

HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Founded in 1946 by Edward H Spiro

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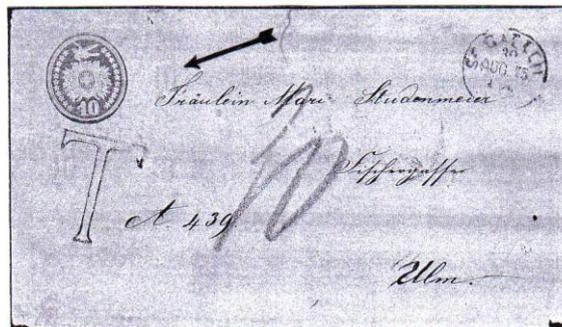
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No. 2 February 2009

A RARE POSTAL STATIONERY WATERMARK

STUART R. MacKENZIE

Michael Rutherford's article on this watermark prompted me to look through my stationery items. At first I could only find one example unused – No. 25 10c aniline – and at the time thought no more about it. Much later, when looking through some postage due items, I came across the cover illustrated here which I am sure that I mentioned in the HPS Newsletter a number of years ago. The envelope from St. Gallen to Ulm shows the earliest known example of the large hollow 'T' mark used on 30th August 1875. The UPU conference was held the previous month when the subject of 'T' marks was decided upon. I then realised that the watermark fitted the description given by Michael. I found this item in a well-known dealer's box and purchased it for the princely sum of £2 !



MISSING COLOURS

JONATHAN CARTWRIGHT

I wonder if any other members have seen this before ? (see illustration). A vertical pair of the 1976 Telecoms issue, Zum D.XI.13, with the bottom stamp showing considerable loss of the yellow colour in an almost zig-zag pattern from top right to bottom left. Superficial examination appears to show no treatment by chemical means.



60 YEARS AGO

The first formal AGM of the Helvetia Philatelic Society was held on 9th September 1949 at the Church House Westminster when the first National Committee was elected. Robert S. Johnson, who is still a member of the Society and regularly contributes to the Newsletter, was one of those elected and was also appointed the Honorary Exchange Packet Superintendent. The annual membership fee from September 1949 was 7s. 6d. At the meeting the idea of establishing a Society Library was raised and a new, comprehensive set of rules (a 'Constitution') was agreed. The name of the organisation was changed from the Helvetia Stamp Club to the Helvetia Philatelic Society to 'accentuate the non-profit making character of our collectors' association.' Our AGM this year is on Sunday 29th March in Chester – see over. (Editor)

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HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWS

THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL NATIONAL MEETING 2009

I hope you have all received your information sheet on this important event which will be held on the weekend of Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th March 2009. Now all you have to do is fill in and return the booking form to the Society's Honorary Treasurer. The Annual General Meeting will take place on the Sunday.- the Agenda is on Page 16 of this Newsletter. If you cannot make both days, but live within reasonable travelling distance of Chester, why not attend on either the Saturday (when the Society Dinner is to be held) or the Sunday ? All members can be assured of a warm welcome.

THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL CUP COMPETITIONS

The Helvetia Silver Cup and the Moore Trophy entries are to be judged at the Annual National Meeting. Postal entries must be submitted to the Chairman by the 20th March. Good luck to you all.

NEXT MEETINGS OF THE HPS REGIONAL GROUPS

London Group - Wednesday 11th March 2009 at 6.30.p.m.– 'Military Issues'

Northern Group – Saturday 7th February at 2.00.p.m. - 'Blocks On or Off – Cover' – David Colman and Members..7th March at 2.00 p.m. – 'Commemoratives (stamps, postcards and postmarks)' – All Members.

Southern (Wessex) Group - Saturday 21st February 2009 at 10.30.a.m. – 'Non - Circular Handstamps and Cancellations' – All Members (main speakers – Bob Medland and Fred Hoadley).

For further details, including the usual venues of the meetings, see the HPS Newsletter for January 2009.

A Response to the Plea for Linguists - Always willing to help the Society, our Vice-Chairman Eric Lienhard has jumped into the breach to help me with translations. Another volunteer would help a lot.

THE DEFINITIVE EXPLANATION OF SWISS TRIAL PRINTS

In case there is still any doubt about the true status of these little 'scraps of paper' that add considerable colour to many collections, Richard T. Hall, the Secretary of the American Helvetia Philatelic Society, can provide the answer. He recently acquired a PTT booklet published in 1957 entitled 'Trial Prints of the Postage Stamp Printing Office' which included the following paragraphs in English.

