.

Our Chairman played an April Fool trick by switching his evening with that planned for Peter Ibbotson. So April 1st saw Peter arrive with the remnants of his Mauritius collection but with an evening of anecdotes a few days before his departure for the island. Peter's collection, on which he wrote the superb book "The Postal History and Stamps of Mauritius" (which recently won the Crawford medal) was up for sale by Phillips at the end of this month. Peter provided a great evening's entertainment. We wish him well in his new home.

The season ended with a visit from Bridgend. This is now an annual event. With 19 of our members and 10 from Bridgend, the room was rather crowded. Everyone enjoyed the displays but the high point of the evening was certainly the refreshments, provided by the "ladies". Please note that subscriptions are kept low and the money from refreshments and the raffle help this. Please contact Margaret Harding, our Treasurer, about donating something for the raffle.

## . The Barry Convention

Several members made the trip to Barry to provide support for the

Annual Convention of South Wales Philatelic Societies. Barry had asked for some help in setting up the displays so I arrived early. This gave my wife a chance to dig into Peter Best's stock of postcards and add some new ones from our part of Gwent to her collection. By 10.00 she had felt the day was worthwhile.

Newport had five entries in the competition and bagged four bronze medals (Bernie Riff for Germany, Alan Blunt for Poland, Roy Bentley for Lundy and myself for Faroes). Vic Sheppard received a diploma for Russian Ice-Breakers. No cups but not a bad haul anyway.

Barry produced a limited edition cover (50 only) for the day with a Barry Island postmark. Despite valiant efforts to get a blank cover sent through the post with a Barry cancel, I had to settle for a Cardiff bureau postmark. This was because the Post Office had a stand but not posting box.

#### . Stamp Fairs

Stamp, perhaps more correctly postcard, fairs seem to be ever more frequent. We joined Cardiff for the regular Stampex trip and had the bonus of an extra long day because the M4 was closed while a bridge was being removed at Aust and long delays were forecast. In the event, we got to London before 11.00.

Most recently Martyn Britton and I went to the Edwardian postcard fair at Cheltenham on May Day. Several familiar faces from other South Wales stamp club were there. Perhaps we are all now collecting postcards instead of stamps. Prices were high and seem to increase during the day as dealers get out their rubbers and soft pencils. Still a lot of sorting did result in some good buys and an enjoyable day out. The number of dealers and the attendance were way above the average stamp fair.

#### . New pad canceller trial for special stamps

Martyn Britton has kindly supplied some information from the Post Office on a trial of a new canceling machine "to further improve the quality of special hand-stamp impressions" [Post Office quote!]. The canceller was first used for the three special first day stamps for the sports stamps on 11 June 1991 at the London North SHC.

The machine, imported from Belgium, is based on those used to print designs on golf balls and other surfaces that are not flat. As it is a trial machine, no clues are given as to how long it will be used or whether more will be bought for other areas. It is worth looking at your first day and other special cancellations to see if there is any improvement. Perhaps one day the Post Office will install a machine that will print advertising slogans that you can actually read - now that would be an improvement!

#### . Stop Press

A special Federation meeting was held on 29 May at Bridgend to discuss the location of future Annual Conventions. After heated debate, we agreed to hold the 1993 Convention at Port Talbot on 31 April and to defer a decision on the long-term arrangements.

Also at the meeting, I was handed the long-awaited Federation badges. These are very attractive and cost only £2. I have 17 for those who said they wanted them and can get more.

John Perry, Hon Secretary

29 May 1992