



Postmark

Issue

164

Spring

2025



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EDITORS COLUMN:

by Steve Gerrard.

December 2024

sdpseditor@hotmail.co.uk

I have enjoyed my 2 stints as Editor but it is time for me to step back and let others enjoy this role. I am continuing as Archivist which I took over in 2017 and is a role I enjoy. I am standing down from the following roles at the next AGM:

Postmark Editor - 2011 To 2019 & 2022 To 2025 (11 Years).

Curator - 2011 To 2025. (This is currently stored at Jack & Debbie Hindson's home and Debbie is going to keep an eye on this which makes total sense. I have the catalogue and will pass this on to Debbie). (14 Years).

Public Relations Officer - 2011 To 2015 & 2021 To 2025. (8 Years).

So as they say 'I have done my time totalling 33 years'. So 2025 is going to be one to watch as there are a number of changes coming (See pages 3 & 4) with a new venue, Postmark and Tuesday Auctions reduced to 3 a year and, subject to the AGM, putting membership up from £10.00 to a more realistic amount but not too high as to scare away existing members in 2026. Hopefully 2025 will bring a new start for the Society with the up and coming changes. Please carry on supporting the Society in which ever way you can and at the AGM there will be 2 posts available to be filled.

IMPORTANT NOTICE - PLEASE REMEMBER TO INFORM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY IF YOU MOVE OR CHANGE / CANCEL YOUR E MAIL ADDRESS OR PHONE DETAILS ETC. STEVE BLUNDELL - MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY.

My sincere thanks go to all the following who have contributed to this issue, in alphabetical order: Austin/Patrick, Bruce/Peter, Chard/Kevin, Coe/Malcolm, Coles/Graham, Edwards/Dave, Jones/Julian, Montgomery/Malcolm, Pantaleev/Brian, Torreggiani/Mike, Watts/Mike.

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SOCIETY UPDATE:

By Kevin Chard (Chairman).

December 2024

We have made the decision to move to Holy Saviour Church, Bitterne for our Tuesday evening meetings in 2025. There are 2 main reasons for this:

- The venue is served by a better bus service
- It offers limited storage space so that we can continue to run our Auctions.
- Details of where the venue is, car parking and main bus options are on the website and Pages 18 and 19.

We have also made changes to our programme:

- There will be only 3 evening Auctions and only 3 editions of Postmark.
- We have cancelled meetings that clash with Europhillex.
- The savings made in room hire and printing will balance the loss of Auction revenue. The full programme is on page 5-7. These changes were approved by a meeting of the full Committee. There are other issues that will need to be discussed at the AGM:
- Evening meeting attendance numbers – our hope is that numbers will recover with the new venue. If they do not, we will reduce the number of evening meeting for 2026 and beyond or even change to afternoon meetings only.
- Membership fee – the current membership fee is less than the costs incurred per member. The proposal will be to change this for 2026 and beyond. We would also offer a digital membership – lower fee to reflect the reduction in costs from printing and postage.
- Profits from Auctions and the Packet can then be used for more social type activities – catered meetings, coach trips, support for local events such as the ABPS conference, better raffle prizes, etc. Funds would be available but we will need people to organise these activities, see point below.
- Vacancies – we still need more help to run the Society. Some vacancies have been advertised already but any offer of support will be welcomed. (See Page 4).

VACANCIES:

By Kevin Chard (Chairman).

December 2024

There are 2 vacancies that will need to be filled from the AGM in April:

- Postmark Editor
- Public Relations Officer

We are also short of time in other areas so please also consider if there are any roles you would like to perform – we can do a reshuffle! Being involved with our Society organisation adds another dimension to being a member and indeed to your hobby as well.

Please speak to any member of the Committee about any role, the two mentioned above being urgent.

The specific vacancies arise from Steve Gerrard needing to step down, primarily for health reasons. Steve has made a significant contribution to our Society over a considerable period of time. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his efforts.

HAMPSHIRE PHILATELIC FEDERATION:

By Steve Gerrard (Secretary).

January 2025

On the 12th January 2025 there was a Council meeting via ZOOM. At present we have no-one to replace Julian Jones as Federation Chairman. It was confirmed that HAMPEX will be organised on behalf of HPF by Peter Jones the HPF Treasurer. It was also confirmed that Julian will continue to maintain the HPF website. However the Bulletin's future is insecure which means that the 16 Clubs/Societies will not be kept up to date with events. The AGM is scheduled for 27th April and that is the opportunity for individual members of affiliated societies to step forward and keep the Federation going, particularly someone to act as the Federation chairperson.

