

# HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Founded 1946 President: Claude Mistely

NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2015

[www.swiss-philately.co.uk](http://www.swiss-philately.co.uk)



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## THE MOORE TROPHY WINNING DISPLAY 2015 – SWISS POSTAL AGENCIES IN ITALY

**BOB MEDLAND**

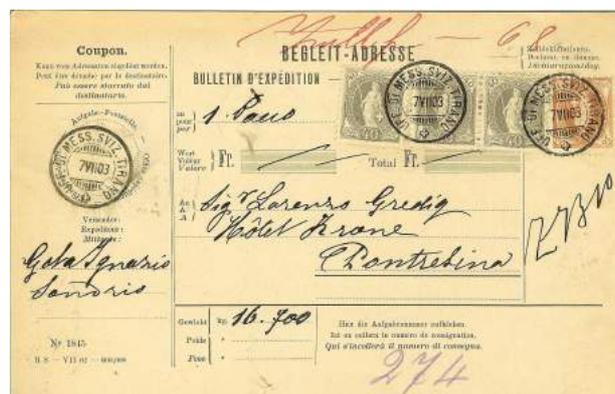
The display that won the Moore Trophy (for postal history) at the Society's Annual National Meeting in Oxford was on the subject of 'Swiss Postal Agencies in Italy'. This fascinating subject has been covered in a number of articles in the Newsletter over the years, particularly one by Adrian Gervasi in the August/September 1988 issues.

The newly-created Swiss Federal postal service was invited by the Italian authorities to establish postal agencies and services crossing the Alps over five passes as well as some local routes entirely within Italy. The display included examples of both stamps and international parcels cards with Swiss stamps cancelled with cancellations from Swiss Postal Agencies in Italy - Tirano, Chiavenna, Colico, Luino, Isella and Domodossola. I hope to write something more substantial on this subject, surely one of the most intriguing aspects of Swiss postal history. Shown here are some of the examples displayed:



Cancellations of Swiss Postal Agencies in Italy on Stamps – Colico, Domodossola and Isella.

Below are two examples of International Parcel Cards sent from Italy to Switzerland via Swiss Postal Agencies located in Italy:



Left: A parcel card sent from Chiavenna to St Moritz with Chiavenna Swiss Postal Agency cancels.  
Right: A parcel card sent from Tirano (Italy) to Pontresina with Tirano Swiss Postal Agency cancels.



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## Conclusions

It is largely a matter of luck where you find the covers or cards which provide the best clues on how and to what extent the various UPU regulations on invalid stamps were applied. Many dealers do not appreciate their significance in their Pro Juventute, Postage Due or Postal Stationery boxes. This can be beneficial to the specialist collector, but does mean that it is left to him or her to track down the unusual, or indeed any, covers that are relevant to this subject.



**Fig. 11 (left):** This overprinted 5c inland card was addressed to Germany, supplemented with a 5c stamp, and cancelled by Railway TPO No. 13 on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1894. Switzerland did not mark the card as underpaid and it was sent to Hamburg franked at 10c (arrival back-stamp of 4<sup>th</sup> October 1894). It seems that an objection to the overprint was raised in Germany and 25 (pf.) due was marked in blue (15c under-franking x 20/25 x 2 = 24 pf.); but apparently not collected?

**Fig. 12 (right):** This private post card of the Hotel Giessbach bears extensive illustration on the address-side. However, no objection arose when it was used from Giessbach to Berlin on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1889 franked at 10c as a post card.

