

Postmark

Issue

168

May 2026



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EDITOR'S COLUMN

By Steve Gerrard (sdpseditor@hotmail.co.uk)

May 2026

Well folks, the 2nd Postmark of 2026 and, with the subscription going up to £25.00 and receiving Postmark through the mail and electronically, it seems that the committee made the right choice and it had to be done.

This is an issue we do not want anymore of as we have lost two of our members, Pauline Vinecombe (Page 19) & John Berridge (Page 21). Both will be sadly missed by our membership and are thoughts are with their partners at this time. This is a big problem for the Society as we have an ageing membership with only a few members under the age of 63. We need to find some other ways of attracting younger collectors and those that have their collections from when they were younger or stopped collecting when their children were born and they had other priorities.

As editor, I find filling pages very difficult and need to have articles from members to include. So please, if you want to see your items in Postmark then just send it in to me and I will do the rest. This also lets members know what your collecting area is and possible contacts for questions etc to ask others.

Next month we see the club from the Isle of Wight coming over to give an afternoon talk. I wonder how many people will attend, as our Tuesday evening numbers have dropped. (The last Tuesday evening meeting only 9 people attended.) So, if there is a good turnout, then is it time we think of having afternoon meetings on Tuesdays instead of evening meetings?

My sincere thanks go to all the following who have contributed to this issue, in alphabetical order (by surname): Blundell, Stephen / Bradshaw, Mel / Bruce, Peter / Chard, Kevin / Coe, Malcolm / Edwards, Dave, / Gerrard, Steve / Jones, Julian / Montgomery, Malcolm / Pantaleev, Branimir / Sheppard, Reg.

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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

by Kevin Chard

April 2026

Welcome to this latest edition of Postmark.

Many of you will have read my thoughts on 2025 recently in the AGM report. This article is something of a follow-up to the AGM, the full minutes of which are available from our website.

My thanks to those who attended on the 7th April; dialogue with the broader membership in this type of setting is always useful. One of the key messages relates to this – we are still actively looking for members who can / are willing to take on any role in the Society. A couple of new faces will allow us to spread the workload but also generates more ideas. Those currently on the Committee are flexible in terms of role and we also need under-studies, especially for the Packet. We also need someone to take on the Zoom programme when Malcolm steps down at the end of this year.

There were two real positives from the AGM. The first is that we enter a more stable time and, without the controversy of increased subscription fees, everything feels settled and calm.

The second is the ideas generated from the meeting. Things may be settled and calm but that makes it easier to innovate. I list the key thoughts that we will be discussing at the next committee meeting, please pass any suggestions to a member of the committee:

- Tuesday meetings – should at least some of these be afternoon rather than evening? Would that enable more people to attend?
- Themed evenings with other clubs – Railways and the Church seem good starting places. If anyone with collections in these areas, who are willing to display, please let Patrick know, or indeed any other club / theme they think might work.

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.

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

by Kevin Chard (continued)

April 2026

- Salisbury stamp fair – with Hampex finishing we have a table at the Salisbury event. Any thoughts welcome. Perhaps we should display some of our collection?
- With the Federation folding we have less visibility. What else can we do to promote ourselves / our hobby?
- Should we increase website security? Security is good for what we do but newcomers may get a message stating it is not secure. The theory on this is it would not be secure for financial transactions but fine for us as we do not conduct any. Would this message be a deterrent to some though?

If I forecast what I think will happen in 2026, I expect the finances to be strong. That does raise the question of what we should do with the money. Ideas are welcomed on this but must be accompanied by practical thoughts on how it can be achieved, so not “it would be good if someone else could organise this” but “I would be happy to organise this if the Club would support”.

Enjoy your collecting in the months ahead and try to get to meetings over the summer months when warmth and light is better and the days are longer.

LIBRARY UPDATE

By Reg Sheppard (Librarian)

February 2026

A reminder to all members that, although our library is considerably depleted, we are retaining all our Stanley Gibbons catalogues. We shall be pleased to receive any surpluses that are in our members ownership in order to keep our library as up to date as possible.

IS OUR WEBSITE SAFE?

By Julian Jones (Webmaster)

April 2026

Some members have noted that when viewing our society website their browser says "Not Secure". Sometimes their computer security programme questions whether they should proceed to the website. Why is this?

