

# STUDY CIRCLE

FOUNDED JANUARY 27th, 1954

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BULLETIN No. 154 SEPTEMBER 1992



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#### **OBJECTS**

- TO promote interest in and the study of the stamps and postal history of the islands that comprise the British West Indies and in addition BERMUDA, BRITISH GUIANA (GUYANA) and BRITISH HONDURAS (BELIZE).
- 2. TO issue a guarterly BULLETIN containing articles, items of interest and other features.
- 3. TO loan books from the Circle library (home members only). Borrowers bear postage both ways. List supplied upon application to Hon. Librarian accompanied by an s.a.e. (9" x 6½") 2nd Class postage for 150gm rate required.
- 4. TO publicise 'wants' and furnish opinions on stamp(s) and/or cover(s) for a nominal fee.
- 5. TO encourage, assist or sponsor the authorship and publication of definitive handbooks, monographs or other works of reference appropriate to the aim in para 1 above.

#### MEMBERSHIP&SUBSCRIPTION

MEMBERSHIP - Is WORLD WIDE in scope and open to all whether they be new or advanced collectors.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - The ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION is £6 for members residing in the UK or Europe and £8 for members who reside elsewhere.

Subscriptions (dues) are payable on 1st January each year and, subject to what is mentioned below, *in sterling* (by personal cheque or Standing Order drawn on a U.K. Bank, a Banker's Draft, International Money Order, Postal Order or local currency *notes* - no coins will be accepted - e.g. dollars, marks, francs etc.).

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# **PROGRAMME**

1992

Sat. 17 Oct. - 10.30 am. At STAMPEX. (Floral Room 'B')

P. Jaffé – "Album Leaves" R.V. Swarbrick - "Jamaica"

1993

Sat. 6 March At STAMPEX.

M. Rego - "Maritime Mail Markings"

T.S. Pearce - "Grenada"

Sat. 24 April Bonnington Hotel, London.

AGM followed by annual Auction.

Note: Due to new balloting arrangements for room allocation at STAMPEX both the venue and date for the meeting in March 1993 are liable to alteration and members are advised to check their latest Bulletin for final information.

### **CONGRATULATIONS**

Congratulations go out to one of our members, Peter Jaffé, who has this year been invited to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists at the forthcoming annual BPF Congress meeting in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The other recipients this year are Alberto Bolaffi (Italy), Koh Seow Chuan (Singapore) and Emile Mewes (Germany).

Since H.M. King George V first signed the Roll in 1921 there have been 236 other signatures. This years recipients join an elite band.

Congratulations must also be given to our President, Victor Toeg, who is one of this years recipients of the BPF Award of Merit. This award is given by the Federation to collectors who in the opinion of their fellow collectors have given many hours of service to the hobby of Philately.

# **END OF AN ERA**

We have received a letter from Robert Tyrrell to inform us that the well known firm of R.C. Alcock Ltd. of Cheltenham is shortly to close after 70 years of trading. Ronald Alcock founded the company in the early 1920's and built-up a successful International business specialising in the stamps and Postal History of Great Britain. The Company will probably best be remembered for the various philatelic publications published for over half a century.

We are sad to lose the membership of this company and wish Jean Alcock and Robert Tyrrell all the best for the future.

# **CONVENTION - 1993**

The next Caribbean Collectors' Convention will be held on Friday 8th and Saturday 9th October 1993 at The Regent Hotel, Royal Learnington Spa.

Further details will be announced in due course.

### MATERIAL FOR BULLETIN

Material is urgently required for the December and future bulletins. All items for publication will be appreciated. The stock of items for a rainy day is very nearly empty.

### **BRITISH GUIANA**

#### 1863-4 1c. BLACK FIRST SETTING

Townsend and Howe list the five printings of the first setting of the 1860-3 1c. It states that all printings were produced from one stone. This results in the same flaws occurring in all of the five printings. In studying the issue, it was apparent that the constant flaws were mainly, though not exclusively, concerned with the value tablet.







Normal

Different Style

I have two 1c. blacks on which the lettering of the value is of a very different style - much taller than the normal. Has anyone any suggestions as to these stamps or are they forgeries?

Peter Ford

# **BRITISH GUIANA**

In Bulletin No.153, Michael B. Nicholson reports "An Unrecorded Handstamp of British Guiana". In looking in Townsend & Howe and the Guyana postmark study of Michael Rego in search of a matching mark, he has been led astray by his two assumptions: that it is a double oval, and that it is a registration mark. It is neither.

