



Redhill Philatelic Society

Newsletter April 2011

Volume 14 No.2



Forthcoming meetings:

Tuesday Evenings:

5th April 2011

Airmails – All Members

19th April

Display – Mr A Hall

3rd May

+Annual General Meeting*

+

7th June

Russia – Mr D Cross

5th July

Cornish Postal History –
Mr A Latham

The programme of Friday
afternoon meetings has now
been completed for the 2010-11

Editorial:

Firstly I would like to remind members the AGM is to be held on the evening of Tuesday 3rd May 2011. Any Other Business does not feature as a topic on the Agenda. If you have a matter that you feel needs to be included in the discussion that night concerning the Society you must contact our Secretary Mr Derek White (Tel: 01737 246 106) before the meeting, so the matter can be scheduled into the proceedings.

Since joining the Society I have gained a few additional “philatelic hats” to add to my collection. One of these is Publicity Officer for the Society, and part of the role entails travelling around local libraries providing them with the current years programme and a small poster; in doing so I have been reminded that we are fortunate in Surrey to have a number of Local History Centres attached to Libraries across the county run by enthusiastic volunteers. Local history appears to have a strong following in our Society, so if you are researching a local matter I would recommend you pay a visit to your nearest library to see how they may be able to help. In these days of financial constraints it is likely to be the case of use it or lose it!

Robert Hurst
3 Bletchingley Road, Merstham
RH1 3HT

*** Following the AGM there will be a display of the late Miss Gilbert's Scottish Thematic Collection**

Up Coming Events:

- 02 May 2011 - **Great Southern Postcard and Paper Fair** (Bank Holiday Monday 10am to 4 pm)
 - Tolworth Recreation Centre (KT6 7LQ)
- 06-07 May 2011 - **ABPS National Philatelic and Postcard Exhibition** (Friday and Saturday 9am-5pm)
 - Ponds Forge International Sports Centre, Sheffield (S1 2BP)
- 15 May 2011 - **Sevenoaks Stamp Fair** (Sunday 10am to 4 pm),
 - Bradbourne School, Bradbourne Vale (TN13 3LE)
- 20-21 May 2011 - **South of England Postcard Fair** (Friday and Saturday 10am to 4 pm)
 - Woking Leisure Centre (GU22 9BA)

Reports of Society Meetings:

4th January 2011 - The Secretary's Evening – Mr Derek White

The evening commenced with two displays invited by our Secretary Derek White. Mr Fred Barnes displayed postcards from Surrey. A tour around the village of Ashstead and Ashstead Park was followed by racing car drivers associated with (West) Surrey. The display concluded with postcards of Outwood, a village with which Mr Barnes had family connections). Fred backed up the display with information about the areas and drivers shown.

Our Chairman, Mr Robert Prentice, presented his working collection of four of the Canadian maritime states of Vancouver & British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, both Postage Stamps and Revenues. Robert then concluded his display with a selection of free franks from England and Ireland. The free franking of mail was a privilege granted to members of the House of Commons, Peers and Bishops sitting in the House of Lords and certain Office holders as stipulated by Acts of Parliament. A Free Frank was a mark applied by means of a hand-stamp to parliamentary mail in Britain to indicate that the mailed item did not require postage, but there was a requirement for the letter or packet to be signed by the official sender. Wide-spread abuse of the system saw the privilege end with the introduction of postage stamps in 1940.

Fullers Earth and British Sand & Brick Co employed many people over the years in the Redhill area until both closed about 20 years ago. Mining for Fullers Earth in Redhill started about 1900 and is known to have used a crawler tractor to extract the earth in the Sevenfields/Patterson Court area of Redhill. While the silica extracted from the workings around the Holmethorpe area was ideal for glassmaking by Pilkington and UBS. Having worked at British Sand and Brick Co Mr Derek White was able to give an authoritative account of the operations as part of his display 'Hooks, crawlers, draglines and cranes'.