This article does not really do justice to the quality and range of material that makes up Robert's exhibit of "Special issues". To overcome this, Robert has very kindly scanned his full 96-page display entitled "Pro Juventute stamps up to 1920", so that our members can view it all at their leisure on the Society's Website (under the EXHIBITS tab). The two items below from Australia are examples of what you have in store. Fig. 13 is a fascinating commemorative postcard from New South Wales issued in 1888 (for the full story, you'll have to look on the Website). But what caught Robert's eye was the text in the imprinted stamp "1838 – 1888 In commemoration of the fiftieth year of the issue of postage stamps in the colony – Design of the first postage stamp". What's this! Two years before the Penny Black? Fig. 14 gives the answer – a letter-sheet or envelope with a colourless embossing with the seal of the New South Wales Post Office franking the item for postage within Sydney. Not actually a postage stamp, but the world's first postal stationery – two years before Britain's Mulready envelopes. (Editor)

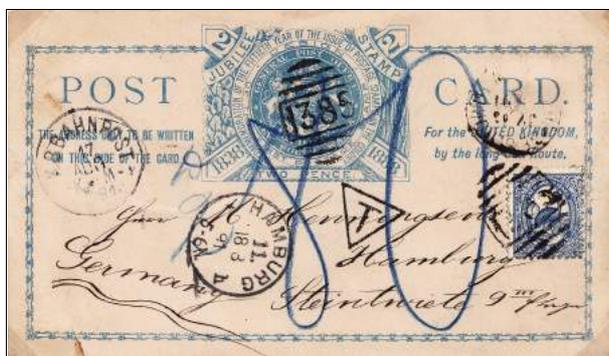


Fig. 13

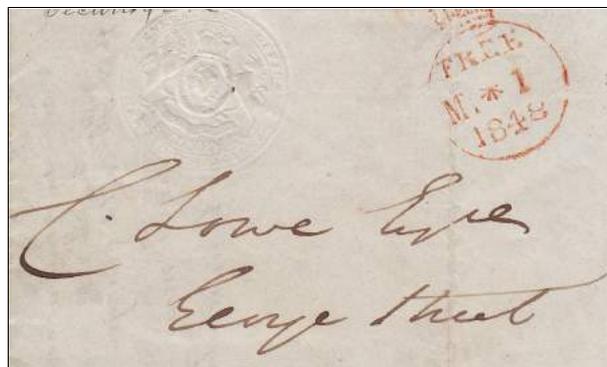
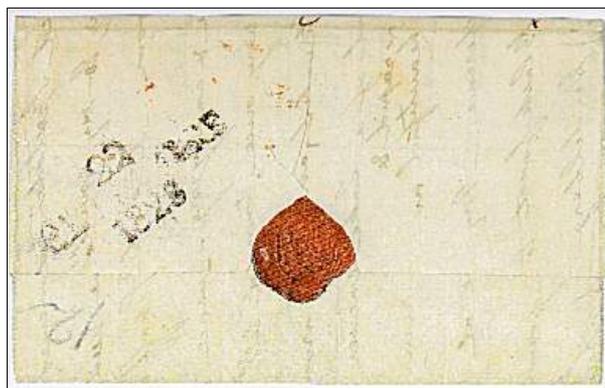


Fig. 14

## A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The Swiss National Stamp Exhibition (Stufe II and III) will take place in Bulle this year from 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> November. From personal experience, it is a journey worth making, although the standard of competitive displays is usually a little bit daunting for the "average collector"!

PEEPS INTO THE PAST !MARC BURGESS

Our member, Marc Burgess, made a memorable debut display at our meeting of the Southern Region Group in Whaddon in June. He highlighted the importance of studying the contents of old correspondence in the wider context of Swiss social history - a message that our previous Newsletter Editor, Peter Hobbs, has constantly championed. To illustrate his theme he displayed three letters written in the C19<sup>th</sup> during the period extending from 1828 to 1852 and the introduction of postage stamps. Details of their posting and receipt which can be gleaned from an inspection of the covers are set out below, but the real value of Marc's items are the insights they provide of the lives of ordinary individuals at that time. Marc finds that such early covers are often comparatively cheap to acquire; and the fact that they contain the postal details/address and the message (fully preserved, usually on the reverse) as a composite item makes them particularly interesting. Deciphering the messages can be a challenge, but is usually very rewarding. He finds translation easier from the French than from Schweizer-Deutsche. Details of two of the letters are set out below.

