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THE JOURNAL OF THE IRISH PHILATELIC SOCIETY

In this issue : News, Displays, Forthcoming Displays at Ely House, President's Page.

Articles : Stamp Promotion A Goal for 2017, Ways to Improve a Philatelic Exhibit,
West London a Thematic Series - Political Westminster Part 1.



1900 cover to Essex with HOUSE OF COMMONS/40 duplex cancellation.
See article inside.

Dear Member,

Herewith the second issue of 2017 (June) Journal. The past quarter was good for the Society with some interesting displays and excellent results from Finlandia 2017 (see News). We also had a very good unexpected Special Society Bourse (see News). However there were no new members elected but also no resignations or notified bereavements so steady as she goes.

Since the beginning of April our meeting venue, Ely House has been uncertain in terms of meeting time allowance. This is as a result of the death of the House Manager with whom we had worked for 23 years. A new manager has yet to be appointed hopefully in time for the start of our new season on 7 Sept. Between April and June this situation has meant shorter meeting times because of adhoc evening cover arrangements by House staff fillins.

A new feature from this issue is the inclusion of Upcoming Displays each quarters with hopefully a brief discription of what will covered by these displays.

We look forward to seeing you in September for the start of our new season. In the meantime enjoy your collecting and whats left of the summer.

NEWS

Membership Changes

Since the last issue no new members have been elected. In the same period there were no notified resignations or bereavements.

COMPETITIONS

The annual Dobbs and Society Cup Competitions will be held on Thursday 2 November.

DOBBS COMPETITION

This is the senior competition with a minimum of 18 sheets and a maximum of 24 sheets. Members intending to submit an entry in this competition are required to submit a copy of their Introductory/Plan Page to the Secretary NOT later than 19 October.

SOCIETY CUP COMPETITION

This is the novice competition with a minimum of 12 sheets and a maximum of 18 sheets. Members intending to submit an entry in this competition are also required to submit a copy of their Introductory/Plan Page to the Secretary NOT later than 19 October.

In both cases this is the page of the entry which outlines the scope and concept of the exhibit. Ideally it should have an opening statement detailing the exhibitor's intentions regarding the entry. These pages will be given to the Jury so as to appraise them of the scope of entries to be judged. Entries will then be required to be handed in to Ely House by 5.30pm on Thursday 2 November.

In all cases entrants in the above competitions MUST have paid their annual subscriptions by 19 October which currently are City members 20 Euro ; Country members 7 Euro.

POST OFFICE CLOSURE

The Post Office in Montague Street (off Camden Street) Dublin close in May and the building in which it was located is now up for let.

SPECIAL IPS SOCIETY BOURSE

The above sale was held on Thursday 20 April following the normal meeting on that night. A total of 53 lots all of which were donated by a member were offered from which 51 sold. The total raised for Society funds was 595 Euros. The highlights of the sale were lot 32 1934 Hungarian Franz Lizst min sheet selling for 36 euro ; lot 36 1921 cover from Netherlands to Dundalk with CENSORED/IRA handstamp selling for 200 euros and lot 50 Sudan 1935 50 pi 50th Death Anniv of Gen. Gordon value proof on watermarked paper selling for 46 euros. The Society thanks the donor of these lots for his generosity.

FINLANDIA 2017

Finlandia 2017 was held in the City of Tampere in Finland from 24 to 28 May. Ireland had a team of 11 participants including 2 literature entries. Our Commissioner was Mrs Heloise Mitchell and the following awards were gained :

Gold Medals - Heloise Mitchell and Alan Farrell , Large Vermeil Medals - David Sweeney and Brian Callan, Vermeil Medal - John Fitzsimons ; Large Silver Medals John Greer , Stan Challis, Nicola Challis , Brian Harmon and Brian Warren; Silver Medal - Stephen Ferguson. The last two named members were in the literature class . Of the 11 participants on the team 6 were first time entrants at this level.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS AND FAIRS

Portadown & District Philatelic Society Annual Exhibition and Fair will be held on Saturday 30th September in the Portadown Town Hall from 10am to 4pm and admission is free.

STAMPA the Irish National Stamp Exhibition will be held from Friday 6th to Sunday 8th of October in its new venue of Griffith Conference Centre, Griffith College Campus, South Circular Road Dublin 8 (near Leonard's Corner) from 11am to 6pm. Please NOTE the show will CLOSE AT 5pm on the Sunday. Admission 5 euro.

DISPLAYS

Dublin Postcards (6 April)

This display was given by Gerry Byrne, our immediate Past President and was a changed title to that in the programme. It was a wide ranging display of Dublin past and present and included the Old Cattle Market (North Circular Road, now a shopping centre), Mc Kee Barracks, the Gough and Wellington Monuments, Aras an Uachtarain (originally the Vice Regal Lodge), the Carlisle Statue all in the Phoenix Park, The Strawberry Beds, Islandbridge, Trinity College (showing the reception and address to King George V in 1911), interior views of Guinness Brewery, Royal Barracks known after 1922 as Collins Barracks (now part of the National Museum), Four Courts.

The display continued with modern cards showing Dublin City at dusk, Trinity College, Campanile at Night. It then showed O'Connell Street with Nelson's Pillar, Clery's Department Store, Henry and Moore Streets, the Gresham Hotel, Parnell Monument as well as the Garden of Remembrance. It continued with cards showing Dublin Castle, The Chapel Royal, Christchurch Cathedral as well as the Mansion House. It concluded with views of Grafton Street, Leinster House, Merrion Square and Government Buildings.

