

This is the second of three articles on the Sheffield Philatelic Society to mark two significant events during 2011—the 2000th meeting, which will take place in April and the hosting of a major philatelic event, the ABPS 2011 Philatelic Exhibition, in May, of which Stanley Gibbons is a major sponsor. In this article Donald Radley and Greg Spring look at the range of collecting interests of members of one of the country's oldest societies.



## The Sheffield Philatelic Society

By Donald Radley and Greg Spring

As recorded in our first article, membership has fluctuated over the years but in recent years has been steady at around 50. Many have been members for quite a number of years but the Society has been pleased to welcome a number of new members in the past few years who are taking active parts in its activities. This article can only include a few of the members but should show the breadth and depth of interests which are typical of those found in all local philatelic societies.

### Steve Cook



Bulgarian stamp designs

Steve is a relatively new member of the Society. Like most collectors, he started as a youngster and then forgot about his collection for many years. Eight years ago he decided the time had come to focus on one area and streamline his collection from the World down to GB. Two years later this plan failed as he was given some stamps from Malta—enough for two stockbooks. The following year, on a visit to Bulgaria, in the local post office there were huge posters on the walls of previous year's stamps and as a result his Bulgaria collection is spread out over 22 stockbooks for mint stamps and more for used.

His collection grew again five years ago after he expressed a wish to go to the Cook Islands, as his surname is Cook, and as a result his partner buys him Cook Island stamps for Christmas. Although she complains that the collection takes up so much space, she still adds to it!

### Dennis Rolfe

Dennis has been a member of the Sheffield PS for many years and has held several offices, including that of President. As a retired fireman, among his many philatelic interests he has developed a particular interest in mail damaged in disasters, such as wrecks or crashes.

The transport of mail is usually taken for granted, but just occasionally something goes wrong, such as shipwreck, train or air crash and a proportion of the mail becomes lost or damaged. In such cases, a wide variety of methods may be used to indicate the reason for the damage or delay. In some cases a cachet is applied specifying the incident in which the cover was involved, for example a

general cachet may be used stating the item was 'Damaged by Sea Water' and this can be used on many different crashes or wrecks. Sometimes a special label is used that may give details of the incident and, possibly, the Postmaster's apologies. Nowadays, with the heavy volume of mail transported, damage is more likely, so most Post Offices resort to the use of sealing tape that incorporates an apology for the damage or delay and makes the item safe to continue its journey.

### Richard Hindle

Richard has been a member of the Sheffield PS since 1971 and has been President, Assistant Secretary and Librarian as well as sometime Treasurer of the Yorkshire Philatelic Association.

His past collections include Australia and Sheffield Postal History and his current collection, which started in 1978, tells the story of European exploration from 1400 to 1939. He found the subject fascinating but because the sequence of exploration was not

logical, he also found it frustrating trying to put it into some semblance of order. He was astonished by the achievements in spite of the perils of going into the unknown, the hardships endured and the sheer determination to survive. He also learnt, and is still learning, about geography, cartography, surveying, navigational science, flora and fauna, etc.

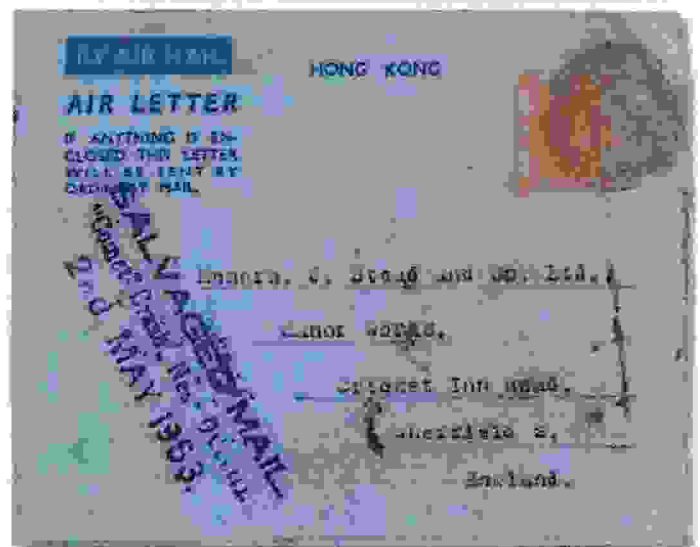
Richard is very clear in stating his enjoyment of collecting over the years in meetings, learning from eminent collectors, and making friends who have helped him and more than compensated for the frustrations of organising his collection.

