

Meeting Report.

Alex McGratten opened our new season with a display of "Aspects of Germany". He told the story of **Anna Freeburg** a music hall artist that on to the stage in full armour to sing patriotic songs became the model of "Germania" on the 1899 stamp issue printed with Deuthespost this name was changed with the 1902 stamps to Deuthes Reich and stamps of both sets were shown these were followed by stamps and covers from countries occupied during the 14-18 war including Belgium, the Baltic States and Danzig.

In 1919 the repayment of war debts led to the loss of the overseas colonies, the Saar and Schleswig-Holstein these event together with the abdication led to unrest in Berlin so the Republican Government was set up in Weimer and stamps of the National Assembly were seen next. In 1920 Bavaria joined the Republic and the set of overprinted stamps displayed.

The inflation issues were next shown and Alex said that between January and December 1923 there were 17 changes of value. The display included some stamps on sheets of Regional local printings that had varying shades. Of the many covers of this time one to Newcastle was shown with ten high value stamps on.

At the beginning of October 1923 all stamps of 100 Mark were taken out of use. A Number of full sheets of stamps were shown with shift and flaw errors, Alex told the story of a man going to the opera with two bags of money one he used to get in the other he left in the cloakroom when he went to collect it the bag had been stolen but the money was left.

The last part of the display started with some Hitler propaganda postcards and from the civil uprising of 21 October 1923 some provisional inflation stamps that had been overprinted with "R R" and new values for the short lived

Rhineland Republic. The display ended with a number of covers of the times including one with a full set of the 1936 Summer Olympic stamps posted in the Olympic Stadium.

Jim Thompson gave the vote of thanks saying that being a German collector of this period himself he was delighted with the display and had seen material that was new to him.

Did you know the first stamp collector was Dr John Gray of the British museum who purchased a block of 1d Black as a memento of the introduction of the Uniform Penny Postage.

Meeting Report.**The Committee Entertains.**

As a change from a single member for the evening six members each put up 24 sheets in three sessions

Pat Harris was first to show the start of his Channel Islands Occupied collection and displayed the local war time issues of Jersey and Guernsey including forgeries, errors and varieties also a prisoner of war letter to the long honeymooners Ron and Eileen Harris.

May Colvill followed with items from her UPU collection starting off with some early South American issues and continuing with stamps commemorating the 75th and centenary issues from various countries.

New Zealand booklets began **John Pettit's** display stating that the booklet was issued in 1901 and had two sheets of the 1d universal postal stamps and cost 1. 0 1/2d.

and continued with booklets up to modern times with some stamps being produced in two formats usual and self adhesive each having different perforations. He finished his display with a number of "hung sell" sheetlets of blocks of 8 stamps.

John Church who collects Iceland stamps displayed miniature sheets of that country including the 1938 Leif Ericsonn series, the Columbus issues of 1992 together with the Nordic counties issues between 1989 and 1992 and finished with the 50th anniversary of the Republic from 1994.

Charlie Mead was completely different although he has made a study of the 1870 1/2d newspaper stamp he displayed 16 sheets of 1/4d stamps from some 12 commonwealth countries and said that he had collected them from the exchange packet and said that small collections like this are easy for that source.

Richmond Yorkshire was Len Stanway's contribution to the evening firstly showing a 1788 letter to London that cost 1/- next was a 1806 one that had a mileage mark in the post mark and he said that at this time all letters had to go to London and that if a letter only had to go across the Pennines it was charged the rate to and from London this was change when cross country route were established also shown were an 1894 letter and 1894 letter card. Richmond camp was set up in 1915 and later became Catterick camp and Len had a variety of covers with both names as post marks and completed his display with a letter from Richmond Virginia to Richmond England.

Dave and Jenny Perry have now taken over the library should you want a book please call them on 01268 520386 and they will bring it to the next meeting they attend

Meeting Report

Croatia by Tony Bosworth

Tony told the story of that Country between 1940 and 1945 saying that after a deal of pressure from Hitler he signed a treaty with Germany on 20 March 1940. A peoples revolt on 24 March ousted the King and the interim group signed a peace treaty with Russia on 6 April at which point Hitler invaded creating an "Independent" state of Croatia on 10 April.

Stamps, over printed in Latin script appeared on 12 April along with postal stationery and Tony displayed a comprehensive mix of stamps, postal stationery and postal history of the whole period including many outstanding items such as Red Cross sheets, Exhibition cards, official and fiscal stamps.

Much of the postal history had a tale to tell of the conditions under which the citizenry had to live in this German Puppet state until it fell to the Russians in May 1945.

A vote of thanks was given to Tony for a very interesting display that had something for everybody proving that you do not have to collect a country to find something of interest in other peoples collections.

Did you know the only stamps of the United States not to be inscribed United States was the set of three Tencentenary stamps of 1920

The Story of Switzerland by Dennis Sales.

This small country roughly in the centre of Europe stands athwart the busy routeway connections and from its high mountains two mighty rivers are born making it the watershed of Europe. the country has no coast line or mineral wealth and yet is one of the richest in Europe. *Continued*

The Historical background is one of trials and tribulation of oppression and wars for freedom and independence.