Irish Revenues (20 April)

This display was given by Tom Mc Carthy. It covered issues from both Northern and Southern Ireland. The display commenced with Northern Ireland issues and included 1921 King George V Contract Note values to 8s as well as 1948-1956 George VI Contract Note values to 6s and 1959 Queen Elizabeth II Contract Note values to £1 with a 4s value used on a document. County Court revenues were then shown with George V 1921 values to 2s6d and 1949 George VI to £1 with a 1971 Elizabeth II 25p value also shown. Judicature issues and values followed for George V and George VI and a Queen Elizabeth II £10 proof. A publicans licence as well as a Petty Sessions warrant of Execution for non payment of a fine in 1936 (apparently for riding a bicycle after dusk without a light) were shown as well as National Insurance and Health stamps, 1921 Great Britain Excise values overprinted NORTHERN IRELAND as well as 2s6d British Seahorse values with Registry of Business names cachets on pieces.

The Southern Ireland section included Irish General Die 10s Harp over Crown of George IV period, a Certificate of Registry of a Judgement, 1892 Natal, Ireland dual stamping on a document, High Court of Justice (Ireland) with pair of George V Judicature values, High Court of Justice Kings Bench Division with 2s George V Judicature value overprinted Saorstát Éireann, Ireland Petty Sessions George V values overprinted Saorstát Éireann, various Social Insurance issues and values overprinted Saorstát Éireann. The display concluded with a Department of Fisheries Promissory Note and 1924 1s definitive overprinted for use in the Passport Office.

Monaco (4 May)

This display was given by Tom Hassett. Included was 1923-24 definitives, 1932-37 Scenes of Monaco definitives, 1946 President Roosevelt Commemoration issue, 1947 Participation in the Centenary International Philatelic Exhibition, New York issue, 1948 Olympic Games, Wembley set, 1950 Accession of Prince Rainier set, 1951 Holy Year set, 1953 Olympic Games, Helsinki set, 1955 50th Death Anniv Jules Verne issue, 1956 Royal Wedding, 1957 Birth of Princess Caroline set, 1959 Flowers issue, 1961 Veteran Motor Cars definitive issue, 1963 Europa, 1965 Cent of ITU set, 1967 25th Motor Grand Prix, Monaco issue.

The display then continued with issues between 1968 and 1973 and included 1968 Olympic Games, Mexico set, Birth Centenary of Chateaubriand, Centenary of Nice-Monaco Railway, 1969 Europa, 450th Death Anniv of Leonardo da Vinci, 1970 Expo 70 set, Europa set, Horses set, 1971 Protection of Historic Monuments issue, 1972 Protection of Historic Monuments issue, 1973 25th Anniv of Monaco Red Cross min sheet, Birth Annivs. The display also included various issues of paintings of "Princes and Princess of Monaco".

France (18 May)

This display was given by Bob Cruickshank and covered 11 of the Departments of France. Included in the display was 1946 Alsace Arms value, postcard of Strasbourg, cover for the European Parliament with Council of Europe cancel and flag of the Council, Maximum card showing Guy Moquet, Aguste Bartholdi and Statue of Liberty maxi cards.

Aquitaine included a postcard showing monuments of Bordeaux, stamps showing Heroes of the Resistance, postcards showing Chateau Pau, residence of the monarchs of Navarre as well as a 1908 picture postcard of the Grand Hotel, Biarritz.

The display also included Basse-Normandy with stamp and postcard of Mont St Michael, scenes from the Bayeux Tapestry, Brittany - postcard showing various site aspects of Morbihan. Orleans included stamps and card featuring Joan of Arc.

Other items included were cover and postcard for Chateau de Loches in the Loire Valley, maxi card for Market of Provence, stamps and postcard showing places of interest in Marseille, postcards of Cannes, postcard and postmark for Le-Mans 24 hour endurance sports car race. The display concluded with cards and stamps featuring Mont Blanc and a postcard and cover for Chamonix-Mont Blanc.

Vatican From 1929 (1 June)

This display was given by John Hickey and showed the stamp issues from 1929 to 1978. Included in the display was 1929 definitive set, 1933 Holy Year issue, definitives, 1934 surchs, 1935 International Juridical Congress, Rome set, 1936 Catholic Press Exhibition, Rome, 1938 International Christian Archaeological Congress set, 1939 Coronation of Pope Pius XII, 1944 4th Cent Pontifical Academy of the Virtuosi of the Pantheon, 1946 400 Anniv of Inauguration of the Council of Trent issue, 1949 definitive issue, 75 Anniv UPU, Holy Year issues, 1951 Beatification of Pope Pius X set, 1952 Cent of First Papal States' stamp min sheet, 1955 5th Death Cent Pope Nicholas V, 1956 450 Anniv of Swiss Guard, 1959 1700th Death Annivs of Martyrs under Valerian, 1960 World Refugee Year.

The display then continued with issues from the 1960s to 1978 and included - 1964 Vatican City's Participation in New York World's Fair, 400 Death Anniv of Michelangelo, Red Cross Cent, Christmas, 1966 definitives, 4th Anniv of Opening of Ecumenical Council, Christmas, 1969 Europa, 1970 "Expo 70" World's Fair Osaka, 25th Anniv United Nations, 1972 UNESCO "Save Venice" Campaign, 1973 500 Birth Anniv of Copernicus, 1978 "Vacant See" (both issues).

