

ABERDEEN PHILATELIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER September 2017

Members should all have received a copy of the 2017-18 syllabus by mail. There will be spare copies available at the first meeting which will be on 21st September and will take the form of the usual informal gathering when members are invited to bring items for sale or exchange. There is usually plenty of boxes and stock books to browse so bring along some small change and you may anticipate some acquisitions. If you have items to dispose of, then this is an opportunity. There will also be a standing display provided by our past-President and sure to be entertaining. Incidentally, the charge for the hire of our current meeting room has once again increased but we would be hard pressed to find a more suitable venue. Congratulations to Chrissie Jefferies, our Secretary, for all her hard work in preparing the programme

We Remember Peter Payne who passed away in January. Peter served as President from 1995 to 1997 and frequently displayed parts of his fine collection of Canada. We also remember James Malcolm who passed away in June. Although not a member in recent years, he was Packet Secretary, Curator of the Permanent Collection and also served as President, from 1979-1981.

Peter John Anderson was one of our founder members, known internationally for his writing on the history of the hobby (see our centennial history). He bequeathed at least some of his personal philatelic library to Aberdeen University Library, where he was Librarian. I feared that his collection might have been disposed of, but to my delight, I recently found out that his periodicals have been carefully conserved and are held in the Library's Archives and Special Collections where they may be freely consulted. They include 23 English and French-language periodicals, dating between 1875 and 1925; some of them long runs and others quite short runs. I have a list of them, in case any member would like to know more.

Congress Report 2017. The 88th ASPS Congress in Perth last April one of the most successful National Competitions for a long time, with twenty-five entries in eight classes, in sixty frames. Congratulations to Graham Searle who was awarded gold for his 'Early Canadian Postal Rate Handstamps 1836-1875'. Graham was also awarded small silver gilt for his 'Canadian Centennial Issue Booklets and Booklet Stamps 1967-1972', which goes to show that relatively modern stamps can be the subject of a fine exhibit. Congratulations also to our President and ornithologist Ken Bruce on the award of small silver gilt for his thematic entry 'Chasing the Wild Goose'. Congratulations as well to Colin Sutherland for the award of bronze-silver for his thematic exhibit on 'World Explorers'. Colin was also awarded the Cowell Salver for the best first-time entrant. Time to think about an entry in Congress next

April, if not in the national competition, then in the open competition, which was also well supported last April, with twelve one-frame entries, double the number of last year. Further details can be found on the Association's renewed website at <http://www.scottishphilately.co.uk/>. Incidentally, Aberdeen Philatelic Society's syllabus of meetings for 2017-18 is on the website, as are the programmes for other philatelic societies in Scotland.

Other ASPS news. Two office bearer posts are currently vacant. The Association needs a Publicity Officer who is primarily concerned with promoting the annual Congress in Perth. Also, a Junior Competition Organiser is needed. The Youth Development Officer would be grateful for any quantity of French, Spanish or Japanese stamps which she can use in connection with a game she has developed for use in language classes in schools as an indirect way of interesting young people in stamps. A new series of judging seminars has been suggested for Scotland. Let me know if you are interested in qualifying as a judge.

Book Review. Thanks to Colin Kilpatrick for drawing my attention to '*The Error World – A Memoir of Obsession and Desire*' by Simon Garfield, Faber & Faber (ISBN 978-0-571 23527-8) 2008, paperback 2009, which is an amusing account of a stamp collector who collected modern GB errors and varieties, with some interesting insights into the stamp trade. The book is described as the 'story of how a childhood obsession became a full-blown midlife crisis' and as 'an eccentric and moving story of getting older and not necessarily wiser'. The author interviewed many well-known names in the world of philately including Michael Sefi and David Brandon. He describes his visits to major stamp exhibitions and his experiences of bidding at auction. He tries to understand the psychology of collecting something of no intrinsic value. The paperback edition is available second-hand cheaply by ordering online at Abebooks.com and when you have read it, you can always recover some of the modest cost by selling it in the club auction. The book is reminiscent of that better known philatelic novel, '*Antigua, Penny Puce*' by Robert Graves (Penguin, 1968).

Social Occasion. Forty-nine people have booked for the Society dinner on 28 September, 7 for 7.30, at the Caledonian Hotel, Union Terrace. Final details have been circulated to those who indicated that they wished to attend. Any further questions to Sheila Den.

Postal Auction Our March postal auction no.31 raised £600 for the Society. This sum was enhanced by a generous donation to the auction from George Alexander.

'Agathon Fabergé: Portrait of a Philatelist'. At the 'F' night last session, your newsletter editor displayed a few philatelic items related to Agathon Fabergé, the gemmologist in the firm of St Petersburg jewellers famous for the fabulous Easter eggs created for the Imperial household in Russia before the revolution. Agathon was a remarkable philatelist and I

mentioned that I was working with a co-author in Finland to compile a philatelic biography to be published in May at the FINLANDIA 2017 international stamp exhibition in Tampere, Finland. My co-author, Kaj Hellman, a well-known professional philatelist in Finland, tragically passed away before publication, so the book is by way of a memorial to him. In that context, it was particularly gratifying that the book was awarded a large gold medal in the literature class at FINLANDIA 2017. In case anyone would like to see the book, I will bring along a copy and lay it out on one of our display tables on our opening night.

Promoting the Society! Alex Walker continues to work on the possibility of providing a standing display in the City Library. He has been authorised by our society committee to negotiate acquisition of permanent frames and awaits confirmation from the exhibitions chairman of the Association of British Philatelic Societies that suitable frames for a public display are available. If the outcome is positive, they could be used for a link with the public library in 2018 on a philatelic exhibition on World War I.

Publicity Appeal. Attached is a poster to publicise the society. If you know of a suitable noticeboard in the public eye would you please print out a copy and arrange for it to be displayed.

Would members please keep the Secretary informed of any change to their **email address**, so that as many members as possible can be contacted at short notice about events or in case there are last minute re-arrangements to the programme over the winter. Any member with an email facility and not currently receiving Society newsletters and circulars by email, please let the Secretary have your email address.

Subscriptions. Members Subscriptions to the Society are due in September for the season 2017-18. The treasurer will receive subscriptions at the opening night, in cash or by cheque, and it would be helpful if the enclosed form could also accompany your payment. Members who don't attend meetings regularly can pay by mail. The form is also seeking your address if you have moved house in the last year; and your e-mail address if you have one, particularly if it has altered in the last year.

The subscriptions for the coming year are:- Town Members £15.00, and Country Members £8.00.