**TO SEE THE 2025 PROGRAMME & KEEP
UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS**

Visit our website www.southamptondps.org.uk

2025 Program:

By Patrick Austin (Programme Secretary).

December 2024

January 7th - No Meeting.

January 9th - Afternoon Meeting Chandler's Ford.

21st January - Members Evening - Bring & Show.

28th January - Supermarket Philately Pt 2 - Jean Alexander (ZOOM).

FEBRUARY:

4th February - Napoleonic Prisoners of War - Bob Small (Speaker).

11th February - Committee Meeting.

13th February - Afternoon Meeting Chandler's Ford.

18th February - Auction.

25th February - Parachutes Through the Ages - Bob Small (ZOOM).

MARCH:

1st March - Members Auction at Chandler's Ford.

4th March - World War 1 Silks - Mike Moody. (Speaker).

13th March - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford.

18th - Social Competition to be judged by members & Bourse/Silent Auction.

25th March - The MacRobertson Air Race - Sue Burn. (ZOOM).

APRIL:

1st April - AGM & Queries & Recent Acquisitions.

10th April - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford.

15th April - Member Evening Letter 'E'.

29th April - Imperial Airways Experimental Trans Atlantic Flights 1937-1939.

Bill Trower (ZOOM).

MAY:

6th May - No Meeting.

7th - 11th May - Europhilex, Birmingham.

8th May - No Meeting.

2025 Program:

By Patrick Austin (Programme Secretary).

(Continued)....

December 2024

20th May - Social Evening & Single Sheet Competition.

27th May - Postal History of the British Forces in Egypt 1932-1936. Julian Bagwell. (ZOOM).

JUNE:

3rd June - Edwardian Era Pageants. Brian Hague (Speaker).

7th June - RINGPEX.

10th June - Committee Meeting.

12th June - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford.

14th June - SWINPEX.

17th June - Auction.

24th June - Switzerland - Stamps from 1900, with Special Emphasis on William Tell. Brian Dow. (ZOOM).

JULY:

1st July - Richard E. Byrd. David Walker (Speaker).

10th July - Social Event at Chandler's Ford.

15th July - Members Evening & Bourse/Silent Auction.

29th July - Hurtigruten - 130 Years. Brian Down (ZOOM).

AUGUST:

5th August - Building a Nation - South Africa. Chrissie Baker. (Speaker).

14th August - Members Auction at Chandler's Ford.

19th August - No Meeting.

SEPTEMBER:

2nd September - The Republic of Venice 1200-1797. Bill Hedley (Speaker).

11th September - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford.

16th September - Members Evening and 16 Sheets in 5 Minutes.

20th September - HAMPEX.

2025 Program:

By Patrick Austin (Programme Secretary).

(Continued)....

December 2024

30th September - Russia. An Introduction to the Postal History of the Zemstovs. Terry Page. (ZOOM).

OCTOBER:

7th October - Alfred Noble, the Peace Prize & Laureates. Grace Davies. (Speaker).

9th October - Afternoon Meeting Chandler's Ford.

14th October - Committee Meeting.

21st October - Auction.

22nd To 25th October - STAMPEX.

28th October - British Borneo Air Mails 1926-1941. Jon Higgins. (ZOOM).

NOVEMBER:

4th November - West Indies. James Podger. (Speaker).

13th November - Afternoon Meeting Chandler's Ford.

18th November - Member's Evening Letter 'F'.

25th November - Speaker to be confirmed. (ZOOM).

DECEMBER:

2nd December - Liberty & All the Colours of the Rainbow. Sue Lambert. (Speaker).

11th December - Afternoon Meeting Chandler's Ford & Christmas refreshments.

16th December - No Meeting.

ZOOM REPORT: September 2024 ~ October 2024.

By Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-ordinator).

Malc.coe@gmail.com

November 2024

Since the last issue of Postmark we have enjoyed two excellent Zoom Events. Attendance remains good, often with 20+ people participating each time, mostly SDPS members but also a few guests. We are in the progress of “recruiting” visitors from other nearby philatelic societies. It would be great to have a few more SDPS members attending to encourage our speakers who put so much effort into their presentations. We run an open doors policy so anyone outside of SDPS may request to be put on our Guests List – just contact me at the address at the bottom of this article if you or a friend want to join the mailing list.