A variety of stamps, postmarks and covers together with photographs and other ephemera was used to show the development and deployment of tracked vehicles produced by amongst others Ransome, Simms and Jefferies of Ipswich, Rushdens, Massey Ferguson and JCB. Their use from construction, to agriculture, leisure pursuits and Polar science was illustrated.

Derek then continued in a similar fashion to explore the types and use of cranes and draglines on building sites, quarries, and the railways, and in both commercial and military life, through his collection. The display was enhanced by Derek's anecdotes around using some of the equipment presented and the witnessing of events such as how breakdown cranes were used to rebuild the bridge at Frenches Road into/out of the Holmthorpe estate in Redhill.

Mr Robert Prentice in giving the vote of thanks praised variety of material and the knowledge displayed by his fellow exhibitors.

18th January – Postcards (Betchworth) - Mr Keith Harding

This was an occasion where geographically we didn't have to travel too far; only down the road to the village of Betchworth. Our speaker, Mr Keith Harding, had recently co-written and published the book 'Betchworth in Living Memory'.

Setting the scene Mr Harding outlined the history of Betchworth which can be traced back to circa 1200. In particular it was pointed out that over the decades the Betchworth Estate has only ever been sold twice. In collecting his cards Keith has specialised in cards from smaller producers rather than the likes of Frith, Judges or Salmon. This does have a downside if permission needs to be sought to re-publish the image as often the name of the copyright owner is not mentioned on the card.

The tour of the area took in both, the village, the churches, the railways and quarry workings, through a selection of the cards which had been accumulated over the years however virtually no cards appear to have been produced showing local farms. Keith encouraged those present to take photographs to record their locality, but suggested prints should be noted on their reverse side with the date and details about the picture (names of subject, location etc) so future generations could have a better understanding of what they were viewing.

In addition to those displayed Mr Harding brought along his whole collection of postcards and photographs in albums for us to enjoy at the conclusion of the formal part of his display.

Mr Robert Prentice in giving the vote of thanks noted it was nice to see scenes from another local village, and admired the research which had been undertaken alongside the depth of knowledge that had been gained over the years, to enable Keith to publish his book.

1st February - Society Auction - Auctioneer: Mr Paul Munro

The meeting began with the Society Chairman, Mr Robert Prentice, thanking our Auctioneer, Paul Munro for the hard work and effort he had invested in putting the evening together. Robert also thanked those who helped on the evening – Mr Les Jobbins for being the auctioneers assistant and also Derek White and David Ainsley for being the floor walkers. With 116 lots falling under the gavel 69 lots were sold. Some of the remaining lots were sold after the auction ended and Mr Munro will advise the final results in due course.

Paul thanked all those who supplied lots for the auction, especially those who donated items (a total of 17 lots) for which the Society will receive the whole of the proceeds.

15th February - The Chairman's Evening - Mr Robert Prentice

The postage stamp issues of Newfoundland span almost exactly 90 years. Under the Charter of King Henry VII John Cabot claimed the area for Britain on 24th June 1497. The island has been fought over by the British, French, Dutch and Spanish. At one stage up to 40,000 of its inhabitants were involved in the fishing industry. It was from Newfoundland that Marconi made his first wireless broadcast to Ireland in 1901 and the island was subsequently the takeoff point for several of the early attempts to cross the Atlantic by aeroplane, as it is the closest point in the Americas to Europe. On 1st April 1949 Newfoundland became the 10th Province of Canada advised Mr Prentice in his introduction to his Chairman's evening display.

Newfoundland's postage stamps from the first issue in 1857 were shown in the order they were released, in the first half of the evening's display. Robert deftly guided members through the pages of material highlighting a number of colour trails, changes in the colour of issued stamps to comply with Universal Postal Union requirements, and difficulties caused following a change in printer in the 1920's. The display continued with the perforation variations on the 1937 Coronation issue through to the last stamp issued as an independent nation on 24th June 1947.

