

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society



How not to treat philatelists!!! - but how they are sometimes seen by the postal services?
This piece was part of a packet received fairly recently by our member Alan Wood

Volume 59 ● Number 2

June 2009

Whole Number 252

**THE FRANCE & COLONIES
PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN**

Officers

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General Secretary 2009-2010: P R A Kelly, Malmsy House, Church Road, Leigh Woods, Bristol BS8 3PG
(email: secretary@fcps.org.uk).
Membership Secretary 2009-2010: Dr R G Gethin, 5 Meriden Close, Bromley, Kent BR1 2UF (email: info@fcps.org.uk).

The Society

The Society was founded in 1949 and is affiliated to the ABPS. Its affairs are managed by a Committee comprising President, Officers and Committee members, elected annually.
All inquiries about and applications for membership should be addressed to the Membership Secretary, all other correspondence to the General Secretary.

2009-10 Annual Subscription Rates

United Kingdom: £13.00, Europe: £17.00, Elsewhere: £20.00.
Treasurer: C J Hitchen, 36 Everton Road, Croydon CR0 6LA (email: treasurer@fcps.org.uk)..
The Society's Girobank account number is 39 784 9001.

The Journal

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Auction and Exchange Packet Sales

Lots for sale through the Society auctions, held 2 or 3 times a year, should be sent to the appropriate Auction Secretary:
M L Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2ES (email: auction1@fcps.org.uk) or
J N Hammonds, 31 Wheatsheaf Close, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 5TH (email: auction2@fcps.org.uk)
according to instructions
Please send material for circulation in booklet form to the appropriate Exchange Packet Secretary, viz.
France: R G E Wood, 51 Longstomps Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9BY (Telephone 01245 267949).
Colonies: J C West, 5 Highbanks Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4AR (Telephone 0208 428 4741).

The Library

Members are invited to avail themselves of the services of the Society's substantial library, on terms set out in the Library List distributed to all Members.
Librarian: G E Barker, 520 Halifax Road, Bradford BD6 2LP.

The Magazine Circuit

The Society subscribes to two French philatelic magazines, and has circuits organised for those who wish to read them.
For further details contact the circuit organiser:
D A Pashby, 148 Glengall Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0DS.

Journal Correspondents

Paris: J M Simmons	Northern Group: J P Maybury
London Group: L H Barnes	Wessex Group: P R A Kelly / A J Wood
Southern Group: C W Spong	Scottish Group: Mrs M Pavey

Publications Stockist

J P Maybury, 18 Courtneys, Wheldrake, York YO19 6BR (email: publications@fcps.org.uk).

* * *

When writing to an officer of the Society, please do not mention the name of the Society in the address. Requests for information should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Data Protection Act. Members are advised that their details are stored electronically, for use on Society business only, e.g address label printing.

The Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society

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SOCIETY NOTES

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following:

1343 John Cumes (Germany), 1344 Kenneth Burr (Suffolk), 1345 Christina Birrer (Irish Republic), 1346 Edward Piper (Sussex), 1347 Peter Hall (Leicestershire), 1348 Jean Kubler (France), 1349 Keith Smith (Somerset).

* * *

Members Deceased

We are saddened to hear of the death of the following members, and offer our sincere condolences to their families:

1022 Alan Rigden, 209 Paul Wood.

* * *

Resignations

512 Betty Blincow.

* * *

Future Events

The **London Group** will hold its first meeting of the new season at the Calthorpe Arms, Grays Inn Road, London WC1 at 6.30pm on Wednesday 23 September 2009.

The **Southern Group** will meet on Saturday at the East Worthing Community Centre, Pages Lane, East Worthing at 2.00pm on Saturday 22 August 2009.

The **Northern Group** will meet at Heaton Royds, Bradford, on Saturday 11 July 2009 for the "Bastille Day" meeting.

The **Wessex Group** will meet at the Scout Hall, Lower Street, Harnham, Salisbury, at 10.00am on Saturday 4 July 2009 for a display by Gavin Fryer on "back of the book" tariffs (wrappers, newspapers and all kinds of interesting things).

The **Scottish Group** meets in Room 1, Cross House, Linlithgow. Details of future meetings will be given shortly.

* * *

Displays by Members

Two Society members, **George Barker** FRPSL and **Iain Stevenson** FRPSL participated in the recent one day 'Jour de l'Académie' exhibition organised by the French Académie de Philatélie at the Postal Museum in Paris. Both George and Iain are among the thirteen 'foreign corresponding members' of the Academy who are elected by invitation. Full Academy membership is restricted to only forty *immortels* who have to be distinguished philatelists of French nationality resident in or near Paris.

The exhibition was a great success and attracted a large number of collectors who enjoyed a wide ranging display of not only French material, presented in a meeting room 'très sympa' as the French say. La Poste provided a special one day handstamp and a full-service philatelic counter (Royal Mail please note!). The material was truly stunning in its quality and interest and underlines the Academy's reputation as uniting some of the world's leading and most scholarly collectors.

George showed the fruits of his research on the semi-modern issues of French Equatorial Africa which challenges much of the conventional wisdom of the French catalogues and his display raised much comment and debate which hopefully will make his important findings better known in France. Iain displayed part of his collection of British express mail and spent much of the afternoon explaining the complexities of rates and routes to an interested audience.

The displays were complemented by an afternoon programme of illustrated lectures which covered fascinating topics in Peru, the Middle East and of course France. The day was rounded off in true Gallic style with a 'vin d'honneur' of Champagne for those who had attended the day and a convivial dinner in a nearby restaurant for Academicians, guests and members. Over two hundred visitors participated and it was encouraging to witness the amount of interest in serious philately and postal history among French collectors.

The day was organised with great efficiency and aplomb by the energetic husband and wife team of *Académiciens* Robert (current President) and Brigitte Abensur. They are to be congratulated on achieving such a high profile event which seems likely to become annual. With Eurostar fares at rock bottom, well worth travelling to Paris for!

WIS

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Peter Kelly arranged a display on 19 March 2009 by members of the European Academy of Philately at the Royal Philatelic Society in London, entitled "The Stamps and Postal History of European Countries and Overseas Territories". **Peter Kelly, Chris Hitchen, George Barker, Mick Bister, Peter Maybury** and **John Yeomans** were among the members of our Society who showed material. This was acclaimed as a marvellous occasion and a great success.

AJL

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On 4 November 2008 **Barbara Priddy** displayed "French West Africa" to the West London P S.

At our US sister society's FCPS Exhibition held in Denver 15-17 May 2009 the exhibits included three by **Ed Grabowski**: "Madagascar Early Postal History"; "Postal History of the French Colonial Allegorical Group Type, Use in the French Pacific Ocean Colonies"; and similarly "Use in Indochina, the French Indochinese Offices in China, and China"; and one by **Stan Luft**: "Alsace-Lorraine/Elsass-Lothringen 1870 to UPU". On the same occasion (16 May 2009) **Ed Grabowski** also presented his keynote programme "Real or Fake? How does a philatelist know for sure?"

* * *

Exhibition Successes

At OKPEX 2008 (October 2008 in Oklahoma City) a Gold Medal was awarded to **Stan Luft** for "France - Marianne de Decaris (1960-1967)".

* * *

Philatelic Honours

It has been confirmed that two of our members, **George Barker** and **John Sussex**, have been invited to sign the RDP (Roll of Distinguished Philatelists) in July. Congratulations to both of them!

Chris Hitchen has been elected President of the Society of Postal Historians.

* * *

2009 Register of Members' Interests

The following corrections and changes should be made to email addresses in the published Register:

Chris Hitchen: chitchen@croyden.myzen.co.uk

Bruno Mattei: mattei.bruno@gmail.com

Héloise Mitchell: heloise@iol.ie

Michael Wright: shawwright@elmic.org.uk

* * *

Southern Group Programme 2009-2010

22 August 2009 - Members: Latest acquisitions and new interests

17 October 2009 - Robert Bradford: Cilicia

9 January 2010 - Alan Carter: French Postal Markings

17 April 2010 - Steve Ellis: Maritime Mail

The August meeting as usual will commence at 10.30am until lunch and recommence at 14.00 until 16.30 hours. The other meetings will be from 14.00 until 17.00, all in the East Worthing Community Centre, Pages Lane, Worthing.

* * *

London Group Programme 2009-2010

Wed 23 Sep 2009 - Members: 12 sheets

Wed 14 Oct 2009 - Derek Richardson: Broken Chains, Dulac & Briat

Sat 7 Nov 2009 - John Scott: French Decorative Paper

Wed 25 Nov 2009 - John Yeomans: French India

Wed 20 Jan 2010 - Alan Barrett: Part 2 French Cinderellas

Sat 27 Feb 2010 - George Barker: French Classic Issues 1849-1870

Wed 17 Mar 2010 - Members: New projects & Acquisitions

Wed 14 Apr 2010 - Ian Nutley: Mermoz Line - Air France

Thurs 6 May 2010 (Festival of Stamps) - John West: France, the Red Cross

Sat 1 May 2010 - 11.30 AGM and 14.00 Live Auction

Wednesday meetings and the AGM are held at 18.30 at the Calthorpe Arms PH, 252 Grays Inn Road, London WC1; Thursday and Saturday meetings (except the AGM) will be at 15.00 at the Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1, and will be followed by a supper at 17.30 for 17.45 at *Il Posto Ristorante Italiano*, 316A Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria, London SW1V 1AA for those who wish to participate.

* * *

Skanda Vaitilingam

We are very sorry to have heard quite recently that Skanda - who has entertained us so often at our Annual Weekends - is now quite poorly and finds it very difficult to get out and about unaided. Any members who would like to write to him will find his contact details in the Register of Members' Interests.

* * *

The Society Auction

The benefits

The auctions have been an integral part of the Society for many years and have provided a valuable service to many of its members. They offer members the opportunity to acquire material at reasonable and, sometimes, very low prices. There is sometimes a discovery to be made as in the case of the last auction when, upon closer examination, an insignificant looking entire was found to have originated in Madeira hence increasing its interest, its scarcity and its value. On another occasion a humble looking cover was offered with a strip of common looking Pasteur stamps which turned out to be the rare coil printing. We cannot guarantee treasure trove in all our sales but there are invariably bargains as well as surprises.

The auctions also offer members the opportunity to dispose of unwanted material and in so doing make room for new purchases financed from their sales. I am sure that each one of us has a few items which we regret buying or in which we have lost interest, so the auction is an ideal outlet for such material.

If you are already a vendor or buyer and hence familiar with the auction procedures I apologise if I appear to be teaching *un vieux singe à faire des grimaces*. I hope though

that the following guidelines will be of help to both new members and to the not so new who have yet to take advantage of what the auction offers.

The schedule

We normally have three auctions a year. The London room auction always takes place in May on the same day as the AGM. The other two are postal auctions which currently take place in February and November.

Preparations for each auction start early as the catalogue needs to be with the printer in time for it to be distributed with the Journal. This means that the closing date for the receipt of lots has to be a good three months before the date of the auction itself. The deadline for submission of lots for the next auction is always published on the last page of the current catalogue.


The material

As members will see from reading recent catalogues, there is always a wide range of material offered in the sales covering most philatelic interests. Lots are divided into the standard categories - Pre-adhesive Covers, 19th Century Stamps, Postal Stationery, Booklets and Coils etc - but occasionally, when a specialist collection is being broken

up, there will be new and additional categories. In recent sales we have seen, for example, Alsace & Lorraine, the Type Blanc and Official Imperfs as well as material from late members' estates.

The last section in the auction usually contains miscellaneous items such as postcards, documents and ephemera. Occasionally literature is offered but there are special conditions attached for books and other large items.

FRANCE AND COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY - AUTUMN AUCTION 1973		
Viewing 2.30pm. - 3.50pm. Auction 4pm onwards. Dinner 6.30pm.		
LQT No.		STARTING PRICE
1	1775 Straight-line CORSE original mark of Bastia	£6.00
2	1790 Straight-line BASTIA	4.00
3	1793? St.-line 50/BOURMONT in red, Paris b/s 6 in circle	2.25
4	- Straight-line 50/BOURBONNE in black (nice) wrapper only	1.50
5	AN8 Straight-line 12/MARSEILLE	1.20
6	AN8 and 1808 St.-line 30/TOULOUSE (2 different)	2.25
7	AN8 and 1822 St.-line 32/BORDEAUX (2 different)	2.25
8	AN8 and 1827 St.-line 33/LUNEL (2 different)	2.75
9	1808 PARIS P in triangle	1.00
10	1810 Straight-line 74/ROUEN	1.20
11	1820 St.-line 12/MARSEILLE to Ajaccio with boxed b/s peculiar to Corsica	3.00
12	1823 St.-line 68/LYON	1.20
13	1831? P50p/VASSY front only but fine strike	1.50
14	1834/44 Pair of cvrs with 1D (Decime rurale) in red and black	1.50
15	1840s Cachets d'entrée 3x 2 BOULOGNE 2 in red, various coloured b/s	1.20
16	1833/66 St.-line ANGLETERRE / PAR CALAIS, plus stamp less entire from Procureur Fiscal at Amiens, with impe	
17	Stampless cvrs with dble-lined taxe marks 3	
18	Stampless cvrs with dble-lined taxe marks 2	
19	Early 19th Cent. colln. pre-adhesive covers	
20	1849 20c blk on white, grille, cut into bott	
21	1849 20c blk on yell., cut on frame at botto	
22	1849 20c blk on yell.; one good mgns but stai	
23	1850 40c good appearance but thin & very clo	
24	1850 40c (Yv 5) light grille, close 2 sides,	
25	1850 40c (Yv 5) lighter shade, FC canc., out	
26	1850 25c blue/yellowish, light grille, thin,	
27	1850 25c (Yv 4) two u.prs., one no outer fram	
28	1849/52 Geres selection : 25c (torn mgns or 3 mgns), 2xlf (Yv6 - one extremely poor and stain	
29	1852 Repub 25c superb mgns, fine appearance	
30	1852 Repub 25c two copies nice appearance bu	
31	1853 Emp 1c deep olive bronze, circular canc	
32	1853 Emp 1c (Yv 11) circ. cancel, nice mgns	
33	1853 Emp 5c (Yv 12) 4 mgns but close and thi	
34	1853 Emp 10c (Yv 13) u. vert pair, nice mgns	
35	1853 Emp 10c (Yv 13a) u. 4 mgns but slightly	
36	1853 Emp 20c blue (Type I - 11, II - 7) on p	
37	1853 Emp 20c blue/laiteux 1854 first mo	
38	1853 Emp 20c u. blk of 4 yell. paper gd mgns	
39	1853 Emp 20c Yv 14, damaged cnr but curious	
40	1853 Emp 20c on covers (19 items)	
41	1853 Emp 40c on 52 pieces (57 stamps)	
42	1853 Emp 80c u. dp. carmine fine appearance	
43	1853 Emp nice seln. mostly 4 mgn 1c, 5c, 10c (I	
44	1853 Emp selection 5 x 10c, 7 x 20c, 5 x 40c	
45	1862 Emp 1c mint part o.g. (Cat 85F)	
46	1862 Emp 1c vert pair un. no gum, corner ore	
47	1862 Emp 20c u. blk of 4 clipped top right (
48	1862 Emp 40c u. blk of 4 trimmed perfs at bo	
49	1862 Emp 80c u. blk of 4 perfs trimmed in pl	
50	1862 Emp 80c u. blk of 4 perfs fair but colo	
51	1862 Emp selection 2xlc (one poor), 2x5c (1 both shades), 3x20c, 2x40c, & 1x80c (C	
52	1863 Laur 4c light circ. canc. but corner pe	
53	1863 Laur 20c (II) Yv 29A un. part o.g. heav	
54	1863 Laur 30c (Yv 30) u. strip of 3 heavyish	
55	1863 Laur selection 1c, 2c, 4c (defects), 10c,	
56	1863 Laur selection 1c, 4x2c, 2x4c (1 sl. def	

FRANCE & COLONIES PHILATELIC SOCIETY		
Winter Postal Auction Saturday 2 February 2002		
		
Requests for viewing (until 26 January) and postal bids (until 2 February) to M L Bister, 7 The Slade, Wrestlingworth, Sandy, Beds., SG19 2ES. Lots may be held for viewing for four days maximum; viewer pays postage both ways. Printed colour scans of suitable lots can be supplied at 5p per lot (please allow for multiple lots) payable in stamps plus SAE. or they can be sent by e-mail as JPG attachments free of charge. Please take full advantage of the viewing and copying arrangements as by necessity lot descriptions in this catalogue have to be kept brief. Telephone enquiries welcome on 01767-631404 or e-mail mbister@theslade.fsnet.co.uk.		
LOT N°		MINIMUM BID (£)
Colonies and Post Offices Abroad		
1	General Issues - 1c & 5c Eagles (Yv1 & 2, without gum), 5c (Yv3 without gum and nick), 40c (Yv5 used). Cat. as used 68,00€	12.00
2	80c Cérés (Yv21) four margins, good colour and light cancel. Cat. 170,00€	40.00
3	Selection of Type Dubois (Yv46-47, 49-51, 53-54 and 59) all used but a couple with faults. Cat. 71,00€	10.00
4	1c, 5c, 10c & 1f Taxe (Yv1, 5, 6 and 26) m/m but all with faults. Cat. 30,00€	4.00
5	2 x 5c, 10c, 15c and 20c Taxe (Yv5, 6, 7, 8 and 18) used. Cat. 34,00€	4.00
6	Algeria - 10c and 40c Sage (Yv65 & 94) canc. ALGER cds and 5c Sage (Yv75) canc. ST DENIS DU SIG cds	15.00
7	75c Sage (Yv81), well centred canc. ORAN cds	25.00
8	Collection of 120 Sage stamps and 7 covers all used in Algeria. Wide variety of issues and postmarks although a number with rust spots. Cat. according to Scott at c. \$420	30.00
9	10f Bay of Algiers (Yv84) Lm.m.	16.00
10	1930 Centenary of Conquest (Yv87-99) m/m	32.00
11	10f North Africa Philatelic Exhibition, Perf. 11 (Yv100a), well centred, m/m	5.00
12	1942 40c Mosque (Yv172) un/m sheet of 100 with sheet number and printing date	4.00
13	1962 EA handstruck independence overprints (Yv354-58 and Taxe 49-53), all un/m	25.00
14	1905 PPC redirected to Chalba with Yv129 canc. BOUFARIK cds and with TEFESCHOUN transit cds and faint CHAIBA arrival cds	4.00
15	1907 (?) PPC of attractive tinted Sahara encampment with Yv111 x 2 canc. light BISKRA A CONSTANTINE convoyeur	4.00
16	1910 tinted photocard of Boufarik with Yv137 canc. AFFREVILLE A ALGER convoyeur	4.50
17	1927 PPC to UK with Yv39 x 2 and Yv48 canc. light BISKRA A BATNA convoyeur	4.00
18	1928 PPC to UK with Yv75 canc. clipped BISKRA A BATNA convoyeur	4.00
19	1940-1951 five covers to France with various stamps and rates inc. one addressed to Zone Libre	4.50
20	1943 four censored covers from Alger and Oran to Red Cross in Geneva all with Ax in circle (3 in violet, 1 in blue) and two with US ARMY BASE censor mark	9.00
21	1946 airmail to France with 2 x 1f50 Marianne d'Alger (Yv214) canc. light hexag. TAMANNRA'SSET. Annotations on reverse of envelope	5.00
22	1962 cover to Bengée with 25c Marianne de Decaris o/p EA and canc. ALGERS RP cds	12.00
23	Barbarie - 1897 part env., repaired, to Germany with 2 x 5c Sage (Yv75) and 15c Sage (Yv90) canc. by 3 ring TRIPOLI BARBERIE cds and with MONTENIS A MACON entry mark	8.00
24	China - 5f Napoleon (Yv33) canc. fine GC5118 (Yokohama) but small thin and one side with trimmed perfs. Cat. 100,00€+	75.00
25	35c Sage (Yv93) canc. fine GC5104 (Shanghai) Cat. 56,00€	8.00
26	French Equatorial Africa - 1941 Free French Issue overprinted RESISTANCE (Yv169-180) Mostly un/m with 3 values m/m	12.00
27	1941 Free French Issue overprinted LIBERATION (Yv183-190) all un/m but for one m/m	7.00
28	1945 censored window env. with Yv149 canc. indistinct POINTE NOIRE - MOYEN CONGO cds	5.00

Left: 1973 Auction Catalogue
The most expensive item with a reserve of £20 was an 1870 *ballon monté* flown on the 'Ferdinand Flocon'.