The first entire letter he displayed (see illustrations of front and back above) was written in English partly at Rapperswil (Canton St. Gallen) on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1828 and partly at Schaffhausen on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1828 addressed to the writer's mother, Ann Scott, who was staying at Hot Spas, Lucca, Lombardy, Italy. The letter bears a black "8" manuscript rate mark (possibly 8 Rappen), a "£2" (possibly 2 lira) black manuscript rate mark, a black straightline "SCHAFFHAUSSEN" postmark, a red Lombardy transit strike "MILANO L.T.", a fancy red "CONTRO BOLLO" strike and a black date stamp "22 SEPTEMBRE 1828".

It highlights the tremendous difficulties of travel at that time and the tenacity needed to overcome them. Difficulties that must have been experienced particularly by those responsible for conveying the Post. The time required to travel, what today might be considered relatively short distances, seems to have been overcome by being prepared for early starts and, often, quite late arrivals. In this case at the expense of the traveller's health. The problem of finding suitable accommodation and means of transport for each stage of the journey would certainly tax the modern tourist, so much reliant on travel agents, public transport services and their own private or hired cars. Considerable effort was expended in conveying news of your whereabouts and latest adventures to your loved ones in the most elaborate prose. And, no doubt, such letters were usually anxiously anticipated.

The full contents of the letter (as written - translated into English by Marc) are set out below:

Friday September 5th, 1828 Rapperschwyl upon Lake Zürich.

Yesterday I left Sargans at 7 in the morning, and at 9 embarked in an awkward flat-bottomed boat on the Wallenstetten Lake See. The night before I had eaten a very hearty supper, for each part of the humble fare was excellent – the bread was excellent – the wine was the lightest sort of Rhein wine and excellent – the butter was excellent – the trouts were excellent. In consequence of so much excellence I suppose I ate and drank more than I ought, the result was that my sleep was not equal to the supper. I got up uncomfortable at ½ past 5 and started at 7 for Wallenstetter, which I reached at a little before 9. I never was in my life more ennuied than during this tedious row - the scarped mountains, whose rocky sides rise perpendicular from the water on the north side are for the lovers of rocks magnificent, provided they are not sleepy, that they are pleased with their company, have had a good stool and are not over-heated by the good supper of the overnight – none of these were my case so I felt discontented and uncomfortable and the said fine rocky mountains were away upon me.

If the four hour row was tedious to Wesen, then the 5 hour drive from Wesen to this Rapperschwyl was little better. The coachman was half an idiot and drove for the 1st time 3 horses and the road was bad and narrow. I got here a little past 7. The house is the best I've been in on the Continent, it is not in a town, has been built with some attention to prospect, and has a nice garden in its front.

Zürich – Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> – I walked one half of the way to this place yesterday – the carriage road was horrid – the fast road conducted me thro vineyards of beautiful culture, and all the houses, which I passed showed their inmates to be very well off, but not rich to luxury. The day was very hot and rainy. There is a Grand Duchess of Russia here with 50 attendants and servants – what think you of Russian light marching order?

Schaffhausen – Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> – Yesterday morning my dearest Parent I left Zürich and set off on foot at 9 o'clock and walked for 3¾ hours, after which I was taken up by my carriage. At about 5 in the evening I saw the celebrated falls of the Rhein. The weather was fine, but I was suffering unfortunately at the time from 3 inconveniences of no small magnitude and I did not see them with the delight that which a traveller free from my uncomferts would have experienced. I had a gumboil and my cheek was in the act of swelling, 2nd I felt over fatigued with the walk of the morning and 3rd I was quite hollow and empty for want of food. Suffering from these 3 inconveniences I was not the enraptured spectator that many have been. Today I remain owing to my swelled face at Schaffhausen, but keep my room. It is of no consequence, but very uncomfortable and annoying. I did not tell you that Zürich is a very nice town, the country around is rich and highly cultivated and like to Geneva it is situated at the foot of a lake and has a river flowing through it clear, as rapid and as beautiful as the Rhone at Geneva. I give it, Zürich, the preference. My intended journey is from this through the Black Forest to Carlsruhe (where I hope to find your letter), Heidelberg, Marburg, Cassel and Göttingen. I hope to arrive at Hanover before the 20<sup>th</sup>. Dear now and then from servants and couriers gets me some intelligence of you but at Carlsruhe must I first hope to find a letter.