Yet More Canada (15 June)

This display was given by our President Mike Burrington and covered the Victorian Era of Canadian stamp issues. It began with the 1851 3d Beaver and 6d Prince Albert values in plate proofs and also included the various papers the 3d Beaver value was printed on as well as the major re-entry to "ANA" of "Canada". The 1852-57 10d Cartier value was also shown as well as 1857 ½d deep rose value in plate proof copy overprinted Specimen. This section continued with the 1859-68 Cents issues with plate proofs of 1c, 5c Beaver and 10c Prince Albert values as well as the 5c Beaver used on cover and various perforations. It also included 3 major re-entries on 5c Beaver value. The short lived (1868-70) Large Queens issue was included with colour shades of all values as well as fancy and coloured cancellations. The Small Queens issue (1870-97) followed including ½c colour shades and image offset on the reverse. Various re-entries including "CANADA POSTAGE" to the 6c value were also included.

The display then went on to deal with the later issues starting with the 1897 Jubilee issue. It showed the complete set ½c - \$5 in plate proofs and also in its issued form used. A number of flaws to this issue included 3c flaws to the left side of the crown, 5c re-entry showing doubling of 'NT' of 'Cents', 10c showing vertical guideline through 'CE' of 'Cents'. It also included the 3c value used on advertising covers from Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The 1897-98 Maple Leaf set was shown along with ½c and 1c re-entries. The 1898-1902 Numeral issue was shown as well as 1898 2c Imperial Penny Postage issue. The display concluded with a cover of 25 December 1898 from Hamilton to Glasgow with 2c Imperial Penny Postage issue with flag cancel.

Forthcoming Displays at Ely House

7 September - Gerry Byrne Personal Choice (Kings and Queens)

The display listed in the programme as Personal Choice will cover I am told issues of the British Commonwealth during the reigns of George VI and Elizabeth II up to about 1969.

21 September - Frank Mc Donald Discovering West London Part 1

The display is the first part of the thematic "Discovering West London" and will cover chapters 1 to 4 - Ecclesiastical Westminster, Royal Dwellings, Political Westminster and The Nash Route. The thematic has since 2014 been mounted to a new plan with a lot of new information and material. It is currently being serialised in "IPS NEWS".

5 October - Frank Mc Donald Discovering West London

This is the second half of the thematic and covers chapters 5 and 6. These deal with Culture and Science as well as Social and Commercial. It shows the development of culture in West London including music, Literature and the museums. It also shows the development on an area by area basis through Social and Commercial activities.

2 November Dobbs and Society Cup Competitions

16 November Dobbs Runners-up

President's Page

This article is being written in the middle of June in order to meet the end-of-month deadline for submission for the next edition of the Newsletter. I'm not sure when the Newsletter will actually reach you all, so I will wish you an enjoyable summer break, or hope you had an enjoyable summer break, whichever is appropriate.

At time of writing the meeting dates and programme for the coming 2017 -2018 Society season have been finalised and the cards prepared. Unfortunately, the administration of Ely House seems to be in a bit of a state of disarray at the moment and we do not yet have confirmation of our dates. For the time being we are operating on the assumption that confirmation will be forthcoming and all will be well. Should this turn out not to be the case and alternative arrangements have to be made, you will all be notified as early as possible. Please be sure that your contact details are up to date; notify Frank of any changes. For the same reason we have not been able to determine if a ground floor room in Ely House could be made available to us; we will continue to follow up on this once the House gets its house in order.

You will notice from reading the programme card that in association with the display on February 15, 2018 there will be a Club Bourse. This will take the place of the regular Bourse at that meeting and all proceeds will go to the Society. I would ask all members to donate two or three [or more!] philatelic items [stamps, covers, books, remainders, whatever...] that would be expected to realise at least €5 each; if this is generously supported we may be able to keep the annual subscription rate at its current level. Suitable material can be brought on the night or handed to the Hon. Bourse Secretary at any meeting before then. The Bourse at the meeting of April 20 last was a very satisfactory indication of what can be achieved, however, in this case all the material came from a single donor and is unlikely to be repeated.

The matter of the winding up and dispersal of the Society library is still to be dealt with. When this is organised members will be offered first crack at the books, either by fixed-price sale or by auction.

The annual competitions will be upon us fairly soon after we return in September; if you're planning on participating it's never too soon to make a start on preparing an entry [in my experience it always takes longer than I expect!].

In the same vein, STAMPA 2017 is scheduled for October 6th to 8th, mark the dates on your calendar. Further information can be obtained from any of the STAMPA council members who are in attendance at IPS meetings.

The March/April 2017 issue of the Canadian Philatelist [journal of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada] carried an interesting article on the Council of Postal Collectors, a new organisation based in the USA which aims to raise the profile of our hobby and reverse its trend of decreasing popularity. This seems to me to be a very worthwhile initiative and I intend to follow its future progress and the ideas it will [hopefully] generate. This is a matter that should be of concern to all of us; if you have ideas for sustaining and growing our hobby/pastime/way-of-life don't be shy about sharing them! The article is reprinted on the following page; I hope it will be a starting point for thought and discussion among our members.

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STAMP PROMOTION A GOAL FOR 2017

By Herb Colling

A new philatelic organization is forming in the U.S. that may have an impact for stamp collectors, and dealers, here in Canada. It's the Council on Postal Collectors, and it's designed to address issues of concern to modern philatelists. The council wants to boost participation in stamp collecting as a hobby. It also wants to 'brand' stamp collecting to make it more inclusive and understandable to non-collectors. It wants to bring in new members, as well as reach out to collectors who may not be affiliated with a club or organization. The council was formed last fall, and several organizational meetings have been held since.

The biggest hurdle for the group is bringing new people into the fold, and introducing them to the hobby. Organizers recognize that many people, especially the young, no longer use stamps, and rarely send letters with postage attached. Email and texting have taken over, and many young people aren't even sure what function stamps serve.