The partial strike is sufficient to identify it as a common double circle handstamp that came into use with Guyana's independence in 1966 or shortly thereafter. When I visited the Georgetown GPO in 1967, I was shown several of these postmarking devices at the desks of clerks in the mail cancelling area and the philatelic office, and there may have been others that I did not see.



In his study "G.P.O. Georgetown Postal Markings in Guyana" published in the BCP Journal, Whole No.118, December 1981, Michael Rego assigned this postmark Type No. GPO1a. He noted that this mark was commonly seen cancelling first day covers and other philatelic material.

Why someone would apply this modern postmark to a valuable 19th Century adhesive is difficult to understand. To me it is an abused rather than a used copy!

Fred F. Seifert

### **BRITISH GUIANA**

An envelope has come into my possession recently, bearing a mark that I have not seen before. I have asked around, and receiving no more than speculation, throw myself before our members, who have collectively, I'm sure, seen it many times.

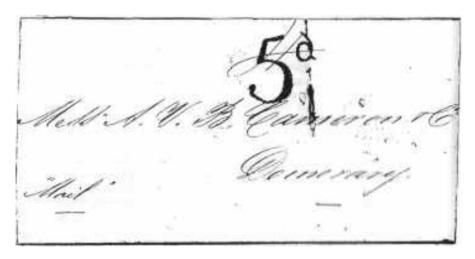


Fig.1

The cover, originating in Martinique and passing through the British Postal Agent there in 1873, was addressed to Messrs A.V.B.Cameron & Co.

Demerary, carries in ink the correct rate mark of '4' but this is overlaid with a '5' handstamp in black.



For Comparison Fig.2

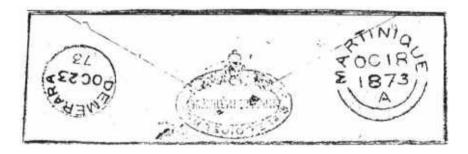


Fig.3

At first I thought that this was a use of the '5d' accountancy mark, normally found in red on 12c adhesives of 1860-75 - see fig.2. This is patently not the case, as can be seen. I then checked on ports of call en route. The only backstamps are those shown in fig.3. While it is conceivable that the '5' could have been added at another point it seems unlikely that it would have been done without an accompanying backstamp. Checks on the possible ports of call reveal nothing.

This leaves me with two possibilities. It was either applied on board the ship or on arrival in Demerara. The possible reasons for a one penny surcharge seem to be Captain's Gratuity or Delivery Charge. In either case, it seems more likely that the stamp was applied in Demerara.

Have any of our members any knowledge that they can share with me in this respect?

Derek Nathan

### **BRITISH GUIANA**

#### 'RHONE' MANUSCRIPT CANCELLATION



The stamp illustrated is the 2 cent orange, watermark Crown CA issued on 27 January 1882.

It is cancelled in manuscript "RHONE 221 '89", probably on board ship; my query is, which ship?

The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company (RMSP) took delivery of a 2,738 GRT steamer of the name in 1865, according to Michael Rego's book in the Cockrill series. She, however, was wrecked in the great St. Thomas hurricane of 29 October 1867, along with the RMSP vessels Wye and Derwent, which left only two out of 60 vessels afloat in the Inner Harbour and claimed 1.000 lives. Rego records no RMSP successor of the name.

The Royal Netherlands Steamship Company (KNSM) extended their service to Caribbean ports, including Georgetown, in 1884 through the fledgling KWIM. Their only 'Rhone', however, was a 600 DWT sail-assisted steamer in service from 1865 until 1870.

So far, I can trace no vessel named 'Rhone' which could possibly have been trading out of British Guiana in January 1889. If any member knows better, or happens to have within reach a Lloyd's Register for that year, I hope he/she will put pen to paper.

Michael Medlicott

# **BRITISH GUIANA**



I obtained a cover recently at auction in Germany. It Is to New York (registered) with a rather smudged duplex on the front. However, of more interest is the mark on the reverse – DEMERARA/NO 7 70, very similar to

fig.19 in Townsend and Howe. However, the outside ring (?) is 22mm. in diameter and the inner ring is 14mm. in diameter. (T & H 23½, 15½). Also, the outside ring is not a simple circle but seems to be similar to the impression which would be made by a beer bottle top. It may be just that the impression was made lightly leading to the irregularity in the outer circle - however it seems too symmetrical to be caused by this. Any theories, anybody.?