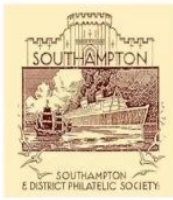


At the end of September we had a very entertaining zoom talk from James Wigmore. His title was “Cyprus Government Railway & Cyprus early airmail”. It was a fascinating presentation particularly since most of us didn’t even know Cyprus had had a railway system!

Our October talk was by Julian Gooch FRPSL with the title “The life & times of Ahmed Shah Qajar 1909-1925”. The presentation was a fascinating revelation of the power struggles going on in Persia as revealed through some excellent philatelic material. An excellent talk by someone who has

ZOOM REPORT: September 2024 ~ October 2024.
By Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-ordinator).
(Continued). Malc.coe@gmail.com November 2024

Presentation to
Southampton & District Philatelic Society
29 October 2024



The Life and Times of Ahmad Shah Qajar, 1909 - 1925

collected Persian philately for over 50 years (by his own admission!).

Our library of these video talks continues to grow and provides an impressive array of accomplished speakers and their talks. This library may be watched by anyone, all you need is a web browser on almost any platform (iPad, Mac, Windows PC, Android device etc). You do not need to use Zoom. Just take a look at the list on our web site and click on the title of interest to you: <http://www.southamptondps.org.uk/avideolibrary.html>

The zoom sessions resume in January with a full programme for 2025. Details of all the forthcoming talks may be found on the SDPS web page under Meetings

Any comments or thoughts on the Zoom session always gladly received. In particular, suggestions for future zoom speakers very much welcomed – what would you like to hear about?

70 THE HIGH STREET...

By Steve Gerrard (Editor)...

November 2024



I often see mail going to 70/71 High Street, Southampton and I came across this item that that was posted on the 25th October arriving on the 26th October 1927. I have added this to my Southampton collection. The item was posted for 1d BUT incurred postage due of 2d 'Liab to Letter Rate 723. This is now the site of Telephone House (No.70 - No75).

The insurance cover was sent by the County Fire Office Limited, Regent Street, London. An English insurance business founded in 1807 by John Thomas Barber Beaumont .

OBITUARY ~ MIKE VOKES MBE 1941 To 2024.

By Peter Bruce (Chandler's Ford Convenor).

December 2024

Many Postmark readers will already have heard the sad news that Mike Vokes passed away in early December 2024. He was diagnosed with a form of lung cancer at the beginning of 2023 and passed away peacefully at the Countess Mountbatten Hospice.

I first met Mike more than 20 years ago when my wife Cathy and I joined the Worthy Down Stamp Club where he was also a member. We ended up being good friends and would meet up regularly both at Worthy Down and later also at Southampton Philatelic. He was an active member at Southampton Philatelic and became Membership Secretary and Convenor of the Chandler's Ford afternoon meetings until ill health obliged him to step back from both roles. His collecting interests covered GB and some selected Commonwealth countries as well as a thematic collection of lighthouses on stamps.

Mike was born in Kingsworthy and could trace his family back several hundred years in the Winchester area. He went to school in Winchester and then took up a career in Customs and Excise which lasted nearly 40 years. He was also involved in the Territorial Army and served in that for some 55 years! He also found time to be involved with Peter Symonds school as a governor and Winchester Cathedral as a Choirmen and Cathedral guide. His involvement in the community was recognised when he was awarded the MBE.

Other interests included birdwatching, gardening, model railways and sport. Together with his wife Mo he enjoyed cruising, particularly to the Caribbean, and would sometimes bring back some philatelic item from a Caribbean island to show at our afternoon meetings.

Mike's contribution to the society, as committee member, meeting convenor, speaker at meetings and simply a friend was much appreciated and he will be sorely missed.

2005 To 2024 - Joined Society (19 years).

2012 To 2023 - Chandler's Ford Convenor.

2014 To 2023 - Membership secretary.

2015 - Members Profile in Postmark. (Issue 127 Page 8).

Peter Bruce.

OBITUARY ~ PAUL ARNOLD (REV)...

By Steve Gerrard (Editor).

November 2024

It was a sad day when I heard of the passing of Paul. He joined the Society in 2011 and was a member for 13 years. Paul was an active member of the Society taking on the role of secretary from 2012 up until 2018. Paul supported the Society in many ways including attending external events such as Colden Common Fete in 2013 along with myself and Paul kept the children entertained and tried his hardest to recruit them. Another event he attended was the Eurotrack14 exhibition in Eastleigh in 2014. Paul would often be seen at the club auctions as a runner giving out items to the attendees. Paul attended the Thursday afternoon meetings at Chandler's Ford and was on hand to lend a help with other events run by the Society.