Amongst the material displayed in the second half were postage due stamps, Formula Registered envelopes, maps, telegram forms, windscreen stickers, cablegrams and lettercards, Court cancellations, savings stamps and customs duty/tobacco stamps relating to Newfoundland. All of this material complimented the stamps displayed in the first half by adding another perspective on life in the islands.

"Everything we saw was from one country. Some very rare and some unusual items were shown this evening It was very neatly displayed and with items in good condition. It goes to show the breadth of interesting material that can be discovered, even in a territory that no longer issues its own stamps, when one specialises" advised our Secretary Mr Derek White in giving the vote of thanks.

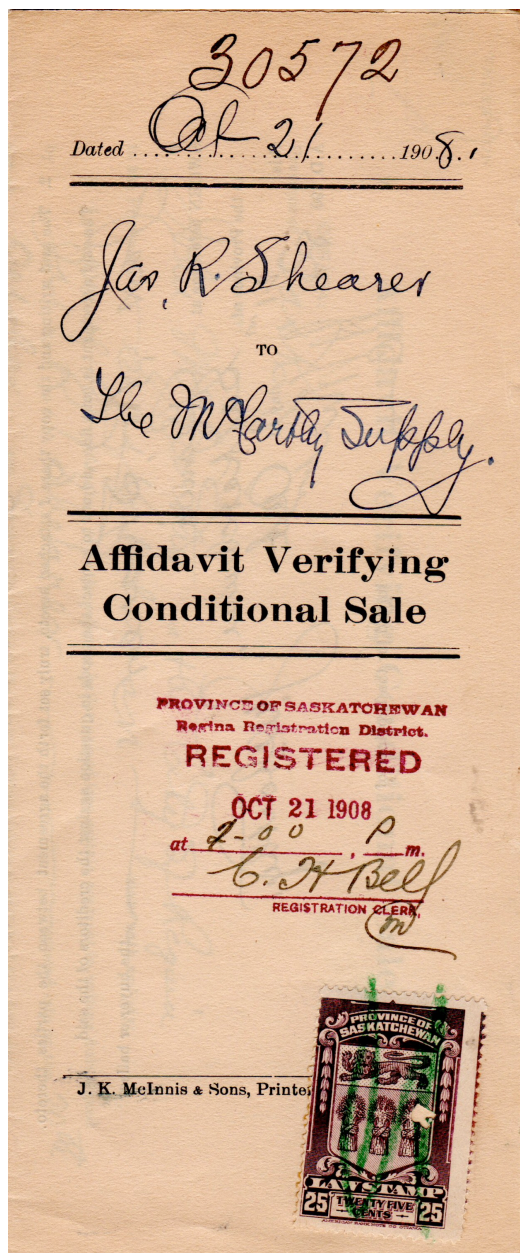
1st March - My Collection (Hong Kong) - Mr David Brunning

Hong Kong, the former British Colony on China's south China sea coast is a destination many have travelled to for work, holidays or even as a transit point for onward travel. In 1953 Mr Brunning's brother travelled to Hong Kong to work. The stamps sent back on the mail to his family gave the impetus for David to start his collection of used Hong Kong stamps.

Starting with the issues of the reign of George VI from 1937 the first session took in the Colony up to the introduction of the principal of one country - two systems and the return of the lands to become a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China in 1997. The display concentrated on the different designs of stamp rather than changes in watermark or perforation, which suited a non-specialist audience. Hong Kong's moderate new issue policy, dominated by subjects closely associated with the Territory. Many comments of members could be heard during the viewing prompted by the stamp's designs recalling time spent in Hong Kong.

The Second half of the evening took in the issues since 1997. The collection for the period showed an increase in the number of stamps issued and the appearance of more issues relating to China in general rather than specifically Hong Kong.

It was interesting to view the development and treatment of subjects on stamps from one Colony, especially when ably guided by Mr Brunning.



