



TORCH BEARER



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ELTA 'P' Stamps for the 2004 Torch Relay



SOCIETY of OLYMPIC COLLECTORS

SOCIETY of OLYMPIC COLLECTORS

The representative of F.I.P.O. in Great Britain



YOUR COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN AND EDITOR :	Bob Farley, 3 Wain Green, Long Meadow, Worcester, WR4 0HP, Great Britain. rfarleysoc@aol.com
VICE CHAIRMAN :	Bob Wilcock, 24 Hamilton Crescent, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 5 ES, Great Britain. bob@towlard.freemove.co.uk
SECRETARY :	Miss Paula Burger, 19 Hanbury Path, Sheerwater, Woking, Surrey, GU21 5RB Great Britain.
TREASURER AND ADVERTISING :	David Buxton, 88 Bucknell Road, Bicester, Oxon, OX26 2DR, Great Britain. david.buxton@bnc.ox.ac.uk
AUCTION MANAGER :	John Crowther, 3 Hill Drive, Handforth, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 3AP, Great Britain. j-jscrowther@supanet.com
LIBRARIAN :	Ken Cook, 31 Thorn Lane, Rainham, Essex, RM13 9SJ, Great Britain. kenny@rainham3.freemove.co.uk
P. R. O. and PACKET and PACKET MANAGER	Brian Hammond, 6 Lanark Road, Ipswich, IP4 3EH brian.hammond57@ntlworld.com
BACK ISSUES AND DISTRIBUTION:	Ken Cook, 31 Thorn Lane, Rainham, Essex, RM13 9SJ, Great Britain.
WEB MANAGER	Mike Pagnamenos

BACK ISSUES: At present, most issues of TORCH BEARER are still available to Volume 1, Issue 1, (March 1984), although some are now exhausted.

As stocks of each issue run out, they will not be reprinted. It is Society policy to ensure that new members will be able to purchase back issues for a four year period, but we do not guarantee stocks for longer than this. Back issues cost £2.00 each, or £8.00 for a year's issues, including postage by surface mail. If ordering single copies, please indicate which volume you require. Cheques should be made payable to the SOCIETY of OLYMPIC COLLECTORS and sent with your order to David Buxton at the above address. If you wish to receive back issues by airmail, please add 75 pence per issue (£3.00 per volume).

LIBRARY: Photocopies of articles are available through the Librarian at 10 pence per sheet. Please enclose payment with the order. Books may be borrowed, but postage must be paid IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. The Librarian's address is listed above.

COPY DATES: TORCH BEARER is published four times a year; in February, May, August and November. Articles or adverts for inclusion in a particular issue should be sent at least two months in advance.

TORCH BEARER

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MAY 2004

ISSUE 2

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Please remember:

Accommodation needs for Much Wenlock (10th July) Must be booked by return.

Orders for Chamonix and Paris Books to Bob Wilcock by 26th May.

Orders for SOC London Torch Relay and Much Wenlock Covers by 14th June

FRONT PAGE

Less than 100 days to the Athens Games!

Before that we have two other important events:

The Torch Relay will pass through London on the 26th June, and the SOC will be producing two types of souvenir covers (1) With special handstamp; (2) Wirth SmartStamps.

Our 20th Anniversary Celebration will take place in Much Wenlock over the weekend of the 10 - 11th July. Again a special handstamp and souvenir cover is intended. We would like to see as many members as possible at some time over the weekend - The Wenlock Olympian Games and the SOC Exhibition are free. We would also like to see more members at the Anniversary Dinner.

Please use the enclosed flier to book your requirements for Much Wenlock, souvenir covers for London and Much Wenlock (only a very limited quantity will be produced over that pre-subscribed), and orders for the Chamonix and Paris publications.

Details of all events appear throughout this issue - see pages 64, 66, 69 and 93.

In line with our new constitution, copies of the minutes of the 2003 AGM and EGM together with the state of our finances appear in this issue.

As the Athens Games take place in August, which coincides with our next issue date, all information from ELTA that is available has been included in this issue. Unfortunately, much of this must be treated as provisional because regular changes to issue date and unexpected issues have been a feature of the ELTA policy.

