

# THE GREAT BRITAIN PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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## President's Report

John Davies FRPSL

This should be my final report, having completed my two-year stint as President. The final chapter has proved to be a frustrating one with all our efforts impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. The loss of some of our meetings and the cancellation of the London 2020 International Exhibition has been a huge disappointment to us all but, hopefully, we will all come through this difficult period safely.

We may need to hold our A.G.M. at arm's length, with voting being made by proxy in order to meet the terms of our constitution, but I am sure we will, with your support, move forward in a positive manner.

In the 2019/2020 season we were able to enjoy again displays of a very high standard and a good level of participation by members and we look forward to resuming a full programme as soon as possible.

The most significant change this year has been our welcome to our colleagues from the Collectors Club of Great Britain in the USA as they have merged their membership and archive with our own. This has taken our membership to around 875 and makes us the largest specialist society in the UK.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our Council members and others who work tirelessly on behalf of the GBPS, particularly in such a difficult time. Each and every one has made a tremendous contribution to the smooth running and success of our Society. As such, I am reluctant to single out anyone but I must thank two in particular.

In addition to his other roles within the Society, Ian Harvey FRPSL has undertaken extensive communication with the membership with the aim of getting a better understanding of current collecting interests to make sure our programme accurately meets your needs. He has also encouraged us to participate actively in the Society; firstly, to produce items, whether long or short, for the Journal and Newsletter. Our publications are very important to the members and we want to make sure that they continue to go from strength to strength. *We are also seeking other active participation in terms of writing reports, undertaking some minor administrative roles, giving a display and so on... don't be shy, we want as many people as possible to get involved.*

Secondly, the GBPS website continues to improve thanks to the initiatives of Maurice Buxton as Website Manager and it continues as an internationally recognised resource, so please keep reviewing the content for the latest developments. It also remains our best recruitment tool. Maurice has kept on top of the regular updates regarding the various changes in circumstances this year and he will receive my President's Thank You Award this year in recognition of his professionalism and support.

But it is, of course, our members who make all our efforts worthwhile and I, again, thank everyone who has contributed this season in attending Society meetings and in giving a display. I must also thank, again, the generous donation to the Society of £5,000 from an anonymous donor for our "Future of Philately" Fund. This is a great initiative and much appreciated.

It has been a most rewarding time as President and I look forward to our new season. Let's hope that 2020/2021 allows us to enjoy our wonderful hobby in a relaxed and safe environment. Finally, I thank you all for the encouragement and support all have given me personally in my time as President. I wish my successor, Chris Harman RDP Hon.FRPSL, every success.

As we enter the new season, I shall be taking on a new role as Publicity Manager, taking over from Janet Bygate FRPSL, who is standing down. She has done a great job in raising the profile of the Society over the years and will be a hard act to follow.

I hope you all stay safe and well in the coming months and I look forward to seeing you all again in the 2020/2021 season.

Happy GB collecting!

## Society Services

### Programme Secretary (Andy Donaldson FRPSL)

Since the last A.G.M., we have held just five Saturday daytime meetings in London (including the Autumn Stampex afternoon meeting). Sadly, the remainder of the seasons programme had to be postponed due to the Coronavirus outbreak and the social distancing this necessitated.

The all-day meetings we were able to hold were all at our new venue (the new home for the RPSL) in Abchurch Lane. As many of you will know our host on these days is David Taylor and he is now a full time member of the RPSL staff; so the RPSL members amongst you will see David at the front desk whenever you visit the Royal. David provides a warm welcome to members on arrival at all our meetings held at the Royal and keeps us supplied with tea and coffee throughout the day. David is also now my point of contact for the required room layout and any additional facilities required. I would like to take this opportunity to give a big “Thank You” to David from me for all his efforts on our behalf.

In addition to our daytime meetings, we had our Summer Evening Reception hosted by Stanley Gibbons in August along with the ever-popular Christmas Evening Reception in December. Thanks go to Victoria Lajer and Stanley Gibbons for organising and hosting these popular events. As ever, the quality of the displays we did manage to see this season has been very high and I would like to thank the presenters for their efforts.

