

# The Bye-Post

No. 201

ed. Colin Stuart

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Hello again, everybody! I hope the slightly different format and different style I introduced in Issue no. 200 have not been too 'jarring' after we had become so used to David Pashby's excellent work on our newsletter over the years.

We have faced a few problems this year because, as has been said before, we had become rather over-dependent on David's efficiency and long experience. Nevertheless, we have soldiered on and will soon be completing another programme of meetings and events, thanks especially to Rod for devising the programme, to Roy for yet another pair of club Fairs and Steve for the great Packet. We had a few temporary difficulties with the Auction, owing mainly to our being forced to switch accommodation at Wanstead House, where we now meet in the Forest Room up under the eaves. The space is ample, yet it was disappointing to be displaced arbitrarily after so many years in our old, well-lit first floor, meeting room. Happily, membership holds up well, despite all our advancing years, and attendance at our meetings, even in deepest winter, was good and has, if anything, increased a little. *Could still be even better, though!*

Because of David's so sudden departure to the far corner of the world, I am conscious that we failed signally to offer him an adequate tribute for his four decades of meticulous service to the club. I should like to put right that failure now and to thank him warmly again and again, on behalf of us all. (He is still in correspondence with some of us and misses contact with his old friends) He was the keystone which held our activities together, as Secretary and collector whose erudite showings of France, Germany and French Antarctica (TAAF) could always be relied upon. (Sadly, because of his ill health and failing sight, most of all that had to be sold off in great haste so that he failed in the end to achieve full financial justice for his passion of a lifetime).



Here finally is a photograph of David taken just days before his departure for N.Z. and the way most of us will go on remembering him. Again we wish him all the very best in retirement in Christchurch

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We have maintained a full bi-monthly programme, which commenced on September 13<sup>th</sup> and featured displays by two Club members, one showing early Icelandic postcards, the other a detailed exposition of the QV Penny Lilac (plus one final showing *in absentia* of France in WW2 by David). Next up was one more for you GB enthusiasts by Keith Rowland, with an impressive and detailed showing of early Victorian stamps and pre-stamp postal history.

Then came our customary Autumn Fair, capably organised by Roy Bates, and assisted as ever by the faithful Margaret Aked and Sheila Bates, whose efforts at providing high class refreshments cannot be praised too highly. We are all deeply grateful to them both, yet realise that their work is becoming steadily more burdensome – we must at all costs not take them for granted!!

Here are those two gallant ladies, snapped whilst busy serving at our October Fair – smiling through gritted teeth! Are any members able to lend them an occasional hand and give them a half-time break?



On October 27<sup>th</sup> all members were invited to show 'Favourites from their Collections'. There were some interesting exhibits on a variety of topics. Small displays included Graham Lyne's very impressive QV, others of Danish phosphor issues, the Saar, some beautiful Canadian Revenues, Australia and states, Negri Sembilan and Arctic Norway.

In November Rod Crump and your Chairman did their best to entertain punters with a showing of Ireland, plus a miscellany that included postcards 'posted abroad', Estonia at war 1940-44, and Chinese New Year booklets. Later that month was our November Auction. It was very popular, as always, but because our room was overcrowded a degree of confusion resulted. Nevertheless it was an overall success and we are grateful to Gordon, Ron Plumb and Charlie for an awful lot of hard work and hopefully for learning from shortcomings.

Christmas 2014 came to Leytonstone early, on the 13<sup>th</sup>, when we held our regular Quiz, this year conducted by last year's winner, Denis Bowman. This year's contest was won, through an extraordinary stroke of good fortune, by your Chairman, (who swears it was not fixed), whose punishment will be to set the next quiz. For the New Year's first meeting all members were invited to show on any topic beginning with 'A'. Though this provided almost infinite possibilities, the number of members (only four) answering the challenge was slightly disappointing. Sometimes when members are invited to put on a small show of their own material, modesty prevents them from displaying their wares. We emphasise regularly that we are not looking for competition-standard exhibits, merely whatever it is that turns them on, in whatever form you collect it. We are all quite modest collectors, and each has his/her own particular enthusiasms – do share them with the rest of us!!

Later, Stuart Henderson gave us some of his usual astonishing range of off-beat material, this time classy R.P.S. annual labels, BEA private airmail material and a whole variety of bizarre Victorian state licences, all of this delivered in his supremely entertaining style. On Valentine's Day Tony Aked, despite no longer seeing what he displays, relied on his amazing memory and on the good offices of Mrs A. to show some more of his French material. He was rewarded by an unusually large attendance. Tony continues to honour his status as President. Then Jeremy Gaskel, another entertaining speaker, showed us firstly Queen Astrid and Edith Cavel stamps and cards (mainly Belgian), and then (modestly) postmarks from the town of 'Jérémie' in Haiti. Enfield were due to visit us next, but there was a misunderstanding and we were compelled at short notice to improvise our own programme, with contributions from Rod Crump (CW), Gordon (GB errors), plus early Iceland and modern Sweden by your Chair.

Goodmayes then visited us, bringing three speakers, who gave us GB plate numbers and overprints, notably the George V Irish provisionals. Then we had a comprehensive showing of Gibraltar, and finally Stuart Henderson (yes, him again) showed his remarkable assembly of Papua and New Guinea, especially of obscure rural postmarks.

We look forward now to meeting Tony Hoad again, to our Spring Auction on May 9<sup>th</sup>, and to our AGM on 1<sup>st</sup> June (do we really have to finish so early?), at which officers will require to be elected. We seem still not to have recovered fully from the loss of our previous Secretary, so can I urge all members, if they are really keen to preserve an active L&WD, in spite of some difficulties, to give thought to their contribution to the club and to come up with any useful suggestions, e.g. for future programmes and/or for changes or improvement to the Club.

**Now, do all have a good Summer. Look forward to next season (dates to be announced)**