Mark Reasoner is the president of the American Stamp Dealer's Association, and he says, "We have to explain what stamps are, and what they're used for." It's no longer a case of touting the benefits of stamp collecting. "It's a different approach from previous generations." Organizers recognize that the daily mail is fast disappearing. Most of it is in the form of bills, flyers, ads, and catalogues that don't require stamps. As one organizer suggested, "Collecting is no longer in our faces anymore." The less stamps are used, the less people think about collecting.

Mick Zais is with the American Philatelic Society, and he reiterated the group's mission statement in progress. He says, "Collectors know much more about history, geography, languages and different cultures. Collectors are more curious, disciplined, have superior organizational skills, and lower stress than non-collectors." So, he concludes, the benefits are real, and it would be better if more people collected stamps.

The idea is to use today's technology: the internet, on line auctions, and social media; to promote stamps, and convince people to collect stamps. Online blogging may be another modern approach to reach a larger audience of potential collectors. Officials with the council feel that, if more individuals can be brought in to develop the hobby, it would help stabilize the number of stamp and postal history dealers involved. Otherwise, dealers may opt out because of declining returns, and that would further exacerbate the decline in the hobby.

Organizers hope to reverse the trend, prompt a regrowth to get people excited about stamp collecting over the next few years. One strategy might be to make stamp shows more accessible, and welcoming to newcomers. As one organizer suggested, in some cases, existing collectors are part of the problem, rather than the solution. "They're participating in the hobby on the internet and are invisible to organized philately." The goal should be to reach those people too.

That prompted organizers to ask why stamp collectors don't join existing stamp organizations and clubs. Why have more men been traditionally involved than women? What brings them in? Does it take a family member to bring potential collectors to shows, and instill in them a love of stamps? When does that happen? Does it have to be youngsters, or could people become collectors in their retirement years for something to do? Now, there is an active women's exhibitor group, how did that happen? These are issues that the new group plans to address.

It was suggested that existing collectors should be writing articles in non philatelic publications, magazines and newspapers, to reach a greater audience, not just the confirmed. Articles could concentrate on topical subjects: collecting train stamps, for example; in magazines that appeal to train enthusiasts. Similarly, sports collecting could be a subject for sports magazines, and stamps with flora and fauna could be featured in nature publications. Stamps with superheroes and Star Wars characters may appeal to young collectors, and generate some interest.

Along those lines, the American postal service was criticized for no longer promoting stamps, and for producing too many, which has turned many people off. Organizers say the service has become product oriented, and there may not be as much value to stamp collecting as there once was. As a result, it's up to enthusiasts within the hobby to make people aware, and focus on collecting.

As organizers pointed out in one report this year, in the past, there was a spokesman/character and regular newspaper articles to keep people involved. "Common, every day interest stories to get people to say, 'hey, I could do that'". The new council is brainstorming to develop a business plan, schedule, and agenda. It's hoped that collectors will support the campaign in the interests of the future of their own hobby. Ultimately, the organization wants to prepare the next generation of dealers to improve the marketplace, and maintain interest in stamp collecting. It's expected that more meetings will be held throughout the year. □

WAYS TO IMPROVE A PHILALETIC EXHIBIT

The points below apply mainly to traditional philately exhibits (studies of certain stamps from a country issued during a discrete period of time) or postal history exhibits (studies of mails that genuinely passed through the mail stream) which together usually make up most of the displays at a stamp show. Some of the criteria for other types of exhibits (eg, thematic, open philately) differ, but most of the suggestions presented below will still apply.

GETTING STARTED

* Don't exhibit in the big-time shows until you're ready.

Refine your exhibit before you take the big plunge. Maybe begin with a local show or Society first?. However, if you've done your homework, why not start with a national show eg, Stampex, London?. If you're unsure of yourself, by all means start at Society level perhaps novice.

* Be consistent in the paper you use.

Make sure every page in your exhibit is on the same type, size, colour and thickness of paper. Do not use for example 70 gram or 80 gram typing paper to mount your entry as it is too flimsy and will not support heavy items such as booklets or covers. Use a minimum of 120 or 160 gram card (required by International Exhibitions, Stampex and Stampex, London) or better still 240 gram card, much more sturdy and gives better support to your material particularly if it has to travel to an exhibition.

Do use a bright colour card such as white or ivory but, do not use black or red, these are not permitted for competitions. Avoid lined or gridded paper - it draws attention to the slightest misalignment of material (especially if it isn't square) or wording.

* Re-paginate your exhibit each time you modify it.

There is nothing more exasperating than trying to quickly mount your exhibit before a show or Society competition, while simultaneously trying to figure out what order the pages should be in. One can use small post-it notes stuck to the back of the page beneath the sheet protector. If you are sending your exhibit for others to mount, find out and comply with the regulations for numbering and labelling the sheets. Do this in pencil if possible - then its easier to change it next time without having to re-do the sheet.

If you use a backing sheet or stiffener inside your protectors, remember to put the mounting information on the back of that. The same applied to "expert certificates".

* Read the Rules, Regulations, Guides, Handbooks etc for what you're entering.

Be sure to understand the differences between the various classes of exhibits and know which yours is. Whichever type of exhibit you have, read that section of the manual or bulletin three or four times. Comply with the rules on what to show and how to display it, however inanely stupid they may seem.

* Show enough to tell your story properly.

Mounting an exhibit is a great way to see if you have enough material to make up an exhibit. Be honest do you?. Will the gaps you have be glaringly obvious to a judge?. Try to apply the judging criteria to your potential exhibit. How complete is it?. Is the condition of the material the best obtainable?. For traditional or postal history exhibits, how significant is the material being shown for the country or period of the exhibit?. In short how would your exhibit stack up against the best possible exhibit of that subject?.