Right: 2002 Auction Catalogue
This was the first to quote catalogue values in Euros.

Guidelines for vendors

Material for the sale must be sent by the date stipulated in the catalogue. Check carefully the address to which it should be sent as the auction is operated from two different locations. Please ensure too that the following conditions are observed.

- 1) Each lot should be individually packaged in a transparent envelope to ensure full protection. Ideally stamps should be placed securely in a piece of stock-card and it is advisable to include a piece of stiffener behind older and hence more fragile covers.

- 2) Allocate a number to each lot which should appear both on the lot itself and on the accompanying list. The list should give a brief description of each lot.

With stamps you need to give its title, its Yvert catalogue number and catalogue value, its condition and, if necessary, anything that needs to be drawn to the attention of a bidder. For example:-

20F Merson (Yv208) mounted mint, well centred but one pulled perf. Cat. 230 €.

It is essential that the description is an accurate one. Do check for faults, especially thins and pulled perfs, and be sure in the case of mint stamps to say whether they are mounted or unmounted.

In the case of a cover quote its date and destination, the franking and cancellation together with any details of historical significance and condition. An example of a cover description might read as follows:

1906 PPC to Marseille with 10c Lined Sower (Yv129) canc. fine Toulon cds and with BM in oval, small closed tear.

If you are still not sure what information is required a good idea is to consult previous auction catalogues in order to gauge what sort of information is required.

The list and your own personal lot numbers are an essential part of the auction process as without these it is difficult to track items. Remember to keep a copy of the list for your own records.

- 3) Stipulate a reserve price for each lot. This will be the starting price in the auction and bids below it will not be accepted. When calculating your reserve remember that the auction is for the mutual benefit of both vendor and buyer. Prices should be reasonable, not those of commercial auction houses. As a guide, stamps should be offered at no more than 1/3 of catalogue value; as for covers a lot depends on the importance and condition and there is no better guideline than perhaps what you paid for it yourself.
- 4) Include a self-addressed envelope for an acknowledgement.
- 5) It is strongly advisable to send the lots by registered post as they are covered by the Society's insurance policy only after receipt.

I am more than happy to assist with the describing of the odd difficult lot but please do not send me bundles of loose material for me to sort out with such instructions as 'I leave the lotting and pricing to your discretion'. Material of this nature, I'm afraid, will be returned to sender.

Vendors who submit large quantities of lots may see their material split between two auctions depending on the amount and nature of lots received from other contributors. A list of their items included in the auction is sent to each vendor indicating the catalogue lot numbers that have been allocated to them.

Vendors should expect to receive cheques for the sale of their lots, less the 10% commission, within six to eight weeks of the close of the auction.

Large Lots

Large items such as collections and books pose a problem in the auction for several reasons. Firstly, the cost of sending them to me can be high and these have to be considered by the vendor when determining his reserve price. Secondly, bidders may be deterred by the postage costs added to their invoice. Thirdly, if the large item does not sell, the return costs have to be borne by the Society. Finally, in the case of room auctions, large lots are not easily transportable and take up a large amount of viewing space which is always at a premium in the auction room.

If vendors wish to offer large items, I prefer to receive just a detailed description for the catalogue but not the item itself. Instead, the vendor retains the item and any queries regarding it from potential bidders are forwarded for his response. If the item is won, the vendor receives details of whom to send it to; if the item fails to sell neither he nor the Society has wasted any postage.

Guidelines for Buyers

Members can submit bids either by post, by phone or by email. When opting for the latter it is important to include one's postal address as the lots cannot be sent as attachments!

Bidding increments are as follows: up to £10: 50p, from £10 to £40: £1, from £40 to £100: £2, thereafter in increments of £5.

The winning bid is calculated at one increment above the second highest bidder. For example if Member A offers £25 for an item and Member B offers £30, Member B will win the lot at one increment above £25 ie. £26. Similarly if an item with a reserve of £10 receives just one unchallenged bid of £25 then the bidder will win it at the reserve price of £10. Conversely, if two members each make an identical offer of say £25 on the same lot the item will be sold at £25 to the bid received first.

If you really want a lot, be prepared to put a decent bid on it. With the incremental system that we use, it is only on very rare occasions that your maximum bid is required to secure a lot.

Facilities are available to view the lots before bidding. Some lots are illustrated in the Journal, others on the Society's website. Lots can also be sent by post for viewing (UK members only), photocopies can be sent by post and scans sent as e-mail attachments. In the case of the Room Auction the lots are available for viewing from 10.30am in the room. Further viewing details are given in the introduction to each catalogue.

Every effort is made to send out the lots to the successful bidders within a week of the auction. It would be appreci-

ated if members do not ring up to ask for their results as such interruptions only delay the work of despatching lots. Lots are not sent out by registered post as they are covered during transit by the Society's insurance policy.

Please note that unlike commercial auction houses you have neither a buyer's premium nor VAT to pay. The only extra charge is the postage and packing.

Unsold

Unsold are listed on the Society's website and are normally available for purchase until the end of the month in which the auction is held. Once the auction has been closed and all the payments received, the unsold are either retained, at my discretion, for re-offering in a future auction or returned to the vendors with their cheques.

Mick Bister

A Message from the President

I am very honoured and most flattered to have been elected to serve again as the Society's President. There will be challenges as well as joys ahead but I know from my previous experience in this office that I shall have the support of an experienced and committed group of officers and committee members who have the Society's well-being and reputation at heart.

I joined the Society towards the end of 1967 and within a few months I was attending my first AGM and Auction in the plush surroundings of the Shaftsbury Hotel in Monmouth Street. The minutes of that 1968 meeting record that John Levett 'banged the hammer 278 times in that period of 135 minutes' and that 'he momentarily paused at Lot 100 and 200 for a drink of water'. But his second pause was not solely for the partaking of refreshment. He had noticed that I had not yet bid for a single item and, with a piercing stare, reminded me that there were only 77 lots left! There were more perplexed glances from behind the gavel as the remaining lots went under the hammer without any reaction on my part. But as the final lot number was called out I raised my card. To my utter delight, my maiden bid was unchallenged and that is how, for the princely sum of £20, I became the owner of Lot 277, a collection of Marianne de Muller, the one lot I had set my heart on and for which I had cashed all my Premium Bonds. My interest in this issue now publicly revealed, I was immediately cornered by John and invited to write a series of articles on Marianne de Muller. In Journal N° 107, in 1968, the first chapter of my article appeared and my involvement with the Society had begun.

Since the appearance of my first article over 40 years ago, the Journal has grown from strength to strength and is now a world class and award-winning publication. This year the Society celebrates its 60th anniversary and I am delighted that we are to honour this milestone with a special September edition of the Journal. It is the flagship of our Society and I cannot think of a better vehicle for our anniversary celebrations.

The Journal is one of the main assets of our Society but it is not the only one. Each year, volunteers give up hundreds of hours to run the packets, the library, the magazine circuit, the bookshop and the auctions as well as in organising regional meetings, giving displays, writing articles, convening annual weekends, managing accounts, updating membership lists etc etc - all for the benefit of their fellow

members. At the recent AGM it became evident though from the officers' reports that not all members are taking advantage of what there is on offer. While the packets continue to enjoy a well-deserved success, the auctions are still involving only 20% of the membership and the magazine circuit and library are being used by diminishing numbers. I beg you to make more use of these facilities as there is so much to be gained, whether it be philatelic material or philatelic knowledge. During the coming few months I shall be inviting my fellow officers to publish in the Journal details of the services they offer so that all members, old and new, will be fully aware of what is available to them.

I have spoken about what the Society has to offer to you but I also need to ask what you can offer to the Society. Without attempting to plagiarise an oft-quoted speech by John F Kennedy or paraphrase a certain World War I call-to-arms, I do have to remind you that your officers and committee are not immortal and so we do need new blood in the Society if it is to survive. It was so disheartening to hear at this year's AGM that, despite repeated invitations, only four volunteers instead of the usual six were willing to judge articles published in the Journal for the award of the 2008 Literature Prize. Contributors to last year's Journal had spent a phenomenal number of hours researching and drafting their articles, so it was rather demoralising to learn that other members could not or would not devote just a couple of hours to read the shortlist and select a winner.

The Society is now 60 years old and if it is to continue to flourish we need more volunteers and we need them sooner rather than later. I have resisted the temptation of calculating the average age of your committee but I can confirm that it is relentlessly rising. Half of the present committee and officers were in their posts at the time of the Society's 50th Anniversary and a couple of us were even involved in the Silver Jubilee back in 1974. We gain an enormous amount of satisfaction from our work and we shall carry on our duties for as long as we can but I'm afraid we cannot continue *ad infinitum*.

May I wish you, therefore, exciting discoveries in our packet, successful bids in our auction, fruitful research in our library, conviviality at our meetings and, of course, exhilarating reading in our Journal but please do remember that these services are not going to survive without the support of more volunteers.

Mick Bister

BOOKSHELF

– AVAILABLE AUGUST 2009 –

The Railroads of Cameroun and Associated Postal History

by M P Bratzel, Jr

170 pages, 8½ x 11 inches (approximately A4 size), perfect bound

CONTENTS

This publication examines the railroads of Cameroun from when the first rails were laid by the Germans in 1901, during the transition of WWI, through the British and French administrations, and after independence to the present day.

- The plantation railroad networks – their development and demise, plus equipment and rolling stock, with a focus on the locomotive Gouverneur Ebermaier.
- The mainline railroads – construction and operation, services and schedules, rolling stock, the transition from public to private ownership, and the outlook for future growth and expansion.
- Other rail lines in the port and the town of Douala.
- The transport of mail and the railroad postal service – under the German administration, through the Anglo-French occupation of World War I, expansion during the French administration, and into the post-independence period.
- Railroad postmarks and their recorded dates of use.
- Profusely illustrated with 4 maps and 138 photos (including 31 from the archives of the French Ministry of Culture) – rail line construction, locomotives and other rolling stock through the years, train stations, railroad bridges, and more.
- 32 postal history items – railroad cachets, World War I-related covers, mail postmarked and carried by the railroad postal service, registered railroad mail, censored railroad mail, plus more.
- Railroad-related Cameroun postage stamps.
- Extensive appendix with detailed train schedules and sundry official orders and announcements.
- Thoroughly researched and fully referenced.

AVAILABLE FROM THE AUTHOR: M P Bratzel, Jr, 1233 Virginia Avenue, Windsor, Ontario N8S 2Z1 CANADA
 e-mail – marty_bratzel@yahoo.ca Price – \$55 USD / £40 / Euros 44 Postage + \$4 USD to US destinations / £10
 or Euros 11 air mail to overseas destinations. Payment – bank notes / cheques (any currency) or PayPal (+5%).
 Also available from: Vera Trinder Ltd. – <http://www.veratrinder.org> –
 and Philatelic Bibliopole – <http://www.pbbooks.com> Contact vendors for their price.
 Financial underwriting provided by The Collectors Club of Michigan and The Stuart Rossiter Trust.

Books Noted

Catalogue des Cartes-Maximum de France 1901-2007 pub. Editions Yvert & Tellier; 1200 pp; price 39€; available from the publishers at 2 rue de l'Etoile, 80004 Amiens Cedex 3. [Full list of *cartes-maximum* produced since 1900, with valuation according to their publisher and cancellation; compilation realised by specialised collectors and Association des Maximaphiles Français; includes rules and advice for undertaking such a collection, with full listing of stamps by theme and subject.]

Marques postales et oblitérations de Lozère by Xavier Garcia & Pierre Laperrouze; pub. Amicale Philatélique du Gévaudan; 192 pp; price 22€ + p&p; available from publishers at 11 boulevard des Capucins - BP 59, 48000 Mende. [Contains numerous reproductions of documents in colour covering this *département*, from first manuscript marks of 17th century to latest contemporary date stamps; much information dealing with dates, valuations, franchise marks, telephone box cachets, military marks, return to sender cachets, list of counter machines and franking vignettes.]

Histoire postale de Rosny-sous-Bois by Claude Quintin & Pierre Dijol; price 5€; available from Société d'Histoire de Rosny-

sous-Bois, Hôtel de Ville, 20 rue Rochebrune, 93110 Rosny-sous-Bois; email musee.histoire.rosny@free.fr. [Brochure on postal history of the town, with reference documents, postcards, telegrams and *flammes* from the society and from private collections; includes mail in Siege of Paris, *courriers-convoyeurs*, military mail, and history of the society.]

La Fabuleuse Histoire des boules et ballons de la délivrance. les transmissions du courrier pendant le siège de Paris, Guerre de 1870-1871 by Jean-Claude Lettré; pub. 2006; price 49€ + p&p; details and availability from Galerie Aramis, 20bis chemin du Pessay, 74940 Annecy-le-Vieux. [Documented presentation of the 67 ballons, with anecdotes, illustrations and philatelic information (departure and arrival cachets); includes homing pigeons, *boules de Moulins*; preface by Bertrand Sinais.]

Livre des Valeurs et Cotations des années 1870-1871 by Gérard Lhéritier; pub. 2008; price 25€; available from Édition Plume, 11 rue Marbeuf, 75008 Paris; website www.plume.mag.com. [Description and valuation of mail in sieges of Paris and of Alsace-Lorraine, covering *ballons montés*, diplomatic bag, messengers, pigeon mail, *boules de Moulins*.]

Maurice Tyler

French Postal Rates of 2 March 2009

PRIORITY LETTERS AND ECOPLI FROM FRANCE TO FRANCE AND OVERSEAS ZONES

Zone 1 : Guadeloupe, Guyane, Martinique, Réunion, Mayotte, Saint Pierre et Miquelon, Saint Martin, Saint Barthélemy

Zone 2 : New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis and Fortuna, Terres australes et antarctiques françaises, Clipperton

Weight Up to	Priority letters to			ECOPLI (250g maximum) to		
	France	Zone 1	Zone 2	France	Zone 1	Zone 2
20g	0,56€	0,56€	0,56€	0,51€	0,51€	0,51€
50g	0,90€	Priority letter rate to France plus an air supplement of 0,05€ per 10g	Priority letter rate to France plus an air supplement of 0,11€ per 10g	0,73€	ECOPLI rate to France plus an air supplement of 0,02€ per 10g	ECOPLI rate to France plus an air supplement of 0,05€ per 10g
100g	1,35€			0,89€		
250g	2,22€			1,67€		
500g	3,02€			-		
1000g	3,92€			-		
2000g	5,16€			-		
3000g	6,04€			-		

Example: Rate for a 35g Priority letter from France to a Zone 2 destination = 0,90€ + 4 x 0,11€ = 1,34€

Registration of a priority letter plus other options

Options	R1	R2	R3	AR	Contre-Remboursement
Indemnity in case of loss or damage	16€	153€	458€	-	-
Fee (in addition to the letter rate)	2,80€	3,40€	4,30€	1,00€	7,00€

Valeur Déclarée. This service applies to Metropolitan France, Andorra and Monaco. The net price of insuring for loss of or damage to an item up to a value of 600€ is

Items weighing up to	250g	500g	1kg	2kg	3kg	5kg
Net price	12€	13€	14€	15€	16€	17€

Plus a supplement of 0,50€ for each 100€ by which the declared value exceeds 600€. Maximum 5000€.

FROM FRANCE TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Under a new procedure, foreign mail is separated into “documents” and “merchandise”

Any item not marked MARCHANDISE is treated as a document

Zone structure: Zone 1 = European Union countries + Switzerland, Zone 2 = Rest of World;

Weight Up to	Documents				Weight Up to	Merchandise			
	Priority		Economy			Priority		Economy	
	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 1	Zone 2		Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 1	Zone 2
20g	0,70€	0,85€							
50g	1,30€	1,70€							
100g	1,60€	2,30€	1,35€	1,70€	200g	3,50€	5,00€	2,50€	2,80€
250g	4,00€	5,50€	2,80€	3,00€	400g	5,80€	6,80€	3,50€	4,00€
500g	6,00€	7,20€	3,90€	4,30€	800g	7,50€	9,80€	5,00€	6,00€
1000g	8,60€	10,60€	5,55€	6,85€	1200g	10,00€	12,00€	6,20€	9,50€
1500g	11,10€	14,15€	7,05€	10,50€	1600g	11,50€	15,00€	7,50€	11,50€
2000g	12,40€	16,65€	8,60€	12,65€	2000g	12,40€	16,65€	8,60€	12,65€
3000g		27,25€		21,20€	3000g		27,25€		21,20€

The 3000g weight step applies only to 18 former French colonies in Africa

Registration⁽¹⁾: 4,00€ for indemnity of 45€ (R1) or 5,00€ for indemnity of 150€ (R2)

Advice of delivery of a registered item : 1,30€.

