

## **ABERDEEN PHILATELIC SOCIETY**

*NEWSLETTER September 2019*

Members should all have received a copy of the 2019-20 syllabus by mail. The season will begin on 12th 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 which may not be suitable for the auction in December, e.g. stock books of duplicates, then this is an opportunity. Thanks to Chrissie Jefferies, our Secretary, for all her hard work in preparing a programme with a mix of visiting speakers and our own members.

**Congress Report 2019.** The 90<sup>th</sup> Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies annual Congress in Perth last April included another very successful 'Scottish National Competition', as well as the Association of British Philatelic Societies 'Northern National 2019', the first UK national competition to be held in Scotland since PERTH 2012. The Scottish National exhibition attracted twenty-four entries, seven up on last year. Congratulations to Alex Walker who was the only entrant from our society and was awarded silver for his 'Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa' in the Social Philately class. Alex ensured that our society was well represented with a second exhibit. He was awarded small silver gilt and the Ferris Trophy for his 'Samoa Express Issues 1877-1881' in the General Class Pre-1900. The open competition was again well supported, with eleven one-frame entries. There were thirty-five entries in Northern National exhibition, many of them from elsewhere in the UK, but including two from Ireland and one from Lithuania. Just one exhibit was from our society. Your Editor's postal stationery exhibit entitled 'The *Kultatähkä* Postal Stationery of Finland' was awarded large vermeil. Now is the time to think about an entry in Congress next April. Further details can be found on the Association's website at <http://www.scottishphilately.co.uk/>. If any member is at all inclined to try their hand at competitive exhibiting for the first time, then Scottish Congress is the event to enter. Plenty of advice and encouragement from the judges will be forthcoming.

The much publicised **STOCKHOLMIA 2019** was a very remarkable exhibition at the end of May. Organised to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Philatelic Society London, it was held in Sweden with the help of generous financial patronage and the enthusiasm of the Swedish members of the Royal. The exhibition was mounted in over 2000 frames with quite a lot of non-competitive exhibits and 294 competitive exhibits across the full range of classes. The quality of the exhibits was evident in the award of seventy large gold medals and ninety-six gold medals. The event was staged in a recently opened exhibition facility extending to six floors. What really made it a special event was the programme of no less than 183 meetings and seminars on all aspects of the hobby arranged throughout the event. At any one time up to nine different meetings were in progress, generally well attended but many of them with the sort of modest numbers in attendance that facilitated discussion. Inevitably, there were times when attractive meetings coincided. One particularly interesting and entertaining meeting that I attended was by Prof Charles Oppenheim on 'Copyright in Philately'. Other topics include book launches, current trends in different aspects of the hobby, recent research on various subjects and so-called master classes. Some topics were very specific, e.g. 'Postal Routes and Post Office Marks of Scotland 1660-1770' by Peter Chadwick. The exhibition came to a head at an extraordinary final dinner in the Vasa Museum, seating some 700 people. I will bring along a copy of the exhibition catalogue to our first meeting, in case anyone would be interested to see it. It is quite the largest and heaviest exhibition catalogue that I have seen.

**An amusing response** to an infringement of copyright occurred as long ago as 1867, when the Belgian stamp dealer and journalist, M Moens, noticed that his journal was regularly plagiarised by a French journal without acknowledgement. Moens announced an issue of stamps by a fictitious Flemish commune called Moresnet and signed the article 'S. Neom' (Moens backwards). The French journal not only copied the announcement but put a price on the stamps. [Source: *Stamp News*, 1882] In the same source, there is a suggested way of removing stamps glued to old album pages, using dilute nitric acid! Sounds a bit drastic? Do you have any tips for removing old paper and glue from the back of stamps?



David Macdonald writes: Membership of a Specialist Society has benefits which can lead a collector into other areas in collecting a country's stamps. Local societies such as our own provide information through the library and contributions from members but a far wider community may exist for collectors who join a specialist society. A subject not mentioned in past editions of The Springbok, the quarterly magazine of a specialist society, South Africa Collectors Society based in UK, was raised in the magazine in November 2017 (see below).

As a result of this article e-mails have been received (May 2019), from South Africa, opening up a whole new source of information, and illustrations of related postmark. Additionally the supplier of the information is now undertaking to write a full article on the particular subject, and publish it, providing a wealth of new information for collectors and in the process, tying up notes from various sources.

The additional information means I can now develop another aspect of my South Africa collection.

## South Africa – Circular Numeral Cancels.

Postal Cancellations on stamps are often incomplete and therefore, from a collector point of view, difficult to attribute to a particular town. On occasion the cancellation may not be a town cancel but some other postmark or cancel.

Cancels with the numbers 1 to 4, surrounded by a circle, can be found on the higher values of the 1913 George V definitive issue. No mention of this type of cancel appears to have been made in the South African Postmarks by published by The Philatelic Federation of Southern Africa. It is not known if Dr. Berry knew about these numeral cancels and excluded them for some



not infrequently of this type of Dr. T.B. Berry known if Dr. Berry knew about these numeral cancels and excluded them for some reason.

Reference to the numbers within a circle is, however, made in Transvaal Philately published by Reijger Publishers (PTY) Limited, Cape Town in 1986. The cancel is referred to under the heading "Miscellaneous Oval and Circular Obliterators and Cachets" indicating that they are telegraphic cancels that are found most often on the Transvaal Edward VII higher values stamps. What is not known is the date on which the cancels were introduced; the date could have been prior to or during the interprovincial period. Additionally there is no indication if all four cancels were used solely at one office or if more than one office had the cancellers for telegraphic use.

To date this author has not seen the cancels used on Transvaal stamps, only on single stamps of the definitive values of the George V issue 1913 – 1924, to which reference has been made in Transvaal Philately. Interestingly one of my three examples, the number "3", is on a 1/3d stamp which is at the lower end of higher value; Transvaal Philately indicates that the author had not seen No. 3. All three stamps have, in addition to the numeral cancel, a portion of a postmark which regrettably is not clear enough to draw any precise detail.



It would be interesting to know if any other collector has information on the use of these numeral cancels.