Our website is not set up to use Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) which is an internet security protocol that encrypts data transmitted between a web browser and a server, ensuring privacy, authentication and data integrity. SSL scrambles data (like credit card numbers or passwords) during transmission, making it unreadable to unauthorized parties.

Our website does not store personal data and we do not conduct financial transactions through it. The website provides just information about the society. So, for the purposes of keeping members up to speed and providing information such as Postmark and auction lists or reminding them about meetings, it is safe to use.

This link takes you to our meetings page: <http://www.southamptondps.org.uk/meetings.html>

ELECTRIC AUTO

By Steve Gerrard (Editor)

May 2026



Electric cars are here to stay and technology has been slow. They say stamps are a good learning tool and captures life and times of the past and present. Here is a 1917 Electric Auto from America on the 17c stamp. So Electric cars are not new, but what happened after 1917 up until 2015? They vanished in a bolt of lightning?

PACKET MANAGER'S REPORT

by Dr Mel Bradshaw

April 2026

The packet results for 2025, reported at the AGM, were an improvement over 2024. Nineteen circuit boxes were audited and paid during 2025, compared with sixteen the previous year. Sales from these boxes amounted to £8,618.96, with commission payable to the society of £862.11. A further £59.22 was paid to the society through the Associate Membership Subscription levy and member donations from packet sales. We are fortunate that compared with many other societies the number of members receiving the packets is still well over 50, including those on the Isle of Wight.

During the year additional boxes were circulated on the Isle of Wight and, owing to the strong sales on the island, all boxes now complete all three circuits, two based on Southampton and one on the island. This of course means that the boxes take longer between their initial production and final audit for payment. We were fortunate to receive a supply of new, slightly smaller boxes and this has allowed for more boxes to be in circulation. Gradually the number of boxes in circulation is being increased, but one effect of this will be to reduce the stock of booklets awaiting distribution in boxes. As a result, more booklets for inclusion in future boxes would be appreciated. All that spare material you have is waiting for a home!

It is anticipated that results for 2026 will improve again, even allowing for the extra time owing to the island circulation. Members from the island now contribute occasional boxes for circulation around our Southampton circuits. One has recently been audited with sales exceeding £400. A total of five boxes has been audited and paid this year, with sales of £2198.89 with commission of £219.92, Associate Membership Subscription levy of £9.43. Sales in the 22 boxes in circulation amount to about £5,150.

Lastly, could I please remind members to take care when completing a purchase slip? Recently there have been errors in individual booklets where items signed for have not been entered on the front, errors in transfer from booklet to payment slip and errors in addition! Please do all you can to reduce the amount of work I have to do, and the amount of chasing up!

Thank you everyone for your support.

REPORT ON ZOOM SESSIONS JANUARY TO FEBRUARY 2026

by Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-Ordinator)
(malc.coe@gmail.com)

March 2026

Recent Zoom Events

Since the last issue of Postmark, we have enjoyed two excellent Zoom events. The first was our annual SDPS members-only session, featuring a series of engaging talks delivered by Keith Burton, Peter Wingent, and Peter Mills. We extend our gratitude to each speaker for preparing and presenting topics that hold special interest for them. As is customary, this meeting was not recorded.

In February, we welcomed an external speaker, Dr Jon Higgens, who presented a talk entitled “1894 The First 2 Colour Pictorials of the Empire, North Borneo & Labuan”. Dr Higgens explored how the earliest pictorial definitive stamps originated from two of the lesser-known territories of the British Empire.

Labuan becomes a Crown Colony

The Sultan of Brunei ceded the Island to the British who took possession on December 24 1846
Ceremony of Raising the Flag, British fleet in the background, Brunei nobility around flagstaff



REPORT ON ZOOM SESSIONS JANUARY TO FEBRUARY 2026

by Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-Ordinator)

(malc.coe@gmail.com)

March 2026

The First stamps of Labuan issued in 1879
Recess printed by De La Rue in sheets of 10 on watermarked paper
Four values totalling 9,180 stamps at a cost of 7s 9d which were expected to be sufficient for
for four years use

Specimen stamps from the printers archive, one sheet only of each value
The first printed by De La Rue from their own engraved plates



Video Library:

