



# THE THATCHAM POSTMARK

THATCHAM and DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY



SUMMER EDITION 2011

There were several unforeseen changes that had to be made to the recent Thursday evening activities and the committee needed to make some quick decisions.

The `quarters` evening was brought forward and actually resulted in three club participants rather than four. Nevertheless it was a very entertaining evening with good subject material.

Tristan Brittain was able to come in May and we had another good evening with plenty of feedback from club members

Jerry Wilson won the Monday Cup competition and there is an excellent program of activities planned for September onwards. I note that there are suggestions that the Monday meetings be extended to June. If that is what is wanted – so shall it be.

The last Thursday meeting was the opportunity for club members to have their say as to how the society should be run and organised. There was plenty of discussion and lots of instructive feedback some of which will be put on the agenda for the AGM in September. If you still have some further comments or feel that some subjects have not been dealt with then do please contact the committee.

Dave Tanner Vice Chairman

*Year 44*

*Issue 113*

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The June meeting on the Future of Philately

*For further information on anything in this newsletter please contact*

*Martin Farr, Editor*

*Tel 01635 866437*

*or*

*Graeme Stewart, Secretary*

*Tel 01635 866942*

## Summer Photo Gallery



The photographs opposite are as follows:-

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Mike Gurr – Quarters evening            | 2. Alan Cross – Quarters evening                                      |
| 3. Louise Funnell – Quarters evening       | 4. May Monday Cup participants  |
| 5. Jerry Wilson – Winner of the Monday Cup | 6. Tristan Brittain with his display on Ethiopia and Pitcairn Island. |

**As the majority of club members know, Robin Martin died in May after a brain haemorrhage which had left him severely paralysed. His funeral was held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May at the Thatcham crematorium where the church was filled to capacity by family and friends. It was great to see that eighteen society members attended the service as well as four dealers that knew him well. Our thoughts go out to Ann Martin, the family and friends. Donations to the British Heart Foundation can be made in Robin's memory.**

### **Past Club Activities**

#### **April**

Monday 4<sup>th</sup>

The theme for the Monday meeting was `The Military` and we had 17 members present on a damp afternoon.

David Beddoes showed 12 sheets of military uniforms on covers of Gibraltar and others and several sheets of stamps showing military equipment.

Eric Osmond displayed covers of Navy and RAF uniforms and two covers of the civil war and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Newbury.

John Taylor show several covers of military uniforms from 8 sets that were issued.

Martin Farr put up 6 sheets on the Chinese Song dynasty uprising - `The Outlaws of the Marsh`.

Tony Jordan showed quite a few sheets on Roman conquests, Medieval times, the civil war, Waterloo, and the Charge of the Light Brigade in 1854.

Ian Keel displayed postcards on the aspects of war – Boer war, WW1 and WW2.

Finally, Jerry Wilson showed sheets from his vast collection of WW2 sheets covering Dunkirk, the invasion of Poland, the D-Day landings, San Nazaire and the Japanese surrender.

A most entertaining and enjoyable afternoon.

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>.

On a warm evening there were 22 members present for the `Four Quarters` evening although there were actually only 3! ( a half and 2 quarters).

To start the evening off Louise Funnell talked and gave a display on the French artist and engraver of French stamps Pierre Gandon who died in 1980. He started in 1941 when he won a newspaper competition and all in all 348 stamps were designed and submitted. He was certainly a prolific artist and designer of stamps and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation are probably some of his best artistic designs. His wife and two daughters were used as models for some of his designs. Louise showed a wide range of letters, covers and quite artistic illustrative material to augment her talk.

The second half was started by Mike Gurr who showed some of his extensive Fire Engine material which included information on the Fire Insurance Co. started just after the great fire of London, illustrations of fire pumps, the steam pumps of Colemans of Norwich and many stamps of fire appliances over the years plus the development of safe motorised engines that firemen could actually travel on.

Alan Cross took the final quarter with his extensive collection of Victoria state postage dues. Alan talked about the initial colour schemes and how and when they changed, the various shades and watermarks that were used and their flaws and varieties. He illustrated these topics with sheets of 120 stamps. Finally Alan showed some sheets of Australia issues that had used Victoria state designs.

