

It is with regret that this newsletter opens with the announcement of the death of a member, Stan Chrisp died just before Christmas. The Society was represented by Len Stanway with John Church and his family at the funeral.

Meeting Report.

At the festive evening with both our Quizmasters unable to attend Pat Harris stepped in as quizmaster with some old and some new questions. David Perry had the best marks some 18 out of 29 but as he won last year Len Stanway won the Tomex Cup with the next highest score. Those Members who were present received the cup and commemorative plates and the rest of the evening was informal and festive with food and drink.

Did you Know. Early stamps of China were overprinted in Anna's and Rupees for use in Tibet.

Meeting report.

For our first meeting of the new year Len Stanway gave a talk centred on his award winning book "Mails under London" the talk was presented by use of a slide projector and static display.

He started off by comparing today's traffic and pollution with that of 150 years ago, the average speed through London is about 7 MPH then it was a little better but the pollution was about the same only in a different form as extracts from the "Times" letter column showed.

The idea of a pneumatic tube came from the method of centralising the cash in large departmental stores by means of an overhead mono rail from the counter to the cash centre (some of you older readers May remember them).

After a number of test and trials at various locations the Pneumatic Dispatch Company was formed with a number of notable people of the time including W H Smith the bookseller under the Chairmanship of Lord Chandos, and by act of parliament they proposed a large underground network to carry parcels and if the general post office agreed mail.

A feasibility test track was laid in Battersea Park with various gradients and bends with a tunnel like an inverted "D" with the rails giving a two foot track. A number of 4 wheel cars about eight foot long and speeds of up to 25 MPH were achieved with the use of two 21 foot diameter cone shaped discs driven by a 30 horsepower steam engine that gave a pressure of between nine and 54 pounds per square inch.

The tests proved successful and the Company approached Roland Hill the Postmaster General proposing a 21 year contract for a scheme to run from Euston Station to the GPO at St. Martin Le Grand and a smaller diameter branch line from Euston to the North western district office, the Post office would not give a firm commitment until the system was proved. It was decided that the first line would be between Euston Station and a building near the North Western district office in Eversholt Street.

The line was inaugurated on 20 February 1863 with some thirty trains a day six days a week for which after some discussion paid 4/111/2d per day, this eventually led to the setting up of the Post Office Railway.

Various proposed routes and size of track with an experimental remote control Electric systems were but it was not until 15 August 1913 that the Post office (London) Railway Act came into being.

Tunnelling started on 24 October 1914 and stopped in 1917.

With Zeppelin air raids over London the tunnels were used to store the works of art from the various galleries of London.

The Railway eventually opened for parcels on 5 December 1927 and for mail on 13 February 1928. The railway now runs from the Eastern district office to the Paddington district office near the Station calling at a number of other stations on the way.

The static display carried many items of interest including number badges from the various stations, parcel tickets and various covers covering the various anniversaries.

Charlie Mead gave the vote of thanks for a very different but most enjoyable evening.

Footnote.

It is imposible to cover this subject in these few words but copies of this well illustrated and comprehensive book are available from Len at 25 Clayhill Drive Basildon SS16 5DD at £10 50 including post and packing.

Did you know that the designers of the Channel Island occupation stamps fooled the Germans by putting hidden messages on the stamps.

Mr E W Vaudin of Guernsey introduced a "v" into the corners of the border and Major N V Rybot had "A"'s in the top corner border of the 1d value with he said stood for Ad Averum Adolf Atrox meaning to hell with you Adolf. On the 1/2d he had "A" in the top corner and "B" in the top corners which stood for Atrocious Adolf and Bloody Benito the Italian leader.

Edmund Blampied introduced the Royal Cypher into the 3d stamp none of these were detected by the Germans.

I must apologise to Viv Hollaway for getting her name wrong in the last issue

Meeting report.

David Sibley recently displayed part of his China collection to us, it was noted that his first visit to us was 25 years ago almost to the day.

He started off by saying that China was the third largest country in the world with a population of some 1.2 billion people. The first stamps displayed were the issue of 1878 with the dragon issue of 1885 including stamps that had been specially printed to be surcharged. Two covers were next shown one to the USA that was cancelled in several different countries the other to Huddersfield in Yorkshire that had been sent with two rows of half cents stamps to the correct rate.

Next to be displayed was a stamp from the time of the Boxer rebellion that was over-printed British Railway Administration. Stamps for the start of the reign of the last Emperor were next followed by the 1911 set of Sun Yet-Sen and the republic of China overprints by Waterlow's

What is said to be the worlds largest stamp That divides into four was next seen, two covers followed both sent to Britain one via the trans-Siberian Railway the other by sea through the Suez canal.

In the second part of his display stamps for the new constitution of 1923 were first with the 1929 set of Chiang Kai-Shek together with several blocks of used postage due stamps. Parts of China in the late 1920's were in the hands of war lords one such captured Peking and set himself up as head of the army and navy and on 1 March issued two set of four stamps to proclaim this. David then said that he bought a sheet of stamps in a postal auction but found when he opened it up in fell into four pieces and he displayed these.

The Chinese introduced an air mail service in the 1930's and knowing that the French had a weekly service to Europe from Saigon arranged their mail to use this service covers were on display from these flights.

An incident in north China led to the invasion by Japan who quickly overran parts of the north and a number of covers of this time were on show one of which was sent to a sailor on a ship in Singapore when it arrived. He had been transferred back to England so the letter followed him with a number of interesting cachets on it.

Having now reached the 1940's David then showed a number of censored covers both British and German.

The display ended with some set of stamps for the time of hyper inflation when some of the stamps cost more than the face value of them.