Peter Ford

### **BRITISH GUIANA**

#### **REGISTERED HANDSTAMP**



Fig.1

The boxed handstamp, BRITISH GUIANA REGISTERED, as illustrated (fig.1), is described in Townsend and Howe as used in Georgetown from 1877 in black with one copy in red dated 1881. It is said to have come back into use in 1914 - 21 with single side lines. It is described as very scarce. In 'Postal Registration in British Guiana' Mike Rego uses a very similar illustration, refers to Townsend and concludes that the single side lines are in fact damaged sides.

This seems to be the sum total of the study of this handstamp. I should like to suggest that both illustrations are wrong, and that there are at least two instruments, possibly three, and that one was in use in Georgetown from early days, one in New Amsterdam from a little later / and possibly a third during the early part of the Twentieth Century.



Fig 2



Fig 3

Fig.2 shows the more common strike, this one used in Georgetown in 1896. It will be noted that the shape of the 'G's is totally different from fig.1. All the copies seen have the battered N.E. area of the side line. BRITISH measures 23 mm and there is 1.5 mm between the lines of lettering. The distance between the border lines is 1.75 mm. A part strike on an adhesive of 1876, see fig.3, shows the probable early shape of the borders. This appears to be the same instrument as fig.2.



Fig.4

Fig.4 shows an 1895 strike from New Amsterdam with a straight N.E. border, BRITISH measuring 25 mm and 2.5 mm between the lines of letters. There is 1.5 mm between the border lines. This seems to me to be clear evidence of a different handstamp.



Fig .5

Fig.5 shows a strike from 1912, incidentally outside Townsend's dates, with 'single side lines'. Careful measurement shows that this may be different again. While I agree with Mike Rego that the single lines are probably caused by wear, the border lines at S.E. and N.W. seem to be closer together than the earlier Georgetown strike, 1.5mm, and the other measurements are BRITISH 24mm, distance between the lines of lettering 2mm, in other words, somewhere between the earlier copies. This might be because a new instrument was made, trying to copy both the previous ones.

May I ask the owners of the other examples of these strikes to let me or the Editor know their comments on this theory.

Derek Nathan

### **JAMAICA**

In the March Bulletin (No.152) Malcolm Mattick enquired about the fragmented cancellation . ..ALTREAS...". It is part of the fiscal cancellation "PAROCHIAL TREASURER". A similar one often seen reads "R.M. COURT". The R.M. standing for Resident Magistrate.

**Bob Swarbrick** 

# ST. CHRISTOPHER

In Bulletin 150, I suggested that one of the characteristic hands which cancel St. Christopher stamps with a date - and are reliably attributed to village use - can also be found on the Antigua stamps (SG 25/26) supplied for use in St. Christopher in February and March 1890. Simon Goldblatt (Bulletin 151) was sceptical, saying "that the style of writing in use in St. Kitts in the earlier 1880's is no guide to what to expect there in 1890".

Rob Wynstra has responded with the 1½d stationery card illustrated at fig.1.



It has a manuscript date applied at Dieppe Bay (7/5/90), and is cancelled with Al 2 and St. Kitts transit datestamp one day later. A Barbados mark of receipt is on the reverse.

Michael Hamilton has responded with the 1d stationery card at figure 2 which, to his eternal credit (and my chagrin) he spotted in the Study Circle auction recently and bought for a song. There's gold in them there quills.



Fig.2

It has a manuscript date applied at Dieppe Bay (3/11/90) and is cancelled with A12 and St.Kitts transit datestamp one day later.

So we have positive identification of the handwriting used at Dieppe Bay, and evidence of its use months beyond the period of use of Antigua stamps in St. Kitts. I can only say that ft very closely resembles the handwriting on those two Antigua stamps illustrated in Bulletin 150.

Through the generous help of Rob Wynstra and Michael Hamilton, I am gradually assembling a picture of the manuscript cancellations used in St. Kitts. I would very greatly appreciate photocopies of any manuscript

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cancellations in members' possession, sent through the editor of the Bulletin. With perseverance, we shall one day have positive identification of which handwriting belongs to which village.