Begging you to give my kindest regards to my sister I shall for the present conclude offering you my own dear mother of the tender and dutiful sentiments of your affectionate son,  
Augustus

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The Second letter was written by a lady staying in Vevey. It was dated and sent on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1852 and has a fully margined Rayon III Large 15 Rp. stamp (Type 9 Position MLI) tied with a type 76 black federal grill cancel and a black "VEVEY 11 OCT 52" circular date stamp addressed to Mademoiselle Jenny Deillarc, Genève at la Queue d'Arve. On the reverse are two blue "GENEVE 12 OCT 52" back date stamps.

Vevey is situated on Lac Lemman and was a favourite destination for the wealthy in the second half of the C19<sup>th</sup>. Victor Hugo was exiled there and in the C20<sup>th</sup> Charlie Chaplin spent the last 25 years of his life in Vevey. The area was known as the Swiss Riviera with an excellent climate. The letter seems to suggest that Julie is weak and has been sent away with a friend or her mother - the author of the letter - to recover.

It highlights the great reliance on an efficient postal system for the transfer of messages including news from home and conducting transactions – and the patience required when awaiting them.

The contents of the letter (as written - translated into English) are set out below (n.b. background information provided by Marc is italicised in brackets):

Vevey, 11th October 1852

Dear Miss Jenny,

As Julie finds herself a little weak, she has asked me to write to you and ask news of her girls, is Pauline well? Are they well behaved and polite? Tell us also how you and your sister are, as you seemed a little unwell when we left.

Upon our arrival here, we were greatly disappointed in finding no lodgings available. The kind and excellent Monsieur Dubois proved charmingly considerate and did his utmost to help us find accommodation. We searched through Glion, Montreux and Clarens with him without finding any lodgings, even the hotels could not offer us a room for one night. We came back harassed, tired and damaged, and with the shame of having left Les Trois Couronnes only to return with our luggage. (*Les Trois Couronnes was an exclusive hotel in Vevey at the time and a choice destination for illustrious visitors, such as Kings and Princes*).

On the second day, Monsieur Dubois came to tell us that he had found some boarding houses in Vevey. We chose what seemed to be the best, but it presented many disadvantages. On the third day, Julie found herself weaker than ever, because of the accommodation and we changed to another lodging found by Monsieur Dubois at the house of the former Minister (*an official post in Switzerland equivalent to an MP*) Mario Megati where, except for a bad bed, Julie has rather good accommodation.

The owners of the house are very polite and make us bear with patience these three weeks that seem very long, with the rain, snow and the bad weather. Monsieur Dubois has been so kind to come down from the mountain to renew his acquaintance with Julie. He is a charming man with easy and pleasant conversation but, above all, with a rare politeness that makes every day easier and having even taken us to an English lady, who gave us much information about our lodgings in Italy. After two more days in Vevey, Monsieur Dubois left with regrets at not being able to stay longer and we are planning to visit him and his wife on the first nice day.

We are impatiently awaiting your reply and send affectionate thoughts to the young ladies asking them to behave and learn well.

With friendly regards to you, dear Jenny, and to your sister.  
Your devoted, Eveline Khaz (?)

P.S. If you pass the post office, could you check if there are any letters addressed to me and send them either c/o the post office in Vevey or to the house of Minister Megati.

If you see the Wahwashe family, pass our respects and remind Madame Wahwashe of her promises to write to us. One last request, Julie would like to stay with you upon our return and would like to know if you could receive us for 8, 10 or 15 days and how much that would be for the two of us.