Lay each frame out and see how it looks as a whole. Consider building your own test frame. Don't put your sheets on the floor : inevitably you'll be called away and the cat will walk over them.

*Submit a synopsis, if permitted.

This special report informs the judges of things not included on the title page. It is only for the judges, and is submitted with the entry form. Here is where you can let them know the challenge of collecting your subject, why you organised your exhibit the way you did, describe your best items so the judges know what to look for, and present a bibliography of suggested reading (not applicable in therapeutics). Instead of a synopsis, one may be allowed a limited space (eg, 50 words) on the entry form. If a synopsis is not allowed, do not submit one.

* Be specific on your entry form when describing your exhibit.

It will be printed in the programme and seen by the judges. It is a major opportunity to raise interest in your material.

THE FIRST PAGE (TITLE PAGE)

*Scrutinize the title of your exhibit

If possible, make it short and sweet but pertinent, so that viewers will immediately know what you are presenting. The title is the first thing a judge sees even before he/she sees your actual exhibit. Avoid "clever" titles that give no clue to what you're going to show. The second thing that the judges will see is your actual title page and synopsis (assuming one is permitted). Most shows require that at least the title page be submitted in advance.

* Revise your title page.

Most title pages are boring and useless. And yet it is the most important page. Usually writing the title page is the first thing you do. Revising the title page should be the last thing you do. Don't have a contents list "this - sheet X ; that - sheet y". Instead do a per-frame list : "Frame 1 - this and that ; Frame 2 - next ; Frame 3 : More of next and some of the other". Accept that you'll have to re-do the title page for a different frame layout (traditional, postal history, aerophilately).

* If possible use a blockbuster item or illustration on your title page.

Try to get the judges to take notice right away — but be tasteful. The rules are very relaxed on what can be shown on a title page, and also sometimes relaxed for the last page of the exhibit. Material on these pages need not be philatelic, or be within the time frame covered by the exhibit (eg, the title page could show a forerunner). In therapeutics non philatelic items eg, Cinderellas or Patriotic labels are not permitted except on cover and provided no reference is made to them in the write-up.

* Highlight on your title page any new research you have done

Judges are impressed if you've gone to extra lengths to study your subject. This is not necessary; but it does not hurt.

If you have a lot to say the synopsis is the place to say it particularly in regards to thematic entries where highlights on new research cannot be shown on the title page.

PRESENTING YOUR MATERIALS

* Make sure Important items are closer to the top of the frames.

You want people (especially the judges) to notice them. The middle two rows are generally considered to be better than the top row, and some people even say that the best items should be on pages 6,7,10 and 11 (ie the centre four of the 16). But do not artificially distort the story (especially in therapeutics and open philately exhibits) you are trying to tell just so you can get your best items in the prime locations.

* Highlight your most important items.

Try using coloured mattes (ie mounting the items on slightly-larger pieces of card of a contrasting colour), coloured dots, coloured text, or some other eye-catching method to draw attention to your most important materials. Do not overdo it. Do not make the judges hunt for the good stuff. A few people object to red dots ("measles") but most judges are okay with anything that helps them.

With mattes ensure that the item will not fall off the matte in transit, or the matte off the sheet. Providing both with four corner mounts is safer than the alternate -corner method. Avoid excessively large mattes especially if dark; likewise large black Hawid-type mounts for stamps. The material is not in mourning.

If the reverse of the item contains important markings or frankings a copy can be shown (it must be reduced to no more than 75% of the original in size or increased depending on space to 120% of the original. It must not however, be the same size as the original).

* Too few stamps or covers on your pages? A mixture of stamps or covers on your pages?. A mixture of mint and used stamps?.

Any of these may lose points, depending on the class. In thematic and open philately classes use either all mint or all used stamps and miniature sheets throughout the entry. Do not mix them on pages. If you opt to include only used stamps and miniature sheets in your exhibit ensure that they are lightly cancelled (preferably in a corner) as possible. Do not include ones that are machine wavy line cancelled as they detract from the overall appearance and obscure what you are trying to illustrate.

In thematic and to some degree open philately entries at Society, and especially national and international exhibitions pages with stamps only are unlikely to do well in the overall context of the exhibit. Therefore the exhibitor should ensure some ancillary item or items eg, booklets, miniature sheet, cover, telegram, proof, essay, art work (if available) is or are shown on the page.

*Ask a non-philatelist to read through your exhibit,

You will be surprised at the flaws they will pick out and the misspellings they will find. Be grateful for the help.

Spelling (and grammar) errors would come under the "Presentation" category which normally counts for 5% in evaluating an exhibit. Sloppy mounting also comes under this heading. Although 5% is not much it can have a subtle negative influence on the judges evaluation of the other categories.

* Occasionally put one or two of your major items on pages by themselves.

This is to draw attention to them and to show judges that you have important items. (Postal history, Aerophilately, traditional classes)

* Do not praise your own material.

Let the material speak for itself. Avoid using the words "scarce" or "rare" in describing your material. Better to describe the scarcity eg, "only 20 issued" or in the case of covers or markings "one of only 2 or 5 covers so far known or, the only one so far known". Other unknown examples of markings could yet turn up in solicitors deed boxes or in archives of families going back decades.

* And do not condemn it either.

Others will do that for you.

Remove any "Philatelic" items

These can include first day or other cacheted covers. Judges want to see legitimate "commercial" usages. Even better, show correctly franked items, and briefly explain the rates. A small overfranking of a rate is usually acceptable. Do not include a 0.00 meter franking.