Michael Medlicott

### **TRINIDAD**

In the sterling period (up to 1935) any value over one shilling is very hard to find used outside Port of Spain and perhaps San Fernando. What a surprise, therefore, to find recently a copy of the £1 deep yellow-green and carmine of 1918, with the characteristically worn background lines (SG.156a), postmarked Rio Claro.

The circular datestamp resembles type VII and is dated 9 AUG 22; although, like Rio Claro's type VII postmark, it is 26mm in diameter, it predates known use of the postmark by almost nine years and shows some differences in type setting. Confusingly, there is also a two line date, 14/27DE, entangled with it.

The stamp shows no trace of having been cleaned, and I can think of no reason why the Rio Claro cds should have been forged.

Could the stamp, perhaps, have been used for money transfer, and do such circular datestamps of fiscal origin exist for other offices?

Michael Medlicott

# **LEEWARDS ENCYCLOPAEDIA - The final word**

The following comments sent to the Editor in January, and not received by him, are being published as a final comment regarding the Leewards book. Updated material will of course always be welcomed for publication.

Simon Goldblatt's article in Bulletin No.151 has prompted me to say he is not alone. However, my criticisms are more concerned with the book than the reviewer, which I think Simon's article also was. Nevertheless, I must say having read most of the book before the review, I was somewhat disappointed with both. Like Tony Farmer, I can only comment with any confidence on the Federal Issues and it is to Pages 190-231 that these comments are confined

There are, in my opinion, too many mistakes (including typographical), omissions and stated unknowns which are known, for the book to justify the status of Encyclopaedia. The very name surely means one can expect a high degree of factual correctness. Unfortunately the tendency to accept what was published many years ago still persists, presumably on the premise that when written closer to the events the facts and opinions are more reliable. This is not necessarily so. Provided one has the time and easy access to London most records are available.

I list some examples to substantiate these comments and criticisms.

P.196 and 198	RMSP Atrato, Calibishie and La Plaine are incorrectly
	spelt. There was no 'AR' - the code was 'AN' on the A12
	Duplex & 'A' on the St.Kitts CDS for Anguilla. 'Ca'
	should be 'CA'.

- P.203 The brown gum saga continues with the added information the 1/- printed at the same time with the same gum as other duties alone remained white. I have Plate 1, 2 and 3 copies with white gum and also with varying degrees of toning due to tropicalisation whilst in storage on the Islands.
- P.205, 7 & 10 The Key Plates given for the printing of some duties are incorrect or have omissions.
- P.20911 & 13 Plate Proofs the information given is misleading. The introduction or replacement, some as spares, of Duty Plates were not made to correspond with particular Key Plate printings that was co-incidental.
- P.211 There were 12,000 of the 2½d printed, not 6,000.
- P.212 "Revised postal rates in 1922 were the cause of the new values 4d, 5d, 2/-, 3/- and 4/-". If correct, some explanation would be most welcome on the rates they represented. To my knowledge none did.
- P.214 I suspect the first paragraph was intended to be in the same position on P.215. It has a number of errors including the ¾d. There was only one printing from Plate 23 for this issue, except the 1d in reels. Plates 24

& 25, also Die I, were bolted together to print Straits Settlements only in 200 forme. The ½d was made into reels and no marginal Plate No. examples exist. Plates 26 and 28 were of course Die II.

P.217

Both illustrations of the ¼d have the lettering 1.75mm high. The first Duty Plate of 1909 in 60 set also had the lettering 1.75mm high and no Marginal Rule as did the last printing from Plate 28 in January 1938. There was only one printing from George VI Key Plate 1 which had the Marginal Rule (double Jubilee lines) as did every subsequent printing. A proof exists dated 15th September for 120 + 4 leads. The ¼d was the last duty printed, the Plate issued on 30th September. Clearly the new 120 set Duty Plate was employed for the George VI first printing.

P.219

The 1½d Marginal Rule is present around the right half of both panes commencing with the 1928 printings from Key Plate 16 in both brown and red (See P.210).

P.226

The reviewer's one criticism was that the Queen Elizabeth issue is not included. A more pertinent comment would have been to inform the reader that the book finishes at 1952 although not indicated in the title.

I am surprised the one reference to the Queen Elizabeth issue was not questioned - which was the other Colony to employ the Universal Postage and Revenue Key Plate?