REVENUE REVIEW

Revenue stamps are stamps used to collect taxes and fees. They are issued by Governments, national and local, and by official bodies of various kinds. As with postage stamps and their use on mail, the attachment of a revenue stamp to a document indicates the payment of a fee.

Law Stamp

Law stamps were typically, but not exclusively, used for the payment of fees and/or taxes imposed on documents associated with civil judicial proceedings. The funds from these stamps were often designated for the support of the court system.

Shown left is a 25 cent Law stamp issued by the Canadian province of Saskatchewan; one of eleven values from ten cents to twenty Canadian Dollars issued in 1908. The design shows the Shield of the Saskatchewan which was assigned by royal warrant of King Edward VII on 25 August 1906. The Lion is a royal symbol of England and the three sheaves of wheat represent the province's agriculture.

The stamp has been used in the first year of issue to pay the fee for registering an "Affidavit Verifying Conditional Sale". An affidavit is a written statement of facts voluntarily made by an affiant under an oath or affirmation administered by a person authorized to do so by law. A conditional sale is a sale of property or goods which will be completed if certain conditions are met (as agreed) by one or both parties to the transaction. (Example: Hotrod agrees to buy Tappit's 2007 Ford Fiesta for £500-00 cash if Tappit can get the car running by 7th June).

The stamp is struck through in indelible pencil and has a punched hole (in this case in the shape of a letter R) tying the stamp to the document to prevent re-used.

The Royal Mail Swiftair Service 1980-2003

Venture into any Post Office in 2011 and you are likely to be hard pressed to find any leaflets on display concerning postal matters amongst a sea of literature promoting the sale of banking, investment and insurance services.

Back in 1980 it was a different story. In the course of a visit to Trafalgar Square Post Office one afternoon in late 1980 I noticed a leaflet for the then newly introduced Swiftair Service. Over the years since that day I have accumulated a binder full of leaflets, labels, a postcard and promotional material, not to mention examples of mail sent via the Swiftair Service. Today over seven years after the service was withdrawn to most collectors and stamp dealers it is just a vague memory. As with much Great British postal history from the reign of the current Queen, little has been written about Swiftair in the philatelic press. However there is a wealth of material that can be collected and the items themselves reflect the wider changes in the Post Office. This article is intended to be a brief introduction to the subject.

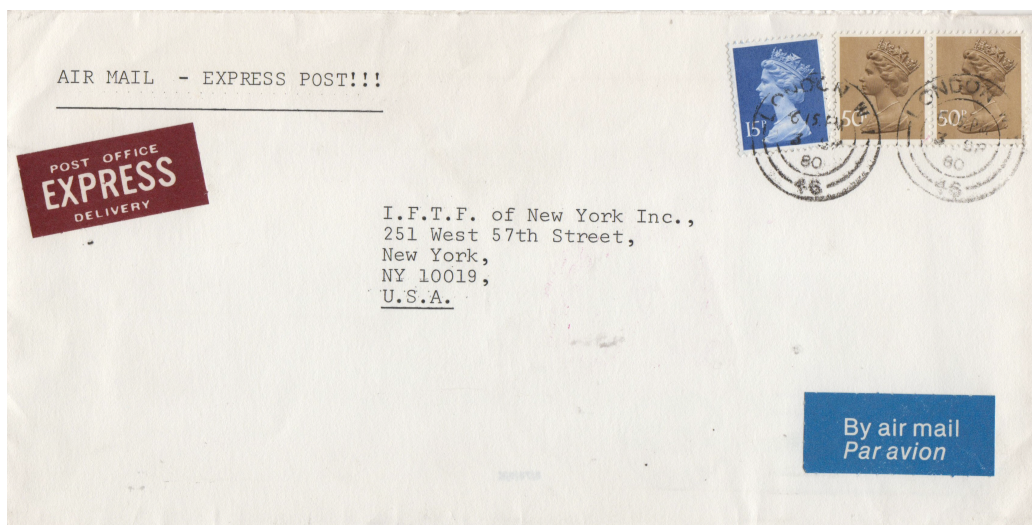


Fig. 1 15p + 2 x 50p Machin definitives date stamped London W1, 3 SP 1980, pay the £1- Express letter fee plus 15p airmail postage up to 10g for delivery to the USA (Zone B).