Contre-Remboursement⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ : a fixed fee of 8,00€.

Valeur Déclarée⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ : a fixed fee of 4,00€ plus a value supplement (2,29€ minimum) of 0,38€ per 76,22€ of VD.

⁽¹⁾ Additional to the Priority Document or Merchandise rate.

⁽²⁾ Service not available to certain destinations.

Note 1 – The data above were taken from a document kindly supplied by M. Laurent Bonnefoy

Note 2 – Rate changes of 1 October 2006 and 1 March 2008 were recorded in Journals N^{os} 242 and 248

Derek Richardson

LIST OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Compiled by Colin Spong and Maurice Tyler

Bulletin de la COL.FRA

N° 127 1^{er} trim 2009: La surcharge diagonale SÉNÉGAL sur timbres des colonies générales [2^{ème} partie] (Strobel); Utilisation sur lettre de la troisième série de la poste aérienne de Memel [cont. from Bulletin 125] (Pineau); Réunion, les variétés de l'Émission de 1901 (Bessaud).

L'Écho de la Timbrologie

Permanent features: Actualités, Nouveautés, Prêt-à-poster Florilège de PÂP, Variétés, Surcharges, Actualités, Cartes postales, Comment ça marche?, Flammes, Livres, Maximaphilie, Thématique.

N° 1827 Mar 2009: Catherine Huerta, Dis, l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves (-); Combattant pour les femmes: Titouan Lamazou (Bastide); La grande grève des Postes et des Télégraphes de 1909 (Hella); Ma philatélie à moi [cont & end] (Cordina); Duxin: Des collectionneurs extraordinaires [18] (Storch); On dirait Presque...des timbres (Emmenegger).

N° 1828 Apr 2009: Francine Langlois, Dis, l'artiste, dessine-moi le timbre de tes rêves (-); L'envolée du super-sonique Concorde 001 (Hella); Une première poste aérienne...gonflée (Bastide-Bernardin); Le «Daurat Vanier» un usage mouvementé (Grillot); Duxin: Des collectionneurs extraordinaires [19] (Storch).

France & Colonies Philatelist

Whole N° 296 (Vol 65 N° 2) Apr 2009: Armies of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Periods 1791-1815 (Kinsley); The Cayenne Airmails of French Guiana (Ward); The French Military Post Offices in the Second Opium War [Second Campaign] (Schneider).

Timbres Magazine

Permanent features: Actualités, Courrier des lecteurs, Club des clubs, Manifestations, Marcophilie, Les nouveautés de France, Actus Andorre, Monaco et les TOM, Pâp, Expertise, Les variétés, Le Journal des nouveautés, Bibliothèque, Mon marché du mois.

N° 99 Mar 2009: Les timbres de la 100^e traverse de l'Atlantique Sud (de Pellinec); Le maire s'appelle «LOYE» mais ne la respecte pas...(de la Mettrie); Docteur, Marinol et ionyl vous saluent bien! (Chauvin); Les Merson ayant servi à l'étranger: Une collection dans la collection [2] (de Pellinec); Strasbourg à l'heure allemande (Zeyons); Les marques postales rares de Paris (Baudot); Porté disparu à Dieppe (Chauvin).

N° 100 Apr 2009: La fabuleuse aventure des Zepelins: 1. Les précurseurs (PJM); La Marianne à la Nef (Stéphan); Une collection qui fait date (Rucklin); De Paris pour Paris (Prugnon); V-Mail le courrier de la victoire (Chauvin); L'ancêtre du premier timbre-poste (de la Mettrie); Les prisons révolutionnaires (Baudot).

N° 101 May 2009: La nouvelle vie des timbres du Dahomey (Coudreau); De la grande forêt équatoriale au Pavillon Gabriel (Apaire); Avec des timbres c'est bien... sans timbre, c'est encore mieux (de la Mettrie); Lettre suivie: retour sur un test national (Rucklin); Les 120 ans de la tour Eiffel et de la «Libonis» (Zeyons); Un acheminement peu commun (Prugnon); Vichy 1942: censure et soupçon (Chauvin).

The Indo-China Philatelist

Vol 39 N° 2 (Whole N° 187) Mar 2009: Internal Postage Due Cover (Bentley); Early North Vietnam Postage Due Cover (Lu); Phnom Penh Postmarks, Part 2: 1950-1975 (Shaw); French Military at Dien Bien Phu (Bentley); Another Reported Cover with the First North Viet-Nam Stamp (Goanvic); Paris Exposition of 1900 (Bentley).

Les Feuilles Marcophiles

N° 336 1^{er} Trim 2009 (Mar 2009): Un hôpital dans le château de Fontainebleau (1914-1918): Hôpital Auxiliaire No 51 - Pavillon du Tibre (Couvé); Quand un bulletin pour l'Allemagne permet une mise au point nécessaire au sujet des perforations postales des timbres sur les bulletins de colis postaux d'Alsace-Lorraine! (Flotte); Réflexions autour du service DESTINEO avec affranchissement illustré et de IDtimbre (Albaret); Cartes Interzones en franchise militaire (Goanvic); Décodage des taxes de colis postaux (Sené); Les dissolutions des bureaux postaux militaires de 1944 à 1956 (sauf Indochine) (Sinai); Un tarif ignoré: Les correspondances entre Tahiti et la France d'octobre 1867 à avril 1875 (Chauvet); Le bureau français de Milan (Bozza); Les nouveautés en matière de guichets-annexes (Delvaux); À propos de l'organisation du service de la distribution (1830-1920) (Douron & Reynaud); Des routages... déroutants! (Sené).

Documents Philatéliques

N° 200 2^e trim 2009: «Documents Philatéliques» a cinquante ans! (Bonnefoy); Les crédits de port dû (Sené); Le port de Toulon et la poste (1767-1939) (Trinquier); Relation entre la France et les Caraïbes au début de la navigation à vapeur (R Abensur); Les surcharges allemandes d'Alsace-Lorraine sur timbres fiscaux de 1870 à 1871 (Danan); Sélection d'affranchissements pour l'étranger au type Siège (B Abensur); Type Sage: Taxes et insuffisances d'affranchissement dans le régime international (Castanet); Création et fabrication des timbres type Alphée Dubois pour les colonies françaises (1881-1892) (Beaussant); Essais d'oblitérations de la place de la Bourse (1880-1890) (Désarnaud); Utilisations particulières des timbres-poste au type Blanc (Saintot); À propos des «Femmes Bakalois» du Congo: essais, épreuves, etc (Gibot); Le Mandat français en Syrie et Liban (Bourguignat); L'émission de Damas (Parenti); Les variétés de la série héliogravée d'Indochine (1931-1934) (Venot); Afrique équatoriale française: Les variétés de 1937 (Barker); La Poste Militaire FFL au Levant (Varin).

ABPS EXECUTIVE BULLETIN NUMBER 14

April 2009

THE CONGRESS MEDAL

The ABPS Awards Committee is very pleased to announce that the 2009 Congress Medal has been awarded to Frank N Soutar, FRPSL, of Larbert, Scotland. Nominated by the Glasgow Thematic Society, the medal will be presented to Frank at the Centenary Congress, 16th- 19th July in Manchester.

ABPS AWARD OF MERIT

The following have been awarded the ABPS Award of Merit for 2009:

David Beddoes - Thatcham and District Philatelic Society; Peter Mellor - National Philatelic Society; John M H Parkin - North West Federation of Philatelic Societies; Reginald Rhodes - Thatcham and District Philatelic Society; Bryan Riches - Germany and Colonies Philatelic Society; Dennis Rosser -North West Federation of Philatelic Societies; Roy Summers - Midland Philatelic Federation.

ABPS NEWS

The latest, recently distributed, issue has plenty of Society news. It also features an article on "The Centenary of the Penny Black" by Francis Kiddle as well as the usual comprehensive news and other regular articles. Please remember to send in your reports to our Editor, Hugh Feldman, prior to the copy deadlines. They should be sent by e-mail to hugh@feldman.f9.co.uk or typed in a clear format and posted to him. He needs more photos too!

ABPS NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

The first competitive ABPS National One Frame Exhibition was held at Spring Stampex in February. Despite the relatively short notice, we had great interest in the event, with 63 exhibits entered and a very impressive set of exhibits on show. Many of those taking part were doing so for the first time in a national competition. The event concluded with a seminar on exhibiting and an awards reception and critique of the exhibits by the jury. It is intended that this concluding day format will become the norm for National Exhibitions.

The next full ABPS National Exhibition, including all exhibiting Classes, and again including One Frame exhibits, will be held at Autumn Stampex on 16 to 19 September 2009. This will include the Inter Federation competition as well. This time the exhibiting seminar will be on the Introductory Page of an exhibit, and also explain the new FIP Postal History sub Class 2C, which introduces a significant element of social philately into postal history.

Then in 2010 there will again be an ABPS One Frame National Exhibition at Spring Stampex, and the full ABPS National Exhibition with all Classes at the Autumn Stampex. These will again have seminars on exhibiting as part of the programme. A new innovation being planned is the introduction of a Post Card National Exhibition Class.

After 2010, the full ABPS National Exhibition will continue to be held at Autumn Stampex, with the One Frame exhibition possibly being held in different locations. There is also a planned full ABPS National Exhibition to be held in Perth in Scotland in 2012. This would be in addition to the one to be held at Autumn Stampex.

Future ABPS National Exhibitions will sometimes have a specific focus to provide additional interest. For example the Australian, New Zealand and the Pacific Island group of societies are planning a celebration of their philately in 2012, and are hoping to attract overseas members of these societies to come to London to exhibit and join the celebration. Similar ideas are being considered for 2010 and 2011.

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

UK Judges for Italia 2009 and Portugal 2010 have yet to be selected. We have just heard that Italia 2009 have selected 11 entries from 20 submitted, with an additional 3 placed on as reserves - this is a good result with exhibitions today usually being grossly over-subscribed.

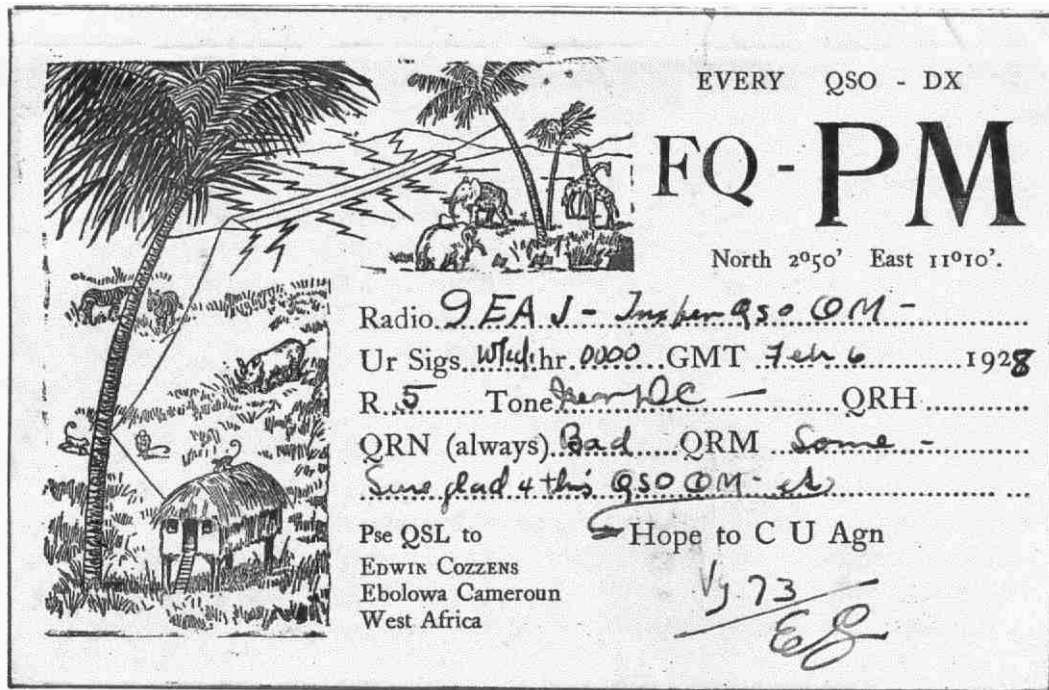
MORE HELP NEEDED

Phil Kenton, Chairman of the Executive Committee and Geoff Longbottom, our Publicity & Publications Officer, have both indicated that they wish to retire. If you feel able to help ABPS in any way, please contact us.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO GIVE YOUR COMMENTS, please contact those mentioned above, or the ABPS General Secretary Colin Searle at his new address which is: The Old Post Office, 1 Wellesbourne Road, Barford, WARWICK, CV35 8EL. Tel: 07879 665658. E-mail: searlec@gmail.com

A "QSL" Card from Cameroun Radio Ham FQ-PM

Bob Maddocks



QSL card from Ebolowa, Cameroun, to Chicago, USA 19.3.1928

"QSL" cards are more especially the preserve of amateur radio operators, kept as a permanent record of their personal worldwide contacts in the pursuit of their hobby. Although they passed through the postal service and are generally not scarce, these cards are not often highlighted *per se* by postal historians unless the latter are deltiologists who specialise in this field. However, cards from the early days of French-mandated Cameroun do appear to be rare and interesting survivors.

Shown here are the front and reverse of one such QSL card which originated from the then French Cameroun some 80 years ago. Mailed on 19 March 1928 at Ebolowa, it logs a particular radio ham's contact at that time. It was sent to Chicago, USA, by one Edwin Cozzens of the American Presbyterian Mission, which had been in Cameroun since German times. He had picked up the radio signals of the addressee and was consequently acknowledging same by mail, giving details of the reception as was common practice among hams the world over. Of note thereon is Cozzens' own international call-sign FQ-PM, as licenced by the relevant French Authorities, and his geographical position. France and its overseas territories had call-signs which began with the letter F. Thus FQ applied to Cameroun which, however, as an independent country has since 1960 been allocated 'TJ' as its international call-sign. 'PM' was probably a suffix used to identify the particular region of the country in which the station was located but my Ref 1 is not specific on this.

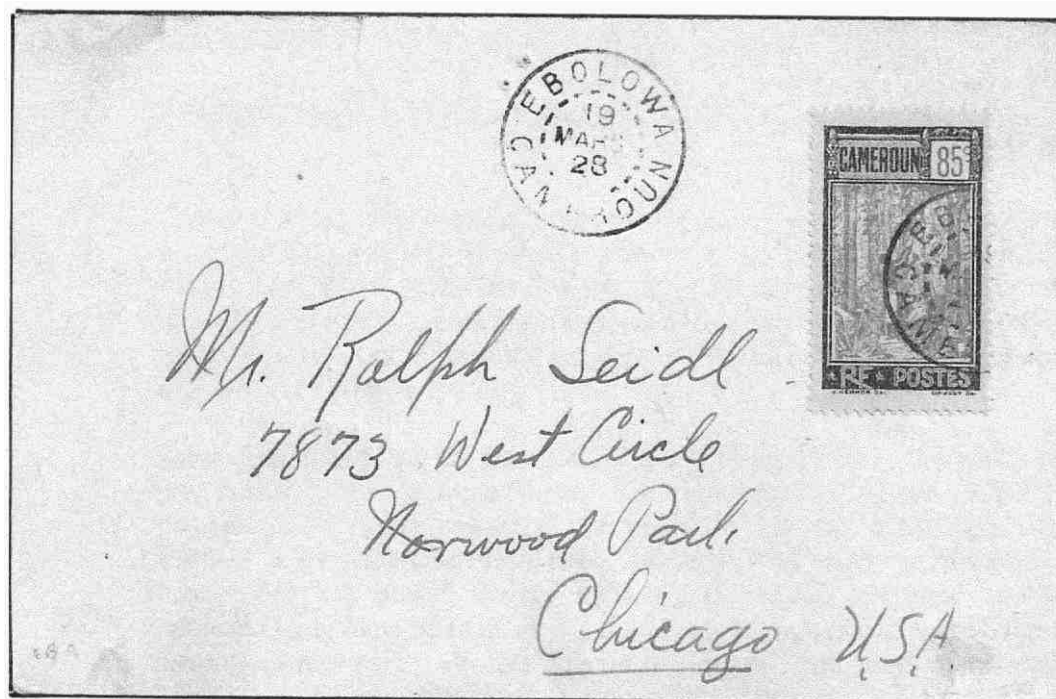
As with today's text messaging, there is also a particular jargon associated with radio hams in communications between them, both in technical and personal terms. This has been codified to simplify the Morse telegraphy and also

to facilitate international contact with those speaking little or no English, the preferred language of the airwaves.

'QSL' is just one of a number of internationally recognised signals used for this purpose. Each signal consists a group of three letters each beginning with 'Q' and representing various messages. It is not an acronym and is meaningless in itself. 'QSL' thus stands for a notification/acknowledgement of receipt of an individually logged radio contact. This was to be provided by the listener and sent through the post to the transmitting person, recording the range and quality and other technical details of a particular contact. The technical details themselves were further covered by another code known as the 'RST' code for Readability, Signal Strength and Tone. To each initial letter a suffix number was added from a base of 1 upwards to indicate poor and improving levels of the quality of signal reception.

These 'QSL' cards were usually of the standard postcard size for correspondence, with preprinted provision on the message side to record the basic information on a radio contact. They were often also enlivened through featuring a ham's own personal drawing or cartoon pertaining to the hobby. Here, Mr Cozzens has sketched his tropical environment with a grass hut – housing his radio equipment – amongst the wild animals. His radio antenna is seen strung between the tops of the surrounding palm trees. Primitive days! – but the 'CU Agn' sign-off is still with us in the 21st century, though perhaps more commonly associated with teletexters than with its progenitors, the radio hams.

Ref 1: *A Guide to Amateur Radio* — P Hawker (RSGB, London 1933 Rev 1980)



Address side of the QSL card

Cameroun – Envelope Recycling in World War II

Bill Mitchell

In past years I've written in the Journal about paper economy devices in Cameroun during and after the Second World War, involving the use of home-made envelopes and New Year "*cartes de visite*"⁽¹⁾ and the backs of old post office and other forms⁽²⁾. Since then I've acquired some examples of another method, the re-use of envelopes. I have four identical covers in all, from in-house correspondence over a period of some six weeks early in 1944 of a British company, R & W King Ltd, which Michael Ensor tells me was (according to the best of his recollection) the United Africa Company's trading arm in Gabon and, it is now apparent, in Cameroun as well. They are not particularly attractive, as can be seen from the example illustrated on page 53, which shows that on re-use the existing stamp was removed more or less successfully and postal and censor cachets normally "cancelled" in a variety of ways. Full details of the covers follow (some postmarks which tied stamps subsequently removed cannot be identified).

