

BASILDON PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

December 1998

FROM YOUR SECRETARY

Since I last wrote to you things have been a little difficult for the Society. Firstly, the Committee had to dismiss the Treasurer as he had not attended five meetings and we were unable to contact him, to date we have been unable to recover the Societies properties although it would appear that no misuse has occurred.

Shortly before the auction 150 lots were withdrawn, but with a number of telephone calls we were able to more than make up the number. Although we have had a few new members join us this year, attendances at meetings have recently dropped off. Apart from the football during the summer on the television I would like to know if there is any other reason, also competition entries have dropped down. On a brighter note, I am happy to report that one of our junior members, Kerry Avis won her section in the "Melville Cup," the national competition for juniors, not bad for a 10 year old. At the recent Essex Stamp Day, Maggie Thompson won the "County Thematic Cup" and also the "Novices Cup" for her first wins at county level. We were second in the "Presidents Cup," losing to Frinton-on-Sea by one point, but with a scratch team of Len Stanway, his wife and John Church won the Quiz team event.

Once again I would ask all members to try to put some lots into the auction. If all members put in between five and ten lots each it would make over 300 lots and I would ask you to remember that any material you do not want could be of use to someone else and you and the Society would benefit. As bank holidays rob us of two meetings next year we would like lists of lots by early January, to myself or to our Auction Secretary, M. Musgrave, 49 Vowler Road, Langdon Hills SS15 6AQ. Lastly, if you have not yet paid your subscriptions could you please send them to Peter Nye, 41 Chevers Pawen, Pitsea SS13 3EL.

Finally your Committee would like to wish you all a "Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year."

OUR MEETINGS FOR THE NEXT QUARTER

December 22nd Festive Evening and Tomex Quiz with Albert Thomas (4th Tuesday).

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- January 4th Zeppelin Post Story (part 2) by Ian Nutley, FRPSL.
- January 19th Informal Evening and Mini Fair with dealers.
- February 1st Display of the stamps of Fiji by Charlie Mead.
- February 16th Something beginning with "L" . . . members displays.
- March 16th Competition Evening for postal history and cinderallas.

MEETING REPORTS

Bill Trower's visit to Basildon was to display and talk about the "War in the Pacific." The first incident he recalled took place on the 11th December, 1937 when the Japanese fired on the Chinese from the sea, at that time a fleet of merchant ships where in the area and an American ship was fired on leaving two killed and many wounded, a cover from this ship was shown. The infamous attack on Pearl Harbour on 7th December, 1941 was covered with photographs, covers and newspapers of the day. The "Battle of the Java Sea" in February 1942 was the first sea engagement, when the cruiser USS Huston and the HMAS Perth found themselves in the middle of the invasion fleet of Japan and

although they caused considerable damage, they were both sunk together with other ships including the first American aircraft carrier USS Langley. The "Battle of the Coral Sea" was next in May 1942, this was illustrated with stamps from Norfolk Island and the Marshall Islands, showing the loss of USS Lexington. Later that year came the "Battle of the Medway," the Japanese code was by this time broken and the Americans, knowing the enemies intention were laying in wait for them, covers from many of the ships taking part were displayed with a large sheet from Uganda showing scenes from this battle and the attack on Pearl Harbour.

Next on display were covers and photographs of a battle where three cruisers and there escort destroyers, including the USS Saratoga, on seeing smoke on the horizon turned towards it only to find themselves surrounded by an enemy fleet and all the ships were lost. The final part of Bill's display was of the battle for Layte in October 1944 in which the USS Phinix took part, a cover and photograph of the ship were shown, it later became the Belgrano of Falkland fame. The bombing of Tokyo was covered with photographs, covers and newspaper cuttings telling the story of General Dolittle and his squadrons, who flew from the aircraft carrier USS Hornet. It was known that the aeroplanes would not be able to return to the carrier, so the men were provided with gold coins and silk scarves, written in a number of Chinese dialects, so the planes were flown on to China. Unfortunately some of the men fell into bandit hands and were sold to the Japanese who put them to torture and later they were put on trial. David Church gave a vote of thanks to Bill for a very interesting and enjoyable evening.

On our **Ladies' Night** Vivian Hollaway presented the second part of her display of "**Famous Women.**" Starting with Harriet Tubman, a women member of the underground railway of America that transported runaway slaves to Canada. Stamps showing a number of singers followed including Dame Nellie Melba, Jenny Lind and Patsy Cline. Wives of politicians followed with Eleanor Roosevelt, Martha Washington, Nancy Regan and Abigail Adams, who was the wife of the second President of America and the mother of the fourth.

Heroic women were next with Amy Johnson an early flying pioneer, Helen Keller who was born blind and deaf but overcame her difficulties and Clara Mass, a nurse at the time of the American-Cuban war when hundreds of men were dying of yellow fever, had herself injected with a vaccine that was hoped to be a cure, the first time was successful but after the second she unfortunately died.

Stamps and photographs of our Royal Family including Queen Victoria and previous Princesses of Wales. For the final part of her display Vivian went on to children's stories and through stamps of various countries told of many stories, such as Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Alice in Wonderland and the Pied Piper of Hamelin, which was based on a true story.

May Colvill took up the story of scouting, starting with photographs of Baden-Powell and Sergeant Major Goodyear at the siege of Mafeking and progressing through stamps and covers of the various worldwide Jamboree's and the changes in uniform throughout their history. Len Stanway thanked the ladies for a very entertaining evening.

Thank you. A. P. Harris, Secretary.

WITH THANKS

Dear Friends,

Rhoda and I would like to thank everyone who expressed condolences and sent us messages of sympathy on the loss of our daughter Rachel. As no doubt you realise it will take some considerable time to come to terms with our loss. She was to us a very special girl.

Sincerely, John and Rhoda Pettit.

Editor: D. Johnson, 15 Mentmore, Langdon Hills, SS16 6DB (01268 413203).