Our collection of recorded video talks continues to expand, offering a remarkable selection of accomplished speakers and their presentations. These videos are accessible to everyone; simply use a web browser on any device, whether it be an iPad, Mac, Windows PC, or Android. Zoom is not required to view these talks. To browse the available titles and watch a talk that interests you, please visit our website and click on the relevant title:
<http://www.southamptondps.org.uk/avideolibrary.html>

REPORT ON ZOOM - 2026 PROGRAMME OF TALKS

by Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-Ordinator)

(malc.coe@gmail.com)

March 2026

Our schedule of talks for the remainder of 2026 is now fully booked, and we have a range of topics to look forward to:

- 31/03/2026 – Rex Dixon: "Nothilfe – German Emergency Aid, 1924-1935"
- 28/04/2026 – Peter Cockburn: "Ceylon Revenues"
- 26/05/2026 – Malcolm Coe - "A 1934 attempt to establish an airmail service London-Southampton-Plymouth"
- 30/06/2026 – Margaret Emerson: "The 1953-54 Coronation Tour"
- 28/07/2026 – Barbara Booter: "Isambard Kingdom Brunel"
- 29/09/2026 – Graham Winters: "Post Cards! Post Cards! Post Cards!"
- 27/10/2026 – Malcolm Gascoyne: "Mail along the Andes: Ecuador"
- 24/11/2026 – Sue Burn: "The Rise of the Flying Boats and the Empire Airmail Scheme"

I hope you can join us for some of these talks.



CHANDLER'S FORD MEETINGS

by Peter Bruce (Convenor)

April 2026

January was our first meeting of 2026 and we enjoyed displays of stamps issued to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's 60th Birthday, the early overprinted high values from Ireland and a number of NZ covers.

Pauline, wife of long standing member Harry Vincombe, recently passed away and as her funeral was held at the same time as our February meeting it was decided that the meeting would be cancelled in order to give members the opportunity to attend and pay their respects. We send our condolences to Harry.

March was a well-attended meeting with lots of displays including a "Letter F" compilation from a recent Bitterne meeting, some examples of Post Office training stamps and stamps on a cricket theme.

April brought us a varied collection of displays, including a "Penny Reds" work in progress, stamps from Surinam and our chairman's collection of odd minor countries, together with WWF stamps (that's Wildlife, not Wrestling!)

April also brought us news of the passing away of our good friend John Berridge, long-standing member of our Society. Again, our condolences to his family.

WHAT COUNTRY AM I FROM?

by Steve Gerrard (Editor)

May 2026



Which country printed their stamps with images such as shown left? So, name the country, why they had to source to printing on this and finally what was the stamp printed on? All will be revealed in Postmark 169. This is not the only country that printed their stamps such as this, but it was the sign of the times when paper became a hard thing to find so printers had to think outside of the box.

LETTER TO BOMBAY

by Peter Bruce (Convenor)

April 2026

I am not a particular collector of Postal History, but found this envelope recently and thought it was interesting.

It dates from 1884 and was sent on May 9th from Folkestone in England to Bombay in India, being addressed to Surgeon Major Ogilvie M.D. Bombay Army, c/o Postmaster Bombay. The stamp is SG162 6d on 6d Lilac.

At this time such letters were sent from England across the Channel and then down by train to Brindisi in Italy (right at the end of Italy's "heel"). Brindisi is at the southern end of the Appian Way which runs 400 miles from Rome and was the port used by ships travelling to Egypt. Once reaching Alexandria the obvious route to the Indian Ocean would be via the Suez canal, which had opened a few years earlier in 1869. However, it appears that the Post Office did not use the canal until some years later in 1888, so this letter travelled by train from Alexandria down to Suez at the southern end of the canal, where it was put on another boat and sailed across the Indian Ocean to Bombay, only for the Postmaster to find that Major Ogilvie had been transferred to Karachi! The letter was then taken up to Karachi, presumably by train, and was received by Major Ogilvie on 29th May.

The letter has five postmarks on it.