Of course this applies only to traditional and postal history exhibits. It is okay for thematic and display and required for illustrated mail. Even for traditional and postal history exhibits, philatelic covers may be okay if they advance the story you are trying to tell. In thematic entries first day covers can be used for the illustration provided the rate is correct for the service intended. However, one with a full set of stamps issued on the day which is clearly in excess of the postal rate should not be included.

* Review the condition of every item in your exhibit.

If you are showing something "easy to obtain" in less than perfect condition you are doing your exhibit an injustice. Try to avoid displaying damaged items. You don't want to hear a judge tell you that better stamps and covers are available on the dealers stands.

* Remove any kind of sloppiness in the page layouts.

Avoid having a row of stamps or pieces of different sizes with the difference emphasised by black mounts - especially if the pieces are not rectangular. It is better to use clear transparent mounts and draw a narrow black border around each on the sheet; make that border the same size for all items on the same row. If one piece is much larger than the rest, move it, replace it, or even trim it.

* Shorten your write-ups.

Very long write-ups are hard to wade through, and judges (and viewers) hate them. Write as if you are paying for each word in a telegram. Use no more than five lines (though six in some cases may be required) per description. Write on the basis that the judges have a better-than-average knowledge of your subject. A complete sentence is not necessary if a short phrase will do.

* But not too short.

Judges sometimes ask "what does the exhibitor mean here"?. It is possible to have too short a write-up. Never ever confuse the judges.

* Delete or Shrink maps and illustrations.

Do not let them overwhelm your stamps and covers, use them only when totally necessary. A sheet with no philatelic material will lose points. In an open philately exhibit it is acceptable to have a page without philatelic material on it, just non philatelic material but, that is the exception.

This is sometimes difficult to do if the map or illustration is the only sensible way to convey the intended information. With maps you could replace city names with numbers and provide a separate list of cities keyed to those numbers. But the philatelic material has to be the star.

* Never refer to catalogue numbers in your exhibit.

Well almost never. Certainly do not use numbers from 'standard' catalogues. Using numbers from some obscure catalogue may sometimes be necessary or acceptable to emphasise the completeness of some items that the usual catalogues lump together. Print them in a really small font.

* Secure some exotic material.

This may require laying out serious money for a few items, but they will make a big splash. Be sure to let the judges know you have them, both in your synopsis and on your exhibit page (s). But such material should be special, exotic, rare, unusual or whatever, not simply expensive.

* Do you show enough "difficulty of acquisition"?

This is a key factor. Will a judge know he/she cannot find some of your stuff on the dealers stands?. Difficulty of acquisition does not always imply expensive, and judges know that. This is usually worth a section heading in your synopsis. In postal history or aerophilately exhibits you can on the title/plan page include a small section heading "Highlights of the Exhibit" in which you can list up to five such items. If you searched for 20 years before you found that \$5 stamp, be sure to mention it.

*Did you do what your title page said you were going to do; no less, and no more?.

"Deliver what you promise; promise what you deliver". The title page should be the last page you finalise, and usually is (or should be) re-done more than any other page. If your exhibit is for ever changing, make sure you always live up to your title page write-up. Also check that, if you say "Frame 3 shows XX" a rearrangement caused by a change in sheets per-frame has not moved XX to frame 4.

AFTER THE JUDGING

* Attend every judging critique, and take notes

And not just on your exhibit, but also on other exhibits discussed. These will come in handy some day. Few things frustrate a judge more than to prepare comments on an exhibit, know that the exhibitor is in the room, but never get a question. Do not be afraid to ask questions of the judge in relation to your exhibit.

* Set a goal to attain, but be realistic.

Think carefully about your subject matter. Is it possible to get it to gold level (at National level and in time International)? If not, do not expect more than what your material will deserve. Or take it as a challenge. The most improbable exhibits have achieved gold.

* Improve your exhibit after each show or club competition.

An exhibit is ever-evolving, ever-changing. Judges who see yours more than once will be impressed. But judges are different, and juries are human. It is not uncommon for an exhibitor to improve an exhibit and have the medal level go down (National and International). Take it in your stride and do not get discouraged.