A very interesting evening with lots of questions and feedback from a good audience

## **May**

Monday 9<sup>th</sup>

This was the occasion of the Monday Cup Competition where entrants had to show 3 sheets of their choice with the voting carried out by those attending. There were 16 members attending with humble apologies from six others who could not make it. Seven took part in the competition as follows:-

Martin Farr – Chinese classical poetry

Ian Keel – Churchill

Dave Tanner – Iran – Nasr ed Din Shah

Tony Jordan – Pre-1900 illustrated covers

Juliet Keel – Scouting

Jerry Wilson – The House of Windsor

Louise Funnell – Back to the drawing board.

After tea and coffee and much chat and deliberation the voting slips were counted and with 25 points awarded the outright winner was Jerry Wilson for the `House of Windsor`. Louise Funnell came second with 17 points and Tony Jordan came third with 14 points.

Jerry was presented with the Monday Cup by Dave Tanner our vice chairman (see picture) and certificates will be presented in the near future.

That was the last Monday meeting until September when we shall start off again with a guest speaker Phillip Cant for the afternoon followed in October by Postcards and November with Tony Jordan and `Wagons Ho!`.

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>.

The guest speaker was our old friend and dealer in postal history material Tristan Brittain who gave 19 members an entertaining evening on Ethiopia followed by Pitcairn Island for part 2.

Tristan started off with the early history using covers, postcards and pictures then to the Italian invasion, the exile of Haile Selassie and his return in 1941 when the British drove out the Italians and finished up with material of the Queen`s visit to Ethiopia in 1955.

For part 2, Pitcairn Island was dealt with by very early postal history material and it is claimed that a seaman who was high in the rigging spotted the island in the distance – the ship did not stop but logged the position (quite incorrectly as it happens which is why it could not be found again for years) – and the seaman`s name was Pitcairn! (sounds reasonable to me ). Tris then finished up with the story of the Mutiny on the Bounty and then showed very early postal agency stamps , most of the islands issues, sheet sets and commercial covers. A good evening with lots of input from the floor regarding the subjects covered.

## **June**

June 19<sup>th</sup> was the meeting that covered the very important topic of `The Future of Philately`. There were 25 members present plus 3 visitors, 2 from North Berks and dealer Tristan Brittain. What an excellent attendance.

The first part of the evening was covered by John Baron as chairman of the ABPS and Tristan representing dealers and auctioneers.

John talked about the national attitudes to collecting, the changing of the classes that members are collecting and the situation regarding young collectors. National competition entries are changing with a dramatic fall in Thematic class entries and the rises in Social and the new Open class.

There are quite a few instances of club memberships falling to an unsustainable level – several having ceased with others having to amalgamate to survive. In parts of the country youth activities are poor whereas workshops at Stampex and in Newcastle were very well attended with lots of keen young collectors handling philatelic material and using computers to assist the activities.

Tristan then put the dealers and auctioneers point of view. Many collectors are bypassing dealers and going to auctions for their material. The middle-priced market is in decline whereas items in price ranges £1,000 and above are selling well. The top end, above £10,000 is selling well too. Ordinary dealers are struggling with many now trading on Ebay instead. Collecting GB and E2 is in decline as are Royal Mail new issues and covers and there are noticeable collecting changes to specialised thematic areas such as Concorde, Transportation and Artists etc and there are lots of collectors that are joining specialised societies to continue their hobby.

For part 2 the audience was divided into 4 groups to discuss the issues raised in the email and data sheet.

The comments that were raised by the groups were as follows:-

1.

Jim Mowat, our ex-chairman spoke regarding the roles of the society, and committee members, then:-, Speakers must speak to the audience and not the boards, be more down to earth and selective with their items and not try to talk about each sheet - Society trips, emphatically yes. – Workshops in various aspects of collecting would be welcomed. – This evenings initial organisation was a bit `iffy` - Were not in favour of spending such an amount on a data projector for minimal usage by most members.

2.

Collecting interests were changing due to economic reasons – Members should be consulted more re club activities and guest speakers – Lists of regional speakers and their subjects (H.P.F. and ABPS) to be issued to members – Auctions are still important but there is difficulty in getting suitable wanted material – Youth collecting needs to have a higher profile – Must contact the numerous `closet` collectors – Hire of transport to events a good idea.

3.