Folkestone May 9th

Sea Post Office May 15th

Bombay May 25th

Bombay May 26th

Karachi May 29th

**TO SEE THE 2026 PROGRAMME & KEEP
UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS**

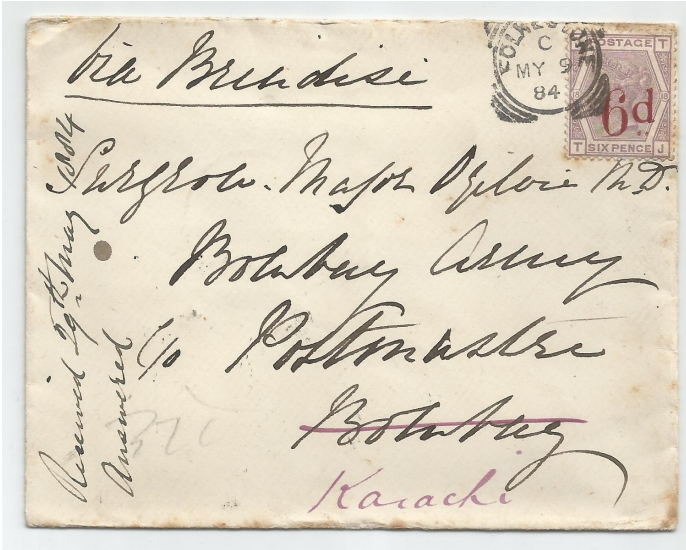
Visit our website www.southamptondps.org.uk

LETTER TO BOMBAY

by Peter Bruce (Convenor) (Continued)

April 2026

I plan to list this item in a future auction, so if you are anxious to obtain it, look out for the list!



SOCIETY MEETINGS FEBRUARY 2026

By Julian Jones FRPSL (President) February 2026

Our first speaker of 2026 was James Podger FRPSL who regaled us with tales of his exploits on and around Ascension Island while captain of an oil tanker moored offshore. His stories were backed by a display of rare and interesting material including covers and postcards relating to the island. This included two postally used covers correctly paid by Ascension Island stamps each including one half of a bisected stamp sent to England. In the second half James' exploits were matched by displays of material from islands he had passed while navigating around Africa along its east and west coasts. A very entertaining evening was enjoyed by a good sized audience.

Our programme continued with a video presentation by Jon Higgins FRPSL on the topic of the First 2 Colour Pictorials of the Empire, North Borneo & Labuan. Jon provided significant philatelic detail but also interesting background and social history about British activities in North Borneo.

Peter Webb provided our next in-person presentation with a fascinating account of French India with historical background of the fall-out from the end of Britain's wars with Napoleon leading to France being given several towns in India, the principal one being Pondicherry. Peter showed covers, stamps, postal stationary and overprints used by the French post offices in India together with forgeries of pretty much everything. A fascinating insight into a piece of Indian history not usually told in Britain.

PANDA FAIRS (May - September 2026).

16th May - Fareham - Holy Trinity Church Hall, West Street PO16 0EL (10-3).

17th May - Farnham - UPPER HALE Village Hall, Wings Road GU9 0HN.

27th June - Southampton - Methodist Hall, St. James Road, SHIRLEY.

4th July - Bournemouth - St Edmund Campion Church, 481 Castle Lane West BH8 9TN.

25th July - Petersfield - Community Centre, off Love Lane GU31 4BW.

12th September - Wimborne - Allendale Centre, Hanham Road BH21 1AS (10-3).

20th September - Farnham - UPPER HALE Village Hall, Wings Road GU9 0HN.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

by Steve Blundell (Membership Secretary)

April 2026

The change in membership arrangements has proceeded, contrary to my initial fears, in a very satisfactory, even disciplined way. Most members have renewed and accurately paid either the digital or postal membership subscription.

The current state of the membership is as follows:

Digital members:	Total 77 members
Postal members:	Total 56 members

In April, we have had two new members apply. Nick Bailey lives in Bitterne. His current philatelic interests are Europa, aviation, Bundespost & QEII from the Commonwealth. The most recent application is from Brian & Patricia Elliott who attended the most recent members' auction to make their enquiry.

In April, we have had two new members apply. Nick Bailey lives in Bitterne. His current philatelic interests are Europa, aviation, Bundespost & QEII from the Commonwealth. The most recent application is from Brian & Patricia Elliott who attended the most recent members' auction to make their enquiry.

A number of members have declined to renew - they mainly cite ill-health. Those, with whom I have had direct contact, wish us well. The message to all former members is that we are sorry to see them go. If they wish, they are welcome to re-join. They would also be welcome to attend a meeting as a guest if they so wish.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

by Steve Gerrard (Archivist)

May 2026

Southampton Chronicle Newspaper Tax Stamp



A 1d & Half Penny Southampton Chronicle Newspaper Tax Stamp. 1712 - 1855.