#### FORTHCOMING REGIONAL MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

The Southern Group – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October commencing at 10.30.a.m. at "The Three Crowns" public house at Whaddon which is just off the A36, 4 miles south east of Salisbury. The main speaker will be our own Marc Burgess who will entertain us with some of the treasures from his Swiss Collection, linked to his family history. The following dates are pencilled in for 2016: 27<sup>th</sup> February and 8<sup>th</sup> October, and suggestions for topics and speakers would be most welcome. The date for a mid-year meeting has not yet been fixed as we do not want it to clash with the possible HPS Jubilee trip to Lucerne. Further information, including details of the location of the venue in Whaddon, is on the Society's Website or direct from Werner Gattiker - business e-mail address: [werner@swisstamps.co.uk](mailto:werner@swisstamps.co.uk), Tel. Office: 01273 845501 and Home: 01273 842135.

The Northern Group will resume activities in November after the summer break. Details of the 2015/16 Programme will be reported shortly. All meetings take place at Corporation Mill, Sowerby Bridge, Yorkshire commencing at 2.00.p.m. Further details from David Hope Tel. 0161 3030091.

#### A HELVETIA P. S. MEETING AT AUTUMN STAMPEX 2015 – A REMINDER

DAVID HOPE

The Society has booked Meeting Room A of the Business Design Centre (BDC) from 2pm to 4pm on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September in Islington. Entry to Autumn Stampex is free including a complimentary catalogue. If you are visiting STAMPEX on that day please join us. Short displays on various aspects of Swiss philately will be given. Why not bring something along yourself? We look forward to seeing you there. Further details on Stampex from – [www.philatelic-traders-society.co.uk](http://www.philatelic-traders-society.co.uk) Tel. 023 9283 2289. Directions – the Business Design Centre is at 52, Upper Street, Islington Green, London N1 0QH. Nearest Underground: Angel (Northern Line). Bus routes: 4, 19, 30, 38, 43, 56, 73, 153, 205, 214, 274, 341, 394, and 476. If in a car, there are some AA signposts to the BDC. Or why not hire a taxi if arriving in London by rail!

## Werner Gattiker

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- Free Standard Price List 1850 – 2012 with both Zumstein/SBK and Stanley Gibbons numbers.
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- Liechtenstein also available.

**Werner Gattiker, P O Box 791 Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 ODP – 01273 845501 - [werner@swisstamps.co.uk](mailto:werner@swisstamps.co.uk)**

POSTAGE-FREE RIDES

ERIC LIENHARD

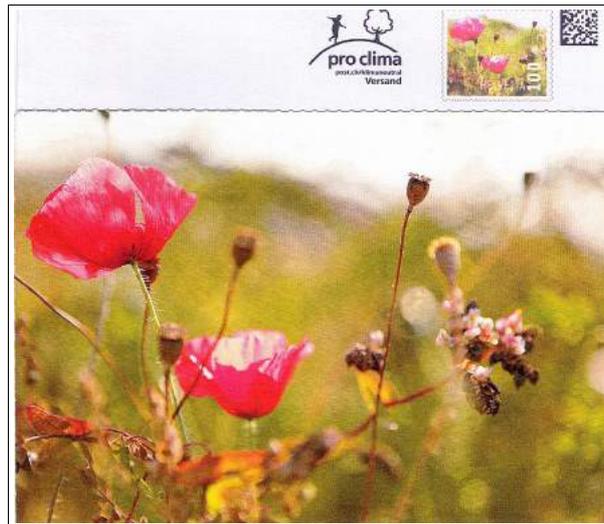


Fig. 1

On more than one occasion Swiss Post have given the people of Switzerland a “postage-free ride”. In 2012 they presented the public with free Pro Clima postcards (Fig. 1). These were announced on their internet site as follows: “Dear customer, the Swiss Post looks back on a successful year 2011. We delivered 2.3 billion letters and 100 million parcels. With our Post Buses we transported 120 million passengers. In addition 2.7 million customers trusted us with their money. On behalf of all colleagues, I would like to thank you sincerely for your trust and loyalty. From 23<sup>rd</sup> January onwards we will surprise you with a ‘thank you’. The postman will personally present you with a small gift or leave it in your post box. At the same time the gift will be given at post office counters, post finance offices, as well as in vehicles and sales points for post buses (whilst stocks last). .....