Trips to events an excellent idea with plenty of free parking at the Memorial hall for the pick-up venue – Workshops and presentations a good idea – Interests are changing with many members turning to Thematic, Social and Open collecting – Auctions are a good idea but the material on offer must reflect wants and needs and can the society still run one successfully – The purchase of a data projector is not a good idea as it would take many workshops to teach most members how to use it.

4.

If we had no Chairman could we run as a co-operative? – We only have about 7 committee members at present who do all the organisation between them – Members interests are changing with postcards, social philately and ephemera taking an increasing role – we need more lady members and perhaps postcards will help – society trips a good idea, to Hampex, CABI, Thematica etc - data projector not a good idea.

During the final synopsis it was suggested that the society change its name from `Philatelic` to `Stamp and Postcard`. After some discussion it was put to the 21 members remaining (some had to travel a distance) and the vote was as follows:- for 14, against 2, abstentions 5. This motion will be included on the AGM agenda in September. It was also mooted at the tea break that the Monday meetings be extended to include June.

A very interesting evening with lots to consider for the future well-being of the society (oops – club) that I am sure will be taken on board by the committee. Why not volunteer to be on the committee and help out.

Some time ago now we had a film evening during which the famous `Night Mail` was shown, a wonderful film produced to illustrate W. H. Auden`s wonderful words.  
In a book of `Train Journeys of the World` - (a very good read) - I came across the following article from 2000, written by Craig Brown, which was included – with apologies to Auden – to humourously portray the state of our railways :-

This is the night train crossing the border – air conditioning out of order  
Windows sealed, atmosphere muggy – outside breezy and inside fuggy.  
Seats for the rich, straps for the poor – everyone else stuffed up by the door  
`We apologise for the sudden halt – we`d like to remind you it`s Railtrack fault`

This is the night train re-crossing the border – the forward lever is out of order  
`Ladies and gentlemen, no cause for concern – in eighteen miles time we`ll attempt to turn  
so why not try our micro-waved pasty – or our new Soggiburger, naughty but nasty`.  
Coffee for the rich, crisps for the poor – with a sudden lurch they`re all over the floor  
Hissing noisily, horribly crammed – Oh dear! the sliding doors have jammed.

This is the night train re-re-crossing the border – toilets temporarily out of order  
`Ladies requested to cross their legs – Gentlemen advised to purchase pegs`.  
Lurching wildly the Night Train passes – silent miles of terrified grasses  
`Customers requested to remain at ease – if you still feel desperate then cross your knees`.  
Trees all groaning as she approaches – thankfully they are not in these coaches  
Leaves busy growing dreaming of the day – they can fall on the line causing major delay  
Cows stare at passengers all asleep – think to themselves `they`re all just like sheep.

This is the Night Train re-re-re-crossing the border – signals and points are all out of order  
`No time of arrival billed as yet – why not try our new filled baguette?`  
Groans of defiance and sighs of despair – hands clenched in anger or pulling out hair  
Passengers demanding more information – on arrival times at their destination.  
Executives bursting with curses and moans – fishing in pockets for mobile phones.  
Calls to the secretary `Cancel that meeting!` - calls to the conference `re-arrange the seating!`  
Calls to the P A `re-schedule my life` - calls to the colleagues and calls to the wife.  
Moans from the oldies `disgraceful, innit` – Threats to the kiddies `stop that this minute!`.  
Abuse from hooligans, harrumphs from commuters – tapping out grievances on their computers  
At last! a conductor, braving the squeeze - `When will we get there?` `Don`t ask! tickets please`

This is the Night Train re-re-re-re-crossing the border – overhead lighting out of order  
`Arrival delayed until 15.22 – so why not try our pizza vindaloo  
Or a tasty masala, buy-two-get-one-free – or a piping hot beverage spilt straight on you knee`.

This is the Night train re-re-re-re-re-crossing the border – Clean off the rails- apologies in order  
Owing to derailment we suggest you alight – and if you run fast, you`ll be home Monday night.



## Presentation Skills

When giving a presentation to an audience there are some simple techniques that will help you to deliver a good talk and improve your audience participation.

Make sure that you have knowledge of your display – if necessary do some research (books, net, friends)

Practice to make sure that you can deliver your talk in the allotted time.

Ensure that your display is attractively mounted.

Try not to appear nervous

DO NOT apologise (eg my material is not very good).

Use body language effectively:-

Do not sway or pace up and down

Make eye contact with members of your audience – not just one.