Looking ahead now to our 2020-2021 season, the draft programme was well under way when the virus struck and we had to start postponing meetings. For this coming season we have put together a programme where most of the postponed meeting topics/displays have been moved to this coming season without too much disruption to the new ones already pencilled in. At the time of writing the programme is still to be finalised but I believe we are in good shape for the start of the new season.

One item not rescheduled for this coming season is the “Overseas Members’ Displays”, which was due to take place at the London 2020 meeting. As London 2020 has been postponed until 19-26 February 2022 our meeting booking has also been carried forward and *will now be 12.00-1.50pm on Wednesday 23 February where we again invite overseas members to display*. More details will be provided nearer the time but don’t say you haven’t had plenty of notice!

The first meeting of the new season traditionally is at Autumn Stampex on the Saturday afternoon. However this Stampex has unfortunately been postponed. If lockdown is extended further we may well have to postpone part of this coming season as well! As always, but even more importantly now given the on-going disruptions, *please see the GBPS website for all the latest information on the programme, as any late changes will be shown there*. Those without internet access can of course call me on 020 8542 4226 for an update.

Since I took on the role of Programme Secretary, the role has expanded somewhat and has become rather too much for one person to do everything required. You will see elsewhere in the A.G.M. notes that a new Council role has therefore been created of “Meeting Manager” and that Steve Teuma has kindly agreed to take on this role. Welcome Steve and thank you for joining me. The idea is that (officially at least) I will concentrate of pulling each new programme together, liaising with potential displayers and the venues with regards to booking rooms and facilities, etc. while Steve will concentrate on the specific meeting day activities, booking the lunch venues, liaising with David around refreshments, collating and managing the running order where we have meetings with “Members’ Displays” (including the SG evenings), etc. In practice however, I expect the lines will be rather more blurred with us working together on activities and able to provide cover for each other where necessary. It’s early days yet but expect to see a lot more from Steve once we are actually able to resume meetings.

I would just like to close the report with my usual requests - *If you have a GB display of your own or know of one that you think the GBPS membership would like to see please let me know and your Council will try to arrange for it to be part of a future programme. In addition, if any member is willing and able to help arrange a regional meeting at a stamp show/fair in your area then please get in touch.*

It is also worth noting that, now we are in the new Royal building, we are able to accommodate displays that incorporate PowerPoint presentations along with the usual display of material in the frames. This is not to say we “expect” you to use PowerPoint, just that the option is there should you so wish.

Andy can be contacted at [programme@gbps.org.uk](mailto:programme@gbps.org.uk)

### **Newsletter Editor** (Paul Ramsay FRPSL)

Production of the Newsletter has continued to run smoothly, with no significant problems to report until recently, when cancellation of meetings has significantly affected the main staple of the Newsletter - display report. The size of the Newsletter had remained fairly constant over recent years with an average of 36 pages, but has suddenly dropped to 24 pages. Getting material to maintain 24 pages will be a challenge.

The page count must always be a multiple of four for printing reasons:

2017 (363-368): 28 32 32 32 48 48

2018 (369-374): 32 32 40 36 36 36

2019 (375-380): 32 40 32 40 36 28

2020 (381-386): 40 24 24 -- -- --

As I approach 7 years as Newsletter editor, I have decided to step down and Chris George will take on the roll for the first issue of 2021. The average life of a Newsletter editor since issue No. 1 in 1967 is about 5 years, although the last two (Tony Walker FRPSL and Howard Hughes FRPSL) put in about 7 years each. I wish Chris well and *encourage the membership to support Chris with more articles than he can publish* at [newsletter@gbps.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@gbps.org.uk)

My thanks to Mike Jackson FRPSL for preparing the Newsletter for printing, to Ray Simpson FRPSL for proof reading, and to all who have supplied the many interesting reports and articles.

### **Editor of The GB Journal & Publications (Production)** (Mike Jackson FRPSL)

The Journal continues to receive interesting and worthwhile articles, and I have some in hand for the next few issues, but please do not stop submitting material for publication! Pardy & Son continues to do an excellent job of printing and distribution. I kept the mailing list database up to date following Ian Harvey’s regular updates, and supplied Pardy with mailing label files. On the publications side, our next book will be on the Penny Lilac; it has been written and a little preliminary production work has been done, but it will be later in the year before it's ready. A big 'thank you' to Paul Ramsay FRPSL for facilitating my production work on the Newsletter, and to Ray Simpson FRPSL for proof reading and editorial help; Ian Harvey FRPSL for general publication advice; Howard Hughes FRPSL for looking after the advertisers; and the advertisers themselves for continuing to support the Society; and of course our authors.