He is a member of the British Thematic Association, The Captain Cook and The Ship Stamp Societies.

Captain Cook by Nathaniel Dance: vignette used for Cook Islands SG 72 Imperforate proof block of ten of Cook Islands SG 100; may have been used as a printer's sample



Air letter from Hong Kong to Sheffield salvaged from the Comet crash of 2 May 1953





## Donald Radley

Donald has been a member of Sheffield PS for about ten years and has held the office of President. As with many collectors, his collection started in his school days—he remembers paying 4s.6d. for his first Penny Black. For many years his principal collection was of British stamps, which is quite comprehensive. About six years ago he decided to expand his small collection of stamps of Great Britain overprinted for use in territories overseas and this collection has itself been expanded more recently to include those stamps that were further overprinted as specimens for the UPU, for reference and for other purposes.

**Oil Rivers Protectorate (3)**

- Continued shortage of 1/2d stamps in 1893 resulted in surcharges on 2d and 2 1/2d values
- Surcharges applied by individual hand stamp in eight styles and seven colours
- Only 480 2d stamps and 1920 2 1/2d stamps were treated in this way

PowerPoint slide showing Old Calabar provisional surcharges from the Oil Rivers Protectorate

As a long-time user of computers he was always keen to explore ways in which technology could support the hobby. For many years he has printed his album pages and used spreadsheets to maintain a record of his collection. With the ease with which items can be scanned nowadays he has produced a database of GB overprints with images of most of the issued stamps and has produced a PowerPoint presentation on the same subject. This presentation is given to philatelic societies along with the usual display of the original material and allows significant points to be made through the enlarged images on the screen. The same presentation is also given to non-philatelic organisations but with a different emphasis—stress is laid on the historical, political, economic and military reasons surrounding the issues which throw some light on British history.

## Doreen and Geoff Farrier

Doreen's attention was first caught by their young son's interest in stamps when she saw the potential for his learning geography, history, politics, trade, culture, etc, without even realising it.

One day, whilst on holiday, seeing a display by the local philatelic society of letters to and from Deal Castle she became hooked herself, since history had always been her favourite subject. She took her son to a Sheffield Philatelic Society meeting to learn more and was advised by a senior member to collect one

country and as a result chose Greenland and Denmark because of a fascination with polar exploration. Later, the Antarctic and the postal routes of Japan were added.

As a schoolboy, like many at that time, Geoff had a small stamp collection but it disappeared while he was away at college. Many years later the bug bit again and in 1974, by the judicious use of a pin and the Stanley Gibbons *Stamps of the World Catalogue*, he selected Thailand as his area of interest. In 1975 he discovered, and joined, the Thailand Philatelic Society, since when his

collection has grown steadily and he has become more involved in the running of the Society, holding the positions of Secretary and Treasurer for several years.

Over time his interest has moved away from stamps and towards Airmails and more recently expanded beyond Thailand. His current collecting is based around the impact that the carriage of mail has had on the development of both aircraft and airlines.

Doreen and Geoff find it amazing how seemingly small things can change lives—all the family became collectors, their common interests helping them keep close to their children through their teens and on. They joined specialist societies to further their knowledge and made friends across the world. They visited exhibitions in Thailand, Japan and Canada, meeting philatelic friends as they went and when they visited relatives in New Zealand they were met and helped by yet another philatelic friend. Their lives have been made richer and more interesting through philately—they've experienced cultures, places and people they would never have dreamed of otherwise and their philatelic journey continues to bring new experiences, knowledge, friends and fun.

