

NPS Library Report 2003-4

The past season was not without its surprises. The need to relocate the library from the ground to first and second floors has been well documented, but it would be remiss of me not to record some of the impact that this gave the library team. Hundreds of crates had to be filled and yards of shelving and cabinets were relocated. The crates then needed emptying and the shelves filling-up again. It may not sound much, until you realise what a Herculean effort this actually was.

My business commitments largely excluded me from helping, so the team undertook the bulk of the work. All members owe a huge debt of gratitude to these volunteers for their support. "Thank you" seems inadequate, for without this hastily assembled team, I dread to think how the move could have been undertaken.

I have one major concern following the move and this relates to the large drop in users of this wonderful facility. As I write these words it is the end of June and after three months of meetings and weekday openings there is no sign of these numbers increasing to their previous levels. I would encourage all members who are able to visit us to do so, for there is nothing more depressing than to have my team sit there all day waiting for a visitor.

The move meant that duplicate holdings have now largely been disposed of. Many specialist societies have benefited from the acquisition of spares for their newer members. This gesture by NPSL has already borne fruit in the form of gaps being filled in our own holdings of several titles. Look out for the balance of duplicates being offered in the monthly auctions over the coming season. This highly necessary action has freed-up valuable space in the basement, needed for our own holdings now that we have less room available upstairs.

The new location means that it has been necessary to restrict access to the second floor, now home to our older periodicals. It has not been possible to staff two separate rooms due to the ongoing lack of suitable volunteers. This is an unfortunate turn of events at a time when the society is so keen to expand its benefits to members. My wish for the new season is that more of our time is spent on the management of our holdings, book acquisitions and the filling of gaps in our periodicals.

My thanks go to all members, societies, collectors, dealers and publishers who have added to our holdings this past year. Despite all the problems associated with the move, NPSL has continued to expand at its usual annual rate. NPSL thanks the British Philatelic Trust and its team for all their support, especially during the building refurbishment programme.

Finally, Ted Halliday and Michael Furnell both celebrated a 'special' birthday earlier this year and it was especially pleasing to have these milestones marked by the society at a joint reception prior to the May evening meeting. Long may these two stalwarts of the society continue to be of service to the membership.

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