*I look forward to your future contributions at* [journal@gbps.org.uk](mailto:journal@gbps.org.uk)

### **Website Manager** (Maurice Buxton)

Steady development over the last year, with new pages, files, and displays added on a reasonably regular basis.

*To see if anything has been added to the site since your last visit, you can check* <http://www.gbps.org.uk/updates>  
*-- there is a link in the page footer.*

New sections this time are:

- The complete run of the Great Britain Collectors Club Chronicle and its forerunner titles from 1979 to 2019
- A start on a listing of Postal Treaties, beginning with the complete run of UPU treaties (although for some of the additional documents only the original French version is available, *so if you know of an English translation please get in touch*)
- A selection of Tools for doing various jobs, initially:
  - Plating the 1d Die 1 Line Engraved (an expanded version of previous Plating Tool, incorporating the Fisher-Brown data, links to pictures of the stamps where available, and some extra options)
  - Stamp Franking Combinations
  - Rate Calculators
  - Postal Mechanisation Tools
- A more detailed listing of Parliamentary Reports relating to the Post Office

Other projects are in the works. At some point we intend to move to a new hosting company with additional options.

In addition, there has also been the usual regular stream of queries from both members and non-members. The former naturally tend to relate to something on the site or otherwise on Society business, the latter are often more general or speculative queries, as the contact address in the site footer goes to me.

Examples of non-member queries included the gentleman who had found an early William Lincoln album in the attic and wanted to know if it was of value; a TV researcher inquiring what stamps and postmarks a parcel would have had in 1937; a lady whose father had some cards from the Osborne Royal Naval College on the Isle of Wight and wanted to know what the postmarks meant, and a man who wanted to confirm the postmark date on a rather tatty 1919 envelope being offered by an auction house.

In response to my puzzled query as to why anyone was bothering with what appeared to be a junk box cover; the interest was that it was addressed in the handwriting of Lawrence of Arabia.

### **The GB Journal Advertising Manager** (Howard Hughes FRPSL)

Another year has gone by where our Society has benefitted from the support of a wide number of dealers and auction houses that choose to advertise in The GBJ. We continue to attract new advertisers and this is greatly appreciated. The continued assistance of our dealer members enables us to keep the annual subscriptions at an artificially low level and I would encourage members to reciprocate this support wherever possible.

*For any advertising queries, please contact me at [advertising@gbps.org.uk](mailto:advertising@gbps.org.uk)*

### **Publicity** (Janet Bygate FRPSL)

During this last year we have had more superb displays and it is always a pleasure to describe these for the philatelic publications. These publications do not always use the reports. However, on the whole we have been getting frequent mention considering the number of societies also preparing details of their meetings for the various editors.

Over the past eleven years I have thoroughly enjoyed reporting on our meetings and hope that my successor has the same pleasure.

*If you'd like some Society publicity for another organisation, please contact [publicity@gbps.org.uk](mailto:publicity@gbps.org.uk)*

## Librarians (Matthew and Cheryl Toomey)

The Society's library asset continues to be updated with both new material and older articles.

### NEW ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

- Treasury Roulette Fingerprints by David Escott, No 4 in the perforation fingerprints series, published by David Escott 2019, pp230, card back.
- Archer's First Roulette Fingerprint, David Escott, No 5 in the perforation fingerprints series, published by David Escott 2019, pp230, card back.
- The Court Bureau. A London Company and its stamps 1889-91, by Vincent West, RPSL 2019, pp99, card back.
- A History of the Royal Philatelic Society London. 1869-2019, edited by Charles Oppenheim, published RPSL 2019, pp291, hardback.
- Linn's Stamp News, January 21st 2019, Magazine containing article on 'Mysteries of the Tyrian Plum'.
- The Postal History of Berwick-upon-Tweed, by David Foster, published by Scottish Postal History Society 2015, Monograph Series No. 4, pp171, card back.
- The Travelling Post Office Cancellations of Great Britain and Ireland, by Keith Morris & Mike Dovey, published by TPO and Seapost Society 2016, pp232, glossy cover, card back.
- The Postal History of Elgin, by Don Hilditch, Scottish Postal History Society, Monograph No.3.