Paul was a very friendly and thoughtful person and, one time at a meeting, he approached me and gave me a small parcel. He had just arrived back from South Africa after visiting friends and family. When I opened the parcel, it contained two rhinoceroses made on a wire frame and made with coloured beads.

Paul battled on with health issues that were to see his leg amputated and using a wheelchair. Paul will be missed as a member of the Society and by those who knew him.



If you wish to know more about Paul, his Postmark profile was in issue 138 Summer 2018 page 11. (If you do not have this, I can send the PDF of the magazine).

CLUB MEETINGS:

By Steve Gerrard (Editor)...

December 2024

1st October - And I Still Don't Know What to Collect!

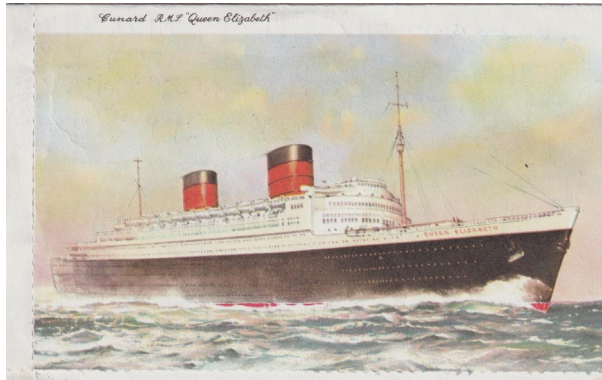
Our October speaker, Paul Latham-Warde, gave members a truly energetic, enthralling and interesting display of some very different topics and material which was enjoyed by all. Topics ranged from a 3-D exhibit of antique letter scales, Barbed Wire, Poor Law letters, Health Insurance stamps, Revenues, Cut and Torn Paper, India Relief Fund, the Renault 2CV and Helicopters. Many topics were shown as 16 sheet competition exhibits to show others what could be done in a novel and distinctive way. It was a great evening's entertainment.

3rd December - The Germany & Colonies Philatelic Society.

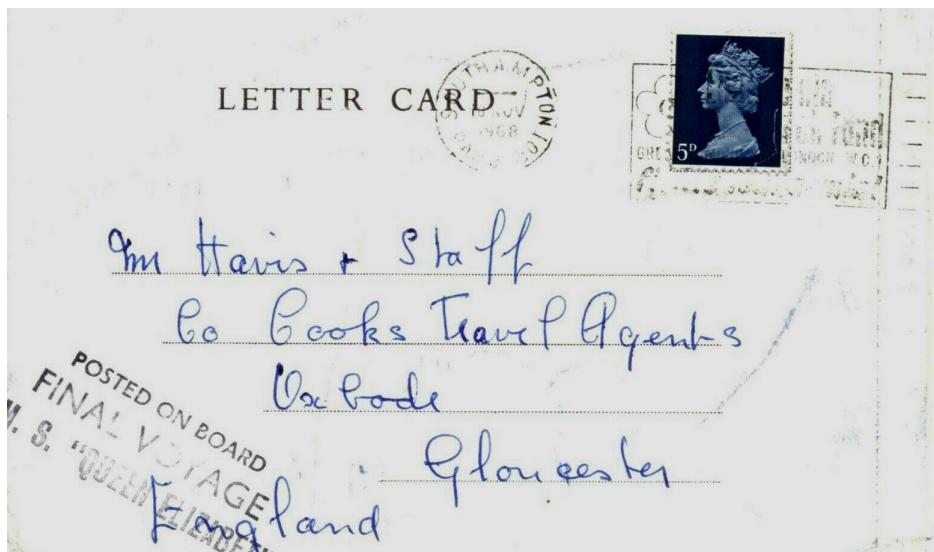
For our December meeting we were delighted to host two local members of the Germany and Colonies Society: Robin Pizer FRPSL and Rex Dixon FRPSL. Robin showed us part of his postal history collection formed over many, many years relating to the policing of money exchange controls set up by the German Government immediately after WWI to stave off monetary collapse caused by the pressure of reparations imposed by the Allies. The talk included amusing examples of how stamp dealers tried to circumvent the controls to provide new issues of foreign stamp sets to collectors within Germany. Many covers showed large denomination German adhesives and multi-rate frankings. Rex followed in the second half by showing stamps issued by the various East and West German States as well as partitioned Berlin immediately after the end of WWII. Examples of sheets of early local printings as well as printings by American and French printers were shown. Examples of usages within East and West Germany were also displayed. Society President Julian Jones gave a vote of thanks and offered the usual certificates and beverage gifts. **Julian Jones. (President).**

Southampton Paquebot Slogan 'Leukaemia'...