## Greg Spring FRPSL



Poland (SC 338). 1938 commemoration of the Battle of Grunwald in which the Teutonic Order was defeated. In 1939 the Germans forced a re-issue with the swords at the feet of the king removed

Greg has been a member of Sheffield PS for eight years. As a child he began collecting stamps of the world which his father brought home from work. However, this proved slightly ambitious and he soon specialised in Canada, GB, and Poland, the countries of his birth, his father's birth, and his mother's birth, respectively. He pursued these areas with a passion until the word 'teen' appeared in his age, at which point his interest abruptly ceased. Many years later, in a desperate bid to find something to take his mind off work, he dusted off the collections.

Canadian philately and postal history remain Greg's main interests. However, he is currently studying European stamp issues between and during the two world wars, being particularly interested in the nationalistic imagery used by many countries. He is especially attracted to stamps produced during periods of extreme hardship, demonstrating the vital importance of postal communication even when other systems have broken down. The more desperate the times are, the more rushed the production is, the more interesting the history behind them.

Greg is actively involved with three philatelic societies. He assumed the role of President in the Sheffield Philatelic Society in January 2011, a two year post, and is the Chairman of the ABPS Sheffield 2011 committee. He is webmaster for the British North American Philatelic Society, and was recently voted as a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London, where he is one of the technical team putting the society's archives on-line.

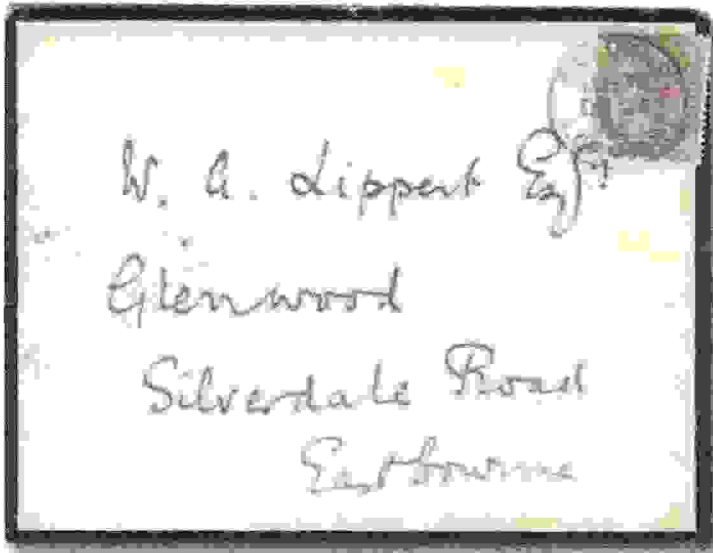


World's first aerogramme form produced by the Aerial Transport Company of Thailand in 1932



## Keith Branigan

Keith Branigan's special interest is in postal facilities provided for the British royal family from the 17th century up to the present day. This includes mail not only to and from the principal royal palaces and houses, but also temporary royal homes, whether occupied by the royals as residents or visitors. His interest also extends to postal facilities for the royal family when they are travelling abroad, whether on private or official visits, and this inevitably involves the study of postmarks and cachets used on mail carried by royal flights, ships and trains. Three royal tours have developed into major collecting interests—the Imperial Tour on board HMS *Ophir* in 1901, the Delhi durbar of 1911, and the Royal Tour of Canada in 1939. But if he had to choose a favourite item from his collection it would probably be a letter written and signed by Queen Victoria's 'Munshi'—perhaps the only letter in existence written by Her Majesty's infamous Indian 'Teacher and Secretary'.