The next issue has already been provisionally prepared to achieve publication in the absence of your editor, but it will of course contain very limited 'news' items (if any). It is however planned to include two major articles on 1908 and 1924.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY OF OLYMPIC COLLECTORS

Membership starts on election, of which applicants will be notified, and will last for one calendar year. All back issues of the magazine for the current year will be sent to members joining during the year.

Junior members are those aged under 18 years in the year of joining, subscription rates are half of the adult rate until the 18th birthday.

All applications should be made to the Secretary.

Subscription rates for 2004 are:

U.K. £10.00; Europe, £12.00 (€ 20, \$US 25).

Outside Europe, £17.00 (€ 25, \$US 35)

Acceptable forms of payment: \$US cheques drawn in USA; Sterling, \$US, or € currency notes; Sterling cheques; *PayPal*.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

From Bob Wilcock

Sarajevo 1984 - 2004 Twentieth Anniversary of the XIV Olympic Winter Games

A single stamp featuring the Olympic Torch was issued on 7th. February 2004 with two attached labels depicting the mascot and emblem of the XIV Olympic Winter Games.



The stamps were printed in sheetlets of 8 stamps and 16 labels as illustrated.

A first day postmark was available from Sarajevo and is illustrated with the emblem of the Games.

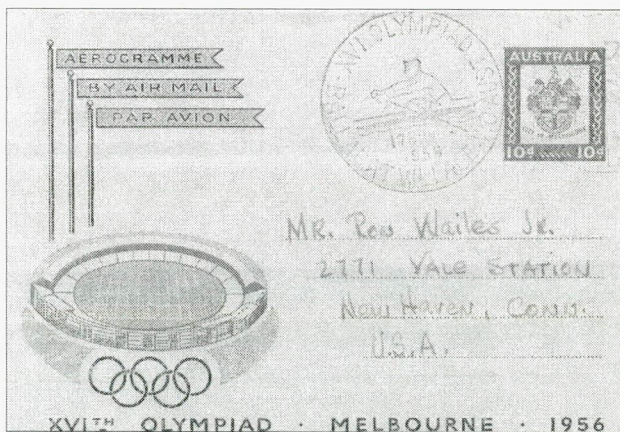
Olympic Correspondence - Rusty Wailes: 1956 Melbourne – Rowing

An unfortunate error occurred in Volume 20 when the first page of this article was published on page 165. At the time of editing the article, I inadvertently assumed that I had reached the end (blame electronic copies!). For the benefit of any new members the article appears here in full. Apologies to those who have already seen page 1 - Editor.

Bob Wilcock

Aerogrammes sent from an Olympic Village always appeal to me – there is a good chance of an interesting message – so when the above aerogramme sent from the Village at Ballarat for the rowers came up on eBay recently I put in a strong bid.

My hunch paid off. The sender was clearly a member of a rowing team, probably from the USA, and the message talks primarily of training and preparation for the Games:



"Dear Ron,

.....We get up at 6:30 & eat at 7:00 then at 10:00 we go out for a morning row – say 5 to 9 miles – lunch sack and 5:00 row again – 5-7 miles – dinner when we get in and sack at 10:00 – The lake is just large enough so that using the longest diagonal – and our tillers in the sand at the start – and bows running up on the beach at the finish we get in 2000 meters – so when we take a long row we just go around and around the lake.

The weather has been louzy – wetter and rougher than what we left behind in New Haven!! It really wouldn't be so bad – if we could have warm showers – and a place to dry our clothes – but it has rained every day – sometimes in a downpour....

The crews we are watching – are first Australia then Canada – then Check [sic], Russia, Sweden, even Italy – though they train on wine – and the Germans on beer – the Russians really go for the coca-cola & ice cream – so we try and make sure they get enough. However I believe the Australians will be tougher than the Canadians – The U.B.C. [University of British Columbia] boys are 6'3" 180 as compared to the Aussies 6'4" 194 - they are big, strong & row damn well – another Corn-hole!! [Can any reader explain this expression please? – Ed.]