Do not jiggle keys or coins in your pocket

Ladies – do not wear jiggly ear-rings

Talk to the audience – NOT the display.

Use anecdotes sparingly.

Only tell jokes if you are good at telling them.

It is natural to talk too fast so try to talk clearly at a good pace but not too slow.

Ensure that everyone can hear you but don't deafen them.

Keep the level of detail relevant to the audience – do not patronise or overwhelm.

Once you have given a couple of talks you may want to ask for feedback about what you did well and what you could have done better.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Tony Bray for World new issues at [www.tonybray.co.uk](http://www.tonybray.co.uk)

Royal Mail for all past and new issues at [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com)

The society website with lots of data and links at [www.tdps.co.uk](http://www.tdps.co.uk)

Avion Thematics – one of the best organised sites at [www.avionstamps.com](http://www.avionstamps.com)

\*\*The Avion website now incorporates the stock listings for Phoenix International\*\*

Portsmouth stamp shop for awkward items and covers at [www.portsmouthstampshop.co.uk](http://www.portsmouthstampshop.co.uk)

A.B.P.S for all the latest philatelic news, events and links at [www.abps.org.uk](http://www.abps.org.uk)

## Recent and Future Royal Mail Issues

5 <sup>th</sup> May	Morris and Co.
19 <sup>th</sup> May	Birds of Britain (3)
14 <sup>th</sup> June	Thomas the Tank Engine
27 <sup>th</sup> July	London 2012 Olympics
23 <sup>rd</sup> August	The Crown Jewels
9 <sup>th</sup> September	Aerial Post
15 <sup>th</sup> September	The House of Hanover

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Society Subscriptions are now overdue** at the new cost of £10.00. There are still quite a few outstanding subscriptions. Please make any cheque out to Thatcham and District Philatelic Society (or TDPS will do), and send it to the secretary Graeme Stewart or contact him or a committee member at any club meeting.

## Sales and Wants

You are able to advertise your items for sale or your `wants` on this page. Please feel free to contact the editor, Martin Farr, at club meetings, by email or `phone.

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## “Club Stamps” corner

**TDPS Club Stamps** are now being looked after by Dave Tanner who will be present at most of our club meetings. There will usually be a Club Table at all stamp fairs held at the Memorial Hall and at Westbex.

**Accessories.** Dave is also the contact for the purchase of all philatelic accessories – most of which are available to be ordered at a small discount.

Stamps of the World Catalogue set (normal price - £200 ) – TDPS price £155 + p&p

Collect British stamps (normal price - £12.95 ) – TDPS price £10 + p&p

GB Concise (normal price - £30) – TDPS price £23.50 + p&p

A small percentage always goes to club funds. Give Dave a ring on 01256 780467

## Future Programme and Events

21 <sup>st</sup> July	Emily Woodhams with `From St Petersburg with Love`
18 <sup>th</sup> August	What do I Collect – Philatelic or otherwise – members displays from as many as possible please – no need to chat – just display.
20 <sup>th</sup> August (Sat)	Stamp Fair at the Memorial Hall
5 <sup>th</sup> Sept (Monday)	Phillip Cant Entertains
14 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> September	Autumn Stampex, Business Centre, Islington.
15 <sup>th</sup> September	A.G.M., a mini-auction and social evening
3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct (Monday)	Postcard afternoon
8 <sup>th</sup> October (Sat)	33 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Stamp Fair at the Memorial Hall in conjunction with the Thatcham Festival of Arts.
15 <sup>th</sup> October	Hampex , Wickham Community Centre,
20 <sup>th</sup> October	Brian Trotter with `Early Issues of South Africa` and `Stamp Production Techniques`.

Don't forget PHLOG – IT in November – time to sort out some interesting items for this popular auction.

**A PLEA – WE REALLY DO NEED A CHAIRMAN TO BE APPOINTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE – PLEASE CONSIDER OFFERING YOUR SERVICES TO THE CLUB.**

Officers of the Club			Committee	
<b>President</b>	John Baron	01235 820120		
<b>Chairman</b>	To be appointed		Nathan Gregory	
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Dave Tanner	01256 780467	Martin Farr	01635 866437
<b>Secretary</b>	Graeme Stewart	01635 866942	Colin Bartholomew	01635 865457
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mike Ward	01635 864307	Reg Rhodes	01635 865721