

BRITISH AUTUMN STAMPEX EXHIBITS

Glenn H Morgan FRPSL

Autumn Stampex was held recently at the Business Design Centre in London and the Village Green was home to the National (48-64 pages), International (80-128 pages), One Frame (16 pages), Youth (up to 16 pages) and Literature competitive displays.

There were fewer entries than the organisers had hoped for and it is unclear whether this is due to the cost of entering and acquiring suitable items, or the amount of work involved. This is the only chance that British collectors get each year to compete nationally and also to prepare entries for international shows. Let's hope that our own international, scheduled for 2010, will see an increased number of entries at Stampex in the coming two or three years, as collectors should be attempting to reach the minimum standard required for entering, which is set at a vermeil medal.

The only exhibit in the Great Britain Traditional National section was my own. Entitled *Machin Dummy Booklets*, it was awarded a vermeil medal and the Royal Mail trophy. In the International section, John Sussex FRPSL displayed *Irish Free State Overprints 1922-1932* (large vermeil medal). The exhibit showed mint low and high values with many multiples and an emphasis on shades and items on cover.

The Postal History class had three relevant entries in the International section. Firstly, Mrs Jean I Ruskin showed *Scottish Additional Halfpenny Mail Tax* items (large vermeil medal, the Bonham's trophy and the William Ferris bowl), which covered the Napoleonic War era and recorded the development of the 1/2d handstamps. William Wilson displayed *Isle of Man Postal History* (vermeil medal). Items included those used on the island from the introduction of the General Post in 1767, through to the end of KEVII's reign. The third exhibit was by David Stirrups *To Portugal from UK: Rates on Maritime Mail by British Packets 1814 to 1859* (large vermeil medal and the Ebby Gerish

trophy), which explained the complexity of the charges applied to this class of mail.

Peter Lister's Aerophilately International section exhibit *Aspects of the First United Kingdom Aerial Post 1911* (gold medal, GBPS Hassan Shaida trophy and the British Aerophilatelic Federation Research medal) included signed items, proofs, colour trials, errors and flown covers, postcards and newspapers.

The Postal Stationery class had three British entries. In the National section Michael Pitt-Payne FRPSL showed *Postcards – Post Office Issues* (silver medal), covering all used cards from the reign of Queen Victoria; while Richard Solly displayed *British Postal Orders Outside the UK* (gold medal and the PTS trophy), which outlined the history of the issue and payment of these items overseas. The International section saw the same exhibitor displaying *Early British Postal Orders* (vermeil medal), which illustrated the events that led to their introduction in 1881 and went through to the first KEVII orders.

Although not strictly Great Britain, Peter Wood's Thematic National section entry covered *The Irish Empire* (vermeil medal and the Stamp Magazine trophy) and showed how the people of this small nation are now scattered around the world, while still retaining their identity. The Revenue National section included an entry on *The Impressed Revenue Stamps of Guernsey* (silver medal) by Jon Aitchison that included unrecorded examples and illustrated how catalogued information is often incorrect.

The initial excitement surrounding the relatively new Social Philately class appears to have died down, although the National class entry *Malton, a Yorkshire Market Town and its Connections with the Post* (silver medal) by John Sussex and in the International section *British Empire Exhibition 1924-25, a Tour of the Empire at Wembley* (vermeil medal) by Jeffrey Watson both proved the value of collectors being allowed to display items that would not previously have been permitted.

The One Frame class appears to be proving popular with exhibitors, where preparation of 16 pages should not be beyond the abilities of any aspiring exhibitor. John Sussex (with his

third exhibit at this year's show) submitted *Halfpenny Wilding Booklet Panes* (bronze standard*), David Milsted displayed *Office of Works Overprints* (gold standard*), Professor Barrie Jay RDP FRPSL entered *The Last Invasion of Britain* (gold standard* and the BPT trophy) and *English Provincial Postal History [Lincoln]* (silver standard*) was an exhibit belonging to Keith Johnson.

The Youth Championships never had a British-related entry this year, but the Literature class included works on *The Post Office and the Colleges* (bronze-silver standard*) by Vincent West and I conclude this report by recording the *Deegam Machin Handbook on CD-ROM* (vermeil standard*) by regular *Bulletin* contributor Douglas Myall.

An enjoyable couple of hours was spent examining all the exhibits and it was encouraging to see what I perceived to be a larger than normal number of visitors doing likewise. Congratulations to all of this year's exhibitors who took the time to prepare and share their collections or writings with fellow collectors.

** Note that certificates instead of medals are awarded in the One Frame and Literature classes.*

(834 words)