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE). December 2024



I was sorting out Southampton slogan postmarks recently and discovered one that should have been included in my 'Paquebot Slogan' collection (such as it is!): 'Leukaemia Research Fund - 1968.1 A postcard of R.M.S. 'Queen Elizabeth', on return from her last voyage from the United States, previously un-recorded and several years later than other paquebot slogans. The discovery set me to tidying up my collection. In so doing, I discovered



Southampton Paquebot Slogan 'Leukaemia'...

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE). (Continued)...

December 2024

another study, 2 available on the internet, that listed British slogan postmarks in the period to 1957 and recorded known issues of slogan postmarks by office, including Southampton, by 'a', 'b', and 'Paquebot'. The 1968 'Leukaemia' postmark falls outside of the period of that study, but it is relevant in listing earlier Southampton paquebot slogan postmarks. I have e-mailed Martin Grier, the author, but received no reply.

A while ago 'SDPS' conducted a brief study of known examples of these marks. As far as I am aware the Grier lists were not consulted (at least, not by me) ... there are marks in his list not included in our collation, most have now been 're-discovered' by SDPS members, but there are other marks that we have recorded that are missing from his list. There is also one on his list, #143 'Volunteer for a Forces Career', 23 May-21 June 1947, that I have never seen on a paquebot cover.

I am preparing an up-date to the SDPS list, if space allows a simplified version could be appended to this article; in the meantime, I would welcome any other examples that readers may have.

One last thought: if anybody can explain Southampton 'a', and Southampton 'b', mentioned in Grier's lists ... I confess my ignorance, but assume two sorting offices (other than the docks), but would be grateful for your views (remember, I live in North Wales, so cannot consult local facilities!). The editor has my e-mail.

¹C.R.H. Parsons, C.G. Peachey, and G.R. Pearson, 'Collecting Slogan Postmarks', p.132: Type 755. #1133.

²M. Grier, 'In-Depth-UK-Slogan-Postmark-Listings, 1917-1959'. ©BRITISH POSTMARK SOCIETY 2020.

HAMPEX COMPETITION RESULTS.

By Julian Jones...

September 2024.

HAMPSHIRE PHILATELIC FEDERATION.
HAMPEX – COMPETITIONS 2024 – TROPHIES and AWARDS.

JAN KALUSKI TROPHY.

(Best 32 sheet exhibit of Show).

David Etchells - Ringwood PS.

HOWARD WHITE SOCIETY TROPHY.

Bob Small & John Davis - Ferndown & West Moors PS.

HOWARD WHITE INDIVIDUAL TROPHY.

Bob Small - Ferndown & West Moors PS.

HAMPSHIRE SIXTEEN CUP.

Julian H Jones - Southampton DPS

The Hampshire Federation competition is judged by nationally accredited judges to national standards. The judges were Michael Smith and Don Jeffries, who were available between 11am and noon at HAMPEX to answer queries from exhibitors.

HOWARD WHITE INTER-SOCIETY TROPHY 2024.

SP7 - HOWARD WHITE SOCIETY TROPHY.

SP8 - HOWARD WHITE INDIVIDUAL TROPHY.

FRAME	EXHIBIT	EXHIBITOR	CLASS	SCORE
		FERNDOWN & WEST MOORS PS.		162
HW01	PENINSULAR WAR MAIL 1808 -1814.	R. SMALL	POSTAL HISTORY	85
				SP 7 SP 8
HW02	WEIMAR REPUBLIC OF GERMANY 1923.	J. DAVIS	TRADITIONAL	77
				SP 7
		RINGWOOD PS		144
HW03	KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ	J. STEVENS.	TRADITIONAL	71
WHO4	FREE TERRITORY OF TRI- ESTE ZONE B YUGOSLAV MILITARY GOVERNMENT.	J. DAVIS.	TRADITIONAL	73

PHILATELIC FRIENDSHIPS ~ STANLEY OSMENT...

By Dave Edwards & Brian Pantaleev. OCTOBER 2024

Stanley passed away in 2023 and an obituary has appeared in an earlier edition of Postmark. Stanley had no family so Brian and myself have arranged for a commemorative bench to be placed in Palmerston Park, Southampton. The three of us spent many happy Sunday afternoons together looking through the stamp packets.