However the course is always damn rough - and always with a head wind - we had a calm day so we rowed a 6:13 2000 at 31 - and the next day with a head wind the U.B.C. boys did a 7:09 & the Check 7:39 - Some of the Aussies bet us we couldn't break 7:00 so this morning - rough as hell - had to row the first 1000 at 29 - then up to 31 then 33 we broke 7 - though we announced the time as 7:07. Oh yes - the same ole game ---
George & Jim say hallo - and me also - until Xmas

Rusty"

We get up at 6:30 & eat 'till 7:00 - we are only about 2 blocks from the mess hall -- then at 10:00 we go out for a morning row - say - 5 to 9 miles - lunch sack and 5:00 row again -- 5-7 miles - dinner when we get in and back at 10:00 - The lake is about a mile away --- and buses run every ten minutes or so --- the lake itself is just large enough so that using the longest diagonal -- and turn tillers in the sand at the start -- and buses running up on the beach at the finish we get in 2000 meters -- so when we take a long row - we just go around & around the lake --

The weather has been lousy -- wetter and rougher than what we left behind in New Haven!! It really wouldn't be so bad -- if we could have warm showers -- and a place to dry our clothes -- but it has rained everyday -- sometimes in a downpour -- my weight is down to almost trim approx 175 -- but I can lose more -- if weather & workouts & my appetite all work together ---

The crews we are watching -- are first Australia then Canada -- then Check, Russia, Sweden, even Italy -- though they train on wine -- & the Kenyon

Second fold here

or beer -- the Aussies really go for the coca-cola & ice cream -- so we try and make sure they get enough. However I believe the Australians will be tougher than the Canadians -- the U.S.C. boys are 6'3" 180 as compared to the Aussies 6'4" 194 -- they are big, strong & row damn well -- another Corn-hole !!

However the course is always damn rough -- and always with a head wind -- we had a calm day so we rowed a 6:13 2000 at 31 -- and the next day with a head wind the U.S.C. boys did a 709 with their 2:37 -- Some of the Aussies let us we couldn't break 7:00 in the morning -- rough as hell -- had to row the first 1000 at 29 -- then up to 31 then 33 we broke 7 -- though we announced the time as 7:07 the eyes -- the same old game -- -- George & Jim say hello -- and me also -- until I was Rusty.

First fold here

So who was Rusty? The addressee of the aerogramme was Ron Wailes, and a quick look at Wallechinsky showed that Richard Wailes was a member of the victorious eights team from Yale. That he was Rusty was confirmed by another card on eBay:

Thank you for your support of the 1988 Olympic Rowing Team!

Mike Tetlow - 8x
 Chris Altewine 4x
 Phil Zandbank 2-
 John Pennington
 Jeff Nordell
 Jack Frankel
 Stu M. Struthers 4x
 Rick and Nancy Jay 4-

The U.S. Olympic Training Center
 National Sports Training Center
 19822 - Printed by National Service

70-00

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID

200

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

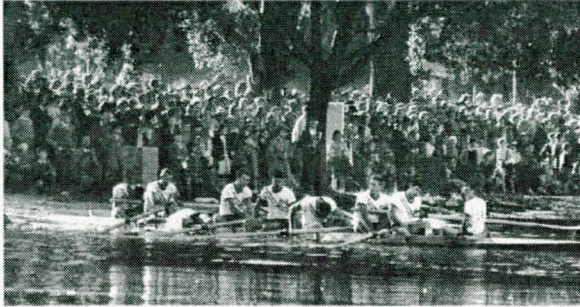
NOV 1988

Mr. Richard "Rusty" Wailes
 14830 210th Ave., NE
 Woodinville, WA 98072

U.S.A. M

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The Yale crew were third to Australia and Canada in the first heat, with a time of 6:09. The weather worsened for the repechage, but they won through with a time of 7:09. The semi-finals were also slow, but the final was an epic race, and Yale rowed past Canada and Australia in the final meters of the race to take Gold for the USA. It was the USA's eighth consecutive win in the event.