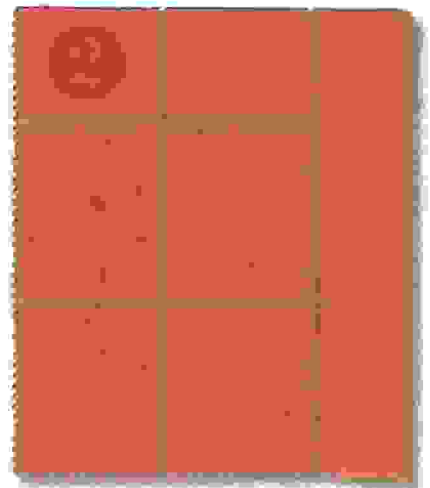


A letter posted on Queen Victoria's last Christmas Eve (24/12/1900) with a very scarce Osborne House cancellation, used only when the Queen was in residence

## Frank Walton FRPSL

Frank has been a member of Sheffield PS for 20 years as well as many other societies. Like many others, he has been a collector since childhood. His interests followed a perhaps familiar path: first worldwide, then Commonwealth and then just GB and a few other countries. The GB collection itself became narrower over the years as the proliferation of new issues led to all commemoratives being put to one side.

At the school stamp club a chance purchase of a packet of mixed Chinese stamps started a new collection of China. This commenced as stamps only, but has in recent years turned into a collection of postal history, especially the airmail services. The post-war hyperinflation period has a plethora of routes and rates which offer great scope for the collector.



Sierra Leone Queen Victoria 2nd Key £1 Plate 2

The main focus of Frank's collecting interests over the last few years is Sierra Leone to 1961. As well as collecting, Frank has written several handbooks on the philately of this West African colony, and also exhibited his collection. Much to his delight he was awarded a Large Gold medal at the London 2010 exhibition earlier this year for his traditional display of Sierra Leone, the De La Rue Years 1859–1931.

Frank is also heavily involved with the Royal Philatelic Society London, where he has been editor of the RPSL's journal *The London Philatelist* since 2001. He is also chairman of the Royal's publication committee and has been one of the technical team building the new website - [www.rpslcatalogue.org.uk](http://www.rpslcatalogue.org.uk)

Further details of the Society and the ABPS2011 event may be found at [www.sheffieldps.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldps.org.uk)

**The chance purchase of a packet of mixed Chinese stamps started a new collection**

## Philip Robinson FRPSL

Ever since he asked for a copy of J B Seymour's *The Postage Stamps of Great Britain: Part I* for his 13th birthday, he has been interested in plating line-engraved stamps, and this interest continues. He also dabbles in the postal history of British Levant, the Bechuanalands and Montenegro. However, it was on a journey along the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1978 that he became interested in Siberia. Thanks to a chance contact with a Russian collector of British postal history, Anatoly V Kiryushkin of Minsk, he started to collect pre-1918 Siberian postmarks, exhibiting these with moderate success in Britain and abroad. Finding no book on the subject, in 1986 he wrote and published *Siberia: Postmarks and Postal History of the*

*Russian Empire Period*. This ran to two editions, and Anatoly and he conspired to write *Russian Postmarks, an Introduction and Guide* (1989) and *Russian Railway Postmarks* (1994), both published by John Barefoot Ltd. These books have had some success in national (vermeil) and international (up to large silver) exhibitions. With a collection of 1500 or so early topographical Siberian postcards, he also wrote four books on this subject. Nowadays he rarely adds anything significant to his collection, but enjoys various types of editorial work, proof-reading the *London Philatelist*, assisting with the text of English-language publications produced abroad, translating philatelic books from German (including nine by Harry von Hofmann RDP, FRPSL) and generally enjoying the social side of philately.



A registered cover addressed to St Petersburg, posted on a Siberian river steamer, on the route from Blagoveshchensk up the Amur and Shilka rivers to Stretensk. Correctly franked with 2x7 kopek 'Arms' stamps, at Stretensk, it would have continued its journey by way of the Trans-Siberian Railway