1. (a) Douala to M'Balmayo, 16 February;
(b) M'Balmayo to Douala, 20 February;
(c) Douala to N'Kongsamba, 24 February.

This is the only cover to have, on the reverse, an arrival cachet, of M'Balmayo and erroneously dated 18 January. The spent post and censor marks have been cancelled by a cross in red ink. "DOUALA" has also been struck through in red ink, "M'Balmayo" in black.

2. (a) Foumban to N'Kongsamba(?), 9 March;
(b) N'Kongsamba to Douala, 17 March;
(c) Douala to N'Kongsamba, 21 March.

Spent postal and censor cachets are cancelled by criss-cross lines in black ink. There is an unidentifiable "seated goddess" cachet. The final destination, "NKONGSAMBA", is

on a piece of paper stuck over the previous destination(s).

3. (a) Yaoundé to Douala, 11 March;
(b) Douala to N'Kongsamba, 22 March.

The spent cachets have been cancelled by crosses in black ink.

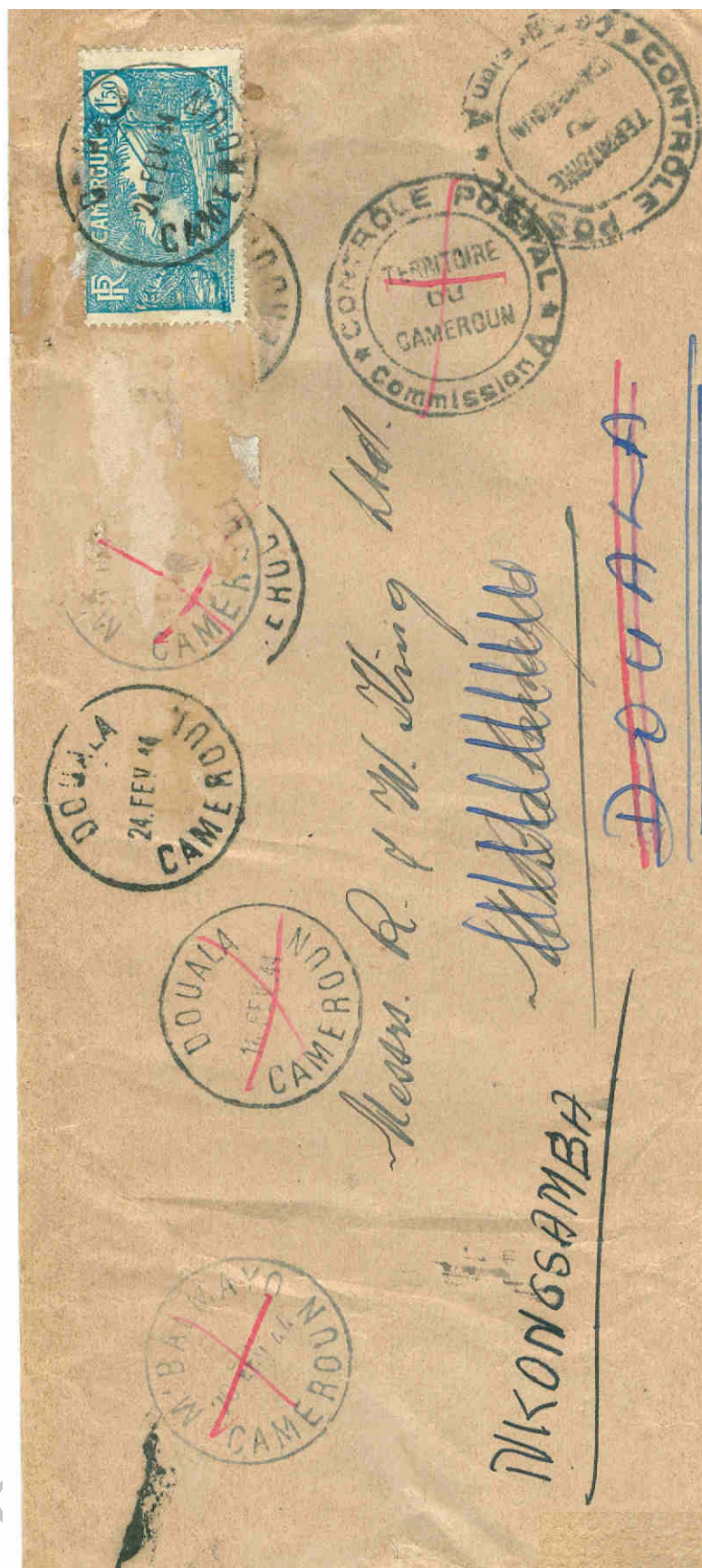
4. (a) Yaoundé to Douala, 25 March;
(b) Douala to N'Kongsamba, 30 March.

This is the only cover on which the spent cachets have not been cancelled.

All covers bear the 1.50 franc blue stamp of the 1925 typographed issue (Yv 128), issued on 28 February 1927 according to both Dallay and SG to meet the then basic foreign letter rate⁽³⁾. By the time these envelopes were re-used this had become the basic domestic letter rate; the effective date was 1 February 1944⁽⁴⁾, some two years later than in France where it was 5 January 1942⁽⁵⁾. A 1.50 franc stamp, printed in brown (Yv 182), was included in the new, recess-printed, series of 1939. Remaining stocks of the 1927 stamp were apparently kept in reserve – fortunately, as it turned out.

References

- (1) "A War-time *Jour de l'An* in Cameroun", Journal 174, December 1989, pages 160-163.
- (2) "Cameroun – A Tale of Three Covers", Journal 217, September 2000, pages 93-96.
- (3) Bratzel, M P – "The Postal Tariffs of Cameroun under French Administration 1916-1959", MPB Canada 2007, page 89.
- (4) *Ibid*, page 20.
- (5) Richardson, D J – "Tables of French Postal Rates 1849-2005" (F&CPS Brochure N° 7, 3rd ed 2006), page 4.



Cover 1

Douala - M'Balmayo	16.2.44
(arrival 18.1 error)	
M'Balmayo - Douala	20.2.44
Douala - N'Kongsamba	22.2.44





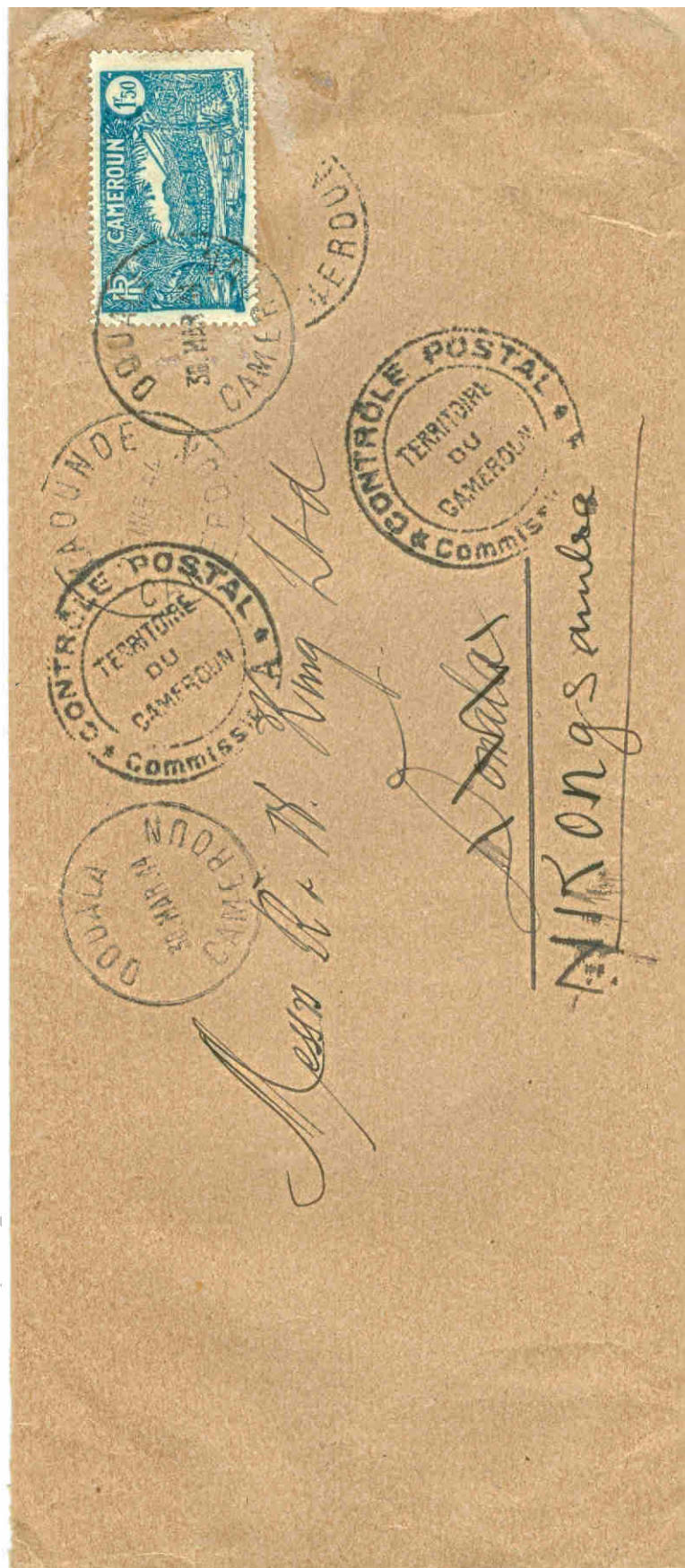
Cover 2

Foumban - N'Kongsamba ?	09.3.44
N'Kongsamba - Douala	17.3.44
Douala - N'Kongsamba	21.3.44



Cover 3

Yaoundé - Douala	11.3.44
Douala - N'Kongsamba	22.3.44



Cover 4

Yaoundé - Douala

25.3.44

Douala - N'Kongsamba

30.3.44

Airmails of the French Congo

John Hammonds

Introduction

The air routes to Sub-Saharan Africa were not exploited until the 1930s, partly due to the depressed economic times, lack of money and suitable aircraft able to fly across the Sahara Desert. However, on 23 May 1930 a Franco-Belgian Convention was signed providing for the creation of an air route from Europe across the Sahara Desert, the Belgian Congo and ending in Madagascar. It took until 1 March 1935 to achieve this aim with the opening of the route to Brazzaville, and that to Madagascar on 9 November 1935.

On 13 June 1937 the Air Afrique route to Madagascar was changed to go via Stanleyville, cutting out Brazzaville. An air service continued to call at Brazzaville, but it was on a branch line from Bangui. Pointe Noire on the Atlantic Coast became the terminus of the Aéromaritime service along the West African coast from Dakar which opened in 1937.

After the Armistice on 25 June 1940 the French Congo started by giving allegiance to the Vichy Government in France, but soon changed sides to support General de Gaulle. Civil aviation ceased and new routes were created by the military.

When the war ended civil air lines came back and services were re-opened between France and the Congo by Air France who had taken over the operations of Régie Air Afrique and Aéromaritime until independence in 1960.

Pioneer Flights

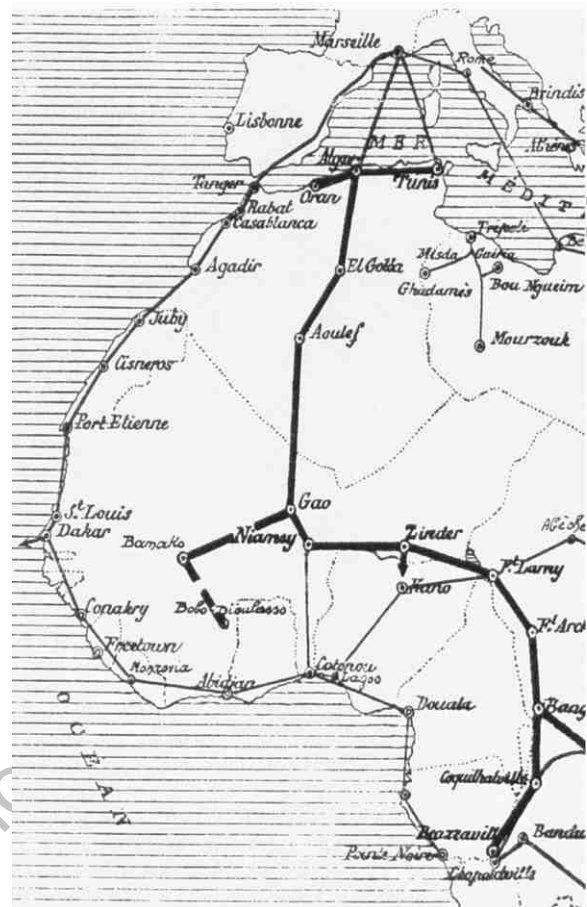
There were several pioneer flights which visited the French Congo on their way to Madagascar and the Belgian Congo. A brief summary is given:

1925 (3 December) Brazzaville - Pointe Noire by Landiech piloting a Caudron C60 (F-AGDH) – some mail was carried. The return flight was made on 6 December. No further flights were made as climatic conditions and lack of landing grounds made flying difficult.

1926 (21 May) Mindouli - Sikasso (French Soudan) by Landiech piloting a Caudron C60 (F-AGDH) – called at Brazzaville and Pointe Noire on his journey. The flight ended in disaster at Sikasso where the aircraft was destroyed on landing. It is doubtful if any mail was carried.

1930 (20 March) Tananarive (Madagascar) to France. Return flight by Marchesseau, pilot, Bourgeois, navigator and Goulette in Farman 192 (F-AJJB) "*France-Madagascar-Ile Bourbon*". The flight, after being delayed at Elisabethville by a damaged propeller, called at Brazzaville on 21 March. The aircraft was damaged at Niamey on 24 March; after repair it took off for France but crashed and was destroyed on 22 April 1930. Two types of a special cover are known.

1930 (19 December) Léopoldville to Brussels by a Bréguet 19 (OO-AKP) "*Reine Elisabeth*" with pilots Fabry and Vanderlinden. The aircraft suffered engine trouble at Fort



Lamy and did not reach Brussels until 30 March 1931. Mail was carried from Brazzaville dated 16 December 1930. Various cachets.

1931 (14-26 March) Paris to Tananarive by a Farman 304 (E-ALCA) "*Caillol-Roux-Dodement*" with Salel pilot, Boutillier second pilot and radio operator Goulette. Also on board was S E Alfassa returning to take up his position as Governor at Brazzaville. Mail was carried from Le Bourget to Brazzaville (22 March) and Tananarive (26 March). No mail was picked up at Brazzaville. [See illustration on next page.]

1931 (11 April) Tananarive to Paris return flight of Farman 304 "*Caillol-Roux-Dodement*". The aircraft was damaged at Coquilhatville which caused a delay of a month. The aircraft picked up mail at Brazzaville on 12 April and again when repaired on 11 May. Both lots of mail reached Paris on 1 June 1931.

1931 (23 November - 14 December) Paris to Tananarive by Farman 198 (E-AJNH) with Arrachart pilot and Puillet engineer. A passenger Capt. Lentz was carried between Bangui and Brazzaville. Mail dated 4 December 1931 was carried from Brazzaville to Tananarive.

1931 (9 December) Brazzaville to Bangui by a Potez T.O.E, pilot Lucciardi, passenger Capt. Lentz. Having completed his business in Brazzaville Capt. Lentz was returned to Bangui by a military aircraft. Mail dated 9 December with



14 March 1931 Le Bourget to Brazzaville

no air surcharge was carried on this flight.

1932 (18 February - 15 March) Pointe Noire to Paris by Farman 190 (F-AJMV) with pilots Avignon and Lebeau, engineer Cottier. The journey to Paris was uneventful. Mail was carried from Brazzaville and Pointe Noire to Paris arriving on 15 March 1932.

1932 (27 April / 1 May) Brazzaville to Paris by Farman 190 (F-AJRY) "Marcel Lallouette" with pilot Salel, navigator Goulette and the Governor General of Moyen Congo as a passenger. Mail was carried from Brazzaville and Pointe Noire to Paris, arriving on 8 May 1932.

Airlines serving French Congo

(a) Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation (CTA)

Founded in 1929 by Jean Dagnaux who had founded Société Air Afrique in 1925 which was closed on the formation of the new company.

Ownership was shared by Aéro-postale and the French Government, Dagnaux remaining as Managing Director. The company was awarded a 15 year concession to operate routes on behalf of France in French Africa, namely the Congo and Madagascar.



Proof of label commemorating Jean Dagnaux

The Company made very few flights but the financial difficulties of Aéropostale in 1931 and the general economic situation meant that the development of the routes in Africa was not undertaken until 1934 when Régie Air Afrique was formed. Air Afrique absorbed the Company in 1935.

(b) Régie Air Afrique

Formed by the French Government in 1934 to help link the French Colonies in Africa.

On 7 September 1934 the first regular airmail service between Algiers and the Congo began using Bloch 120 Aircraft. The route was opened for the carriage of passengers on 27 April 1935.

In 1934 the company absorbed Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation founded by Jean Dagnaux and in 1935 the trans-saharan route of Compagnie Générale Transsaharienne which ran motor car and air services across the Sahara.

In November 1935 the Algiers to Congo route was extended to Elisabethville and was operating fortnightly in conjunction with SABENA.

On 9 December 1935 Régie Malgache reached Elisabethville and a direct link to Madagascar was made. On 19 April 1936 the first commercial passenger service to Madagascar began.

In 1937 the French government combined the services of Régie Air Afrique, Régie Malgache and Lignes Aériennes Nord Africaines to form Air Afrique. Régie Malgache continued to operate within Madagascar.

(c) Air Afrique

Air Afrique continued the work of Régie Air Afrique in linking the French colonies in Africa, its main route being from Algiers across the Sahara to Gao. From Gao a route went west to Dakar. Another route went to Niamey for connection with the Aéromaritime service to Cotonou.

The main route went to Bangui, where it divided: one route going to the Congo, the other to Elisabethville and Madagascar.

(d) Aéromaritime

In 1935 the Compagnie des Chargeurs Réunis together with Compagnie Marseillaise de Navigation à Vapeur (Cyprien Fabre) decided to duplicate their maritime route around West Africa with an airline.