Reviews have been written by your librarians and published in the GBPS Newsletter for the following books: -

- David R Beech, A Guide to Philatelic Research at the British Library, published by David R Beech 2019, pp50, pamphlet.
- Howard Summers, Bibliography of the Philately and Postal History of the British Isles, published by Howard Summers 2020, pp210, glossy A4 card back.

All books received for review are added to the online library list.

### LIBRARY LOANS

*Library books need to be returned and are always chased.* We have received requests to send books to the USA but the cost is prohibitive. If possible we send scans of the relevant sections.

### TELEPHONE/EMAIL ENQUIRIES

We received the following queries: -

- General assistance requested by members on miscellaneous postal history queries.
- Query about a blank page 4 in the Perfin catalogue. Confirmation that this was the case in all copies.
- Request from a member for a scan of a page on a specific Bangor Maltese Cross.
- Request to provide a book review of James Cook, a philatelic book-marketing flyer and request to purchase. As the book was not donated, we were not in a position to review.
- Request for information regarding Edward VII from Michael Ashley's book.
- Request for copies of Gibbons Stamp Monthly re article on coil stamps by the late Edward Klempka. As the GBPS does not subscribe, we referred to SG website.
- Numerous requests from a member to help confirm and research specific philatelic items relating to his area of study. Significant assistance was provided.
- Request for book recommendation for TPOs. This led to your librarians purchasing a book to add to the library resource.
- Copied a catalogue for a member.

## SALE OF DUPLICATE LIBRARY ITEMS

No sale of books in the period. *These are listed at special prices on the Society website.*

## NEW BOOKS WANTED FOR THE LIBRARY

We would welcome copies of any new books for review and inclusion in the library. The following is a list of books wanted. *We would appreciate your support in obtaining copies of these books, preferably as donations.*

- Latest editions of SG catalogues.
- Penny Red Stars used abroad, Mike Batty.
- The Use of the 1894 Coded Time System, 2nd ed. 1999, John Moy.
- The Glasgow Penny Post by William Cochrane.
- The First Low Value Surface Printed Postage Stamps of Great Britain, by Bob Galland (Conserved Heritage Series Volume VII).
- The History of the Universal Postal Union. The Postal Card, RPSL
- 1840 One Penny Black, Michael Chipperfield, RPSL
- The Fathers of Philately, Brian Birch, RPSL
- Edward Proud Series, RPSL.

*We appeal for scans or PDF copies of any regional Postal History publications. Many of these are now very hard to find in hard copy and need to be captured digitally for future generations.*

## JOURNALS RECEIVED

We continue to receive copies of the following journals:

- The Overprinter
- The Perfin Society Journal

## POINTS FOR RESEARCH

*If any members would like us to try to obtain copies or runs of other journals to add to the library list then please let us know [library@gbps.org.uk](mailto:library@gbps.org.uk)*

## Competition Organiser (Robin Cassell)

Competition Day was, yet again, a huge success with a full house in attendance at the prestigious new premises of the RPS at Abchurch Lane. This was despite the best efforts of Network Rail to prevent many members from travelling. In the morning, Maurice Buxton with one of his many collections, being appropriately 'The Card Post' as it is the 150th anniversary of the postcard this year, entertained us.

In the afternoon Graham Winters FRPSL gave us the results of the morning's deliberations on the Competition entries, which, as usual, included a wide variety of areas and interests. In all the years I have been running the Competition, I do not think we have ever had two similar entries on the same day.

As usual both the *Martin Willcocks Plate* (postal history) and the *R.A.G. Lee Cup* (traditional) with six entries each were keenly fought for. The winner of the R.A.G. Lee cup was **Chris Harman** RDP, Hon.FRPSL with *Bank Note Duty* followed by Ray Simpson FRPSL with *Provisional Perforation 16 - 1857-58* and third was Don Davies FRPSL with *Rise and Fall of Mulready Postal Stationery*. In the Willcocks, **Michael Lockton** FRPSL was triumphant with *London Late Fee Mail to Overseas Destinations, Pre-Paid in Cash*. Second was Peter Lister FRPSL with *The 1919 Railway Strike* and third equal were Dr Richard Hobbs FRPSL for *Ocean Penny Postage Reform Campaign* and David Milsted FRPSL with *Queen Victoria and King Edward VII Army Official Issues Postally Used*.