The oldest item held in the Society Postal History collection.

STAMP JOKES

- I told my friend that I was starting a stamp collection... Now they won't stop sticking around.
- Did you hear that joke about the letter that didn't have a stamp? No... Never mind, you wouldn't get it.
- You need to put another stamp on this parcel as it's too heavy. But another stamp will just make it heavier.

PROGRAMME JUNE TO SEPTEMBER

Steve Gerrard (Editor)

May 2026

June:

2nd - Visitor Displays: Isle of Wight Stamp Club - Afternoon Meeting at 2.30pm

6th - Ringpex 2026 - Ringwood BH24 1DW

10th - Visit to the Isle of Wight Stamp Club.

11th - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford.

13th - Swinpex - St Joseph's School, Swindon.

16th - Auction.

July:

7th - Antipodean Trials & Tribulations - Clive Jones.

9th - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford & Social Event.

21st - Members' Evening & Bourse / Silent Auction.

August:

4th - Falkland Islands & South Georgia - Hugh Osborne FRPSL.

13th - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford - Members' Auction.

September:

1st - Railways & Spitfire - Yvonne Wheatley FRPLS and Richard Wheatley FRPSL.

10th - Afternoon Meeting at Chandler's Ford.

15th - Members' Evening and 16 sheets in 5 minutes.

To see our events on ZOOM, please turn to page 9 where you will find dates, speakers & the subject of their presentations.

JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF HONG KONG

By Dave Edwards

March 2026

The Japanese Occupation of Hong Kong began on 25th December 1941 when the British surrendered after 18 days of heavy fighting. The occupation lasted for three years and 8 months.

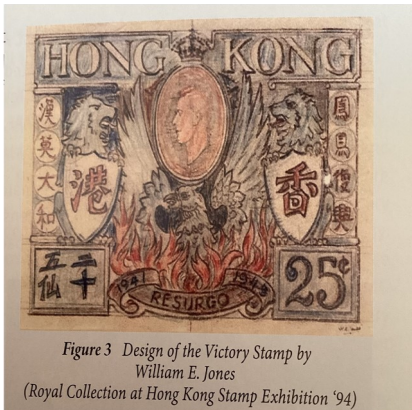


Figure 3 Design of the Victory Stamp by William E. Jones

(Royal Collection at Hong Kong Stamp Exhibition '94)

Edward Irvine Wynne-Jones was the Postmaster General of Hong Kong before the occupation and he along with several others were sent to Stanley Internment Camp. The story of how Wynne-Jones designed the Victory stamp for when Hong Kong was finally liberated is well known. (SG169/170).

During the occupation Japanese stamps were used in Hong Kong. Later towards the end of the occupation, in April 1945, due to soaring inflation, three

Japanese stamps were overprinted with denominations of 1.5 yen, 3 yen and 5 yen.



Figure 8 Japanese Stamps Issued in Hong Kong 16 APR 1945

Eventually in August 1945 the Japanese conceded defeat and the Surrender Document was signed in September 1945 at Government House.

In August 1945 Wynne-Jones was able to leave the Internment Camp and visit the GPO. The

Japanese Postal Officers were not very cooperative but a few of the old P.O. staff remained employed. Eventually British rule was restored and the last day of the Japanese-run postal service was on 31st August 1945. Some souvenir covers were produced by stamp collectors but probably not postally used but cancelled by favour and handed back.

After the new administration took over, all Post Offices, Pillar Boxes etc were closed until basic postal services could be re-established. However a

JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF HONG KONG

By Dave Edwards (Continued)

March 2026

restricted local postal service, free of charge to the public, was operated. Letters could be posted at just two main Post Offices and no stamp was required. A special handstamp showing 'Hong Kong 1945 Postage Paid' was applied to this mail.