By a contract signed on 23 March 1935 between the Minister of War, the Minister for Air and the Company, Aéromaritime was to provide a weekly service between Dakar and Pointe Noire in five days; also included was a weekly service on the Cotonou to Niamey route.

The company also took over the running of the route from Cotonou to Niamey which had been operated by the Compagnie Générale Transsaharienne between December 1934 and June 1935 to join with Air Afrique. The new company took the name "Compagnie des Chargeurs Réunis (Aéromaritime).

In 1945 Aéromaritime ceased operations and was absorbed by Air France.

Summary of Air Routes to French Congo until 1940

1. **SABENA**
 - (i) (Brazzaville)-Léopoldville-Boma-France (By sea)
 - (ii) (Brazzaville)-Léopoldville-Boma-France (By air from Dakar or Casablanca)
2. **AIR AFRIQUE** Brazzaville-Coquilhatville-Bangui-Fort Archambault-Fort Lamy-Zinder-Niamey-Gao-El Golea-Algiers (France by Air France)
3. **AEROMARITIME** Pointe Noire-Libreville-Douala-Cotonou-Abidjan-Monrovia-Conakry- Dakar

Commercial Services to and from French Congo

1. SABENA

1929 (26 March) Opening of service from Brazzaville to Europe via Léopoldville (Belgian Congo) and Boma/Matadi from where mail would have gone to France by sea. Alternatively it could have gone by sea to Dakar or Casablanca where it would have been unloaded and transferred to an Aéropostale aircraft on the France-Morocco-South America service.

Prior to this mail could have gone to Pointe Noire by river (the railway was not opened until 1934) or alternatively via Léopoldville to Matadi by rail (railway opened 1898) or by the SABENA air service to Boma for the onward journey to be made by sea.

Postage rates for a 20g letter using the air service to Boma from Brazzaville were 50c postage + 1F25 air surcharge.

Par Avion
LÉO - BOMA

1929 cachet in black

On some mail a cachet was applied "Par Avion / LÉO-BOMA" this is also found in manuscript.

2. REGIE AIR AFRIQUE

Between September 1934 and February 1935, before Air Afrique opened its air service to the French Congo, there were ten trial flights between Algiers and Brazzaville; all except the first carried mail. The mail was free from an air surcharge and most bore the cachet "*Lettre Transportée Exceptionnellement Par Avion A Titre de Propagande*" or similar.

Trial Flights from Brazzaville:

1st - 19 September 1934; arr Algiers 21 September 1934.

No mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Pharabad, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Massias. J Dagnaux travelled as a passenger.

2nd - 19 October 1934; arr Algiers 23 October 1934. Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Lambert, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Guignier.

[See illustration on next page.]



Cover carried on 2nd return trial flight

3rd - 16 November 1934; arr Algiers 20 November 1934.

Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Avignon, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Guignier

4th - 29 November 1934; arr Algiers 4 December 1934.

Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Pharabad, Engineer Carrey, Radio Massias. An aircraft of Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation was used.

5th - 14 December 1934; arr Algiers 18 December 1934.

Mail carried

Pilots Pharabad and Lambert, Engineer Lefebvre, Radio Guignier. An aircraft of Compagnie Transafricaine d'Aviation was used.

6th - 20 December 1934; arr Algiers 1 January 1935. Mail carried.

Pilots Poulin and Avignon, Engineer Carrey, Radio Guignier. The route of this flight from Algiers was modified to

reconnoitre landing grounds in Cameroun for a possible shortening of the route. From Zinder the aircraft went via Garoua to rejoin the original route at Bangui.

7th - 11 January 1935; arr Algiers 16 January 1935. Mail carried.

8th - 25 January 1935; arr Algiers 29 January 1935. Mail carried.

9th - 8 February 1935; arr Algiers 12 February 1935. Mail carried.

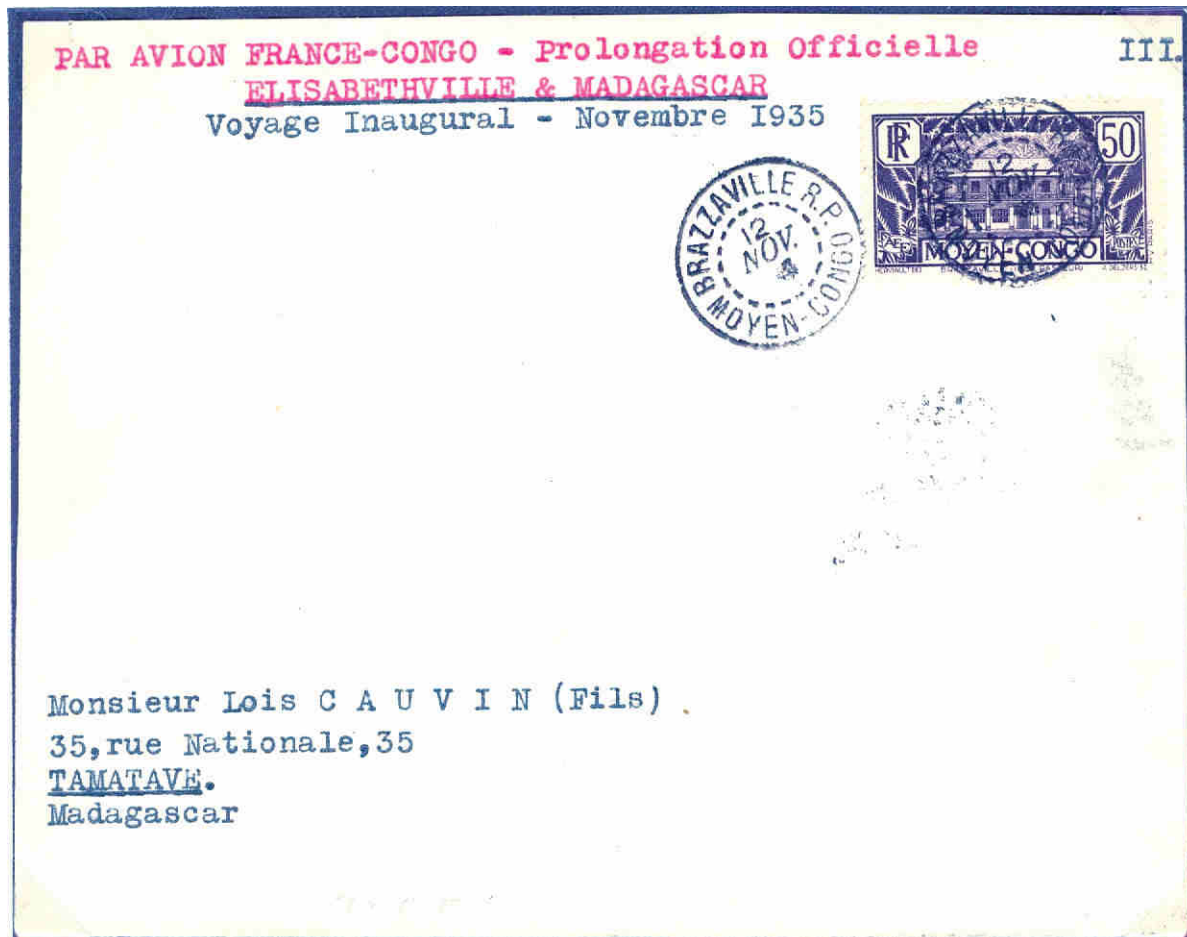
10th - 19 February 1935; arr Algiers 26 February 1935. Mail carried.

The dates of the return flights vary according to which source is used.

25 March 1935: Official opening of the route from Brazzaville to Algiers. Aircraft Bloch 120, with pilots Pharabod and Plamont, engineer Lefebvre, radio Massias. The aircraft arrived at Algiers on 28 March 1935.



Cachet "Inauguration du Service Postal Aérien France-Congo / Postez Votre Courrier Par Avion"



9 November 1935: Inauguration of the entirely French route Algiers to Tananarive (Madagascar). [See above.]

13 June 1937 Algiers to Tananarive via Stanleyville omitting Brazzaville as a stop on this route. Mail for Brazzaville

was offloaded at Bangui and was flown on a feeder service.

4 November 1938 Algiers to Congo twice weekly service.

9 November 1938 Brazzaville to Algiers twice weekly service. [See below.]



Timetable of flights by Air Afrique, Algiers to Brazzaville and return

1935/36	Algiers	dep Sunday	Brazzaville	dep Sunday
	Brazzaville	arr Thursday	Algiers	arr Thursday
1937/38	Algiers	dep Sunday	Brazzaville	dep Saturday
	Bangui	arr Wednesday	Bangui	arr Saturday
	Brazzaville	arr Wednesday	Algiers	arr Thursday
1938/39	Algiers	dep Monday	Brazzaville	dep Saturday
	Bangui	arr Wednesday	Bangui	arr Saturday
	Brazzaville	arr Wednesday	Algiers	arr Tuesday
1939/40	Algiers	dep Friday	Brazzaville	dep Saturday
	Bangui	arr Sunday	Bangui	arr Saturday
	Brazzaville	arr Sunday	Algiers	arr Thursday

Air Afrique flew on alternate weeks from SABENA commencing 11 March 1935.

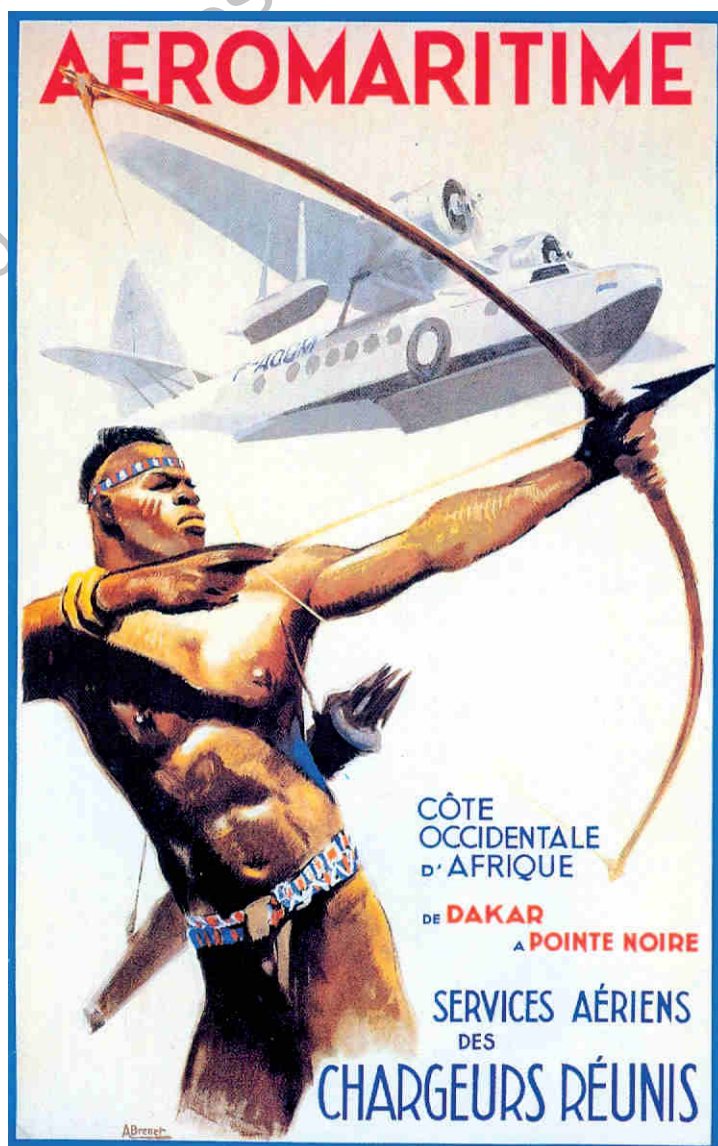
3. AEROMARITIME

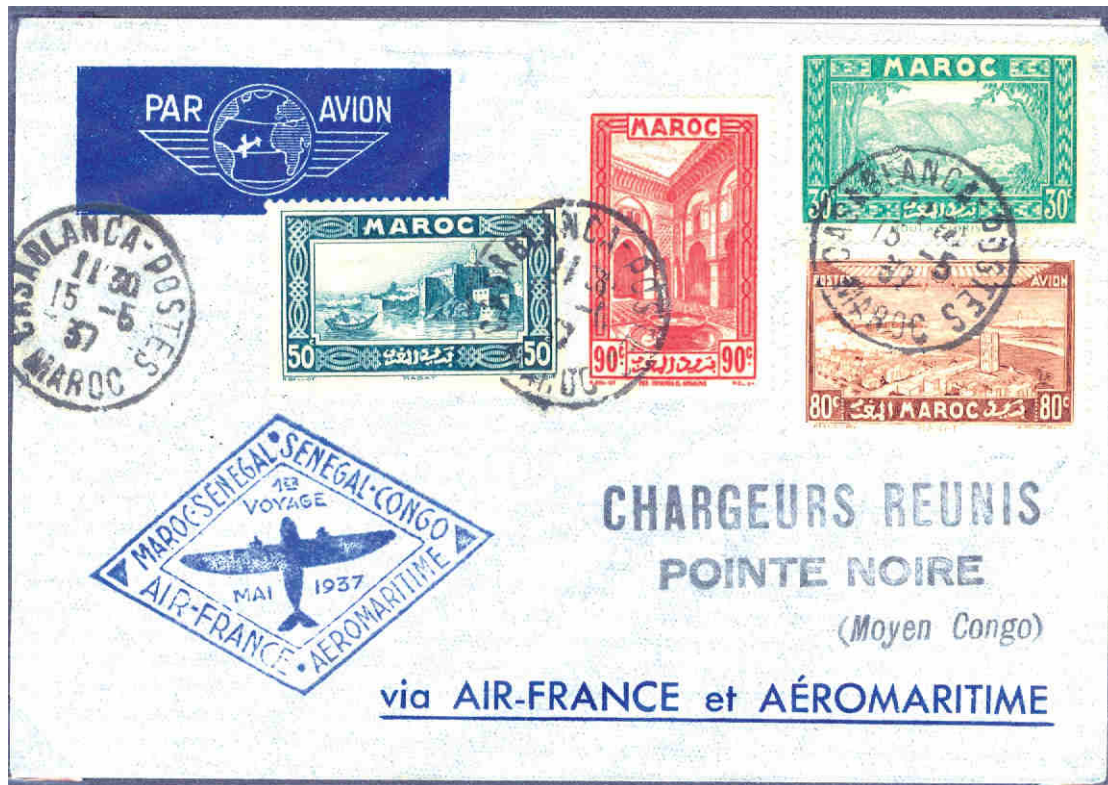
The opening of the route from Dakar to Pointe Noire was in two stages:

- Stage 1 Dakar to Cotonou (1-3 March 1937)
 Cotonou to Dakar (5 - 7 March 1937)
- Stage 2 Cotonou to Pointe Noire (17-20 May)
 Pointe Noire to Cotonou (21-23 May)

1937 (15 July) Special flight between Pointe Noire and Brazzaville on the occasion of the *Foire Exposition de Brazzaville*: the amphibian S-43 (F-OUM) was used with a crew of pilots Pivot and Souville, engineers Fournier and Mistrot, radio Vernaz; also on board were M. Carrié a director of Aëromaritime and M. Pravikoff an engineer with Sikorsky. The return flight was made on 16 July. Mail exists for both directions.

1938 (11 November) An accord was signed between France and Portugal concerning the carriage of mail between Portugal and Angola and return. The Portuguese post office set the air fee at 6 escudos for each 10g. The first flight was made on 19 November from Pointe Noire by Capt. Joaquim Balthazar, chief pilot of the Aero Club of Angola using a De Havilland Leopard Moth (CR-IAA).





Extension of route to Pointe Noire

Wartime Services

When the mobilisation of French forces started on 2 September 1939 all French air services were suspended. On 18 September the air services re-started with modifications, e.g. the service to Madagascar and Réunion terminated at Brazzaville.

At the beginning of September, during the period when the air service was suspended, airmail correspondence from Brazzaville received a cachet "Courrier avion / provisoirement suspendu. / Acheminement par bateau."



Cover with air service suspended cachet

Following a Franco-Belgian agreement SABENA on 11 February 1940 moved the starting point of its Léopoldville service from Brussels to Marseille.

The Armistice on 25 June 1940 caused all services to be suspended.

On 20 December 1941 the agreement of 1933 under which Air France was created was cancelled. In 1942, following the occupation of Vichy France by Germany, Deutsche Luft Hansa concluded an agreement with Air France, by which the routes, aircraft and personnel were taken over by the German airline.

From August 1940, under the direction of Colonel Carre- tier, the military officers left in the AEF started up what services they could on an as and when basis, which went on until LAM actually got as far as Brazzaville.

During December 1940 General de Gaulle requested the creation of a Free French Airline to serve the countries sympathetic to his cause. This was formed under the name of Lignes Aériennes Militaires (LAM) with its headquar- ters in Damascus. It started with a fortnightly service to Cairo and gradually the route was extended along the North African coast, to Khartoum and Tananarive and via Khartoum to Pointe Noire.

In 1944 the airlines were rationalised when LAM and Aéro- maritime were all placed under the authority of Direction des Transports Aériens (DTA) for the duration of the war.

DTA reorganised its services on 22 June 1944 dividing the network into three separate divisions, the *Réseau Cen- tral* based in Algiers which provided for the link between France, Dakar and Madagascar, the *Réseau Occidental* in Dakar which linked Dakar with the rest of French West and Equatorial Africa and the *Réseau Oriental* in Damas- cus with routes to Madagascar and Teheran; on 16 Novem- ber a *Réseau Métropolitain* serving France with a connexion to London was added.

Summary of Air Routes through the French Congo during WWII

LAM Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Bangui-Fort Lamy-Kano- Accra-Lagos.

LAM Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Bangui-Fort Lamy-El Fasher-Khartoum-Wadi Halfa-Cairo-Damascus.

LAM Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Bangui-Fort Lamy-El Fasher- Khartoum-Asmara-Djibouti-Mogadisho-Nairobi- Lindi-Tananarive.

1940 (23 August) Algiers, Gao, Bamako, Dakar service via Gao, Niamey, Zinder, Fort Lamy, Bangui, Brazzaville. A very short lived service.

1941 (October) Damascus to Brazzaville by Lignes Aéri- ennes Militaires (LAM). The route was extended to Pointe Noire where it joined with the Fort Lamy to Accra route allowing Pointe Noire to be reached via Lagos, Douala and Libreville.



