

Secretary's Report for 2014//2015

Derek Booth and David Begley

Derek Booth died on 19 May 2014 aged 85. Derek was a very active and popular member of our Society for 29 years, in addition to which he was Chairman of High Wycombe PS for 26 years.

David Begley passed away on 30 March 2015 a few days short of his 75th birthday. He joined the Society in 1982 and his main activity in the Society was buying from the Exchange Packets.

We shall miss both Derek and David.

John Harley

During the past year John has moved from a nursing home in Stoke Poges to a new custom built and comfortable nursing home, Chesham Leys in Cameron Road, Chesham. It is now easier for his family and friends to visit him.

Membership

Our membership during the year ended 31 March 2015 was exactly the same as 2014, being 109 plus 10 Honorary Life Members, of whom 2 are still active. New members during the past year are Jennifer Moss, Brian Feakes and Keith Wright who is Secretary of Hemel Hempstead PS.

Over the past 12 months attendances at our normal meetings have remained constant when compared to the previous two years at 21, but the auctions continue to be popular, with an average of 43 (compared to 42 last year and 47 in 2012/13) of whom perhaps 11 are non members. The highest attendance for an auction was 48 in February this year.

Auctions and Exchange Packets

As the Treasurer will report, the auctions have achieved record sales during the year. Once again we are very grateful to Les and Liz Gwilliam for organising the auctions in such a professional manner. We should not forget the contributions from other members directly involved, namely Stuart Catchpole and Alan Williams as the auctioneers, David Peace who keeps the back up records and acts as cashier, plus Chris Marsh and Derek Chandler who usually distribute the lots to the successful bidders in the hall. Ian Wallace does a very professional job in organising the refreshments and operating the industrial dishwasher in the Drake Hall kitchen.

Alan Williams has again run the exchange packets very smoothly and successfully for the eighth successive year.

Competitions

The competitions attracted 22 entries from 9 members. Four members shared the trophies with Michael Pitt-Payne winning two. The awards will be made at the end of the AGM.

Junior Collectors

In common with most clubs the average age of our membership increases every year and we continue to do whatever we can to encourage younger collectors. If we hear of any local junior collectors we try to give them a starter kit, comprising a stockbook, tweezers, magnifying glass, some stamps and a packet of adhesive hinges.

Unfortunately Maureen Cory who has run Kidstamps so well over the past few years has recently retired from that position, as her husband Tim has been given a kidney transplant. We await news from the Association of British Philatelic Societies regarding a successor to Mrs Cory.

Programmes

During the past year we have enjoyed the final programme Tony Bridger arranged for us before he stood down at the 2014 AGM as Programme Secretary, after 6 successful years in that post. Tony took a great deal of care in selecting our speakers, the vast majority of whom proved to be of very high quality and we are most grateful to him.

Chris Marsh was elected Programme Secretary at the 2014 AGM and we know he has been busy arranging next year's displays. In 2016 the AGM will be followed by a short presentation and our fourth auction of the season will be held as a separate meeting.

Website

David Page and his son in law Steve Griffiths have again managed the website extremely well over the past twelve months. The website is particularly useful to display our auction catalogues and prices realised, but it also incorporates a lot of other helpful information about the Society, including the dedicated section for members. On the subject of information technology I would like to thank Martin Johnson for his expert guidance to the committee over the past two years.

Committee

After serving five years on the committee Dr Nigel Perrins is standing down at his own request. We are sorry to lose Nigel's counsel, but he has confirmed he will continue to actively assist the Society when the need arises.

There are now eight committee members, with two posts Competitions Secretary and Publicity Officer unfilled at present. We would like to recruit one or two new faces to the committee and if any members would like to help in running the Society please let us know.

Jim Drummond