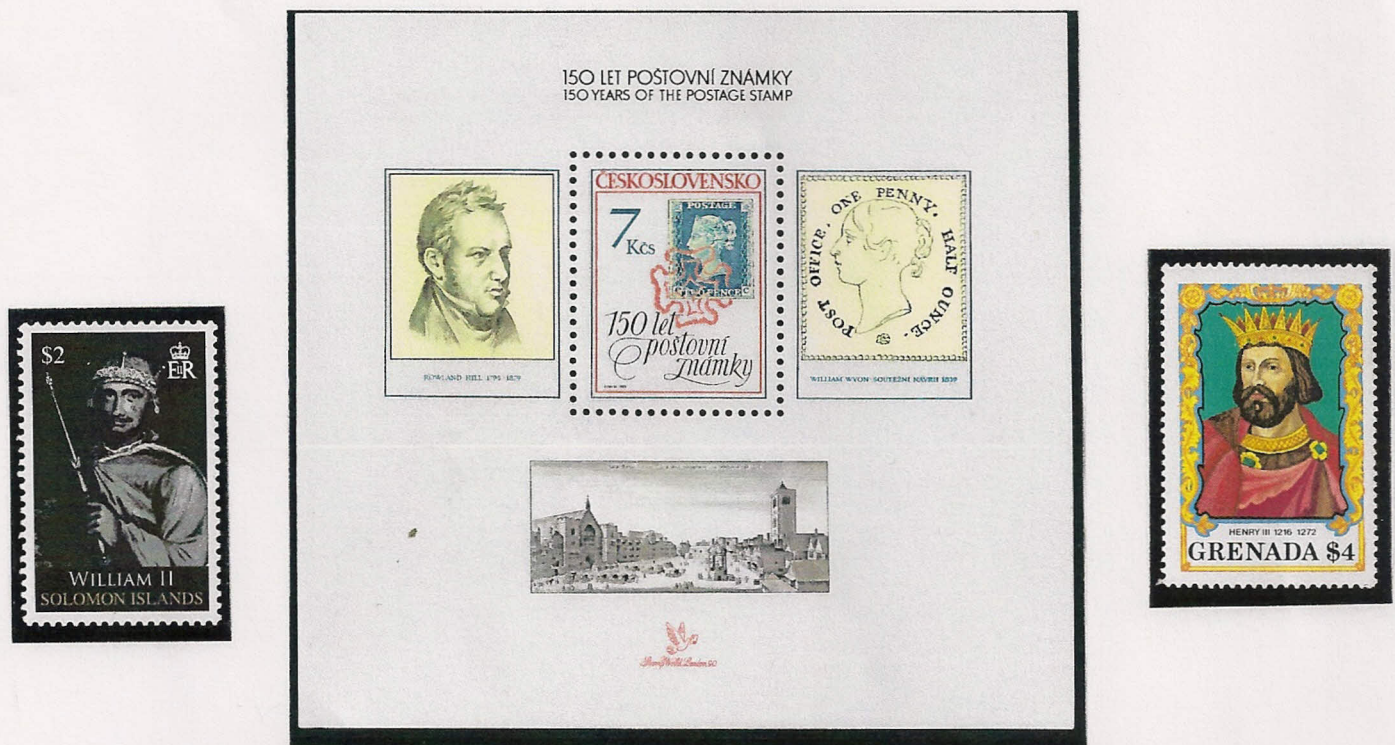
Also check the regulations, which frequently forbid an unchanged exhibit from being trundled out too often. The more specialised it is, the greater the likelihood that it will be remembered.

F Mc Donald

POLITICAL WESTMINSTER - PART 1

Houses of Parliament

Parliament today meets in the Houses of Parliament which, stands on the site of the old Royal Palace of Westminster. The foundations of parliament were however, laid in Westminster Hall, built between 1097 and 1099 by William II (discussed under the Royal Dwellings section).



This occurred in 1265 when Simon de Montford, the rebel Earl of Leicester, born in France, summoned knights of the shires and Burgesses from the towns to sit in parliament. What is so extraordinary about this is that, he summoned the parliament in the name of Henry III while holding him and his son Edward I prisoner. This became known as de Montford's Parliament.

The shortest Parliament (1399) met there for one day to depose Richard II. In 1327 the Commons (representatives of the counties and boroughs) separated from the nobles (Barons, Earls, Lords) and so from then on the two house parliamentary system was born.

Before that legislation was originated by the Lords or Upper House but now it began to originate from below in the Commons which still continues today.

When Henry VII was establishing himself as the first Tudor sovereign, following the War of the Roses, he called parliament every two years. Henry VIII began by calling six parliaments between 1510 and 1515 but his chief minister, Cardinal Wolsey found them awkward; only one more parliament was summoned before Wolsey's fall in 1529.



Between 1529 and 1532 parliament dutifully assisted Henry in his unsuccessful attempts to coerce Pope Clement VII to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon.

When Henry VIII vacated the old Palace of Westminster in 1529 it then remained dormant. In 1547 Edward VI granted it as a meeting place for parliament. In 1584 parliament was opened for the only time during the reign of Elizabeth I to determine who should succeed her after her death. During her reign matters of state were dealt with by the Privy Council who acted as her secretaries hence today "Secretary of State" is the term given to a Minister of the Crown.

In 1586 Sir Walter Raleigh was elected to parliament. Its Portcullis Emblem surmounted by a crown dates to the reign of Henry VIII when the old Palace of Westminster was a royal palace. It was one of the House of Tudor badges. The old Palace of Westminster burned down in 1834. Construction of the present building began in 1840 and was completed in 1852. Queen Victoria opened the first parliament in the new building in 1852.



VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Printed by the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office at St. Stephen's
Parliamentary Press, Pocock Street, London, S.E.1

V.P.148A (10)

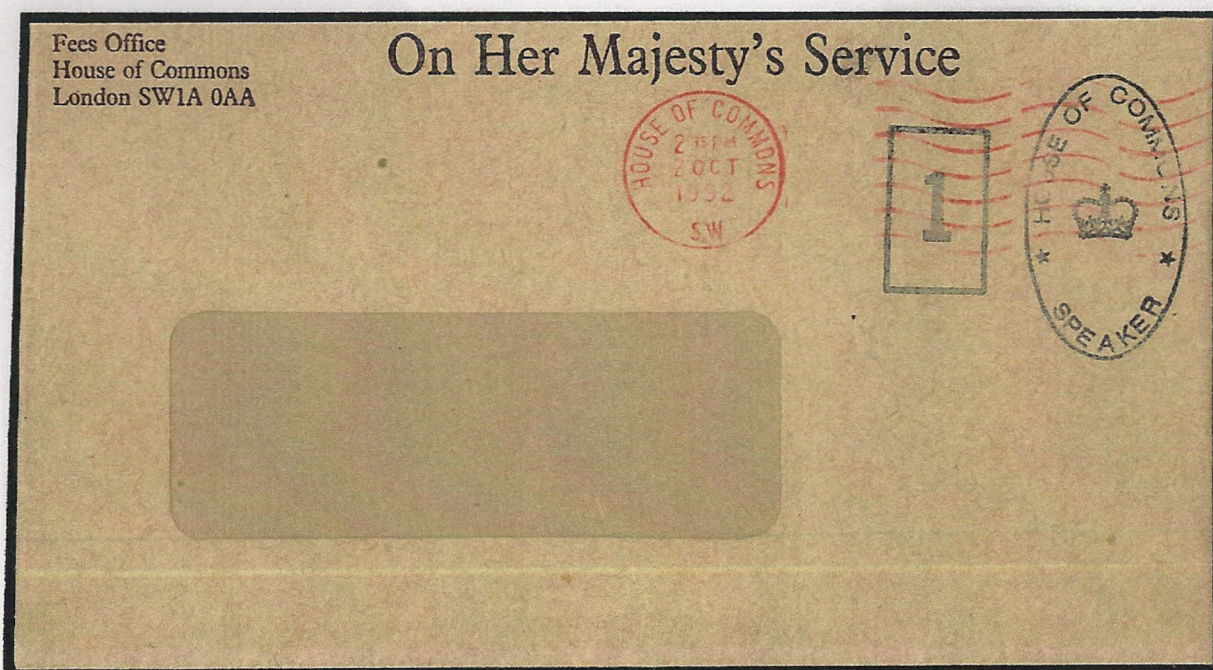
MR. L. N. SMITH E.S.B.3
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Let us now look at the House of Commons or lower house. It dates to 1332 when Knights of the Shires and Burgesses from many towns began to meet together. It represents all local communities of the kingdom. The office of Speaker dates to 1377 when a commoner could petition the king. His or her task is to keep order in the House but the Speaker of the House of Commons does not have a vote, casting or otherwise.