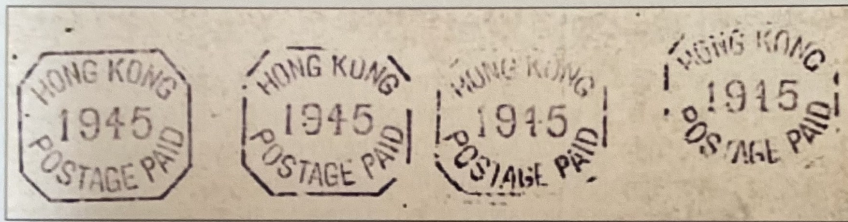


Figure 25 Impressions of the different sub-types of the 1945 Postage Paid handstamp

On 28th September 1945 the free service was discontinued and from then on letters had to be properly stamped.

Curiously it was found that a large number of original Hong Kong stamps were preserved by the Japanese and these were able to be used by the Post Office when normal services were restored.

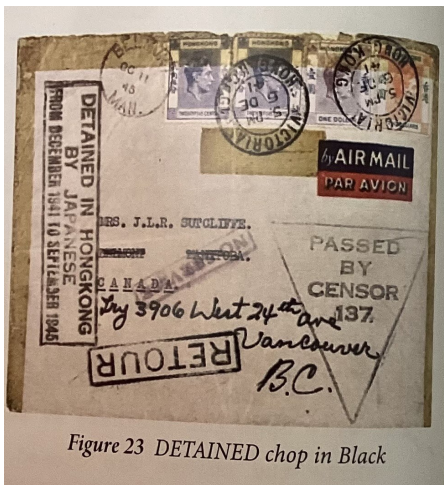


Figure 23 *DETAINED* chop in Black

In addition 7 sacks of outgoing Mail were discovered which had been lying in the GPO during the period of occupation having been posted on the day of the British surrender but again preserved intact. These were resorted and put back into the postal system. Again a special handstamp showing 'Detained in Hong Kong by Japanese from December 1941 to September 1945' was applied.

A very comprehensive article on the Japanese Occupation and the postal service at that time appears in the

Hong Kong 2026 Journal by Simon C.K. Choi and K.K. Ho.

OBITUARY: PAULINE VINECOME (1936 To 2025)

by Branimir Pantaleev (Member)

February 2026



I am sad to share with you that our longstanding member and my friend Pauline Vinecombe has passed away.

Pauline was born on 30 March 1936 in Bromley, Greater London. She had a happy childhood until the outbreak of WWII. Her family experienced the Blitz, and Pauline had vivid memories from those tragic days, particularly the later stages of the War, when V1 and V2 rockets were used to attack London, and one struck her street.

The years after the War were not easy either and Pauline was able to explain the nature and reasons for Rationing better than many books on the subject.

Later, Pauline started work for British Gas, and was involved in the conversion from coal to natural gas in the early 60-s. She met Harry in 1969, and the following year they married. Two years later, Pauline retired and became a homemaker. Harry credits her as the main reason for his professional success. There is a well-known saying that "*behind every successful man there is a strong, wise and hardworking woman.*" This was indeed the case with Harry and Pauline.

Pauline was competent in history, geography and contemporary politics, as well as art and culture. Harry describes her as a Facilitator for his work, including his role within our philatelic society. For instance, when a member got ill, she would buy a *Get-Well Card*. Such seemingly *little things* enabled Harry to regularly spend time with frail SDPS members when delivering the packet, to look into their collections, and to find out whether they already had the intriguing stamp from the booklet. Such kindness sometimes took several

OBITUARY: PAULINE VINECOME (1936 To 2025)
by Branimir Pantaleev (Member) (Continued)

February 2026

hours of Harry's time, but it contributed greatly for the success of our Society. That would not have been possible without Pauline's unwavering support.

Pauline collected fish on stamps and over the years gathered a great collection, many of which were from members attending the Thursday meetings. I was glad to also contribute significantly to her collection. She attended social events at SDPS until the outbreak of Covid. Three years ago, Pauline had an unfortunate accident and broke her Pelvis. While in the geriatric unit, she was offered a container for her dentures, but she amazed the nurses by saying that all her teeth were natural, which was the case indeed! She managed to recover and was able to move around her home with the help of a Zimmer frame. Fortunately, her hairdresser was able to visit and keep her in good spirits.

I was fortunate to visit Pauline at the end of November, and she was both enthusiastic and energetic despite not hearing much. Pauline passed away in her sleep on 29 December – a sad but painless departure from our World.

From the Society records from 2003.

