

## The trials and tribulations of the Cambridge Philatelic Society Centenary

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Almost all the celebrations of Cambridge Philatelic Society's Centenary have at long last been satisfactorily achieved despite the several delays and cancellations caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Our former secretary, Richard Husband, prepared a short article announcing our centenary in the November issue of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, 2020 <sup>(1)</sup>. The real centenary had taken place a month earlier, on 22 October 2020, for which a special hooded postmark was commissioned (Fig. 1). It incorporated the society's logo, the upright oval 158, derived from the Post Office cancellation issued in 1866. The cover, illustrating Cambridge datestamps and cancellation were designed by the president. This was the only event that took place on its intended date! Unfortunately it was not possible to have any face-to-face meetings at this time because of regulations, but thanks to *Zoom*, the computer-literate members of the society were able to continue virtual meetings. This program, unfamiliar at the beginning to most of us, but coached by our Treasurer, Graham Wylde, became a saviour of our and many other society meetings during the periods of restricted social contact. Our Secretary, Peter Morton, kept our non-computer literate members up to date with more traditional postal communications. After the AGM of the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021, the President gave a *Powerpoint* presentation. He gave a history of the first one hundred years of the society including the locations across Cambridge of the meetings, from its roots in the Cambridge Photographic Society in 1920, through to its present location in the Oddfellows Hall on Newmarket Road; the significant members, the important 50<sup>th</sup> <sup>(2)</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup> <sup>(3)</sup>, and 90<sup>th</sup> <sup>(4)</sup> anniversaries, and the significant hosting events of the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain in 1925, 1938, 1967, 1970, 1990 and 2016.

The first face-to-face meeting since the pandemic started was held by the Society as an informal outdoor Garden Party on 25 July 2021, where members and partners met, fortunately on a fine sunny afternoon. A special Centenary cake decorated with a reproduction of the Centenary cover stamp and postmark was consumed! The Puckridges also brought some superbly iced novelties - philatelic cup-cakes! A small display was prepared illustrating aspects of Cambridge Postal History and a number of postal artefacts from the Society's Postal History Collection were displayed including stamp vending machines, enamelled letter box plates, handstamps and the rescued Haslingfield Post Office sign.

The main celebratory event of the year was the Centenary Luncheon which has just successfully taken place at the Arundel House Hotel in Cambridge where thirty one members and guests assembled on 29<sup>th</sup> November. It had only been delayed some thirteen months since the actual original intended date! There were sixteen members present, mainly with their partners. Special invited guests came from as far as Kings Lynn representing neighbouring societies who had helped with our society activities during the past year. John Spencer represented the ABPS (Fig. 3). On previous special anniversaries we have been honoured with the presence of the Cambridge Mayor and on this occasion it was Councillor Russ McPherson who was our guest of honour. He arrived wearing his chain of office, and we were pleased to introduce him to our own member, Councillor Mike Brindle, Mayor of Thetford, and similarly enchain! (Fig 3). After a welcome from the president (Fig. 2), the mayor proposed a toast 'to the next hundred years of the society, sorry the next ninety nine years!'

We had hoped to arrange more public displays as we had done in the Cambridge Library for our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary and to give philatelic demonstrations to our neighbouring societies to

advertise our celebration. Alas, these fell by the wayside, victims of the pandemic. Nevertheless despite these failures we have succeeded in the preparation of a commemorative cover, prepared a *Powerpoint* presentation of the History of the Society, and enjoyed a summer Garden Party and a winter Luncheon. Considering the conditions under which we were working, I do not think we have done badly.

There remains one final step in the celebration of our centenary and that is the completion of our Centenary Book, which is being compiled by the president with contributions from members of the Society. It will be covering firstly the history of the society, its members and events, and secondly selected aspects of its postal history. It is designed to complement and supplement our first curator, Derrick Muggleton's *Postal History of Cambridge*<sup>(5)</sup>. The president apologises because he has great difficulty in reconciling his worktime geological clock, calibrated to the nearest million years with that of rather finer tuned modern equipment. It is intended that this book will be completed in 2022. However, he does note that Jack Simmonds' *Brief History of the Cambridge Philatelic Society*<sup>(3)</sup>, intended to be published in 1990, did not appear until the following year!

I would like to say a special 'Well Done' all the members who have contributed to the organisation of our various celebratory events, but especially Peter Morton, Graham Wylde and Rufus Barnes for their particularly hard work during these difficult times. Also I am very grateful to my wife, Chris, for help with the garden party, and to Christine Wylde for the photographs of the luncheon.

## References

- (1) Husband, Richard. 2020. Cambridge Philatelic Society. Gibbons Stamp Monthly, November 2020 Issue, p. 14.
- (2) Ray, Derick (President) and Simmonds, Jack C. (Secretary). 1970. Cambridge Philatelic Society Golden Jubilee 1920-1970, Exhibition Catalogue. 29 pp.
- (3) Simmonds, J.C. 1991. The Cambridge Philatelic Society, a brief history. Cambridge Philatelic Society, Cambridge. 20 pp (unpaginated).
- (4) Pearce, John. (Compiler) 2010. East Midlands and East Anglian Philatelic Federation, 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention & 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Cambridge Philatelic Society. 20 pp.
- (5) Muggleton, Derrick J. 1970. A Postal History of Cambridge. Cambridge Philatelic Society, Cambridge. 130 pp.



Fig. 1. The CPS Centenary special postmark.



Fig. 2. Simon Kelly (President CPS)



Fig. 3. The Chain gang: Councillor Mike Brindle (Mayor of Thetford); Councillor Russ McPherson (Mayor of Cambridge) and John Spencer (Chairman of ABPS). Table



Fig. 4. Table 1: Simon Kelly (President), Councillor Russ McPherson, Tony Crowther, Sue Crowther, Simon Hill, Richard Husband.





Fig.5. Table 2: Peter Morton (Secretary CPS), Jacque Morton, Lissi Puckridge, Tony Puckridge, Sue Datson, Geoffrey Datson, David Northrop, Terry Wagg.



Fig. 6. Table 3: A, [Jenny Lloyd] John George, Roger Carr; B, Brian Mynott, Adrian Boggust; C, John Spencer, Graham Wylde, [Christine Wylde – Photographer].



Fig. 7. Table 4: Rufus Barnes, Michael Leveridge, Shirley Leveridge, Winston Williams, Paulene May, Stafford May, Ray Jones, Margaret Barnes.

## **Members & Guests at CPS Centenary Luncheon**

Dr Simon R.A. Kelly (President)  
Russ McPherson, Mayor of Cambridge

Rufus Barnes M	Shirley Leveridge G
Margaret Barnes G	Stafford May M
Adrian Boggust M	Paulene May G
Mike Brindle M	Peter Morton M
Roger Carr M	Jacquie Morton G
Tony Crowther M	Brian Mynott M
Geoffrey Datson M	David Northrop M
Sue Datson G	Tony Puckridge M
Sue Crowther G	Lissi Puckridge M
John George M	John Spencer G
Jenny Lloyd G	Terry Wagg G
Simon Hill M	Winston Williams G
Richard Husband M	Graham Wylde M
Ray Jones M	Christine Wylde G
Michael Leveridge M	