At the end of February 2012 a friend in Switzerland made me aware of this event. The gift consisted of a strip of four 1Fr. postcards and attached information. The big surprise for the philatelist, was that there were three different sets of four cards each available in German, French and Italian, making a total of 36 different cards with catalogue status. The four cards in each set represent either, spring, summer, autumn or winter. My friend presented me with French sets. Thereafter I contacted family and friends for further examples and managed to obtain the 12 different German versions. Sadly my rear guard action came after the cards had mostly already been used.

The next event for me in this ‘freebie’ tale occurred, when I received a Christmas card in December 2014, sporting a self-adhesive post office Webstamp. Fortunately, soon after, a friend sent a complete strip of four post office Webstamps, with explanation (Fig. 2). They show four different post office delivery methods. Apparently they were another Swiss Post thank you. Sadly, again my contacts had already used them, but luckily managed to chase some up for me. The internet also came good.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

During my trawls on the internet I stumbled on yet another ‘freebie’ in the shape of a strip of 5 Webstamps – see Fig. 3. These strips of stamps were presented to customers in 2004 to be valid for postage on just one day, 7th April, to send Easter Greetings. Fig. 4 shows an example on cover.

Something else that might be considered a post office “freebie” are the Christmas greeting cards sent to philatelic customers, in two versions. One for collectors, and another with a different wording, for trade customers.

The moral is: be ever vigilant!

Eric showed some of his 'Freebies' at the Annual Meetings in 2014 and 2015 and most recently at the Southern Region meeting in June. His display in Whaddon also included a number of covers with unusual combinations of stamps and cut-outs, postage due stamps and some Pro Clima and WebStamps (see Figs. 5 and 6 below). He posed a question – when did newspaper wrappers (and stamps from wrappers) become invalid for postage? - answers please to the Editor or direct to Eric.

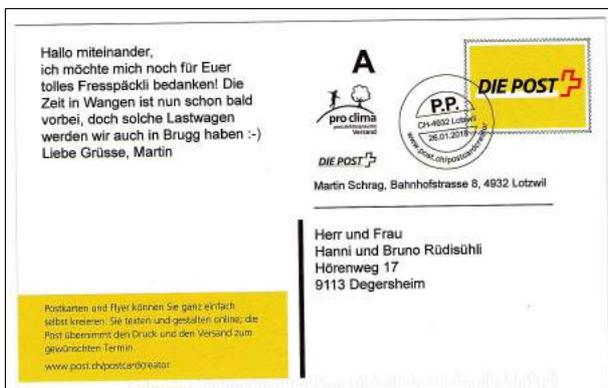


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

The Society is grateful to Swiss Post for allowing illustrations of its products to be published in the Newsletter.

WEST HIGHLAND GATHERING

BOB MEDLAND



In July the Helvetia Philatelic Society had the next-closest thing to a West Highland Group meeting. Whilst visiting north-west Scotland, I took the opportunity to call in on our member Stuart MacKenzie at Poolewe where I was made very welcome and enjoyed much discussion on postage due, Fahrpost cancels and much more. Below is a photograph of our meeting with an appropriately Highland backdrop – Stuart is on the left.

The following day I called in to see Kit Jarman in Oban where he is making a slow but steady recovery from his serious operation last October. Those members who know Kit will understand when I say that the conversation on many topics was “lively”! He sends best wishes to all and plans to present a display on early Pro-Juventute frames to the society in due course.