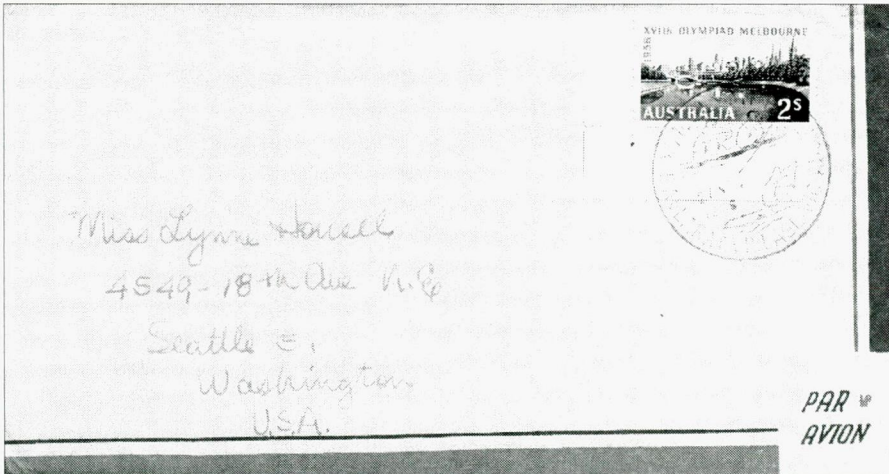


*The team just after victory.
Rusty rowed seven.*

Rusty moved to the coxless fours for the Rome Olympics. In the repechage they broke the world record. In the final they were last at the halfway mark, but stormed through to beat Italy and Russia for the Gold.

He continued rowing throughout his life, and died, of a heart attack, while rowing on Lake Washington near Seattle on 11 October 2002 at the age of 66.

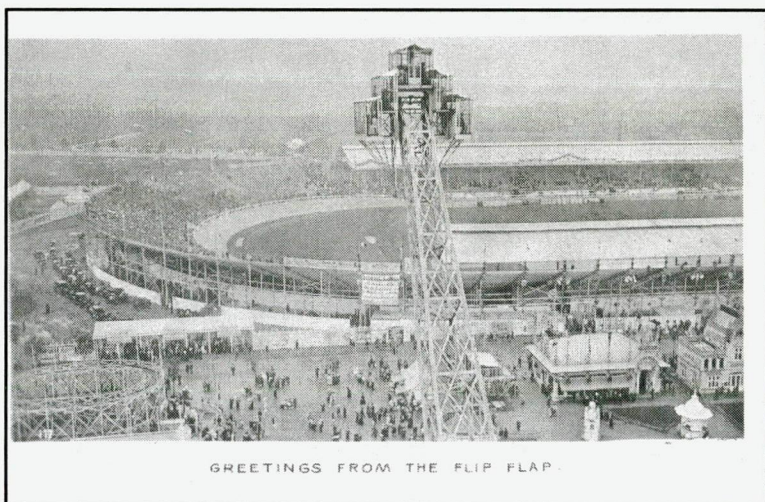
One other cover among the eBay lots is particularly interesting.



It was sent on 27 November, the day he won his Gold medal, and is addressed to Miss Lynne Housel, the young lady who became his wife. If the letter survives, and I hope the family still have it, it will be full of the excitement of a Gold Medalist writing to the lady he loved.

1908 OLYMPIC POSTCARDS ? (II)

Bob Wilcock



All 1908 collectors will be familiar with this postcard. It exists in a number of variations, mostly published by the Rapid Printing Co Ltd. London E.C., but also, as here, a hand coloured version, by E Alexander London W.C. The text of the hoarding to the left of the Flip Flap is clear to read in enlargement:

OLYMPIC GAMES
July 13 – 25
Opening Ceremony by
His MAJESTY THE KING
Competitions Twice Daily
WORLD'S GREATEST ATHLETES

Less clear to see, in the bottom right corner, behind the Bovril Castle is the ticket office with a placard for the Olympic Games. To the left, behind the end of the stadium, and beyond the dignitaries' cars is the Olympic Fencing Ground.