Pauline joined the society in 2003 and remained a member up until her passing in 2026. She was a very valued member of the Society for 23 years.

Archivist Steve Gerrard

OBITUARY: JOHN BERRIDGE (1936 - 2026)

by Branimir Pantaleev (Member)

May 2026



I am sad to share with you that our longstanding member and my friend John Berridge has passed away.

John was born on 26 February 1936 in Glasgow as the youngest child in the family. Soon afterwards, they moved to London. At the outbreak of WWII, he was evacuated together with many other city children to the countryside. John was fortunate because due to his young age, his mother was selected to accompany his group of children as a helper. Moreover, they were accommodated in a stately manor in Devon, provided by a particularly kind member of the aristocracy. However, during the first months of the War both

OBITUARY: JOHN BERRIDGE (1936 - 2026)
by Branimir Pantaleev (Member) (Continued)
May 2026

sides avoided deliberately targeting urban areas (at least as far as the Western Front was concerned), so by early 1940 most evacuated children returned to their homes. This meant that John experienced the Blitz but as he was not yet five, he was fascinated by the searchlights and tracer rounds, and even collected pieces of shrapnel and cartridge casings. Meanwhile, his father worked for an insurance company and, as he was considered too old for frontline service, he was appointed to perform shifts as a fire warden on the top of his office building, where he had to use sand and basic tools in order to extinguish incendiary devices. Even though the family survived the War, the stress John's father experienced during the Blitz nights was likely the reason why he passed away before reaching retirement age.

John started collecting British Empire stamps early and this became a life-long passion, only rarely being interrupted by major events such as his National Service in the Royal Artillery as a Surveyor.

He joined the Royal Exchange Assurance in the City of London in 1956, and this was a most fortunate decision because the following year he was transferred to its Bulawayo office, back then in Southern Rhodesia. Some people went to Africa to find Gold, others - Diamonds. John was luckier because he met Mary there and they married in 1961. Her kind character and unwavering support were the main reasons for his long and happy life. In later years, John often displayed his collection from the Federation of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Those stamps reminded him about some of his happiest years - the Wedding, the birth of his first two children, the rally driving, including the Bulawayo Chronicle Cup as Champion Rally Driver of Matabeleland, and the flying as a founding member of Falcon Aero Club. John was transferred to the Lusaka Office of the Royal Exchange Assurance in Northern Rhodesia and joined the local

OBITUARY: JOHN BERRIDGE (1936 - 2026)
by Branimir Pantaleev (Member) (Continued)
May 2026

philatelic society, where he met the utmost authority in Southern African Philately – Alan Drysdall. Little could either of them have foreseen that 54 years later John would succeed Alan as President of Southampton Philatelic Society!

However, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland fell apart. Northern Rhodesia became Zambia and, when the Government of Southern Rhodesia declared the Unilateral Declaration of Independence, John realised that the writing was on the wall, and it was time to move on. The journey back to Europe on board the *Southern Cross* brought one of the greatest upheavals in John's life. Two days out of Cape Town, in the middle of the South Atlantic, he had his appendix removed, courtesy of the ship's Irish doctor and an Australian anaesthetist.

Safely recovered, he settled with the family in Sussex to join the local firm of Insurance Brokers in Crowborough where their third child, Mary Frances, was born. Later, John was transferred to Wales, where the family spent 14 happy years. 1983 was a fortunate year for SDPS because John was appointed to run the Southampton & Bournemouth Offices of Alexander & Alexander Insurance Brokers and, despite his busy professional life, he joined our Philatelic Society to become one of its most active members. John's contribution was enormous and, among other Committee roles, he will be remembered as the person who brought our Postmark back to life in 1988 after a break of 35 years. He remained as its editor until 2012, having produced over 80 issues. Another innovation introduced and implemented by John and Mary was the travelling programme. Thanks to their efforts and organisational skills, a number of annual excursions to International Philatelic Exhibitions took place: Paris, Madrid, Brussels, Amsterdam, Valencia, Brno, Salzburg, Prague and Antwerp. In 2007, John received the ABPS "Award of

OBITUARY: JOHN BERRIDGE (1936 - 2026)
by Branimir Pantaleev (Member) (Continued)
May 2026

Merit" for services to the Society.