A fine duel in the *MacPherson Cup*, for those who have not received any previous philatelic award, attracted some excellent debut entries and was won by **Andy Donaldson** FRPSL with *The Official Protective Underprints Service* with Kevin Maunder runner up with *The Repaired Impressions of Die 1 Penny Red Plate 17*. The latter was deemed worthy of *The Secretaries' Cup* for **Kevin Maunder**.

I would like to thank our judge Graham Winters FRPSL yet again for doing such a wonderful job on the day. I think everyone found the new setting much to their satisfaction too and I look forward to seeing everyone again and also some new faces next year. Watch out for reminders in the autumn Newsletters.

*If you have any queries, please contact me at [competitions@gbps.org.uk](mailto:competitions@gbps.org.uk)*

## **Consultants**

### **Postal History** (Michael Lockton FRPSL)

Interest in GB Postal History continues unabated, mainly on a regional basis, county by county or of larger urban areas. A typical study is exhibited in the book written by Tom Slemons FRPSL on Suffolk Postal History and Postal Markings to 1844, a fine county book with an extensive listing of the postmarks, town by town.

We do now have several collectors of modern postal mechanisation, which is a highly complex area of Postal History and requires an extensive computer background. Its disadvantage is that it lacks the visual aspect of earlier Postal History with adhesive stamps and manuscript markings.

Today's post is tomorrow's Postal History. *Michael can be contacted at [postalhistory@gbps.org.uk](mailto:postalhistory@gbps.org.uk)*

### **Queen Victoria – Line Engraved** (Mike Williams FRPSL)

2018-19 produced a fair number of questions, including a few from the APS, the US Expertising body, who received some rather optimistic '1d Red Plate Number' submissions during the year. Fortunately, I was able to point them in the direction of the evidence needed to resolve their queries. The addition to the GBPS website over the past year of images of the Imprimatur Sheets was a very significant step forward and these images were instrumental in resolving those APS queries. Thanks to Maurice Buxton, our Website Manager, these important images can now be accessed online. I recommend to all Line Engraved collectors that they take a look at these images. Previously, we only had black and white images available to us, so these colour images certainly add to our knowledge. Finally, I have mentioned before the online 'Mulready' group, devoted to the study of QV material generally, but Line Engraved in particular. This group remains very active and will welcome anyone who wishes to improve their LE knowledge.

*Mike's contact is [lineengraved@gbps.org.uk](mailto:lineengraved@gbps.org.uk)*

### **Queen Victoria – Surface Printed** (Peter Young FRPSL)

De La Rue supposedly 'recutting', 're-engraving' or 'repairing' parts of their plates has raised its head again. Every 5-7 years I have to remind members that only the attempts to recut parts of a plate in a way that is so widely seen on the Perkins Bacon intaglio plates, can be seen only on one or two of the King Edward 1d red plug repairs where the firm acknowledged they were trying an experiment that failed. De La Rue make it completely clear in numerous statements that they did not recut any plates or leads - although they did recut numerous dies. So many of the so-called recuts are actually the effects of solid dirt landing in a 'down' on a letterpress plate and producing a distorted line when the paper was slightly lifted on printing. Unusually, this year four correspondents have informed me or asked if they have examples of 're-engraving', only to find the explanation was easily attributed to the effects of dust or grit.

Last year I commented on the number of correspondents from abroad. This year the number from America has more than doubled to nine, but the 'home' enquiries have decreased. This decrease is a pattern that I noted since 1980 in the years when we held International Exhibitions. Perhaps the enquiries all surfaced when exhibitors were writing up their displays, and having done so, they relaxed. *Please forward your questions to Peter at [surfaceprinted@gbps.org.uk](mailto:surfaceprinted@gbps.org.uk)*

### **King George V** (Allan Jones FRPSL)

There has been a slight increase in the number of referrals this year. Virtually all have related to the low values to 1/- covering all printings, although one concerned postage due. Two looked like fakes.