'The prints, up to now incorrectly called trial stamps, are the results of trials on the rotary press of the Postage Stamp Printing Office PTT. They are neither printing proofs nor colour proofs of any philatelic value, nor labels of any kind, let alone finished postage stamps.

These trial impressions are required after the assembly or the overhaul of a rotary press, after the replacement of parts, or in trying out new material, such as paper, colours, wiping cloths, support felts, etc. To avoid the use of actual stamp cylinders, special impression cylinders with fancy designs are employed for this purpose, bearing neither the name of the country nor any value. These pictures also show the various possibilities of steel line engraving. Thus, the trial impressions are not only of use to the printing staff, but also to the stamp designers and steel engravers.

To ensure successful trials it is indispensable to use all equipment, materials and accessories, such as gummed stamp paper, perforating devices, etc., exactly as required for the postage stamp impression. These extensive trials furnish a comparatively large quantity of printed specimens, and as stamp collectors are well known for their great interest in all phases of the postage stamp production, the vignettes are distributed free to all those sending in a request.' (as reprinted in the AHPS's 'Tell' July 2008 Page 9).

Although these 'free offers' are no longer available from the postal authority they can still be found in some dealers' stock. I leave it to you to decide how much you are prepared to pay for them. In reaching your decision you may be interested to learn that our member, Allen Payne, obtained a Gold Medal for his fascinating entry based on this material at the annual competition of the Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies in October 2008. (Editor)

POST FROM SWISS SETTLEMENTS ABROAD

In the 18th and 19th Centuries, a large number of Europeans emigrated abroad to start a new life. The Swiss were no exception. They established settlements in North and South America, sometimes adopting Swiss place or family names from their homeland. In 1991 the PTT held an exhibition 'Helvetia Worldwide' in their Museum in Bern showing covers with postmarks from some of the more interesting settlements. They included post from 'New Bern' in North Carolina, 'New Glarus' in Wisconsin, 'Berne' in Indiana, 'Gruetli' in Tennessee, 'Helvetia' in West Virginia, 'Stettler' in Alberta, Canada, 'Nova Friburgo' in Brazil, 'Romang' in Santa Fe Province, Argentina and 'Nueva Helvetica' in Uruguay. The exhibition brochure contained much interesting information. For example, regarding Europe, it states 'several places bear names that also exist in Switzerland but, with the exception of 'Helve'cia' in Hungary, they probably have no Swiss origin.'

I once passed through what is believed to be the oldest Swiss colony in the New World – New Bern in North Carolina established by Christopher von Graffenried in 1710. It is a small but very pretty Southern town close to the coast. I stopped to obtain a souvenir only to find, much to my frustration, that the small post office was closed for lunch.

No doubt, much post has passed between these outposts of Switzerland and the homeland over the years. Have any members come across covers with tell-tale cancellations? Please let me know. (Editor)

PRINTED CARDS AND ENVELOPES

Several significant articles of interest to our members have appeared recently in the American HPS's journal 'Tell'. The November 2008 edition included three very interesting articles for collectors of unusual cards and covers. Two articles over five pages on 'Swiss Folded Typewriter Postcards' (Unlisted Printed to Private Order Items)' by Wayne Menuz and Robert Bell and a related book review by Harlan F. Stone CPhH, and a three page article on 'Officially Printed Advertising on Swiss Postal Envelopes' also by Harlan F. Stone. The elaborate lettering used in the 1870s on the postal envelopes illustrated makes them particularly attractive.

The January 2009 edition included an interesting five page article by Harlan F. Stone entitled 'Switzerland's Postal Cards 1870 – 1905' and a detailed index of all the articles published in the 6 editions of the 34th Volume (2008) of the journal. Back-copies of 'Tell' are available for inspection in the HPS's Library. Messers Bell and Menuz are seeking further information on 'folded typewriter cards' – their genesis, patents, trademarks and the regulations governing their issuance in Switzerland (responses to the Editor to forward please).

MORE NEWS

GABRA V – The Swiss all-postal stationery exhibition, last held in 2001, will take place in Bern on the 9th – 11th of October this year. It will mark the 100th Anniversary of the UPU Monument in that city.

