

Jim Drummond – Secretary’s Report for 2015//2016 (SecReport16)

David Peace

David Peace joined our Society in 2006 and in 2013 he was co-opted to the committee, where he proved to be very conscientious and willing to help. Sadly during the summer recess in 2015 David passed away after a short illness. His death is a great loss to the Society. David will be remembered by some of our members for his role of keeping the back up record of the successful bids at auctions, where he revelled in collecting payment from the buyers

Membership

Our membership as at 31 March 2016 was 113 plus 9 Honorary Life Members of whom two, Maurice Taylor and David Page are active. We have welcomed five new members John Shipley, Tim Harrison, Geoff Tisbury, Jim O’Keeffe and Peter Iremonger.

Over the past 12 months attendances at our normal meetings have declined fractionally to 20, but the auctions continue to be popular, with an average of 40 (compared to 43 last year) of whom 10 are non members. The best attendance for an auction was 53 in December 2015, which is the highest for any meeting since October 2012 when we hosted the MPF Quiz.

In the 2016 ABPS Handbook & Directory, Amersham is the 7th largest affiliated club by membership out of a total of 220. In addition ABPS believe there are a further 163 non-affiliates and it is unlikely any of them would have a bigger membership than we do.

Auctions and Exchange Packets

As the Treasurer will report, the auctions have again proved very successful during the year and provide our major sources of income. Yet again we must thank Les and Liz Gwilliam for organising the auctions in such a professional manner. The auctions depend upon the full cooperation of up to 10 members, including Stuart Catchpole as our splendid auctioneer, Alan Williams who keeps the manual back up record of sales and collects payment, plus Chris Marsh, Derek Chandler and Roger Elliston who take it in turns to distribute the lots to the successful bidders in the hall. Ian Wallace always does a most professional job in organising the refreshments, with the great bonus he knows how to operate the industrial dishwasher in the Drake Hall kitchen!

Alan Williams has again run the exchange packets remarkably smoothly and successfully for the ninth successive year.

Competitions

I am very pleased to report that after being co-opted to the committee in the summer of 2015 Derek Chandler agreed to accept the responsibilities of Competitions Secretary. He is the first person to fill that role since 2003. David Page and I have covered the last twelve years on an acting basis.

The competitions attracted 26 entries from 7 members. Four members share the trophies, with Michael Fletcher winning two. The awards will be made towards 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.

The Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS) has appointed a new convenor of Youth Philately, Alan Bretherton who lives in Southport. We plan to support him when we can, with suitable material to be distributed free to young collectors.

Programmes

During the past year we have enjoyed the first programme Chris Marsh has arranged for us, which included good quality full presentations by five members, Ed Hall, Rob May, Peter Coe, Les Gwilliam and Stuart Catchpole, in addition to which Keith Wright will give us a short presentation after this AGM.

On 05 May Dane Garrod gave a power point talk *British Royalty and Other Stories* which must rate as one of the best presentations ever given to our members.

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 ongoing advice to the committee.

The website is proving a very useful tool for introducing a steady trickle of new members to us.

Committee

At the AGM Les Gwilliam will retire as President to be replaced by Chris Marsh. I would especially like to thank Les for being so amenable and easy to work with over the past three years.

As mentioned earlier Derek Chandler joined the committee during the 2015 summer recess. He is now standing for election at the AGM. I am also very pleased to advise that David Lee has agreed to stand for election to the committee. David joined the Society in March 2012 since when he has proved a very active member.

There is always work to be done at committee level and if any members would like to stand for election we shall always be pleased to hear from you.