*Please forward your questions to Allan at [kgv@gbps.org.uk](mailto:kgv@gbps.org.uk)*

### **King Edward VIII** (Barry Stagg)

There have only been a handful of enquires from members this year; however, all have been rather interesting. One on perforations was particularly challenging, as it required further study, as did a question on how coils were produced. There was a question on the Postage Due watermark but sadly I had no material at the time to examine. I also have been asked for a view on various items, the most interesting being a 'Knebworth' FDC. The highlight of the year was the GB Edward day in November when many Edward VIII collectors got together (along with many Edward VII collectors) and showed a huge range of interesting material. I'm always happy to try and answer your question so please don't hesitate to ask. *Please forward your on-going questions to Barry at [keviii@gbps.org.uk](mailto:keviii@gbps.org.uk)*

### **Queen Elizabeth II** (Ian Harvey FRPSL)

Having finished the Specialised Vol. 3 just before my last report, the number of queries and work on this reign has been modest during the last 12 months. I am aware that there has been a resurrection of debate on the appearance of papers used in the Wilding period but this is a subjective matter on which little new technical information is to hand and many participants are not privy to previous explanations that recur at 20-year intervals. Like many aspects of philately, a lack of certainty can result in quite heated debate!

For my part, I have and I will continue to put articles in the Journal and Newsletter of different aspects or greater explanation of my area of collecting – that is the books of stamps – which are not or cannot be covered or illustrated in the catalogue. If you have material “beyond the catalogue”, I commend writing such articles – the Journal for record, the Newsletter for the more ephemeral.

*However, I am always “open for business”, be it queries on QEII, booklets in general or any other area in which you think I may be able to help at [geii@gbps.org.uk](mailto:geii@gbps.org.uk)*

### **Postal Stationery** (Dr. Alan Huggins RDP, Hon.FRPSL)

As usual there have been a number of queries from Members and these have been dealt with. The Postal Stationery Society was invited by LONDON 2020 to produce a display to mark the 150th Anniversary of the introduction of pre-stamped postcards and wrappers on 1 October 1870. This 34 frame display has been compiled by several collectors, including those who are both PSS and GBPS members. Obviously the cancellation of LONDON 2020 has necessitated a change of plan, and the intention was to include it in Autumn Stampex, which has also unfortunately been put off. An article describing this display was published in Gibbons Stamp Monthly in April.

*Please forward your questions to Alan at [postalstationery@gbps.org.uk](mailto:postalstationery@gbps.org.uk)*

**'Back-of-the-book' – Revenues, Locals, Labels etc.** (Chris G. Harman RDP, Hon.FRPSL)

As consultant, I continue to receive a number of queries about a range of subjects. Some I can answer, but otherwise I am normally able to direct the enquirer to a source of information if I cannot answer the question myself. Several recent ones have been about forgeries. As a collector more generally of fakes and forgeries, I am always surprised at how few forgeries actually exist for the stamps of Great Britain. I discount the recent plethora of modern "facsimiles". The Spiro Brothers, operating in Hamburg during the 1860s and 1870s must have forged virtually every stamp from virtually every country in the world – except for the stamps of Great Britain (with the odd exception). I have never understood why.

The magnificent Stockholmia Exhibition celebrating the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Royal Philatelic Society London held in May 2019 will remain in the memory of those who attended as probably the finest international philatelic exhibition of all time. Privately sponsored, it also managed to more than cover its costs. Part of Stockholmia was the holding of the 2nd Cinderella Congress. This was always well attended and spanned several days, offering a series of displays from eminent Cinderella collectors from around the world.

I again recommend that members look at Glenn Morgan's Dummy Stamps website [www.stampprinters.info/dummystamps.htm](http://www.stampprinters.info/dummystamps.htm) It is a mine of information on material which often touches in a major way the collecting of "standard" material. The booklet pane material used from experiments during the Royal Cypher period is an example of this, as well as the sample designs used by most of the printers for advertising or experimentation purposes. I think that members will be surprised at what they find that impinges on their collecting interests. *Please forward your questions to Chris at [backofthebook@gbps.org.uk](mailto:backofthebook@gbps.org.uk)*

*Phil Waud  
Hon. Secretary  
June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020.*