Interested in Sperati ? - The Royal Philatelic Society London is currently advertising a publication – 'The Work of Jean Sperati II ' by Robson Lowe and Carl Walske (published in 2001) – price £65 (including postage) to Non-Members.

Latest Auction Information – The long-established firm of Corinphila Auktionen AG have provided a copy of their latest brochure which includes examples of special collections and rarities from their past auctions. They have also sent a copy of their preview auction catalogue for the Fritz Kirchner Collection which includes a number of Swiss rarities. The auctions will take place in 2009 and 2010 in co-operation with Heinrich Köhler. A copy of the 390 page Catalogue for the next Röllli Auction of primarily Swiss material, to be held in Luzern on the 5th - 7th February 2009, has also been sent to the Society. The three publications have been forwarded to the HPS Library if any member wishes to see them.

Future Articles for the Newsletter – There was a very healthy response to my request last October (Page 80) for more articles. Thanks to all of you. The request is, of course, on-going, particularly for more definitive, two or three page, 'academic articles.' More answers to previous queries published in the Newsletter are also always welcome. As members you should all have something to say – let's hear it !
P.S. Many thanks for all your Xmas well wishes – you know who you are – they were much appreciated.

REPORT OF THE SOUTHERN (WESSEX) GROUP'S MEETING 25th October 2008

'Charity' proved to be a very popular theme for the Group's Autumn meeting in Salisbury attracting 22 members and partners and enticing no less than eleven brave souls to display some of their precious items. Apologies were received from Claude Mistely, Rosalind Ragg and Eric Gill.

Norton Wragg kicked off with a fascinating 63-sheet presentation of Pro Juventute (PJ) stamps used on cover with the correct values for a wide variety of postal rates and services. Free of the taint of the label 'philatelic material', each cover told a tale. Included were parcel labels, printed paper rates of only 5 cents to South America, Czech and Egyptian censor marks in use in 1950 and 1960 respectively, a single post card passing through several German censors in December 1939, registered mail including the use of miniature sheets, recorded delivery labels, oversize cover rate on an Express cover, firms' advertising covers, a value declared label (the postage reflecting the value of the contents), a rare square temporary cancel and airmail fees (including a cover on the first flight from Geneva to New York on the 8th April 1946).

Fred Hoadley and Ted Stern introduced us to the wealth of beautiful illustrated cards produced by the Pro Juventute organisation from the year of its foundation in 1912 until 1960. Some 300 different cards in 55 envelopes or folders were produced in this period to help raise funds for youth welfare. In 1914, 1917 and 1936 no cards were issued. Otherwise, for the years to 1916 and from 1919 to 1923, two sets of cards were issued. In 1918, 1924 and from 1926 on, one set of cards was issued annually.

They were available for sale in local post offices, but unlike the early Pro Patria cards they had no impressed stamp, encouraging the purchaser to attach the appropriate Pro Juventute stamp(s) to them. The picture-sides showed paintings of a famous Swiss artist, usually featuring landscapes, portraits, traditional costumes, old buildings or flowers. The early cards were issued in sets of seven, but later in sets of five. Each set was contained within a folder with a picture of the artist on the cover and details of his life inside. Albert Ankers had the distinction of being the only artist featured twice. The most desirable used cards for collectors are those with Pro Juventute stamps of the same year, and particularly with cachets or first day or automobile post-office cancels relating to Pro Juventute. Over 70 cards and 10 of the flimsy wrappers were on show, a sight rarely seen in this country.

Fred also reminded us that the Pro Infirmis (help for the 'disabled') organisation produced illustrated cards from 1934 onwards. A number of these were shown in postally used condition. Founded in 1920 the charity is now based in Zurich. This was followed by illustrated cards inscribed 'Schweizerische Nationalspende für Unsere Soldaten u.ihre Familien' (National Fund for Soldiers and their Families) which were issued during both World Wars. These cards often portrayed soldiers in uniforms dating back to earlier campaigns (e.g. the Franco/Prussian War of 1870/71). Some doubled up as lottery cards.

The full range of denominations and designs of Franchise Stamps issued to charitable organisations, institutions and hospitals for free postage, several on cover, were shown. The control numbers on the stamps which were allocated to particular organisations (e.g. those in Basle (501 – 600), Zurich (801 – 1000) or Canton St Gallen (1001 – 1100)) are apparently set out in detail in Part II of the Zumstein Specialised catalogue. The number of stamps issued to each organisation was based on the amount of mail they expected to send, up to 2,000 Swiss francs per annum.

