

OFFICERS' REPORTS FOR A.G.M. held 9th July 2022

Secretary's report by Richard Flemming

It is ten months since my last 'annual' report, with this year's Annual General Meeting back to its usual July slot. A reduction in the number of reported cases of the dreaded Covid-19 virus now enables the Society to return to some normality, although we are still holding Executive and Full Committee meetings via Zoom, more to reduce costs in terms of money for the Society, and a big saving in personal time in travelling to London for committee meetings. Due to the success of holding the 2021 Annual Competition Day by submitting entries directly to the Competition Secretary, rather than bringing them to London on the day, we continued this scheme for the 2022 Competition Day, and again we were rewarded with an increase in entries across all classes.

The attendance at the December 2021 Member's Meeting was somewhat disappointing, with only nine members attending, but the highlights of the day were the two 45-minute displays held via Zoom, one by David Winnie on the *Sark Post Office*, and the other display provided by myself on the theme of *Routes and Rates: Mail from and to the Channel Islands*. What was pleasing was the number of members who joined via Zoom to see the presentations, and something which the Executive Committee aims to be included in future Member's Meetings.

April 2022 saw twenty-six members and guests attend our first Member's Weekend Meeting since the Covid-19 lockdown back in 2020. The Three Swans Hotel was an excellent venue, especially with the refurbishments that had taken place over the recent months. Progress is being made for our 2023 Member's Weekend, which will be held at the Peninsula Hotel, Guernsey.

Thank you to all those members who partook of the Membership Survey, with more than 50 members completing the questionnaire and providing some thoughtful comments. The results will be available on the Society's website in the near future.

Finally, I wish to thank all my fellow committee members for their support and guidance, and with a special thank you to Gerald Marriner, who is coming to the end of his five-year tenure as President.

Membership Secretary's report by Mark Bailey

As I take stock of our membership, I am looking at the number of members we have this month and in earlier years, and I see the following, a gentle decline in overall numbers during these 6 years:

2022: 235
2021: 241
2020: 243
2019: 247
2018: 263
2017: 270

What I particularly note this year, though, is that although we sadly had a number of members who died, and several people who decided that they no longer wished to remain members, we have had numerous new members join us.

We now have a Junior member (which is a first, I believe), and a member in Peru (our first in the whole continent of South America), so I see that although we are not quite as large a Society

as we were, we are a healthy Society, welcoming new members and still having members who enjoy their membership as they have for many years.

I recently went through the membership records in detail, and I can report that we currently have 79 people who have been members of the Society for 30 years or more. That is just over a third of our members. So, we are clearly attracting new members and retaining people who value their membership.

Auctioneer's report by Nick Stuart

In 2021 three postal auctions were held. Virtually all the Lots were scanned and the images available on the CISS website. The feedback from members is that they see this as a valuable benefit; allowing them to view the Lots before deciding to bid. Also, members feel reassured that the Lots are as described because they can see them.

In 2020 the Society bought, from the Executor, the rump of the John Hurst collection of postcards. These have been sold via the auctions and the Society has made a good profit from them.

The auctions are very well supported by both a good number of vendors and around a third of the membership are regular bidders

We started the year with our second postcard only sale with 537 Lots which featured a wide range of LL, Allix, novelty, shipping, railway and scenic cards. Sales were £5,285 with a profit of £235 and CISS sales of £340.

This was followed with our general Spring Auction which featured 750 Lots of the usual wide range of material covering postal history, Occupation, Red Cross, Feldpost, Sub-post Offices, stamps and many items from the smaller islands. Sales were £13,528 with a profit of £1,164.

The Autumn Auction featured 740 Lots and produced the highest level of sales that the Society has ever had of £19,938 which made a profit of £1,831.

We were fortunate to be asked by the executors of two member's estates to sell their Channel Island material. This resulted in some rare, good quality early postal history and Red Cross items being made available for the first time in a long time. It resulted in some vigorous bidding as the bidders sought to fill gaps in their collections.

The prices realised from these sales can be found in the Auction Archive on the CISS website along with the images which, over time, will provide a rich source of material for research purposes and give members an indication of the likely sales value of items in their collection.

I am very grateful to Gerald Marriner who does the describing and compilation of the catalogue for the general auctions. Also, to him and Richard Flemming who have travelled far and wide to collect the material from member's estates.