NEWS FROM THE AHPS - In the 1970s some AHPS members created a large card file index of Swiss philatelic references that has been stored for many years at the Western Philately Library (USA). The Index in six boxes has recently been sent to AHPS members Paul Tremaine and George Struble, who have volunteered to scan and create electronic files of the cards. The quality of the card file is not known at this time, but the project will ensure that this information will be saved for future researchers, regardless. After scanning is complete, the originals will be shipped to the American Philatelic Reference Library and archived. Winter Fun in Sunny California - The SANDICAL philatelic exhibition in San Diego is the location for the AHPS's next annual convention on 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2016.

THE SOCIETY'S PROPOSED 70<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND

Further news on this proposed event will be published shortly. Meanwhile, if you are thinking seriously about attending, and have not yet responded to the notice provided with the July edition of the Newsletter, please fill in the 'Notice of Intent' and send it to our Secretary, Neville Nelder; or notify your intentions to Neville by email - [seitani@waitrose.com](mailto:seitani@waitrose.com) or telephone – 01453 766751. Thankyou.

NOSTALGIA ON THE WATER – SWISS SHIP POST

EDITOR

Thanks to much painstaking and expensive restoration work, several lake steamers dating from the first half of the C20<sup>th</sup> still ply their trade, to varying extents, on the Swiss lakes. The Compagnie Générale de Navigation du Lac Léman's (CGN) fleet of 8 Belle Epoque, side-wheel paddle boats is the largest and perhaps most well known in the world. Five of them still have paddle wheels equipped with a steam engine as the propulsion unit – albeit of very modern design\*. Six, built between 1904 and 1927, are currently in active service – the S/S 'Montreux', M/S 'Vevey', S/S 'La Suisse', S/S 'Savoie', S/S 'Simplon' and S/S 'Rhône'. The M/S 'Vevey', was the last to be returned to service in 2014 after an extensive re-fit. It was built in 1907 and has operated Belle Epoque cruises out of Geneva throughout this year. The Association of Friends of the Steamboats on the Lake of Geneva (ABVL) is continuously searching for funds to conserve and maintain the fleet. It is currently working to ensure that the remaining two ships, the M/S 'Italie' and the M/S 'Helvétie', are brought back into service shortly. If anyone would like more information their website is - [www.abvl.ch](http://www.abvl.ch). If any members have covers which have cancellations that can be linked to historic vessels still operating on the Swiss lakes, please send the Editor a scan(s) or photo-copy(ies). They could make a nice display in a future newsletter. Information from the ABVL's journal 'À Toute Vapeur' 2014. \*The 'Savoie', which celebrated its centenary last year, has retained its original engine but has a new boiler and auxiliary power plant.

EDMUNDSON CARD TICKETS

Admittedly not philately, but a treat for train ticket collectors. The last Edmundson card ticket machine of the Rhätische Bahn (RhB) can be seen at the Bahnmuseum Albula in Bergün (GR). Your admission ticket will be by an Edmundson card. The Museum was awarded the title of Europe's Museum of the Year in 2014 by the European Museum Forum. Nicolas Regamey, a printer in Lausanne, has restored a historic card printer and can print new card tickets to order – [www.ateliertypo.ch](http://www.ateliertypo.ch) Information from the Swiss Railways Society's 'Swiss Express'. n.b. A short illustrated article by Michael Farr on his first encounter with Switzerland as a train ticket collector – 'Auto AG Interlaken' appeared in the 'Swiss Express' in March 2014. Articles on Edmundson card tickets have been published in previous editions of our Newsletter in recent years.

A FORTHCOMING RAZOR CANCEL CATALOGUE

The AHPS's Roger Heath is helping to produce a book entitled 'Razor Cancel Handbook'. He shares author-ship with two German and two Swiss collectors. I believe that one or two of our members have assisted them in their researches. Intended to be the definitive reference for these historic cancels, it will be published in Germany and will include much English text. Complete with illustrations and diagrams, the soft cover book is expected to run to 120 pages. The book is scheduled for release at the German Sindelfingen Briefmarken Börse in the last weekend of October this year. A big thankyou to everyone involved.