Before Swiftair

Up to 13 October 1980 the Post Office accepted mail for express handling by the post office in the immediate neighbourhood of an overseas destination against the payment of a fee in addition to normal postage. The labels used to highlight the express nature of the mail were similar to those used on mail with in the UK. Over the years fees for the service had increased from 3d in 1892 to £1- on 4 February 1980 (Fig. 1)

Introduction of Swiftair

On 13 October 1980 Swiftair replaced overseas Express Delivery. The new Service offered accelerated handling throughout its transit in the postal system. Initially Swiftair was made available for letters to Europe plus airmail letters and printed papers to other overseas destinations. In 1991 the service was extended to airmail letters printed papers and small packets worldwide.

Under which ever class of mail an item was posted the Swiftair fee remained the same, though inevitably over the years the fee itself saw increases from the initial charge of £1-25. See over for a full review of the tariffs charged.

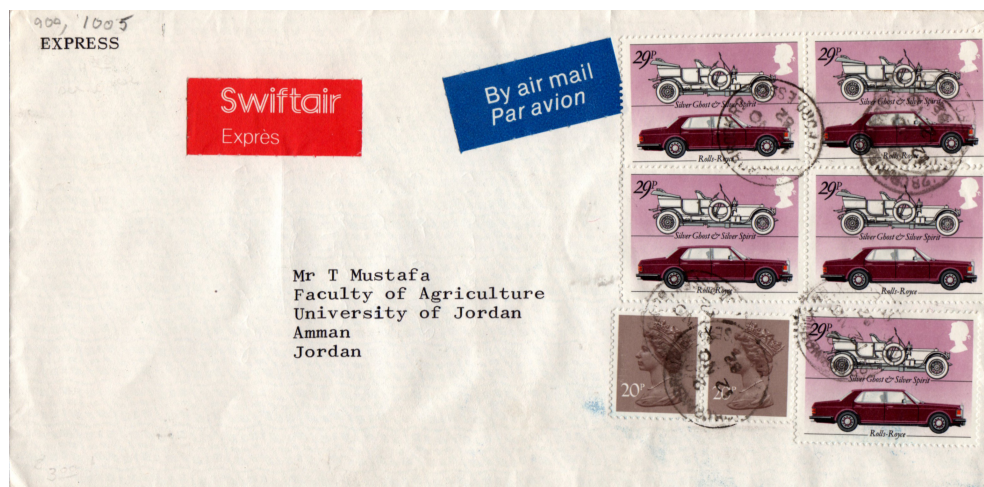
Use of the Swiftair service was highlighted by use of labels attached to the front of the letter or packet. Initially these were gummed in the same way as postage stamps. By the early 1990s the labels had been redesigned and had become self adhesive and subsequently self adhesive with bar coding to assist in the tracking of the item of mail.

The Gummed Labels



Type: 1 (above)

Type 2 (right)



Type: 3

5 x 29p (British motor Cars issue) + 2 x 20p Machins postmarked Ilford Essex 12 NO 82 pay the £1-50 Swiftair fee +35p Airmail postage up to 20g to Jordan (Zone A). (Envelope backstamp Amman Jordan 15 No 82)

So far three types of gummed label have been identified:

Type 1 is set out in two lines and the label is perforated. This type of label is illustrated on the cover of first publicity leaflets issued by the Post Office. To date not seen on commercial mail by the author.

Type 2 is the same design as type 1 but appears to be on thinner paper and has roulette perforations. Known to have been issued in sheets of 50 labels (10 rows of 5).

Type 3 is the most common type of gummed label found used, the wording, set out on three lines, highlights the express nature of the mail. As with type 2. the labels have roulette perforations.

TO BE CONTINUED.