1941 Beirut - Brazzaville

The liberation of North Africa enabled LAM to link up with Aéromaritime Dakar to Cotonou service brought back into operation in stages during 1943.

1941 (10 November) Brazzaville to Beirut.

1941 (10 December) Brazzaville to New York by FAM 22 via Léopoldville.

1942 (26 October) SABENA Léopoldville-Pointe Noire-Libreville-Douala-Lagos.

1943 (20 February) Brazzaville-French Somaliland-Madagascar.

1943 (21-27 April) Opening of fortnightly service Dakar-Abidjan-Douala-Pointe Noire by the western network of the Transports Aériens Militaires (ROTAM) which had replaced LAM

1943 (22 November) First regular Dakar-Pointe Noire re-opened service



25 November 1943 Dakar - Pointe Noire

Postwar Developments

On 26 June 1945 air transport in France was nationalised and the operations of DTA, Air France Transatlantique and Air Bleu were taken over by Réseau des Lignes Aériennes Françaises. On 1 January 1946 this organisation was renamed Société Nationale Air France.

After the war ended civil airlines came back and services were re-opened between France and its Colonies, that to the Congo in July 1946

1946 (14-16 July) Brazzaville to France, red or black cachet applied.

On 13 October 1949 a new company Union Aéromaritime de Transport (UAT) was formed by Chargeurs Réunis which started a regular service to the Congo on 23 January 1950 calling at Algiers, Gao, Libreville, Pointe Noire and Brazzaville.

After independence in 1960 several small airlines operated within the country. Co-operation between the ex-West African colonies and with the assistance of Air France a new company Air Afrique was formed. This operated routes world wide.



18 July 1946 Re-opening of service after war

Postage Rates

Postage rates up to independence ran in line with those of Metropolitan France: Moyen Congo being a colony the rates to and from France were the same as the French internal rates.

09.08.1926	Letter Rate 20g	50c	31.01.1928	Airmail	20g	1F25
12.07.1937		65c	01.10.1929		10g	3F00
17.11.1938		90c	01.09.1935		5g	2F00
01.12.1939		1F00	13.08.1938		5g	3F00
01.03.1945		2F00	02.05.1941		5g	4F50
01.01.1946		3F00	10.03.1945		5g	6F00

Overseas Rates

01.02.1926	Letter Rate 20g	1F25
01.08.1926		1F50
01.08.1937		1F75
01.12.1938		2F25
01.01.1940		2F50
01.02.1942		4F00
01.02.1946		10F00

References

1. *Lignes Africaines* Vol 1 - G Collot & A Cornu
2. *Le Service Postal Aérien dans les Pays d'Expression Française* - P Saulgrain
3. *History of World's Airlines* - R E G Davies
4. *The History of Air Cargo & Airmail* - C Allay
5. *La Poste Aérienne Française* Vol 1 & 2 - Icare 173 & 177
6. *Encyclopaedia of African Airlines* - B R Guttery
7. *L'Aviette Postale*
8. *Airmail Operations during World War II* - T H Boyle
9. *The Locally Registered & Foreign Air Services of British Africa* - Cheveril Press
10. *Poste Aérienne Française* Vol 1 - *Afrique du Nord* - H Truc
11. *Catalogue des Aérogrammes du Monde Entier* - F Muller
12. *Tables of French Postal Rates 1849-2005* - D J Richardson
13. *Airmail Directional Handstamps* - I McQueen

SHORTER ITEMS - INCLUDING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Après le Départ Mark



I was interested to see this item with its *Après le Départ* cachet offered in the WASC auction on 20 September 2008 and acquired by our member Barbara Priddy, with whose permission it is reprinted in the Journal.

The description states that it is from a soldier at Atar, Mauritania, and sent 10.01.1959 to the USA. I cannot recall seeing the strike in boxed format previously. Registered mail from here may be difficult to find.

John Mayne

Paris Olympics 1924



A collection recently acquired included two vignettes for the Paris 1924 Olympic Games previously unseen in over 50 years of collecting. I am grateful to Charles Kiddle who kindly answered my query when I visited his stand at Philatex, where he had in stock a complete sheet confirming

there are two types, both illustrated above. The sheet was contained in an envelope from the Paris 1924 Olympic Committee addressed to the Jockey Club, Gibraltar! – an unusual address for such material. Charles suggested a value of £15-£20 each.

John Mayne

Booklet Publicity Tabs

In our last Journal (n° 251 pages 27-28) we published a number of replies to John Mayne's query on this topic. At least one member wrote to John direct, and we therefore add the following comments for completeness. – Editor.

ooooo0000000000000000000000000000

This is only an incomplete answer to John's query in Journal 250 (page 142) on the Dallay (now known as Maury-Cérès-Dallay) listings of publicity tabs and booklets.

Only the list of firms subscribing to publicity tabs can be considered as complete.

The list of tabs, on the contrary, is very incomplete. Dallay only illustrates one tab out of five – four out of twenty, of course, if one considers a complete booklet.

Having gone through the 50c *Paix* section a couple of times, I think the tab in question belongs to either the Bernard Moteurs or the Moteurs Conord adverts, Dallay references 201 and 205 respectively.

In the booklet section properly speaking there are two similar covers advertising Bernard and Conord, Dallay references 184 and 209.

The interesting thing is that the Bernard/Conord adverts were integrated in the Type IIa cylinder!

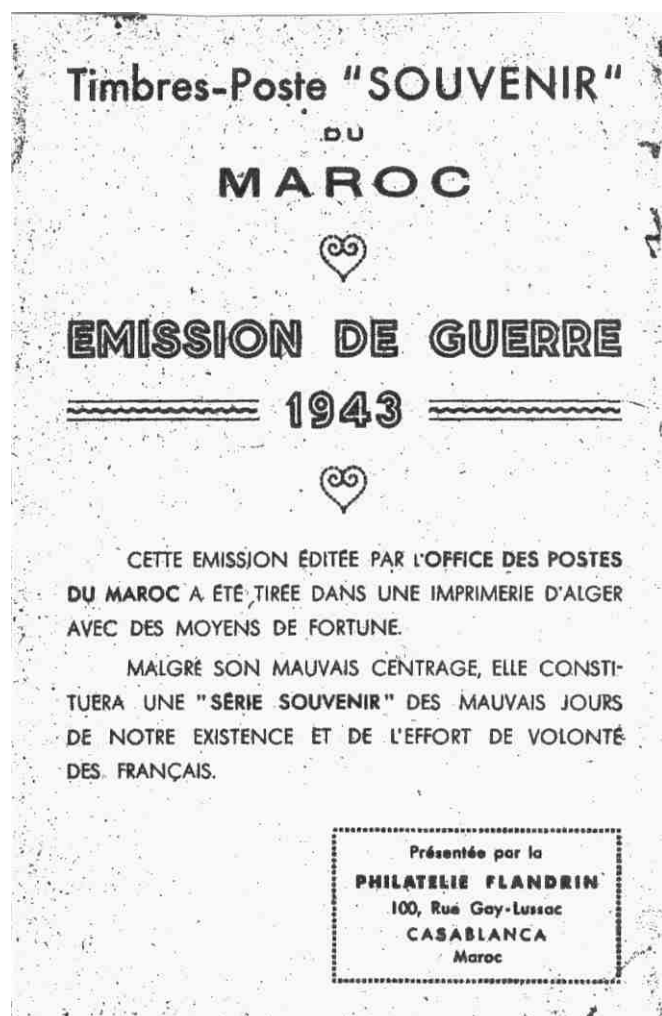
Incidentally, in the January 2009 edition of *L'Echo de la Timbrologie* I came across a short piece concerning the *Association de collectionneurs de carnets de timbres et publictimbres* 2009 Catalogue. Their website is:

www.accp-asso.com

or one can contact Simon Behmo, 33 chemin des Crêtes, 19100 Brive la Gaillarde, France.

John Simmons

Moroccan War Issue 1943



Reduced to 70%



I recently acquired a Souvenir package for the Moroccan 'Hassan Tower' issue of 1943. In 30 years I have never seen this, and therefore it may be of interest to members. The folder is in brown coarse paper, with the page of stamps loose-leaf. The English side shown above is the correct size, but the French side and the the stamp page (opposite) I show reduced to 70%.

The Allied invasion of North Africa (Morocco and Algeria) took place in 1942, so this issue was obviously prepared soon after.

The wording is somewhat unusual – and also rather sad. Note that "misprinting" is the English translation here of *mauvais centrage* or poor centring.

Bob Deakin

Early Airmails from France

A small piece of mine about early airmails in France was published in the last Journal (N° 251 of March 2009). Since then I have managed to have the two postcards I showed (on pages 14 and 15) translated, so I am able to add somewhat to my original rather sparse descriptions.

The two postcards were quite definitely sent to the same person, although they were from two separate individuals. At this point I should say that the translations are by Alan Cameron, an American collector and lover of all things Thai, to whom I owe my thanks. The cards are both addressed to 'Luang Songsakda, Deputy Commander, Special Army, 9th Division, Chachoengsao, near Bangkok, Siam.' Chachoengsao is an alternative name for the 'Petriew' which is on the postmarks – this is not particularly unusual with Thai place names. It is probably also worth mentioning that 'Luang Songsakda' is a title and not a name.

The postcard in Figure 4 in fact says very little, though as far as I know there would have been no kind of censorship:

"I received your letter already. I do not know how to thank you sufficiently.

And I hope that you are healthy. When you are free from your official duties please write to me and I will be very grateful."

The postcard in Figure 5 is fortunately rather more interesting:

"Dear Older,

"I arrived in Paris on the 10th because at this time (early September) there is no training with the aircraft. The weather has been bad with constant rain. I will return to Mourmelon on the 15th of this

month. I already sent you one P.K. album containing 500 issues cost of 12 francs (6 baht). After I have returned to Mourmelon I will inform you of other news. I hope that you are healthy and I am thinking of you a lot.

"P.S. After I finished this card I found out that you were promoted to Luang Songsakda via an order that arrived from Krung Thep (Bangkok)."

The handwriting on the picture side of the postcard reads as follows:

"This road goes to the embassy which is about 40 metres from the arrow. At this time it has become cold and the leaves are starting to fall. The sky is gloomy and with little sun. It rains continually."

Unfortunately the signatures on the cards are illegible, but it is clear that the second writer was somewhat disconcerted by his experience of a French autumn, remembering that at this time in Thailand it would have been the driest and sunniest time of the year. I presume by 'the embassy' the writer meant the Thai embassy. The 'P.K. album containing 500 issues' is apparently abbreviated Thai for a postage stamp album and stamps, which seems appropriate for an illustration in a philatelic journal.

Mourmelon is a small town east of Paris in the Champagne region, where I imagine the writer was lodging while he learned to fly. Villacoublay, where he was learning, is in the outer south—west suburbs of Paris, about 8 miles from the centre. The airfield was apparently built in 1911, shortly before the three Thais arrived; and indeed there is still a French Air Force base at Villacoublay.

John Garner

Chandernagor to Namur

Ron Wood's postcard illustrated on page 29 of Journal 251 of March 2009 does not exhibit any French postage due tax mark: I am willing to concede that there might be such hidden under one of the Belgian tax labels, but until Mr Wood demonstrates a French tax mark, if he can, concealed under one or other, his card is wrongly taxed in direct contravention of UPU regulations.

The rule I refer to expressly states that a UPU country receiving mail from another UPU member country shall not tax it if the item is not marked as requiring tax by the dispatching country, unless there is an obvious mistake by the sender's office.

The same regulation goes on to cover variations in UPU countries' postal regulations and says receivers must NOT tax items and try to justify the imposition by quoting their internal postal regulations – a device much used by the British Post Office to extort 3d on a standard 9cm x 14cm UPU sized postcard received in Britain. The GPO handstamp described the UPU card as "oversize and liable to letter rate"; similar claims beloved by our authorities were

levied, for instance, for writing on the address side or the picture side, once more mulcting the unknowing and trusting recipients. This was particularly prevalent between 1900 and 1910, after which the weight of foreign protests started to take effect.

At least, that is the conclusion I came to while searching postcard dealers' stocks, when building a sideline collection of taxed cards, more than 400 strong, all from France to England, and all franked with Sowers. Of those cards more than a quarter were incorrectly handled: most common pre-1914 was tax imposed when it should not have been if the GPO FB and IS had deigned to conform to the UPU regulations.

I feel it in place here to mention an individual who seems to have had an animus against the French, or possibly against postcards *per se*, because I have cards dated from 1904 to 1914 which bear his pencilled initials beside a FB tax due strike. Not one of the cards was struck for tax by an employee of the PTT – and none ought to have been taxed.

David Jennings-Bramly

World War II Letters from Paris

These two letters were sent from Paris on 8 July 1945 and 16 October 1944 – when the beaten Germans were retreating past Paris, their own backs against the wall. I suspect

anyone of my age with a liking for the French would find a catch in their throat. Moira was my mother, and she was hearing from cousins.

16/10/44

Dear Moira,

We have written to you, a few days after the liberation of Paris – in order to tell you how happy all Frenchmen felt to be, at last, free.

We also wished to know whether you had any news from our eldest son Jean Pierre, who had escaped through Spain to join the army of North Africa. We had no news from him since December last. Alas, since then the news has reached us that he had joined the French flying forces and had been killed. This was a shock for us as we expected him any time.

Otherwise, things have not been too dramatic here, although our country houses have all been entirely emptied by the Germans of their contents and although Montguerre has been crushed to atoms by an American bombardment, we feel here very thankful for the Allies' aid. Our only regret is to be unable to co-operate with them at present. But what can we do with no army weapons, no factories to make them, no raw materials (as

The transcription of the first page of this letter reads as follows:

"Dear Moira,

"We have written to you, a few days after the liberation of Paris, to tell you how happy all Frenchmen felt to be, at last, free.

"We also wished to know whether you had any news from our eldest son Jean-Pierre, who had escaped through Spain to join the army of North Africa. We had no news from him since December last. Alas, since then the news has reached us that he had joined the French flying forces and had been killed. This was a shock for us as we expected him any time.

"Otherwise, things have not been too dramatic here, although our country houses have all been entirely emptied by the Germans of their contents and although Montguerre has been crushed to atoms by an American bombardment we feel here very thankful for the Allies' aid. Our only regret is to be unable to co-operate with them at present. But what can we do with no army weapons, no factories to make them, no raw materials ..."

7^{bis} rue Cassini
Paris XIV^e
8 juillet 1945.

Chère Moira

Voici longtemps que je voulais t'écrire pour te dire combien j'étais touchée de ta si gentille et affectueuse lettre que tu m'as écrite au moment où nous avons appris la mort de notre petit Jean Pierre.

Nous avons vu Arthur^X qui a passé quelques jours à Paris la semaine dernière. Cela a été pour nous une grande joie de renouveler les contacts avec notre famille d'outre Manche et de parler de vous tous.

Mais Arthur nous a appris la triste nouvelle de la mort d'oncle Harry^X. C'est bien que nous partagerions votre peine car tous ceux d'outre nous

The translation of this letter reads as follows:

"Dear Moira,

"For a long time I have wanted to write to you to tell you how touched I was by the kind and affectionate letter you wrote to me at the time when we learnt of the death of our young Jean-Pierre.

"We have seen Arthur who spent a few days in Paris last week. That was a great pleasure for us to renew our contacts with our family from across the Channel and to talk about you all.

"But Arthur has given us the sad news of the death of Uncle Harry. Believe me, we share your distress because all those of you ..."

Patrick Hills

Cameroun to Gabon 1916

This cover has a **TRÉSOR ET POSTES AUX ARMÉES CAMEROUN** date stamp of 10.1.16 with a black '1' hand-stamp within it. There is also an unclear Gabon arrival date stamp on the reverse.

The cover does not have any official markings such as *Service Militaire*. It is possible that the '1' is a postage due mark. Any suggestions or further information from members would be welcomed.



Jeremy Martin

German *Taxe* mark used in Cameroun 1955



In a Warwick & Warwick auction last year there was a good collection of Cameroon, though spoilt by an abundance of modern items, i.e. 1950s covers. However, one caught my eye and I reproduce it here out of interest.

The *taxe* mark matches the German example noted by Bob Maddocks (see Journal 249 page 115, as well as the extended correspondence on this topic in Journals 146-150) and is I think further evidence that an example of the

mark was discovered by French / British forces when they invaded. There was no post office at Maroua in the German colonial period.

Marty Bratzel, I suspect, is more inclined to the view that the mark is generic, as it has been seen at offices where there was no German representation. I go along with that: the French probably copied a German example they found at one of the major post offices.

John Mayne

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

NORTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 14 FEBRUARY 2009

Stephen Holder: 300 Years of Alsace-Lorraine

Judith Holder: St Valentine's Day Cards

Members Present: G E Barker, S R Ellis, C S Holder, B Lucas, J P Maybury, M Meadowcroft, R K MacNeil, A Shepherd, P S Stockton.

Guests: J Holder, R Shiers.

Apologies: D. Bakker, J W Cowell, A Goude, C L Graham, R L High, K. Howitt, J. Milford Ward, J W Morton, P Rooke, J W Smith.

The convenor welcomed Ross MacNeil, a new member and introduced him to the gathered multitude.

Stephen then introduced the subject of his display with a map and outlined his reasons for collecting this most interesting area of France. The display commenced with pre-stamp material covering the two provinces of the *Ancien Régime*, the revolutionary era with the change to six *départements*, and the Napoleonic and post-Napoleonic period.

The introduction of the postage stamp was then well covered,

with some superb examples and studies, and a look at the growth of the railway system.

The Franco-Prussian War and its aftermath were described in great detail, with examples of mail from the divided area, the local *Stadtpost*, French Lorraine and the *Territoire de Belfort*.

First World War material from the French and German Zones was followed by the recovery of the "Lost Provinces", with temporary postmarks, and then the period from 1920 to 1940 was followed by a section on WWII, the Liberation and finally post-war France 1946-2000.

It being St. Valentine's Day, Judith then treated us to a short, but superb, display of Valentines, tracing their history and development, from the inception of the *Souhait de baptême* in Strasbourg in the 18C, through the Victorian period, to postcards by Valentines of Dundee.

JPM

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 28 FEBRUARY 2009

John West: French Red Cross

John started by telling us that he was going to avoid narrating the history of the Red Cross because he had dealt with that on previous occasions, and was going to concentrate on the stamp issues themselves, omitting the cinderellas. His display would be in 3 sections, and the majority of items would be from the French colonies.