Switzerland started issuing stamps in 1843 making it the third country to do so but as these are so pricey I will start at 1900.

The first commemorative stamps issued by Switzerland was for the UPU Silver Jubilee, the only country so to do with a set of three stamps. This issue is rich in plate flaws and varieties.

1909 saw the unveiling of the UPU monument in Berne by the French sculptor Rene de St. Marceaux. This lovely monument is now the UPU logo. Special 5c and 10c postcards were issued for the occasion.

1910 produced the William Tell issue. Fact or fiction nobody is sure, but what a wonderful story. In front of Altdorf Town Hall is a very nice statue of William Tell and son. The stamps ran for several years with overprints, colour changes and value changes.

With such wonderful scenery to hand the 1934 Landscapes were a sure bet, they were redesigned in 1936 by Karl Bicker. Issued in ordinary and grided papers with and without watermarks, some had redrawn plates and colour changes a very interesting set to collect.

The end of the first world war saw the introduction of a lovely set of 13 values entitled PAX (the Latin for Peace) much sought after now and very expensive. I wish I had a first day cover cat£1500.

The century of Swiss Railways produced a set of four stamps, this set is more interesting for the flaws than the actual stamps.

The 5c shows the first Swiss Steam Engine, but has a broken wheel variety, on the 10c has an Express steam engine with various colour shades. The 20c shows the Electric Gotthard train with steam in the front.

and also clouds in what should be a clear sky and a missing gantry Pole. The 30c shows a goods train crossing over a river.

The rest of this story will be in the next newsletter if you have similar stories please let me have them for further editions.

Did you know The first travelling post office was a converted horse box that ran between Birmingham and Liverpool on 24 January 1838

Meeting Report One Page Competition.

Members were invited to display one sheet from their collections. On a balmy summers evening with many members on holiday 21 sheets were shown with the members present giving marks out of ten.

John Church put up a sheet showing air mail stamps and cover from Iceland, Brian March displayed two sheets e was an 18th century revenue receipt the other being flaws of the George V heads of Australia. A sheet about Edward 8 life was Bill Leeds contribution and both May Collvil and Gary Green showed sheets of revenue stamps.

Arthur Bowles had a study of the worlds first Christmas stamp from Canada with a block of four and a first day cover, his second sheet was an other study of cork cancels on a 1884 stamp of the USA. Dennis Sales also had two sheets the Lucerne wooden bridge on one and the post passed and present set of 1986 from Switzerland. Maggie Thompson entry was larger than usual being a complete sheet of the "Pacific 97" stamp Exhibition 32 cent triangles in 6 blocks of four.

A letter carrying a full sheet (240 stamps) of the 200m inflation stamps of Germany was from Alex McCracken. Vivian Hollaway had the Knighting of Francis Chichester on covers

and Steve Apse used a study of the new GB first class stamp for his entry and finally Pat Harris showed two sheets of the war time Arms issue of Jersey.

The markings were again a little odd with some sheets getting marks varying from 1 to 10 with top top 6 entries only having a single point between them but Arthur Bowles and Pat Harris getting the most marks.

Did you know that the first mail to be sorted aboard ship was on 1 October 1860 when the Hollyhead to Kingstown Packet service was inaugurated. Four steamers named after the four provinces of Ireland, were used on this route. Each ship had two sorting rooms one for letters and one for newspapers and printed matter. Postmarks inscribed H&K PACKET were applied to mail in transit from 1860 onwards. Mails posted on board were postmarked with a special cancellation from 1919 to 1925 when the service was discontinued.

Notes from the Editor.

Are you one of the very few who has not yet paid their subscriptions due in June if so could you do so soon.

You would have had your Autumn Auction lists by now (if you have not please phone me on 01268 473946) try to come along or make a postal bid we do raise club funds with the Auctions with your help.

Our Autumn fair and exhibition is at Laindon on Saturday 7 October

As some of you know Albert Thomas has been on the sick list for some time and at home, he would like to hear from any of his friends you can ring him on 01268 544827,

Our programme for the rest of this year is set out below we are always happy to see those members who do not attend very often.

2 October Autumn Auction Auctioneer Denis Livermore

7 October Stamp Fair at Laindon.

18 October Informal evening with dealers

6 November Competitions Stamps, Postal history and Aerophilately.

11 November "David's" "stamp fair at Laindon.

21 November Any thing but stamps.

4 December The Mermoz Line a Display by Ian Nutley

19 December Festive evening and Tomex quiz with Dennis Livermore.

Stampex is on until 24 September

Philatex 2000 is on at the Royal Horticul-

Eric Waldock visited us early in September to give a display about Jennifer Tombs called "Tombsiana" a report of this meeting will be in the next newsletter.

The oldest post office in the United Kingdom still in its original building is at Sanquhar, Dumfries and Galloway. The post office is unique having been occupied in the same house since 1763, a fact which was officially recognised with a pictorial postmark in 1974.

The most southerly post office in the British Isles is in Samares, Jersey.