In more recent years, he wrote a book about the History of the Airmail and Aviation of Bulawayo. His expert knowledge made him a valued member of the Royal Philatelic Society until the very end. While Rhodesia in its various incarnations was the main philatelic interest, John had also other collections and his final philatelic display was about the airship *Hindenburg*. After his term as a President, John served as a Vice-President and, despite various health problems, he kept on attending meetings, and almost until the end, John was helping with the auctions, making notes for the bids. In 2018, John received Honorary Life Membership Certificate, which was a fitting tribute for his Contribution towards our Philatelic Society.

I was fortunate to meet John just before Christmas and despite some breathing problems, his high spirits and positive mood cheered me up. We were looking forward to his Zoom presentation in May but sadly John left us on Good Friday, with his family next to him. John will be remembered not only by his wife, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren but also by all SDPS members who had the chance to travel with him to Europe or witness his philatelic displays.

P.S. I would like to gratefully acknowledge the help of John Dorrington, whose Profile article within the 2016 Summer issue of Postmark has been the foundation of this obituary and also contains further interesting details about John's life.

By Society Archivist...

As previously stated, John was a very active member within the Society and I would like to add the following:

OBITUARY: JOHN BERRIDGE (1936 - 2026)

by Branimir Pantaleev (Member) (Continued)
May 2026

John took part in many club competitions and also undertook many roles within the society. ...

Archivist 2000 – 2003

Bulletin Editor 1988 – 2011

President 2014 – 2017

Vice Chairman 2009 – 2012.

Vice President 2021- 2022.

Award of Merit ABPS – 2007

Basil Owen Award – 1994/1999/2013

Bob McDonald Trophy – 2012/2013/2015/2016.

Fassnidge Award – 2005/2018.

HAMPEX – 2018/2019.

John Stockley Rose Bowl – 1997/1999.

Millenium Trophy – 2003/2007.

Open Class at West Trophy – 2014.

John Emmott Shield – 2018.

Sharman Trophy – 1998/2014.

2022 - THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY LONDON elected Fellow of the Society. (FRPSL).

Honorary Life Membership – 2018.

Steve Gerrard Society Archivist



AN OUTBOUND SHIP LETTER THROUGH SOUTHAMPTON

by Malcolm Montgomery MBE

April 2026

I will start by admitting that I'm on fairly shaky ground here ... I have seen and collected many ship letters through the Solent ports, but they have generally been inbound and, as best that I can recall, have never been prepaid with adhesive postage stamps. So, in case I have it wrong, I'll apologise in advance ... but it is a pretty cover and has given me another opportunity to illustrate that Southampton, and the other Solent ports, deserve greater recognition of their importance in maritime postal history than they sometimes receive.

A letter from London to New York dated 7th July 1857, paid eightpence and directed 'Vanderbilt via Southampton'.



A Treasury Warrant dated 10th January 1840 established the ship-letter rate from the United Kingdom to the United States (among many other destinations) at eightpence per ½ ounce; this remained in force for the United States until 1st January 1858¹. The prepayment of eightpence, rather than the shilling rate for packet letters to the United States, and the direction to a particular ship, is quite unusual. However, 'Vanderbilt' on her second voyage for the line of the same name, was scheduled to call at Southampton (Cowes) on the 8th July and made New York on 19th July 1857². The postage was prepaid with a pair of perforated penny reds and a sixpence lilac (J12, Plate 1).

On arrival in New York the letter was charged six cents, the United States' charge for an incoming ship letter delivered to an address at the port of entry.

AN OUTBOUND SHIP LETTER THROUGH SOUTHAMPTON

by Malcolm Montgomery MBE (Continued)

April 2026



An illustration of 'Vanderbilt', after she was taken over by the United States' Navy – I have been unable to find an earlier example,



example.

1. C. Tabcart, '*United Kingdom Letter Rates, Inland and Overseas, 1635 to 1900*'. (Second Edition 2003), p28 and 31.
2. W. Hubbard and R. F. Winter, '*North Atlantic Mail Sailings, 1840-75*', p 102.
3. R. F. Winter, '*Understanding Transatlantic Mail*', Volume 1, p. 102.

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SUBMISSION DATES FOR POSTMARK

SEPTEMBER 2026
JANUARY 2027

15th August 2026
15th December 2026

Submissions to be received by the Editor by midnight on each date