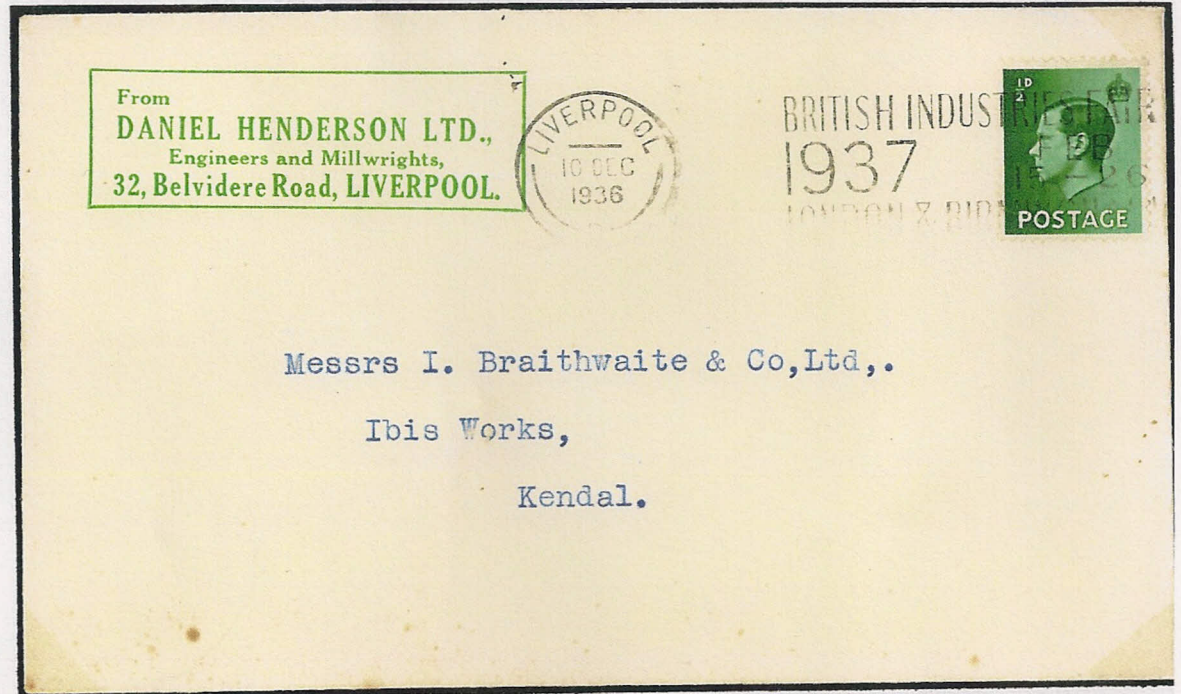
In 1642 an attempt by King Charles I to arrest 5 members in the House of Commons led to the start of the English War. As a result of this no sovereign has set foot in the House of Commons since. However, as Duke of York the future King George V attended debates in the House sitting in the gallery. In 1649 the House of Commons set up a small body of Commissioners to act as judges in the trial of Charles I. In 1812 Spencer Perceval, Prime Minister 1807 - 1812 was assassinated while entering the lobby of the House of Commons. He is the only British Prime Minister to have been assassinated.

In 1887 a duplex cancellation HOUSE OF COMMONS/40 was issued to its Post Office in the Post Office List of that year.



In 1918 the Irish revolutionary, Countess Markievicz (nee Gore Booth) was the first woman elected to the House of Commons. She did not take her seat as was and is the policy of her party Sinn Fein. She instead took a seat in the First Dail in 1919. The first woman to take a seat in the House of Commons was Nancy Astor.

On 10 December 1936 the Speaker of the House of Commons read the note of Abdication from Edward VIII to the House.



In 1992 the Prime Minister (John Major) announced to the House the separation of the Prince and Princess of Wales.

Over the centuries a number of historical bill and acts have originated in the House of Commons. These include the Regency Bill of February 1811 making the Prince of Wales, the future George IV Prince Regent due to the growing mental instability of the king, George III, The Incorporation of Lloyds Act in 1871 and the Indian Independence Bill in 1947.



In the next article I will conclude the Houses of Parliament.