Many of the more unusual Pro Patria cards, mainly used, were shown by Ted Stern and others including 'The Gymnasts' (1920), several relatively rare vignettes on the back of cards issued between 1931 and 1934, the beautifully designed wrapper for the Keller set (1919) and some of the post-1937 cards without imprinted stamps.

Ray Harris provided some very unusual items including the Pro Juventute Forerunners of 1912, pointing out that they were described, at that time, as 'Christmas seals'. He and Don Symonds displayed the range of colour shades on the 1937 PJ 25th Anniversary issue and the different designs and shades of the 1940 Bundesfeier Issue (including the imperforate versions on the miniature sheet).

As usual at such events Eric Lienhard stunned the audience with some truly unusual material from his extensive specialist collections, pride of place being an immaculately written-up display of alpine flowers and flaws, retouches and errors on a surprisingly large number of PJ issues. Among his items were an 'inverted background' on the 20c of the 1933 issue and a double perf. version of the lowest value of the 1912 Forerunners. (Continued on Page 13)

(Southern Group Report continued from page 12) Neville Nelder's contribution included some PJ first day covers and cancels, some Pro Patria stamps used on cover for a balloon flight and the use of the 1945 Red Cross (5c Pax stamp with surcharge) and the two 1945 Swiss Fund for War Disabled stamps on cover. The bulk of his and Richard Donithorn's display were devoted to the range of slogan cancellations (in French, German or Italian) used by various charities and others promoting good causes and related events. They included help for Internees from the YMCA, the Anti-TB Fund, the Day of Hunger, Pro Infirmis, aid for the Swiss Abroad and Red Cross aid to prisoners of war. They reminded the Group of the large number of commemorative stamps with subject matter related to 'good/charitable causes' including Pro Sport, the Red Cross, Blue Cross, the Salvation Army, the Odd Fellows, Civil Defence, wildlife conservation, help for children and the elderly, women's organisations, road safety, fire prevention, safety at work, international aid and health improvement programmes. Neville was particularly proud of his recent acquisition (which he had found at a local stamp dealers in Salisbury on the day of the Group's meeting) – a slogan cancel to celebrate the canonisation of Bruder Klaus of Sachseln (1417 – 1487, Patron Saint of Switzerland) in 1947.

Don Symonds showed a wide range of Pro Patria stamps on cover including some unusual maxi-cards. Ray Clegg followed him up with a collection of Pro Juventute stamps on commercial covers, many with mixed frankings from small towns and villages. One had a perfin version of a PJ stamp affixed to it.

Peter Hobbs fascinated members with items from his collection of more than 50 covers relating to a charitable organisation based in Geneva during World War I. It was organised by the Free Masons from their Hall near the Rue du Stand P.O. to forward letters from both sides of the 'front line' to and from Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain and Russia'. Any information readers may have about the 'Service gratuit pour la Transmission de Correspondence entre Civils', 4, rue Petitot, GENÈVE (Suisse) to the Editor please.

Allen Payne showed charity-related material, much of it from his Lucerne heimat collection, including mobile post office and Bundesfeier/Rütli date stamps, Pro Patria stamps on Day of the Stamp cards and some attractive PJ First Day Covers. Rounding off the displays were two sheets of one of the most recent additions to the world of the Swiss charities collector – the Pro Patria organisation's annual stamp booklets, introduced in 1989, 77 years after the first Pro Juventute ('Für die Jugend') booklets appeared.

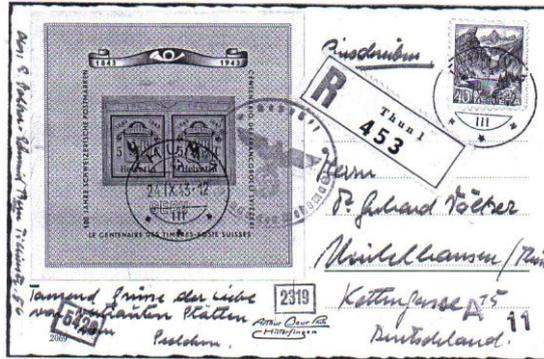
The diversity of the material displayed reminded all present of the scale of the Swiss people's charitable and voluntary aid efforts and, fortunately for philatelists, their love of commemorating and promoting their activities through special postage stamps, pictorial cards, covers and cancellations. Martin Mantell did full justice to all the presenters in his vote of thanks and, in the absence of our President (Claude Mistely of Pro Patria cards and covers fame), Eric Lienhard thanked the organisers of the event, including the chairman for the day, Fred Hoadley.