The bench is on the main path. Look out for it if you are down that way. The plaque reads 'Stanley Osment. 1931-2023. In loving memory of a good friend'.

NEW LOCATION FOR TUESDAY MEETINGS...

By Mike Watts (Vice Chairman).

December 2024

Holy Saviour Bitterne Church.

Where Is It? The east end of Bitterne Shopping Precinct – behind the Red Lion Pub and Iceland. (It's NOT the United Reformed Church.)

How to get there:

By Car:

From the west, turn right off Peartree Avenue or left off West End Road into Angel Crescent where there is a large car park behind Sainsbury Supermarket. (Pear Tree Gardens Car Park is within the SO18 5RS post code).

Coming from the east filter left off the A3024 signed "Bitterne, Woolston, West End" and first left into Angel Crescent where there is another fairly large car park.

(The two ends of Angel Crescent do not join up for vehicle access.)

There is very limited parking outside the church in Bursledon Road.

Slightly farther afield there is a small car park in White's Road and another on the corner of Commercial Street and Haynes Road (behind Bitterne Library.) There is a pedestrian subway under the A3024.

There may be on street parking in White's Road and Brownlow Avenue.

Parking Charges:

Sadly Southampton City Council is consulting on the introduction of after 6pm parking charges for all these car parks, which we only discovered after we were committed to the move. £1.50 for 3 hours was suggested as possible by the Evening Echo.

Disabled Parking:

By the main entrance of the church. Go down Bursledon Road (from Maybray King Way) and turn left just before the bollards across the road. The entrance looks narrow on Google Maps but it seems to have been widened!

NEW LOCATION FOR TUESDAY MEETINGS...

By Mike WATTS (Vice Chairman). (Continued)...

December 2024

By Bus.

The following Blue Star bus routes stop at Bitterne Shops bus stop, which is just a few minute's walk from the church:-

3 Southampton to Eastleigh. (Terminates at 8pm).

10 Southampton to Sholing (via Woolston). (Terminates at 8pm).

13 Southampton to Harefield (via Woolston).

14 Southampton to Hedge End.

16 Southampton to Townhill Park.

18 Millbrook to Thornhill (via City Centre).

Services from the City Centre are frequent to get you to meetings for the start time. Not all these routes continue as late as our finish time but routes 14, 16 & 18 run services back into the City Centre at 20.57, 21.08 & 21.29. The last bus from Bitterne Shops back to Woolston is route 13 at 20.44.

For more details see www.bluestarbus.co.uk/service

By Train:

Bitterne Train Station is just under 1 mile from Holy Saviour Church.

Arrivals (Time quoted is arrival time at Bitterne.)

18.37 Train from Southampton Central & St Deny's

18.37 Train from Bursledon, Hamble, Sholing & Woolston

The 3, 14, 16 & 18 bus services will take you from the station to Bitterne Shops bus stop.

Departures

21.37 Train to St. Deny's and Southampton Central

21.38 to Woolston, Sholing, Netley, Hamble and stations to Portsmouth

The 2108 bus (number 18) will get you to the station at 2110

The 2129 bus (number 14) will get you to the station at 2131

(Alight at Bullar Road bus stop)

For more details see www.nationalrail.co.uk

These times are correct at the time of going to press but it's always worth checking in case of any changes.

A TALE OF TWO POSTCARDS...

By Mike Torreggiani...

December 2024



The postcard in question is one of Winkle Street in Calbourne near Newport and published by Peacocks in the early 1900s. Postmarked Calbourne Oct 8 1907 and cancelled at Newport, the card travelled on the afternoon train from Freshwater to Newport,

being picked up at Calbourne station at 4.44pm, arriving in Newport at 5.03pm, where the stamp was cancelled at 7.30. As it was addressed to Totland Bay it would have travelled back to Freshwater on the evening train leaving Newport at 8.55pm for delivery in Totland Bay.



The second card was posted 20 years later in 1927. The stamp was now cancelled at Calbourne on August 5th, time code A for morning, and would again have been taken by train to Newport for onward transportation to the Mainland. The writer

comments on the lack of postcards, saying she bought the available stock from the post office and that 'they date from the year dot'. The card is identical to the card sent in 1907.



This is the only
P.C. I could find of
the village - it shows
the main street. We
visited the post-office
and bought every p.c.
it possessed - only about
12 - & they date from the
y. dot. Love, Etel.

OLD GRAHAM'S PHILATELIC TALES No 7...

