

LIBRARY OPEN DAY

Thursday 28 June saw sixteen members take advantage of the Library Open Day that had been organised at short notice by Council to gauge the appetite for such events and to let members see and use the Search Room, perhaps for the first time. It was intentionally an informal and flexible format and visitors arrived and departed to suit themselves throughout the day, including one member who had travelled down from York and was able to make a flying visit on his way home from a business commitment in the Capital.

Several one-on-one tours of the Search Room were undertaken and those members previously unfamiliar with the new arrangements were able to see first-hand the superb facilities so generously made available to the National Philatelic Society by the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) and Royal Mail. It is hoped that they will now become regular visitors to the library over the coming months.

An afternoon display was undertaken by Peter Mellor, who showed those present some of his interesting collection of material entitled “*Overseas for a Halfpenny (1879-1949)*”. It included a number of particularly interesting and difficult to obtain items and was well-received by an attentive audience. Peter showed well over 200 pages in two halves with a 30-minute break halfway through where tea/coffee and biscuits were available, together with much conversation on ‘matters philatelic’.

In addition to Peter’s display, there were many of the Library’s recent literature arrivals on show, including forthcoming auction catalogues and dozens of copies of the latest specialist society periodicals for members to look through. The venue was the Phoenix Centre, which is Royal Mail’s conference suite adjacent to BPMA, and the room was ideally suited for such meetings.



Peter giving his display

It was pleasing to see that socialising was again to the fore – just as it always had been at the British Philatelic Centre prior to the changes to that building that had resulted in restrictions on eating, drinking and the ability to sit in reception chatting. These are important elements of the

hobby, as collectors like nothing better than to discuss their interests with like-minded people over a bite to eat and a drink.



Members looking at Peter's display

The day appeared to be welcomed by those attending, with most members asking when the next mid-week afternoon meeting would be held. Council will consider this possibility and if there are future events of this nature, we will ensure that they do not clash with meetings of The Royal Philatelic Society. Greater notice will also be given in *Stamp Lover* and other philatelic publications in the hope that even more members - and potential members - will join us.



Members catching-up on their philatelic reading

I will conclude by offering Council's special thanks to the British Postal Museum & Archive, Royal Mail and NPS staff for their major contribution to the success of the day.

Glenn H Morgan FRPSL
Honorary Librarian,
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(483 words)