

**CROYDON PHILATELIC SOCIETY:
NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH MARCH 2018;**

President Richard West welcomed the 13 members present to the meeting. He introduced **Dr Brian Austen** and invited him to give his presentation on **India**.



The first postal stamp in India was introduced on 1 July 1852 in the Scinde District. Scinde Dawk was a very old postal system of runners that served the Indus Valley of Sindh, an area of present-day Pakistan. The term also applies to the three first adhesive stamps which are famously known as the Scinde Dawks. Dr. Austen showed examples of these rare stamps as single examples and also used on cover.

In 1854 the introduction of uniform postage rates led to the development of the first postage stamps valid for use throughout India. These were the ½a, 1a, 2a and later the 4a which was the first bi-coloured stamp in the British Empire.

A comprehensive selection of stamps and covers over the Victorian period was shown including large blocks, die proofs, different printings, watermark varieties and scarce booklets.

Examples of Forwarding Agents mail from pre-stamp onwards were described and displayed. The involvement of India in the Boer war was evidenced by mail from Boer POWs billeted in India.

The Coronation Durbar of Edward VII at Delhi had a special postmark and superb examples of souvenirs and mail told the story of this event.

During WWI Indian troops fought in Europe and there were detention camps for Germans who had been living in India when war broke out. Correspondence was shown from both these areas.

The display continued with post WW1 mail including the attempt on climbing Mount Everest, early flights by pioneers including the 1st Official Airmail from Allahabad in 1911 followed by special flights and the inauguration of international air services by British, Dutch and French airlines.

Dr.Austen gave a fluent commentary throughout describing his material, the quality of which was outstanding. Members enjoyed viewing the display and President Richard gave the vote of thanks. The meeting closed at 16.30 hours.

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Graham Harker
Honorary Assistant Secretary