By Graham Coles.

October 2024

During the autumn and winter of 1870-71, the city of Paris was besieged by Prussian troops. The beleaguered citizens attempted to correspond with the outside world by various means. The balloon post is well known to carry letters from Paris, but the French also made use of the River Seine itself to carry messages from the provinces to the capital. Several schemes were suggested, including use of a small submarine (which was partially constructed before the siege was lifted), but only one was adopted.

Three engineers, with the names of M. Robert, Delort and Vonoven, came up with the idea of using zinc balls about the size of a baby's head, which could hold letters, and then be soldered up. The zinc balls had fins on the side to help them catch the current. The density of the zinc was just enough for the ball to float, but not on the surface. On the 1st of December 1870 a gunboat left Paris, and went upstream towards the lines of the Prussian troops. At this point, the Parisian Director of Post (M.Rampon) threw one of the zinc balls into the current, and watched it float back towards the point where they had set out from. The following day, with the aid of a fishing net, the ball was recovered several miles downstream. On the 7th of December the intrepid pair of Robert and Delort left Paris by balloon with a stock of the zinc spheres, and floated over 100 miles until they could touchdown in un-occupied France. It took until the following month before permission was granted to send the first of the "boules".

On the 4th of January 1871, M.Robert disguised as a peasant, slipped through the Prussian lines to the banks of the Seine, and placed the boules into the water. For the rest of January 1871, he made numerous trips between the Post Office at Cosne, and the river to release the spheres. Some 40,000 letters had been collected to send to Paris, and it has been estimated that perhaps half of these were entrusted to the water. The public were asked to mark their letters "Paris par Moulins" to hide the secret from the enemy.

OLD GRAHAM'S PHILATELIC TALES No 7...

By Graham Coles. (Continued).

October 2024

M.Roberts was based in Moulins, so the spheres are known as “Boules de Moulins”. The normal postal tariff at this time was 20 centimes- sending it by water would cost you a Franc!

So you may well be asking, what happened to these letters? Some 55 Boules were released, but the Prussians had stretched fishing nets across the Seine, so it is believed that none of them actually reached Paris. Since 1871, boules have come to light from time to time, particularly in the period prior to 1910, but as recently as 1988, with their contents intact. Some 20 Boules are yet to be accounted for. The letters they contained were handed over to the addressees, or their descendants. Since 1982, they have been considered part of the French national heritage.

My last tale concluded with a little French tag, so I can use it again: Sacre Blue Mon Ami!

TUNE IN TO VIDEO...

By Julian Jones...

December 2024

As we get older many of us are reaching the point where driving in the dark is getting stressful. And we don't need stress. So don't forget that, thanks to Malcolm Coe, the Society continues to offer a programme of virtual meetings on the last Tuesday of the month. The society website already shows the video programme for the January through March next year as well as for the remainder of this year here: <http://www.southamptondps.org.uk/meetings.html> . Past meetings can be viewed on our video library page here: <http://www.southamptondps.org.uk/avideolibrary.html>. Yes, I know that members like to socialise in face to face meetings, but Malcolm 'opens the doors' 30 minutes before the start of the presentation and there is usually a live discussion about a variety of topics. If you can't meet physically on a dark winter's night, why not try the next best thing? If you are on Malcolm's invite list then join in. If not, ask him to include you.

CHANDLER'S FORD MEETINGS...

By Peter Bruce...

November 2024.

The three meetings in September, October and November were less well attended than normal, but we still enjoyed some good displays of material. All three meetings were of the normal "Show and Tell" variety.

September saw us treated to displays of Antarctica, Rhodesia and airmail related to Wellington NZ.

October produced some Inland Revenue mail, some GEA overprints and also a large collection of Transatlantic mail.

I recently received a batch of "schoolboy" albums to dispose of, and amongst them was an interesting item issued by the Ivory Soap Company in conjunction with Captain Tim, who used to broadcast short radio programmes relating to countries and their stamps back in the 1930s. For two soap wrappers and 10c you could obtain this album for your stamp collection in 1936. A similar deal offered packs of stamps in exchange for the wrappers. I brought this along in November to show. This item will appear in one of our auctions next year!

We also had displays of Halley's Comet, early Mauritius (sadly only copies of the first issues as John Berridge claimed not to be able to afford the millions needed to acquire originals!) and an unusual cover from Campbell Island, a dependency of NZ out in the Antarctic Ocean. No permanent residents, but it has a Post Office!