The first Red Cross issue in France dated from 1914 when the Sower had been on sale since 1903, and this was surcharged for raising funds. The Paris surcharge produced double, inverted and double inverted varieties, but these can be regarded as forgeries.

The stamp itself was re-engraved for the second issue, and we saw examples that included a shade variety from the booklet and *millésime* pairs (with a variation in font that distinguished 1914 from 1904). The novelty wore off quickly, and a second Red Cross design was commissioned, that of a sinking hospital ship (though the image when compared with a postcard leaves some doubt over the number of funnels on the *Asturia*).

1939 saw the 75th anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Convention, and André Spitz was chosen as the engraver of the special issue that portrayed the nurse who had once tended him, Mlle Gervaise. We learnt that 1940 issues are particularly difficult to find on cover, but we were shown some WWI overprints from Réunion, with an inverted surcharge, together with varieties and shades of overprints, all on cover, and a WWII item with the CFA francs

overprint.

In the second section of the display John showed WWI examples from nearly all the French colonies from Morocco to Ubangi-Shari-Chad. He pointed out that during this period there were restrictions on the number of stamps sold to one person, and the stamps had to be affixed to the covers in the post office. He had acquired some covers with the stamps cancelled but with no address indicated – perhaps because this was the only way they could be obtained?

We were shown 4 different Red Cross stamps on a cover from Morocco to Paris; some Tunisian material where 10% commission was deducted leaving the surcharge as the face value; different surcharges and positions used in the French Indian Settlements; stamps that were not cancelled as they went through the diplomatic bag; early *prêt-à-porter* from Gaboon; a cover from Guadeloupe to Switzerland with a patriotic vignette; a New Caledonia block of 4; and an unrecorded surcharge on a Martinique stamp. We also viewed a block of 4 with inverted surcharge (probably not genuine); a Sinking Hospital Ship stamp used in Senegal (where French stamps were not legal on colonies mail, but the other stamps used probably covered the postage); items from the Ivory Coast and Indo-China; a cover from Madagascar to the USA with odd franking (7c or 17c or 35c?) that had not been taxed; and the Red Crescent cachet on Moroccan mail.

The final section of John's display covered the reply labels supplied by the Red Cross HQ in Geneva, a topic that has been covered in full detail in an article in Journal 250 (pages 128-141). These were used when details were provided of wounded soldiers or missing civilians to the central agency, the labels being used to identify the nationality of the appropriate file, by colour and/or initials.

Thus we saw many from POW camps, especially in Germany; the letter B added for Belgium; the letters SP (probably for Poland) and O.o (unknown, but perhaps for *Outremer* or *Orient* or *Ouest* or *Österreich?*); buff and blue coloured labels for civilians (reason unknown); unusual

Trésorerie and *Comité* labels; labels of different sizes, and some with perforations in the centre to facilitate separation; a larger address label; some from WWII; and items from smaller sub-sections of the Red Cross such as *SSA n° 1*, *cantine de gare*, *poste de secours*, *infirmerie de gare*, and hospitals.

Maurice Tyler gave the vote of thanks.

Members present: Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden, Mike Brindle, Michael Fairhead, John Hammonds, Chris Hitchen, Hugh Loudon, Barbara Priddy, Derek Richardson, Colin Spong, Maurice Tyler, Michael Wright, John Yeomans.

MST

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 18 MARCH 2009

Members: New Projects and Acquisitions

The following members displayed their new material:

Michael Round: post-independence Niger bird definitives 1967 to 2000, and an account of what he has managed to deduce from the material and incomplete and sometimes misleading catalogue listings.

Barbara Priddy: A request for help on what was going on in Mali around 1961. She had acquired 3 covers, some with military censorship and some with reference to a French Soudan republic which never apparently existed. This complemented the Niger shown by Michael Round and shows that there is still much to uncover on post-independence French West Africa.

Michael Ensor: French Guinea and Ivory Coast postal stationery and censorship.

Michael Fairhead: a query on colonial marginal markings of French Oceania which Mick Bister answered. The press and day are shown but not the year unless one has a *millésime*.

Mick Bister: A detailed study of the Pétain SN overprints.

Godfrey Bowden: Late 19th century decorative envelopes, Pépin envelopes, and Sower cards including a satirical one by La Lanterne

Members Present: Len Barnes, Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden, Michael Ensor, Michael Fairhead, Chris Hitchen, Hugh Loudon, Barbara Priddy, Derek Richardson, Michael Round.

Apologies: Maurice Tyler.

CJH

SCOTTISH GROUP MEETING OF 28 MARCH 2009

Peter Brand: Accountancy and Entry Marks David Hogarth: WWII French Internment Camps

Peter Brand kicked off with accountancy and entry marks. He showed examples of *Marques des Origines* with Germany, Spain, Holland and Thurn and Taxis. He showed how the Napoleonic Wars changed the location of entry points to France. There followed examples of mail markings after the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo.

Then Peter showed how the need to account for the cost of postage was met with markings. There were sheets showing the relations with Swiss Cantons. Peter ended with

more accountancy marks consequent on various accords with Britain and Prussia as examples.

David Hogarth gave a display based on the internment camps in south western France between 1939 and 1942. He started with the camps established to house Spanish refugees in 1939, with mail also from locations across France where Spanish Workers' Companies had been deployed; and he ended with examples of mail from a number of other camps both before and after the liberation of France.

MP

SOCIETY'S 33rd ANNUAL PHILATELIC WEEKEND 13-15 MARCH 2009

41 members and 16 guests attended the Society's Annual Weekend at the Charlecote Pheasant Hotel near Stratford-upon-Avon.

Friday

Apart from an afternoon Committee Meeting, the weekend opened officially after dinner on the first evening, when Joint Organisers **Peter Kelly** and **Chris Hitchen** welcomed all those attending and invited the usual short displays.

Tony Shepherd showed French Guiana cards (trade cards and those concerning the Dreyfus affair); **Alan Wood** had brought various oddments such as Siege of Paris detour mail (a letter from Strasbourg to Lyon), a card of a painting of a postman by Van Gogh, sheets of *La Belle France* vignettes, a map of post stages marked in leagues, and a printing flaw; **Jeremy Martin** displayed French Cameroun 1878-1915 military covers, postage due to Gaboon, maritime items, the first stamp issue of Gaboon, and a Gold Coast 1897 cover with postage dues; Barbara **Priddy** showed Federation of Mali items (French Soudan and Senegal independence 1960); **Bob Paterson** had two items including a letter to the *Camp de Rivesaltes*, and two queries about the AO mark (*Autres Objets*) and the *bloc de St Nazaire*; **Godfrey Bowden** produced some Esperanto cards and labels; and **Mavis Pavey** brought the evening to a conclusion with POW mail from WWI.

Saturday

For his Presidential Display the following morning – “*La Semeuse*, this Common Little Stamp” – **Ashley Lawrence** showed items from his collection of Sowers, which had appealed to him from his schooldays because of their classic design, fascinating variety of types and wonderful range of colours and shades. In those days they were also affordable! The display commenced with illustrations of the original sketch of *La Semeuse* made by Louis-Oscar Roty in 1886, the medallion struck for the Ministry of Agriculture, and the silver coins based upon Roty's design that were issued in 1897-98. We saw photographs of Charlotte Ragot, the model who had posed for Roty, and of the die engraved by Louis-Eugène Mouchon, together with essays, colour trials and proofs of the stamps for the first series of lined Sowers that were issued in 1903.

The new stamps were welcomed by the press and public at large, but criticised by some on political and artistic grounds. Patriots eager for the recovery of Alsace & Lorraine from Germany would have preferred to see a more militant figure, such as Joan of Arc, as the symbol of France. Purists found fault with the design itself, complaining that the sun was rising behind the Sower yet her back was in shadow, and worse – she appeared to be sowing into the wind! When the ordinary letter rate was reduced in 1906, Minister Bérard ordered revised versions to be issued. Engraver Mouchon's patience was sorely tested as he tried to satisfy the critics, at first showing the Sower standing on the ground and shortly afterwards in cameo.

Among many goodies displayed was a strip of three of the rare 15c slate-green lined Sower stamps (Type VI) printed by rotary press for use as coils in 1924, a *millésime* block of

the 10c cameo Sower in scarlet, only issued in November 1907, and examples of the Turin Forgery of 1909, authenticated (if that's the right word) by the police inspector who had arrested the forgers. There was a full range of the lined and cameo Sowers that were issued between 1907 and 1939. The Sower design survived, in spite of the issue of several other series of definitive stamps during these years: Prud'homme's *Pasteur* series during 1923-26, Lauren's *Paix* in 1932-33, J-J Barre's *Cérès* in 1938-41, and Hourriez's *Mercur* in 1938-41. Such was her popularity and distinction that the Sower made a comeback in 1960, newly engraved by Jules Piel, to mark the introduction of the New Franc.

Other choice items on display included a dated corner of the rare 75c magenta lined Sower (Type II) that was printed on only three days during May 1932, the *Minéraline* and *Philopode* booklets, and a strip of the 35c violet cameo Sower (Type II) that had escaped being surcharged. There were colourful *porte-timbres* carrying advertisements or patriotic messages; Sower money orders and postal stationery; and Sower stamps encased in *jetons* that were used as small change after the Great War. More recent items included the Sower booklet issued for the *Journée du Timbre* in 1996, and stamps and coins celebrating the changeover of the French currency from Francs to Euros in 2002.

Ashley ended his display with two covers. One was a first day cover, franked with the very first Sower stamp to be issued, the 15c lined Sower, and postmarked Place de la Bourse, 2 April 1903. Alongside this was another cover, also postmarked Place de la Bourse, but this time dated 2 April 2003. This had been sent to Ashley by Roty's great-grandson to mark the Sower's centenary.

[Editor's Note: Ashley has written a book about *La Semeuse* which he hopes to have published in the near future. Further details will appear in the Journal shortly.]

John Hammonds' exhibit covered the early history of human flight, and in particular that by hot air balloons. The story moved on from ancient legends to the pioneer balloonists of the 18th century such as the Montgolfier brothers, Jacques Charles, Jean-Pierre Blanchard and Pilâtre de Rozier, leading to a crossing of the Channel by air (1785) and the military use of balloons for observation (1794). Their use was developed in the Siege of Paris (1870-71) for carrying passengers and mail, and they later appeared in exhibitions and as a tourist attraction. John also covered a number of early aviation meetings at Rouen (1910, 1922, 1923) and illustrated these with different types of vignettes and postcards, concluding with the Air Bleu service in 1935 when Rouen was a stop on the Paris-Le Havre route, and the helicopter carrier *Jeanne d'Arc* that made several visits to Rouen.

Len Barnes reported that his interest in French aviation started on learning that when the USA eventually joined the Allies on the French battlefields in 1917 it was the Allies who provided them with 90% of the equipment they used in combat, of which 75% was provided by France. Len's general display of French aviation from 1869 to 1940 was being gradually developed, and was illustrated here by

cards and vignettes, pictures of flying boats and kites, zeppelins, rally meetings, catapult mail, Air France advertising cards and crash mail.

Michael Annells' display opened with the full set of airmail labels on cover for the Amiens 7.10.1925 Air Meeting. This was followed by a card with a specially printed stamp for the Paris-Brussels-Paris rapid flight, the first direct transatlantic flight to South America that landed on the Cape Verde Islands because of engine trouble, and a selection of La Baule covers. We saw some interesting items such as a cover from Paris to Réunion via Stanleyville (a very unusual route), one to Moscow and Alaska with some doubt as to whether it did in fact go to Moscow, and one from Douai to Amsterdam via Saigon!

After a coffee break **Brian Brookes** displayed classic Martinique. This covered entry marks into France during the period from 1664 until 1802 and included a letter from Louis XIV and Colbert the naval minister dated 27 September 1676 addressed to M. de Baas, Governor of Martinique. Manuscript marks from the 18th century followed, and the display ended with a letter signed by Napoleon ordering more troops to Martinique in 1802.

Colin Spong then focussed on the Free French issues of Madagascar, and first displayed the Edmond Dulac design commissioned for colonial airmail stamps by General de Gaulle in 1940. This issue arrived in Madagascar in 1943 but due to the change in rates the stamp values were mainly used to make up postage rates. Examples of *épreuves de luxe*, mint and used stamps together with covers depicting the various rates and destinations were shown. The final sheets covered two 1944 commemorative issues, the Charity and Air stamps with proofs, and the 1945 Félix Éboué issue.

Barbara Priddy explained how very few aircraft were left to France at the end of 1944, and her display illustrated the way in which the service to French West Africa was gradually built up again after the war, starting with the French flying-boat the Laté-631 (with its fatal flaw of losing its engines in mid-flight), followed by American DC-4s and Lockheed Constellations. UAT was founded in 1949 and in 1953 decided to fly the West African routes with Comet-1s (which also had a tendency to come apart at altitude), soon followed by DC-6s and (in the 1960s) DC-8s. At this time Air France began using Boeing-707s, and graduated to Boeing-747s and DC-10s, leading eventually to the Concorde and Airbus of the mid-1970s.

Tony Shepherd's display of French Guiana began with a short history of the way in which the colony had been set up and developed later as a penal colony, and the first item was an 1822 entire letter from Cayenne to Paris, by hand (ie merchant ship), and thence by the French internal postal system to Tournon in the Ardèche region. There followed a series of entires illustrating the various types of postal handstamps used in the colony, though the only post office at this time was situated at Cayenne. Then came the later dated Cayenne postmarks and covers prepaid by the use of General Colonies issues. The second section of the display was concerned with the rural posts of the colony, with postcards and postmarks exemplifying the post offices situated mostly on the coast and opened from 1882 onwards. Items shown also included the short-lived Transports Aériens

Guyanais airmail service and the Territoire de l'Inini, an undeveloped region in the interior that became the site of penal work camps for prisoners. [Editor's Note: It is hoped to base a short but fully illustrated article on this display for publication in a later Journal.]

After the lunch break **Mick Bister** displayed 'Designers and Engravers of the 1960s', explaining that his interest in this topic had been sparked by correspondence undertaken when a student in France in 1962. This period saw a very moderate stamp issuing policy by the PTT when compared with more modern times, and the stamps were regarded as ambassadors for the country, over half of them being for the foreign letter and postcard rates. Their subjects represented France's history, culture, achievements, her literature, her art and her architecture, for all of which only the best printing method would suffice - *taille douce*. The newly acquired TD-6 press, which could print line-engraved stamps in up to six different colours, became the flagship of the *Atelier*; and the best of France's engravers and designers were commissioned, including the old guard of André Spitz, Albert Decaris and Jules Piel, the post-war brigade of Jean Philpin, René Cottet, Robert Cami, Charles Mazelin and the prolific Pierre Gandon, and the newcomers Pierre Béquet, Claude Durrens, Jacques Combet, Claude Haley, Claude Hertenberger, Georges Bétemps and Pierrette Lambert. These skilful and experienced artists produced miniature works of art, especially in the Art on Stamps series (*le Musée Imaginaire*), that several times won the *Grand Prix de l'Art Philatélique* - most significantly the Marianne de Cheffer issue for which its designer Henry Cheffer (1880-1957) was posthumously awarded the prize in 1967.

George Barker showed 'France: Napoleon III Imperforate Colour Trials', which proved to be a range of imperforate material in the Empire non-laureated and laureated designs, for all values 1c to 1F, save only for the 40c value for which nothing had come to light. The range of paper supports (very thin *pelure* to thick card) and the different colour tints (from very pale colours up to black) suggested the production of *découpage* material plus tests of the quality of the finished plates. Laureated material included trials for the 1867 Paris International Exhibition.

André Métayer then exhibited the *Poste Restante* service in France, the first official mention of which was an instruction of 20 December 1748 about the treatment of dead letters. We were shown the different indications of *Poste Restante*, *Bureau Restant* and *Télégraphe Restant*, the postmarks of Paris and of the provinces, the ways in which the addressee was named or identified, unusual methods of forwarding a letter so addressed and the variations in the length of the period for keeping such letters. On 1 May 1920 a surcharge of 20c was imposed on these letters, payable either as postage or as tax, and we saw how the surcharge could occasionally pay for several letters at once. From 14 July 1924 newspapers could be sent *Poste Restante* at a reduced rate of surcharge. An annual subscription removed the need for separate surcharges, though only rarely can this system be found used by commercial travellers. The display concluded by showing the great variety of documents that could be sent by this service, the special franking machines that were used for it, and cards that were used for forwarding or redirecting mail.

After the break for tea **Prue Henderson** showed a selection of picture postcards illustrating the early French railways, together with a map of the lines. Thus we saw the first Lyon to St Etienne route from the mid-1840s, and the way in which the individual companies were formed for the different lines, with an overview of the different locomotives that were employed up to 1910.

Godfrey Bowden's contribution showed examples of most of Tunisia's postal stationery from 1888 until 1948 after which none was printed during the Protectorate. Cards, envelopes and letter-cards were shown, the largest section consisting of the cards. Godfrey pointed out that postal rates may be followed fairly closely from postal stationery but there is often a lag in them being produced owing to the need to use up old stock, and consequently it is not unusual to find surcharged stationery. There is great variation in type and colour of the items and in some cases such as the reply paid cards interesting varieties are found. The most sought after items are those issued towards the end of the period, especially those cards which have been adapted for airmail use. A pair of cards sent from a dealer in Tunis to Monsieur Forbin in Paris told an interesting story of war-time Tunisia. Some covers were shown which had postmarks that considerably pre-date the recorded issue dates shown in the ACEP catalogue.

John Scott displayed the paper and parchment tax of France 1673-1690, a tax that was of course levied to fund wars. France had 14 different rates according to the types and size of the paper, and 26 *généralités* (or treasury subdivisions) each with its own stamps (for example, Normandy had 105 different stamps).

After a much appreciated dinner, members rejoined the meeting hall for the second set of impromptu displays. **Mick Bister** started with a selection of his collection of engravings entitled '*La Poste en France*' created by some of the designers included in his main display and published in 1952; **Paul Watkins** showed maritime items tracing the story of postcards between France and Great Britain (ship letter mail; mail paying frontier rate or shilling rate; registered mail); **Ashley Lawrence** had a query about a stamp from Hong Kong bearing a lozenge of dots with figure 1 in the centre, asking whether it was French and what it signified; **Bob Paterson** had some Dulac definitives as separate stamps and on cover, including censored and registered mail; **André Métayer** illustrated the German occupation 1870 double franking; **Steve Ellis** had brought some picture postcards of *Félix Faure*, a boat on the Seine between Le Havre and Rouen with linked excursions to Paris.