- P.227
- Type C4 was not used for any Postal Stationery.
- P.228
- Format C should be 51/4 x 41/4 ins.

King Edward envelopes were printed in Format A only.

P.229

King George VI envelopes were printed in Format C (thick cream paper) and Format D (Air Mail, blue 'ALL BRITISH' lining).

BICTION IIII

P.230

No George VI 1d newswrapper was printed.

My other main criticism of the book is the constant reference to items sold through RL Auctions. Quoting realisations of over 20 years ago can surely be of little assistance in the present climate to both the auction houses and their prospective clients.

To list four or five unillustrated and sparsely described covers of a particular issue is more frustrating than informative. In the last paragraph on P.201 we are given prices Before Hardening without date (1990?) and After Hardening with 1970-71 prices. The proof at the bottom of P.227 was sold again by RL in 1988 for a very different price than in 1979.

To criticise is an easy task when compared with that of the author. Robson Lowe has encompassed a most extensive subject area in a Volume superbly printed and bound with numerous high quality illustrations. It comprises a valuable source of reference for further study and should be on the bookshelf of every philatelist who has an interest in the Leeward Islands, including the non-British.

Michael Oliver

### **AUCTION REPORT 1992**

The 1992 catalogue claim to have attracted a wider range of important and valuable items than ever before was fully borne out by the auction result. Despite the recession, which was biting even harder than in 1991, the sale total was substantially up on previous years, reaching five figures (£10680.25, in fact) for the very first time, and ending up, after taking post-auction sales into account, at the impressive figure of £11341.70.

There were early highlights. Lot 2, the ANGUILLA ROAD TRD philatelic cover, opened at just below estimate, attracted attention in at least three places. The "book" dropped out at £230, and the winning bid of £260 seems to have satisfied everybody, being well above our and the vendor's aspirations, but still happily short of the levels such covers have reached in the major London sale rooms.

Lots 10 and 11, the 'Thompson' flaws on 2½d and 4d stamps of Antigua, the second being used, confirmed our assessment of the levels to which these interesting varieties have risen, fetching £95 and £125 (estimates £90 each). And these had been preceded by our 'find' of the year - the 6d SG3 of Antigua, which the vendor had submitted as SG1. This item sold for £500 which, although below estimate, was the product of bids in four places, and is by far the highest price we have so far realised for a single

stamp. How will the auction sub-committee ever maintain their standard for future years, we ask ourselves!

For the first 100 lots the sale settled into a steady rhythm, with most of the lots being sold, but no more major sensations. When lot 81 was reached, the auctioneer announced that £220 was the level of three even bids. There is always a temptation to go one higher on the few occasions that you know this will beat the book, and room buyer B20 (one of 27 members present and competing) duly trumped it by paying £10 more.

Bermuda ran rather flat, with over half the lots not selling, and only four lots beating their estimate, until Bushell's "Picturesque Bermuda" multiplied its starting price by four. Nevertheless, there was one lot that we were able to secure on the book for less than one quarter of what the bidder was prepared to pay. Auctions are in a category by themselves.

There were no peaks or troughs in British Guiana; we simply record our pleasure that we valued our colour trials just about right. Then came, probably, the rarest single stamp of the sale, lot 175, the GB 1/- stamp struck with the A06 of British Honduras. £180 may not be far above our estimate; it was, all the same, the collective effort of seven would-be buyers in competition.

By this time the sale had fully resumed its rhythm, and most items were selling steadily. Lot 199 deserves special mention, a delightful used block from Dominica, that almost doubled its estimate of £30. In confidence between you and us, one of our members paid \$15 for it because "I didn't want it myself; I just thought it belonged somewhere in the Study Circle". How right!

Then came the next trough: from lots 200-49, only 18 lots sold - there were barely a dozen bids on the book. Even lot 249 opened and closed with a single bid, which, in a better year, might have been doubled or trebled. Lot 250 - that gorgeous combination of GB 6d and Savannah la Mar - was another story; it opened above estimate and went £100 higher, at £180, before the bidding died. Numeral cancellations that followed found buyers only for the scarcer marks. Then suddenly, we reached the 300's and were firing on all cylinders again.

Lot 350 - an interesting Leewards variety - fetched £28 (estimate £12). Lot 399 should have been classified under Anguilla. This mattered not - in its modest way it fared just as well as lot 1. Given the interest in lot 406 as well, Anguilla was possibly flavour-of-the-month.