We started 2022 with another postcard auction as well as our Spring Auction, again with good sales.

A member wrote to me when he settled his auction account to say that the CISS auctions are the only regular source he has found which provides a good range of CI material and looks forward to receiving the next catalogue. Given the wealth of material we have and the regular supply from members the quality of future auctions bodes well.

Press and Advertising Officer's report by Steve Wells

ADVERTISING

Costs

To support promotion of the *Pioneer Aviation in the Channel Islands* book, the Committee agreed to the society placing a quarter-page colour advertisement at a cost of £160 + V.A.T. in the June issue of *Fly Past*, which also included a review of the book. The publication has a circulation of 26,000+. The advertisement was designed by the magazine staff at my request as the author was unable to do so.

Billings

Our billings for 2021 in respect of journal advertising were £568 compared with £590 for 2020, a small decrease in line with my expectations last year. There were no auction house inserts booked.

Grosvenor Auctions continued to take the premium rate outside back cover position, which David Gurney originally negotiated in 2015.

I expect our advertising billings for 2022 to be much the same as 2021.

PRESS

Press Releases

I issued nine press releases in 2021. These included (i) a modified version of the initial press release concerning Publication of *Pioneer Aviation in the Channel Islands*, which was sent in January to the Guernsey Society of Aviation Enthusiasts (G.S.A.E.), Jersey Airport, Guernsey Airport, the British Airline Pilots Association and the European Cockpit Association. Receipt was confirmed by Dave Bougourd of G.S.A.E. The other press releases covered (ii) Auction NS 13; (iii) A.G.M. 2020 Meeting; (iv) the American Air Mail Society (A.A.M.S.) Award for *Pioneer Aviation in the Channel Islands*; (v) 17th April Zoom Meeting and 22nd Apr Zoom Presentation given by Jon Aitchison to the RPSL; (vi) Auctions NS14 and NS15; (vii) Midpex 2021 and London Members' Meeting 24th Jul; (viii) A.G.M. 2021 Meeting; and (ix) the December Hybrid Members' Meeting.

The general releases were sent to *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, *Stamp*, *ABPS News*, *Linn's*, *Guernsey Press*, *Jersey Evening Post*; the Germany & Colonies Philatelic Society and the Germany Philatelic Society U.S.A.'s Third Reich Study Group (T.R.S.G.), Michael L. Goodman – Editor of *Stamp Lover* – at the National Philatelic Society (N.P.S.), Mike Jackson – Editor of *The GB Journal* – at the Great Britain Philatelic Society (G.B.P.S.), and Nick Halewood, Editor of *Geosix*, the journal of the King George VI Collectors Society.

The series of press releases I had issued between 26th October-30th December 2020 regarding Publication of *Pioneer Aviation in the Channel Islands* resulted in additional articles, which appeared in 13th January 2021 issue of *The Gaspé Spec* [Gaspé being the area in Quebec where many Channel Islanders migrated to with the fishing industry in the 19th century], the March issue of *Philatelie* in Germany, and the April issue of *SBZ* [Swiss Stamp Journal] in Switzerland (the latter two being German translations).

A review of the book also appeared in the April issue of *Philatelic Exporter* and the November issue of the *Railway & Canal Historical Society Journal*.

With reference to the Auction NS 13 press release, Shaun Shackleton, Features Reporter with the *Guernsey Press*, asked for more information about the postcard publishers. This resulted in an article on the Arts page in the 15th January issue, with a note about the postcard auction on 6th February.

Keith Burton, Editor of *ABPS News* used the image of the Zoom meeting in progress on the front cover of the Spring 2021 issue as well as the report on the A.G.M. in the National & Specialist Societies section.

The joint Auctions NS14 and NS15 press release was also sent to *Sark Newspaper* and Sark School. Gill Kay, journalist at the *Jersey Evening Post*, and Dr. Nicholas S. Roberts, the Head of Sark School,

confirmed receipt. Nick Stuart advised me that *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* had used the release, and Gill Kay provided me with a copy of her two-page spread from 8th July issue.

Packet Secretary's report by John Triggs

Since my last report a total of twelve packets have been circulated for packet year 2021-22. Nine of these boxes have been returned with three boxes still in circulation. To date, sales from the packets have made £1670.