Lesley Marley illustrated her thematic Claude Haley collection, with topics such as ships, portraits and botany; **Alan Wishart** showed some postcards from WWI POWs and a *La Poste* calendar for this year; **Derek Richardson** gave details of a red *Type Paix* 90c stamp that John Simmons had indicated was being claimed as a (valuable) forgery, but which he said was in fact a forgery to defraud forgery collectors; **John Hammonds** displayed some postcards recording the exploit of Blériot in crossing the Channel by air in 1909, and some interesting letters from customs officers demonstrating their reactions to this; **George Barker** showed items concerning the 1983 bicentenary of the first balloon flight, a 1945 miniature sheet, a cartoon, and bal-

loon activities commemorated in 1971; **Gina Douglas** (John Parmenter's wife) produced a laptop presentation of letters to Linnaeus in Sweden from the 1740s and 1750s.

The final session of the night included **John Yeomans**, who displayed the French connection with Mauritius 1863-1891; **Maurice Porter** showed some Napoleonic (1795-1808) British items of correspondence from the West Indies; **Lesley Marley** had an 1870 Franco-Prussian War airletter; and **Paul Watkins** showed a selection of postcards, publicity cards, Siege and Commune material.

Sunday

Full displays recommenced on Sunday morning with **Derek Richardson**, who illustrated the variety of papers and ink shades used in the production of the common 5 centime green Sage stamp, plus multiple examples of *Imprimés*, *Journaux* and *Section de Levée* cancellations. He then showed a collection of covers illustrating a range of usage, which included a late collection item and a 1906 letter with a Chambon trial machine cancellation.

Peter Kelly showed three frames entitled 'The *Type Sage* issue of France - the end of the classic period'. The study covered the period from the introduction of *Type Sage* in mid-1876 up to 1 May 1878 when major structural changes took place in the postal rates. The period is interesting for a number of reasons including the progressive introduction of the Sage issue, the choice of all values in green up to 10c which were quickly replaced, and the two different types of the stamp itself. There were many opportunities for mixed franking with the previous Siege of Paris / Cérès issue and this was particularly the case with the initial lack of Sage high values. The issue was also a child of the GPU /UPU which France joined on 1.1.1876. The old local and territorial postage rates remained in place until 1.5.1878 when a single territorial rate was adopted. The old system of weight steps was replaced at the same time by a uniform weight step of 15 grams. The display included examples of letters, postcards, business papers, samples and printed matter.

Standing in for Peter Maybury who was unfortunately indisposed, **Peter Kelly** then showed letters from Réunion illustrating the problems of blockade and early attempts to organise an airmail service from the island to Madagascar. The first part of the display was a single letter of 1805 from Réunion to France which successfully braved the dangers of the blockade in the Indian Ocean as well as around the Spanish and French coast. Early airmails included the 1929 Goulette flight, the 1933 Samat flight to Mauritius and the Laurent, Touge, Lenier flight to France via Madagascar in 1937. The outbreak of war ended the establishment of regular flights to Madagascar and Réunion had to rely entirely on shipping until the island was relieved by the Free French at the end of 1943. During the period of the blockade there was little opportunity of communication by sea because of the risk of German and Japanese submarines operating in the Indian Ocean. Two attempts were made by Messageries Maritimes mailboats in February and October 1941 sailing from the Far East via Madagascar also carrying Réunion mail. Both of the convoys concerned were taken by the British Navy off the coast of South Africa and the mails were censored there. Examples of these two voyages were shown. After liberation by the Free French censorship of

the island's mail continued and examples were shown up until the end of the war.

Alan Wishart displayed a selection of items showing the variety of entry and transit marks put on mail from Russia. The earliest shown was a 1789 entire from St Petersburg to St Quentin, then there were various covers showing entry marks such as PRUSSE GIVET and PRUSSE VALENCIENNES and *Aus Russland* transit marks reflecting the route through Prussia into France via Belgium. There was also a cover from the Ukraine to Marseille through Austria. The display ended with an illustrated envelope for the Visit of the Russian fleet in Toulon in 1893 and a stationery postcard used by the Russian army based in France during WWI.

Peter Stockton's display of French Morocco military mail included a section showing the administrative cachets of the *Service des Renseignements* (Intelligence Service) first established in 1907 to help with the occupation of Casablanca and the Chaouia hinterland. A Naval Division letter from the "Protected Cruiser" *Du Chayla* in 1910 was an item attributable to a particular ship as opposed to the general "*Marine Française – Service à la Mer*" cancellations not so readily identifiable. A further section dealt with military aviation marks, the service dating from a flight from Casablanca to Rabat on 13 September 1911. Further items of censored mail from the WWII period concluded the display with mail from American forces remaining after Operation Torch of November 1942.

Mavis Pavey displayed POW and censored mail in WWII, including items such as mail from French POWs held in Germany and a variety of marks used on postcards and official German POW lettercards during the period from July 1940 to December 1947. A photograph showed French soldiers taken prisoner during the German flanking movement of the Maginot Line in 1940. 2 cards dated 1946 and 1947 were from German POWs held in Amboise and Grenoble. The censored mail items covered the period November 1939 to May 1944 and showed a French military censor's mark with a suspended postal relations cachet. Censor marks from the Cologne, Frankfurt, Vienna, Munich, British, Berlin, Bordeaux, Paris, Italian and Lyon offices showed circular and roller cachets, and examples of sealing tape.

Steve Ellis dealt with the French Red Cross during the period of the Franco-Prussian War, including items from Bâle, Prussian occupied territory, the siege of Strasbourg, Paris, cachets of the French Red Cross local committees, ambulance and stretcher bearer units. The Red Cross tracing service at Geneva utilised Reply Labels to facilitate the investigation into missing persons, both military and civilian, during the First and Second World Wars. Examples of different coloured labels (for different nationalities) and the different sizes were explained.

Claire Scott covered the topic of the wounded soldier in World War I. She showed picture postcards of war scenes and hospitals, but also gave examples of the cachets used by each military unit, the different types of hospitals and

other buildings used as medical establishments (often provided by individuals or associations), and the three societies that had combined to form the French Red Cross. Thus we saw examples of ambulances, stretcher bearers, dogs used by the medical units, *hôpitaux bénévoles*, radiography and psychological units, railways (*trains sanitaires permanents et semi-permanents*) and canteens.

After a coffee break **Paul Watkins** displayed the postal history of Bordeaux. He explained that he had chosen a regional city of some size, to trace the development of handstamps from 1579 up to 1791. We saw examples of mail by private messenger or the Bordeaux Post Office, with two separate tariffs. Postmarks included variations of the *fleur de lys* over the letter B, the name of the town in a circle, straight line marks, and eventually the departmental marks. Items of particular interest illustrated the different offices in the town and the different postal charges.

John Yeomans' display of French India showed examples of mail carried on the P and O and Messageries Maritimes routes to and from the Far East and Indian Ocean to illustrate the development of the postal rates in the period leading up to the UPU and later 1862-1912. Of particular interest was mail to and from the smaller settlements including an 1876 newspaper and wrapper from Mahé to Dunkirk franked 17c, an 1887 prepaid letter from Réunion to Yanaon and redirected to St Marie de Madagascar, and an early 1862 unpaid entire with an exchange mark from Yanaon addressed to France and carried by a British packet.

Finally **Alan Wood** displayed French fiscals. He explained that from as early as 1860 stamps were issued for fiscal purposes, and progressively the range of reasons for taxation was expanded. The display included stamps and documents for the raising of revenue for commercial bills, weights and measures, bills of lading, transcripts, railway receipts, passport fees, taxation of matches, patent fees, a baggage ticket for a cruise in 1930, a permit for the use of the beach at Cannes for 8 days in 1947, salmon fishing, hunting and an abattoir tax. In other words, if it stood still, tax it; if it moved, shoot it; and when dead, tax it again!

The weekend came to an end with the presentation of awards for the displays, voted for by those members present. The winners were **Tony Shepherd** who won the Levett Trophy for the best display by someone who had not won a competition prize before; **Steve Ellis** who won the Jubilee Salver for the best postal history display; and **Mick Bister** who won the Filmer Shield for the best display on stamps. Judgement of the Literature Competition had been delayed, and the winner of this would be announced at the AGM. A short review of the weekend showed that members were still in general happy with the venue, and it was agreed that next year's weekend would be held at the same hotel, from 12 to 14 March 2010. The Organisers **Peter Kelly** and **Chris Hitchen** were thanked for their usual hard work and meticulous organisation, and guests **Marian Bister**, **Jean Hammonds** and **Annette Tyler** similarly for running the bookstall and bourse, which again raised a considerable sum for the Society.

The following members were present for part or all of the weekend:

Maurice Alder	Prue Henderson	Bob Paterson	Peter Stockton
Michael Annells	Chris Hitchen	Mavis Pavey	Maurice Tyler
George Barker	Peter Kelly	Maurice Porter	Paul Watkins
Len Barnes	David Lamb	Barbara Priddy	Brian Weeks
Mick Bister	Ashley Lawrence	Derek Richardson	Alan Wishart
Godfrey Bowden	Hugh Loudon	Claire Scott	Alan Wood
Brian Brookes	Lesley Marley	John Scott	Bob Wood
Hamish Clifton	Jeremy Martin	Tony Shepherd	John Yeomans
Steve Ellis	John Mayne	Gerald Small	
Colin Graham	André Métayer	Colin Spong	
John Hammonds	John Parmenter	Willy Stephens	MST

SOUTHERN GROUP MEETING OF 4 APRIL 2009

Ray Downing: *Marianne de Dulac*

The Organiser welcomed our member Ray, who had travelled down from London with his wife (who had gone to see a play at the Worthing Connaught Theatre), and also especially Geoff Gethin, who was attending his first meeting since 2006, with his wife Elizabeth.

Ray gave a brief description of the issue of this interesting stamp design, by a French designer who was a naturalised British citizen and, until General de Gaulle approached him to design stamps for the liberated Colonies and France, had designed some of the issues for King George VI. Dulac's model for Marianne was the wife of a school friend – Léa Rixens, who he discovered after the war was awarded the *Croix de Guerre* for her bravery.

The *Marianne de Dulac* issue was printed by Thomas De La Rue, London, in sheets of 200 comprising two panes of 100. Unfortunately they were not very popular in France and by the time that they had appeared in the post offices after the Liberation, with the increase in rates in 1945 this issue did not meet with the new postal rates. In fact they were mainly used in multiples or combined with other issues. However, certain values were able to be used as the rates changed again.

In the first section of his display Ray showed a large selection of covers covering many destinations both internal and overseas, depicting this usage of new postage rates being made up by the Dulac issues. The later changes in rates were shown with a number of covers of this issue paying the correct amount.

In the second section of Ray's display he concentrated on proofs, unadopted designs commencing with *Marianne de Gandon* and ending up with *Marianne du Bicentenaire* (1989).

The third part dealt with a miscellany of subjects including a dissertation on the position of the stamp on the envelope. In Great Britain there was no difficulty as on the selvage of the line engraved issues the instruction was given to "Place the label above the address and towards the right hand side of the letter". In France instructions as to where to place the stamp do not seem to have been given until 1916, as mentioned in an article in the *Daily Mail*.

Ray continued with an introduction to postal mechanisation, mentioning that the first use of a post code was in the Law of 26 February 1790 when France was divided into *arrondissements* which were numbered and eventually led to the five figure numbers used today. The slogan postmarks were used to get people used to the post codes.

Ray finished up with a selection of postmarks and souvenirs of Dakar and Mali which he obtained on a visit to his daughter who was stationed there.

The vote of thanks was given by Colin Spong

Members present: Michael Annells, Graham Booth, Colin Clarkson, Geoff Gethin, John Hammonds, Bob Larg, Bill Mitchell, Bob Small, Colin Spong, John Thorpe, John Yeomans. Guests: Christine Annells, Mary Clarkson, Elizabeth Gethin & Pat Spong [who looked after the refreshments].

The next meeting will be on Saturday 22 August, with a display to be arranged

CWS & JNH

Addendum

The list of those attending the London Meeting of 15 April, reported opposite, is as follows:

Len Barnes, Michael Ensor, Michael Fairhead, Chris

Hitchen, Hugh Loudon, Bill Mitchell, Barbara Priddy, Derek Richardson, John Thorpe, Maurice Tyler, Michael Wright.

Apologies: Mick Bister, Godfrey Bowden.

LONDON GROUP MEETING OF 15 APRIL 2009

Maurice Tyler: Aspects of World War I in France

Maurice began by reminding members that France granted free postage to her forces from 3 August 1914, and that just over two weeks later official *Franchise Militaire* cards were produced for them at a rate of 450,000 per day. The earliest and best known of them displayed the coloured flags of France, Great Britain, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro and Russia; they were produced in two versions, *Modèle A* free of charge to the troops and *Modèle B* sold at 25c (later 15c) per 10 for the use of relatives writing to the troops. The flag of Japan was added at the end of 1914, but when she became embroiled in Chinese affairs it was replaced by that of Italy (in May 1915). For the sake of economy these cards were later still replaced by manila ones with simple ornamentation.

Maurice showed examples of a few of these and then some of the more unusual official cards such as varieties of medical bulletins, varieties of cards for correspondence with the invaded *départements* passing on information from the German Red Cross, anti-malaria cards for the *Armée d'Orient*, and his prized acquisition of a *Regia Marina* card used by French sailors stationed at Brindisi.

He then showed a series of privately produced commercial cards. Picture postcards were banned in November 1915, but two months later it was decided that such designs as flags, portraits and allegorical pictures or compositions would be permitted, and we saw such favourites as the Gallic cock, the 75mm gun, the pansy or forget-me-not, the Lion of Belfort, the clover leaf and religious symbols.

These were followed by a series of novelty cards (the language of visiting cards, a horoscope for soldiers, the course of love for soldiers on leave, a 1000 kisses banknote), some cartoons featuring Alsace, life in the trenches and the home front, propaganda cards (e.g. for War Bonds), and advertising cards for Dubonnet (where the name was always hidden somewhere in the picture) and for shoes, heels, lamps and burners, a cinema, the Banania breakfast drink, a paper mill, warehouses (now used as barracks), etc.

The first half of the display ended with examples of the Hatier map cards, on which a large coloured map of the Western (or Eastern) Front was shown so that purchasers could mark the changes in the front line as the war progressed (this was banned on 10 March 1916 because it began to show too many retreats), and a postwar card inviting veterans to enlist or re-enlist in the Colonial Army.

The second half of the display concentrated on some of the many nations who fought on the Western Front and sent mail from France. The Portuguese, for example, sent 2 divisions to France in 1917 and served in the British sector, but used their own red or purple censor marks. We saw a selection of their CEP-SPC field post office cachets (numbers 1-27 allocated, though not all used), that included a card produced in Italy and one produced in Portugal, and the Army Post Office S69 date stamp used by the British Mission with the Portuguese.

The Indian Expeditionary Force A arrived in Marseille

in September 1914 with 2 Infantry and 2 Cavalry Divisions, and we saw a selection of their FPO marks (3, 7-20, 36-42 were used at this period). There were also an Indian field service card in an Indian language and a number of picture postcards featuring Indian troops. Other Empire forces were represented by APO date stamps RW1-RW5 and SW1-SW4 that were used by the Australian Divisional Railheads and Stationary Offices; and APO date stamps RZ, SZ and SZ2 that similarly served the New Zealand troops. Canada also featured in APO date stamps RX and RX2-RX4, that were redesignated RP1-RP4 in 1917. This section also included some more unusual items such as a cover posted at the Canadian YMCA Central Branch, APO S84 used by the Canadian Reinforcement Camp in the Pas-de-Calais, and a cover sent from the Canadian Base Depot via London FS21 to Switzerland.

China supplied a large labour force that carried out menial tasks as non-combatant duties, and their cachets included those of groups in a paper mill, a munitions factory and the dockyards. Indo-China was represented by a 1919 letter requesting an Annamese interpreter and a cachet from a Tonkinese labourers' group. Japan was involved in naval affairs in the Far East, but Maurice showed several picture postcards with views of a voluntary hospital in France run by the Japanese Red Cross.

Eastern Europe appeared in the shape of Russia, whose troops arrived in Marseille early in 1914 and used the *TréSOR et Postes* 189 date stamp for the Russian Brigade (but we also saw the cachet of a Russian hospital and of a Russian ambulance sponsored by the Empress); Czechoslovakia, who declared for the Allies in May 1918 and formed a Czech Legion (we were shown the cachets of a Czechoslovak Regiment and of the Czech Volunteers - Czech Colony of France); and Serbia, who was mainly engaged on the Eastern Front in Salonica, but had many refugees in France, and we saw a letter from a refugee and cachets of a Serbian military training school, the Serbian Legation in Paris, and Serbian refugee settlements in Provence.

There was also Poland, whose troops fought at the beginning of the war with the Austrians, were encouraged by the Russians to form a Polish Rifle Brigade, and later formed a Polish force with the Germans. However, always hoping for independence those captured fought with the Allies (Canada and the USA had Polish formations) and formed a Polish Army in France in 1917. The display included cachets of the Polish Army Engineers and of the Franco-Polish Mission at the War Ministry in Paris. Bulgaria signed a secret treaty with Germany and Austria in July 1915 and joined the Central Powers in the war in October 1915, so it was interesting to see the final exhibit was a registered letter from a bank in Paris to Sofia dated September 1915.

A vote of thanks to Maurice was given by Len Barnes, who elicited the promise from him that on some future occasion he would perhaps show military mail posted in France by other nationalities: the British, French, Belgians, Italians, Americans and even Germans.

MST

CHARLECOTE WEEKEND 2009



Prize Winners Mick Bister, Tony Shepherd and Steve Ellis



Ashley Lawrence giving his Presidential Display



Barbara Priddy and Peter Kelly bowing to the God Philately



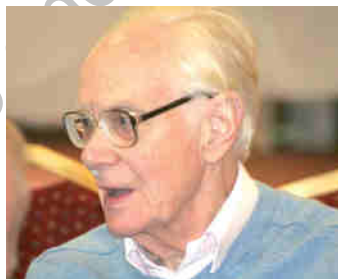
Jean Hammonds, Annette Tyler and Marian Bister running the Bookstall



Peter Kelly and Chris Hitchen running the Weekend



Alan Wishart



David Lamb



Brian Weeks



Gerald Small



Len Barnes



John Scott



John Parmenter



Bob Wood



Paul Watkins