St. Vincent ran pretty true to form, with good prices paid for the better quality postmarks (lot 442, a very fine mark, reaching £48); and our 18th century cover from Tobago, lot 454, found a buyer at £300, where an Antigua cover of the same period had failed. Two other covers, lots 458 and 469 sold well - we were too modest in our £25 estimate for this POW letter, though the competition was all on the book. Then, with a slight hiccough at Turks Islands, the rhythm of the sale ran right through to the end - no major surprises, just steady demand, and steady sales, including two uncatalogued literature lots, available only to buyers in the room.

Perhaps the happiest feature of all was the contribution from room buyers. There have been years when whole sections of our sales have gone to absent bidders. On this occasion, the split could not have been more even: from recollection 325 lots were knocked down, and of these, 162 went one way, and 163 the other - without a recount we could not say which category had their nose in front. One other interesting statistic - much improved on previous years - is that we illustrated 34 lots and 31 of them sold.

After the auction was over, a further 24 lots were sold from our unsold list (sent <u>only</u> to those who took part in the bidding this year or last). One unhealthy precedent was set. No fewer than three postal bidders (it always happens in threes) discovered that lots knocked to them were not ones on which they had intended those bids; yet in every case the mistake was the bidder's, and we had correctly followed the instructions on the bidding form. So PLEASE, PLEASE be careful next time; mistakes cannot always be remedied. Yet, we are reminded. There has been a precedent. Our auctioneer has - once - only once! - been seen to knock down a lot to a bidder who "was only trying to ask a question".

Prices realised for the lots sold were as follows:-

Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£
1	20	2	260	3	9	6	33	7	11.50
8	500	10	95	11	125	12	8	13	21
14	65	15	38	16	13	17	8.50	23	7.50
24	7.50	25	17	26	10	27	58	28	21
30	37	31	14.50	32	21	33	9	34	8.50
35	7.50	36	11.50	38	40	39	14	40	23
43	12	45	15.50	47	42	48	32	49	6

50 15 53 48 56 250 57 190 58 2	230
	13.50
	22
	5.50
	13
85 130 86 15 87 6.50 88 12 89 7	
	7.50
	7.50
108 42 109 32 113 6 115 44 116 6	
	30
	30
	32
	22
	13.50
	26
	15
	28
	15.50
	56
	60
	18
	12
	52
	22
260 27 261 27 263 7 272 11 276 9	
	25
	35
	34
301 5.50 303 9 307 120 308 9 309 9	
	14.50
	14
	14
	13
	15
349 21 350 28 351 13 352 21 353 6	3
354 44 355 22 356 12.50 357 13 358 1	100
359 15 360 15 361 11.50 362 21 364 4	4
365 20 370 14 372 46 375 90 376 9	90
	13.50
	38
	13.50
	14.50
403 14 404 18 405 22 406 85 408 4	1

Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£
400	00	444	40.50	440	40	444	0	440	04
409	36	411	10.50	413	12	414	9	416	21
417	65	418	21	420	31	422	9	423	28
426	20	428	48	429	54	430	105	431	9
433	9	438	4.50	439	13	440	25	441	21
442	48	443	31	444	17	445	12.50	447	7.50
450	6	451	52	453	7	454	300	455	23
456	32	458	32	459	22	460	14	462	30
463	13.50	464	12	465	15.50	466	30	469	52
473	9	474	8.50	477	15	480	13.50	482	14
483	10	486	8	492	12	494	20	497	4
499	3	500	16.50	501	33	503	27	504	15
506	12.50	507	7.50	508	21	509	23	510	22
511	24	512	10.50	513	21	515	12.50	516	7
517	13	519	4.50	520	54	522	6.50	523	13
524	5.25	525	7.50	526	9	530	7		
	Additio	nal Lot	ts	531	28	532	6		

# **MATERIAL FOR BULLETIN**

PLEASE send material for the bulletin. Everything welcome.

# **MEMBERSHIP LISTING**

New Members	Special Interests
Baron, J.	LEE.
Booth, F.	CAY.
Hepplestone, J.M.	BWI Gen. BER. LEE.
Powley, I.W.	TUR. TUR-CAI

### **Address Changes**

Baker, R.

Drewett, S.

Ivanovic, I.B. Keresztesy, Dr.John Jr., Richards, G.N. Webster, M.

Wilson, C.J.

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