Charlie Mead gave a vote of thanks to David and presented him with a silver commemorating his visit.

The world's first truly miniature sheet was issued by Luxemburg on 3 January 1923. A special printing of the new 10fr definitive, in Green instead of Black was produced in sheets ranging from 78x59mm to 79x61mm in size. The miniature sheets were sold as a souvenir of the birth of Princess Elizabeth.

The 1933 Royal William stamp of Canada by Arthur Hobbs.

It was in August 1833 that the "Royal William" sailed out of Pictou, Nova Scotia. While the ship was a three master she was equipped with steam power and she made the entire crossing of the Atlantic to London under steam.

This was the first Atlantic crossing entirely by steam and took 25 days.

The ship's master was John Mc Dougall.

The stamp was designed by the British American Bank Note Co Ltd. From an oil painting by S Skillet.

(photo copy of first day cover on next page.)

Did you know The only instance of stamps being wholly produced aboard a ship in wartime occurred in 1916 when stamps for use by a projected Allied expedition to Mount Athos were printed by a photographic process aboard the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal in the Aegean Sea. The stamps were inscribed in English, Greek and Russian, valued in pence, lepta and kopeks and contained a curious blunder—a picture of Madonna (everything female is banned by the monks of Mount Athos.) The expedition was cancelled but a few of these unique were subsequently used at the British field post office in Salonika.

The Basildon/ Billericay Quiz. Basildon's team was Arthur Bowles, Charlie Mead and Dave Perry while for Billericay Mike Broughton, Dennis Sales and Mark Wheeler. Ray How was the Quiz Master and Len Stanway acted as Scorer.

The quiz was over 8 rounds of 5 questions each every round on a different subject. The first round saw Basildon in front by one point but the other 3 rounds in the first half went to Billericay who led by 26 points to 21.

The break saw a revived basildon team went all out and won every round with a final score of 59 1/2 points to 41.

The quiz was as usual carried out with good humour but some of the questions were not that easy to answer.

Charlie Mead thanked the Billericay team and Ray for a happy evening.

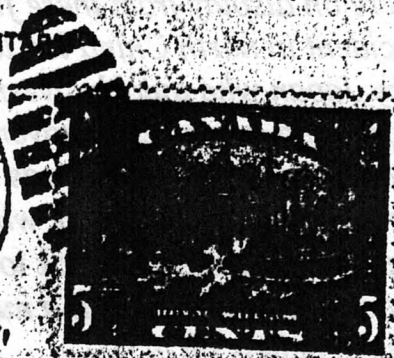
Field post cards and envelopes for the use of troops on active service were first used by the North German Confederation in 1870, for use in the Franco-German war. Stamped pto.

CENTENARY
S. S. "ROYAL WILLIAM"

1833-August 18th-1933

Canadians of today are proud to proclaim that on August 17, 1833, the S. S. "Royal William" built entirely in Canada, sailed from Pictou, N. S. and docked at London, Eng., twenty-five days later, thus being the first boat to cross the Atlantic Ocean under steam for the entire distance.

W. RUSSELL BROWN, PORT ARTHUR, ONT.



Geo. C. Yim Co.
115 Moorgate
London E.C. 2
England

Stamped envelopes for use by soldiers and seamen were issued by India in 1879.

The Spring Competitions.

A little disappointing for its lack of entries although there were seven in the Thematic competition the Cinderella only had one and the Modern Material two, perhaps you could look to improve this in the Autumn competitions.

The Judges David Sibley and George Capon from Colchester said that they were pleased with the standard of the entries but made these comments. Before entering a competition you should always read the rules for the competition you are entering and keep within there guidelines as the Judges can only mark according to the rules laid down. More could be written about the cachets and cancellations and that with Thematic the entries should have a plan.

Maggie Thompson had a walkover in the Cinderella with her Triangles but that in no way detracts from an excellent eight page entry.

In the Modern Material John Churches entry was of Pacific Express flights showing various countries covers in the area and the routes they flew. Len Stanway used the postage labels of Singapore for his entry John won the competition by a slim marking.

In the Thematic competition of Dennis Sales entries the first was of the Red Cross taking it from its conception through the occupation letter sheets to the modern days. His UPU also told part of their story and the story of Charles Dickens had part of his life story and scenes from his stories. The story of Roland Hill was from May Colville told of how the penny prepaid stamps came into use.

John Pettit put in an entry of Antarctica with stamps and covers from the various countries involved in that area. Len Stanway had an entry about Railways.

Arthur Bowles had an entry with an unusual theme the life of Kemal Attuack(may be spelt wrong) the Architect of modern Turkey. This entry won the competition. The Judge said that only one point separated the first two in this competition. Len Stanway as competition Registrar thanked the Judges for their time and comments and presented the winners with the trophies.

Meetings in the next quarter.

2 April Auction night

7 April Stamp fair at Laindon

*17 April Something beginning with P or Q
Part 1*

8 May Visit from Goodmayes P S.

22 May P and Q part 2.

*4 June Tobago and Heligoland by Nigel
Chandler MBE.*

16 June David's stamp fair at Laindon

19 Jun Annual General Meeting.

Messages from the Editor.

First some sad news about Albert Thomas who a little while ago seemed to be doing well and attending meetings is unfortunately in hospital and has had his leg removed from above the knee. I am certain that you will join with me in wishing him a speedy recovery.

I have now run out of articles for the Newsletter and would ask you for your stories about your collecting or that lucky buy or anything I can use.

I will be starting a series of articles about the lead up to and the occupation of the Channel Islands (my version) in the next issue which will be delayed until the first July meeting so as to include the Annual general meeting.

Please try to support the Auction the more sold the more money for the club that helps to keep the subs down.