SWISS-RELATED SUBJECTS FAR FROM HOME

EDITOR

I have just paid my first visit to the marvellous, award-winning Olympic Museum of the IOC in Lausanne. Its displays have recently been given a complete overhaul to tell visitors more about the evolution of the Olympic movement, the human experiences of the athletes, the coaches and the volunteers; and the role of the media. I was looking for a postcard of the building in the souvenir shop to illustrate its intrinsic qualities, with no success. I will have to continue to rely on the illustrations on the cover of the booklet of IOC stamps issued in 2000 which give only a partial view. Not so an illustration of the nearby IOC Headquarters building which appears in all its glory on a stamp from the Republic of Guinea! Which, in a rather convoluted way, brings me to a question – how many stamps of foreign countries are you aware of that have Swiss-related subjects as a theme? I hope to partially answer this question in future editions of the Newsletter. Hint – you might start with those illustrating events connected with other organisations based in Switzerland – e.g. the International Red Cross, the Universal Postal Union and UN (Geneva) including the World Health Organisation.

ROLF RÖLLI-SCHÄR

The Society was sad to hear of the death on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2015 of Rolf Rölli-Schär, founder of the well-known Swiss auction house. He was 78 years old, greatly respected in the world of Swiss philately and was well-known to a number of our members. Rölli Philately is, of course, one of the regular advertisers in our newsletter. On behalf of the Society our Chairman, David Hope, has sent condolences to his family and colleagues.

RÖLLI-AUCTION 2015

The 56<sup>th</sup> Rölli-Auction takes place in Lucerne on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September. Material will include "a high quality collection of Switzerland with beautiful covers of the Entlebuch, a fantastic range of Cantonal Stamps, a wide selection of beautiful Rayons and, as well, a series of lots of aerophilately and other modern fields containing some real gems." The complete catalogues are now available on their website: [www.roelliphila.ch](http://www.roelliphila.ch)

SWISS POST OFFICE CLOSURESRICHARD HALL

Richard Hall has been reporting in the AHPS's 'Tell' on the closure of post offices in Switzerland since Swiss Post initiated its "review and modernisation of the out-of-date post office network" in 2001. The number of post offices has declined from 3,897 in 1983 to 2,222 in 2014 – a sorry state of affairs for all philatelists interested in cancellations. The latter figure includes 660 so-called "post office agencies" which are located in small villages, in the market or similar business. Mail is franked with computer-generated labels at these facilities but no mail is cancelled. In May/June this year the following post offices closed: - 9464 Rüthi (Rheintal) (canton St. Gallen), 4538 Oberbipp (canton Bern), 6318 Walchwil (canton Zug), 8806 Bäch (canton Schwyz), 2864 Soule (canton Jura), 3988 Ulrichen (canton Valais), 3953 Leuk Stadt (canton Valais), 1312 Eclépens (canton Vaud), 8552 Felben-Wellhausen (canton Thurgau) and 9422 Staad (canton St. Gallen). The related cancels would presumably have ceased to be used after a post office closure, thus creating a whole new collecting "last-day" theme. One consolation – although the numbers are constantly falling, there are still some 788 K-cancels in use. (Information from Richard's latest article on the subject in 'Tell', July 2015 Page 13. Thanks are due to the AHPS for allowing us to reproduce much of it in our Newsletter – Ed.)

A NEW BOOK ON SWISS PostAutos

Over recent years the Swiss Railways Society have produced a series of Swiss Travel Guides for their members. They hope to publish a new one next year on Swiss PostAutos which, as well as describing a selection of currently operated routes suitable for tourists and visitors, promises to include some details of the organisation's history and a description of the fleet.

Passion, imagination & experience  
in producing top results



- ◆ At least one specialized Swiss catalogue every year
- ◆ Consignments are welcome at all times



Contact Anders Thorell today for any question you may have  
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