REPORT OF THE NORTHERN GROUP'S MEETING 6th DECEMBER 2008

The Northern Group was pleased to welcome our National Secretary, Peter Vonwiller, who gave a display entitled 'A Town's Postal History – St. Gallen'. Peter began by pointing out that it was his wife, Hazel, who got the ball rolling with the words 'I like that'. As a result we were given a wide ranging display from pre-stamp to modern times with mail originating from or coming into St Gallen. Peter began with a 1785 entire with a straightline St. Gallen. Several other entires were shown including a boxed TZ transit mark of Zürich. Next came examples of Rayons, Sitting Helvetia imperf and perf on covers including registered and nachnahme. Postal stationary cover and cards were shown including one with a superb receiving cds of the German Post Office in Constantinople. Items to Sierra Leone and Tahiti at the turn of the 20th Century were also shown. Among the wide selection of cancellations shown were named TPOs and some fine razor blades. The 1904 Shooting Festival at St Gallen was illustrated with special cancellations, cards and a vignette on card. The First World War period was illustrated with covers censored abroad and internment strikes on covers and cards. Official mail included a Franco label used in 1914 and a boxed Franco. Various machine slogans were shown along with a variety of airmails including first flights and carried by Zeppelin. The Second World War period was illustrated with examples of censored covers followed by mail censored in Germany and Austria after the War. Other items shown included express mail, postage dues, charity free post and labels such as 'refused'. Finally came some more modern examples including the embroidered stamp from NABA 2000. This was an excellent display illustrating that in collecting mail from and to one town you can in fact cover a wide variety of the different aspects of Swiss philately. Peter was thanked by Chairman, Norton Wragg, for his fine display which was enjoyed by all present.

SOME INTERESTING ITEMS FROM MY COLLECTIONSTUART R. MacKENZIE

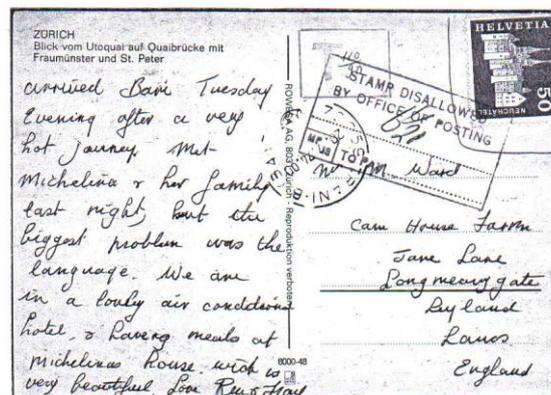
An Unusual Use of the 1943 Centenary Sheet -1943 (24th May) picture postcard sent Registered from Thun to Kettingasse, franked with 40c (1936 definitive) with Centenary sheet affixed and cancelled Thun. (Unfortunately a week after issue !) The card shows the usual treatment by the German Censors.



Funny Goings on at Gunten - 1919 Bundesfeier National Fete postcard with additional two and a half c Tell Boy added to Columbus Neb. showing two hollow type T marks struck and both deleted – which came first we will never know !



An Unusual Postage Due Item from Italy -1974 Swiss P.P.C. (Zürich) posted from Italy to England and-franked with the 40c (1968) Architectural definitive has been noted by the Italian Post Office for Postage Due (Boxed T 110/90). Noted at London it receives a boxed Stamp Disallowed/by Office of Posting (MP/IS Mount Pleasant Inland Section) in green. Due evidently collected and a very unusual amount - six and a half p !



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DID YOU KNOWMICHAEL RUTHERFOORD

THAT there were 65 million SMS or MMS messages sent at Christmas, and the PO did their bit by delivering more than 3 million parcels in time. There were even more electronic messages at New Year, a record.