Thanks to all who bring along items for display. All are welcome to bring something – maybe it's your turn!



VIA SOUTHAMPTON...

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE)... November 2024

Some years ago I began to notice that some envelopes were pre-printed 'Via Southampton' ... they were quite scarce but seemed to reach, or originate from, all corners of the globe. Those I could afford to buy I put aside for a collection that was to be called 'Southampton – Centre of the World' but, like many other aspirations, it has never been realised. The purpose of this article is twofold: first, to increase awareness of Southampton's importance as a centre for directing and facilitating correspondence to distant destinations and second, rather selfishly, to coax out other examples that might help to form a more comprehensive collection.

The primary purpose of the printed instruction was, of course, to ensure that correspondence was sent by the most appropriate, or cheapest, route, but it still surprises me that it appears on envelopes from the Americas, India, the Far East, the Pacific and Africa. Many of the correspondents were British, but not all, letters originating in France or more distant parts have also appeared. British correspondents could choose the earliest departure, or a cheaper route, Southampton rather than Marseilles, for instance. Overseas there were a range of reasons, but Southampton often appears to have been the preferred choice. I have illustrated a few and would like to hear of others, if you have any.

From Hong Kong: Hong Kong to London, via Southampton, 12th May 1861. A letter from a corporal serving with the 21st Fusiliers (see over) about to move from Varna to attack Sebastopol. The letter was directed 'via



VIA SOUTHAMPTON... (Continued).

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE)... November 2024

Southampton' to avoid foreign postage but, the French Government having given permission for British Forces to send letters via France at the same rate as their French forces, threepence per quarter ounce, the letter in the event did not travel via Southampton. As the rate for soldiers and officers was the same by this route, no commanding officer's endorsement was necessary. (ex. Scott Archer).

England to Australia: Bristol, England, to Melbourne, Victoria, 18th July 1862. This is the earliest (and most recently acquired) of the printed-to-order envelopes that I have. It has a lilac imprint 'VIA SOUTHAMPTON' and was pre-paid sixpence, the rate for a letter weighing less than half of an ounce to Australia. Sent first to London, in accordance with its direction the letter was passed to Southampton (rather than to Marseilles, the more expensive, but faster, route). Carried first by the Peninsular & Oriental Company's ship 'Ripon', departing 20th July 1862 via Gibraltar and Malta, for Alexandria, then overland to Suez for the 'Bombay' to Galle and Melbourne. The letter arrived in Melbourne on 8th September 1862.



VIA SOUTHAMPTON... (Continued).

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE)... November 2024

England to the United States: London, to Boston, via Southampton, 19th April 1869. A letter with a cachet applied by W. Brandt's, Sons & Co., at first directing it 'Via Cork' for the Inman Line 'City of Baltimore'. Recognising that there was an earlier sailing, the direction was changed to 'Via Southampton' for the North German Lloyd 'Hermann', calling at Southampton on 20th April 1869. The letter arrived in Boston on the 3rd May 1869.



India to the United States: Meerutt to the United States via Southampton and Queenstown, 29th March 1870. A cover, intended for mails via Southampton, apparently produced by a regiment in India for the benefit of its soldiers. Corporal Davies has paid an additional sixteen pies for British transit, nevertheless, a further three cents has been raised for United States inland postage. The letter was sent first to Bombay and by 'Meerut' to Suez on 16th April, then overland to Alexandria for 'Pera' sailing on 17th April for



Southampton on the 30th; thence via London to Queenstown, Ireland for 'Samaria', arriving in Boston on 14th May 1870. (ex Bryan Hunt).

VIA SOUTHAMPTON... (Continued).

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE)... November 2024

France to Peru: Paris to Lima via Southampton, 15th September 1873. Letters from France, if so directed, could be sent to South America by British packets out of Southampton. Those from Paris normally passed through London and bear transit marks to that effect; the example below does not, but with a 'Gare du Nord' origin it is unlikely to have travelled via Le Havre to Southampton. It was paid two francs sixty centimes with a red 'P.P.' (Port Payé) directed 'VOIE DE SOUTHAMPTON / VOIE DE PANAMA' for the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's ship 'Tagus' out of Southampton on 17th September 1873 for Colon on 9th October; thence via Panama to Lima. There is no legible arrival handstamp, but the letter is endorsed as having been received on 18th October 1873.



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SUBMISSION DATES FOR POSTMARK.

**15th APRIL.
15th AUGUST.
15th DECEMBER.**

Submissions to be received by the Editor by midnight of the 15th.