THAT glancing through an old 2006 Chianni Auction catalogue I noticed that there were many mint sheets of Liechtenstein stamps on offer, some of which were printed by Courvoisier in La Chaux-de-Fonds, However, the perforations were clearly made by a Swiss 25-stamp harrow machine situated in the Swiss Mint in Bern. That was a surprise for me. Now I have heard that Luxembourg also had stamps printed by Courvoisier and perforated in the Swiss Mint. Which stamps with exactly 25 horizontal and 13 vertical teeth were printed by Courvoisier from 1933 till about 1938 ? Thank you for helping. The normal 20mm gauge system does not help with this study, especially when catalogue reproductions are being checked.

THAT in Modern British and German philatelic reference books there is very little, or nothing, about Swiss Perforating Machines, and what is said on early methods of perforating generally is usually wrong or incomplete. For me there are three periods of special complication at the moment – the Tell Boy, the Shields of 1924 and the low values of the Peace issue of 1932. If anyone has corner blocks I would be most thankful if you could send photocopies to the Editor for me to study for an explanatory article.

THAT the well-known firm of has produced another of their annual catalogues in A5 size full of colour illustrations of Swiss classic material, stamps and covers. A wealth of information. They will have a stand at the exhibition for personal contact, as it is just down the road, or lake, for them.

THAT I came across the emblem of the Harmonica Club of Wollishofen (since 1893 part of the city of Zurich) and thought this was a good illustration of how the old 1493 village arms are used today. They consist of a left-half in gold (the dots for yellow are missing on such a small reproduction) with 5 bars alternating in silver (white) and red (vertical bars). See Figure 1.

THAT the 1932 PJ 10c has been skilfully modified by the secretary of the active Philatelia Winterthur for their monthly programme, as shown in Figure 2. The ancient stone is shown on another stamp, do you remember which ?

THAT coming to modern times, Figure 3 shows one of the new electronic methods of communication, Bee Tag. The related 2007 stamp was described in DYK. The coded pattern can be read by the camera in your hand to give you immediate contact with your Post Finance account anywhere. Can I afford another ice cream ?



Figure 1



Figure 2

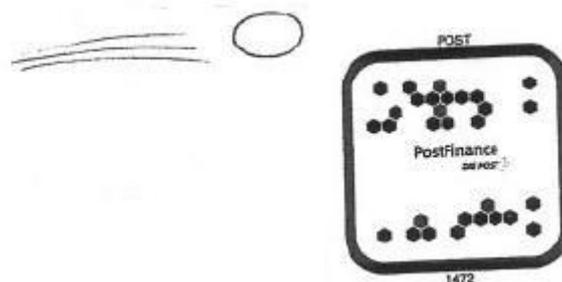


Figure 3

THAT you have probably guessed that I am not too good at sending illustrations to your Editor electronically, but I will keep on trying and apologise for it. Last month was very below standard, so I have repeated the five illustrations below for clarity towards TPO fans.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Notice is hereby given that the sixty-second
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held on
Saturday 28th March 2009 at 2.00.p.m. prompt at
THE QUEEN HOTEL, CHESTER

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 19th April 2008 and published in the June 2008 edition of the Helvetia Philatelic Society Newsletter.
3. Matters arising from the Minutes.
4. Chairman's Address
5. Honorary Secretary's Report.
6. Honorary Treasurer's Report and Statement of Accounts for year ending 31st December 2008.
7. Honorary Treasurer – 2009 Budget and 2010 subscriptions.
8. Appointment of Auditor.
9. Honorary Packet Secretary's Report.
10. Librarian's Report.
11. Election of Officers and Members of the Society's Committee for 2009.
12. Motions and Resolutions.
13. Any Other Business.

NOMINATIONS Nominations for the election of Officers and Members of the Committee i.e. Chairman, Vice Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and (not exceeding) **twelve** members of the Committee should be sent to the Honorary Secretary **in writing** to reach him not later than Thursday, 26th March 2009. Such nominations must carry the assent of the nominee.

RESOLUTIONS Any member desiring to move a Motion or Resolution at the Annual General Meeting must give notice **in writing**, enclosing the text, to the Honorary Secretary not less than 14 days before the Annual General Meeting.

Peter Vonwiller Hon. Secretary
David Hope Chairman

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E Mail admin@igstamps.com

A FINAL TIP – Michael Rutherford is keen to remind us that the Swiss Stamp Dealers' Association is celebrating their Centenary with an Exhibition in Rapperswil-Jona from 10th – 12th September this year. Michael recommends that you should try to visit this exhibition if you can.