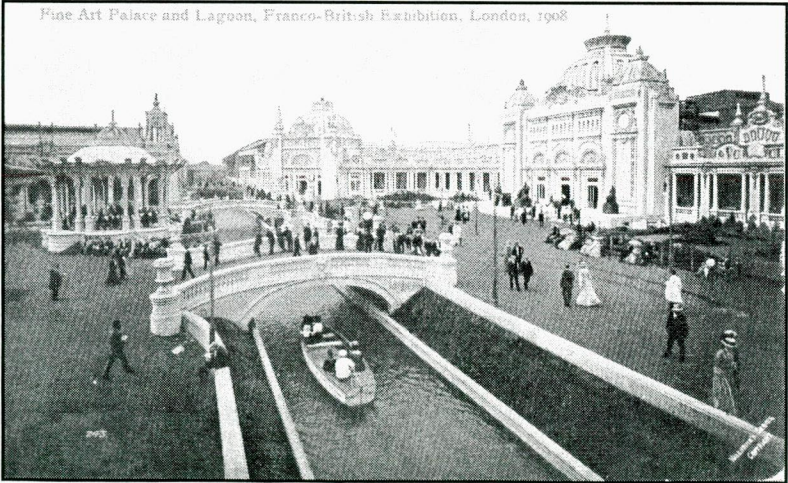
There are athletes lined up on the field, opposite the Royal Box (which is on the nearside of the stadium). It is clearly an Olympic card, and thanks to the Daily Graphic, we can now reveal that the photo was taken on 24 July, and accompanies the newspaper's report of the Opening Ceremony of the Games.

Less commonly found is the second card. It shows a similar view, but the stadium is empty, the main Olympic hoarding has gone, and the sign above the ticket office behind the Bovril Castle now reads "STADIUM BOOKING OFFICE". The signs above the turnstiles are unchanged ("STADIUM ENTRANCE"), but the tents have gone from the Fencing Ground. The flags are still flying, and the coats of arms are still on the stadium supports behind the stand, but it is clear the this photo was taken after the July events had been completed; it is a view of the Stadium in its Olympic finery, but not of the Olympics.

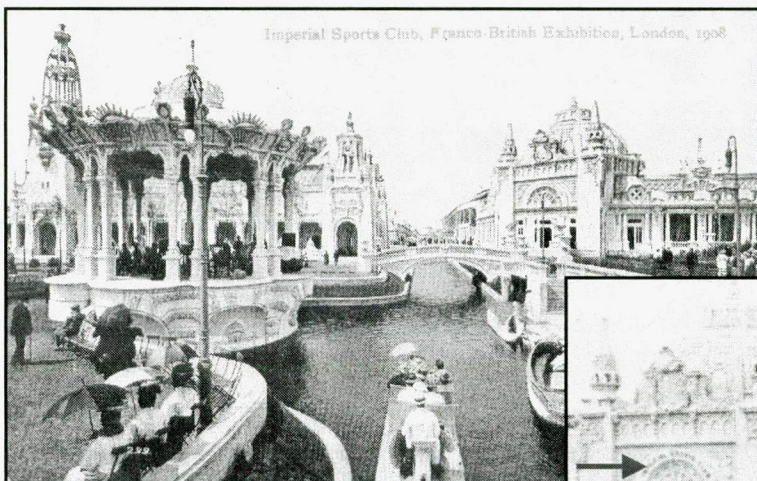
It was published by Valentine & Sons Ltd, and they underline on the back of the card the fact that it is an "OFFICIAL POST CARD" of the Franco British Exhibition, their response perhaps to the popularity of the unofficial card. It is published in the standard postcard size, 3½" x 5½", and also, as illustrated, as a Giant Post Card, 7¼" x 5½", and requiring 1p. postage. The earliest date of use seen is 5 September, so it was available well before the autumn events in the stadium, hockey, rugby, and soccer.



Fine Arts Palace and Lagoon



The Fine Arts Palace and Lagoon card does not look Olympic, and we must thank Michael Berry (Healey and Wise) for drawing it to our attention. The Olympic connection is revealed in the next card. The photographer moved to the bridge in the centre of the Fine Arts Palace card, to give extra prominence to the bandstand – and the Imperial Sports Club. This was the headquarters of the British Olympic Council, the sub-committee of the British Olympic Association charged with organising the Games. We must be grateful to Michael, the Fine Arts Palace card is very common and inexpensive, and comes both in colour and black and white, but the Imperial Sports Club card is rare and difficult to find; I am only aware of it in colour. On both cards the words “IMPERIAL SPORTS CLUB” can be clearly seen above the doorway.

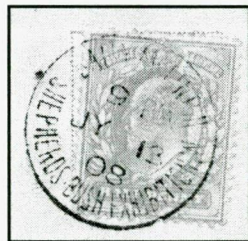


In the previous article I mentioned the Official Opening of the Stadium by King Edward VII and President Fallières on 26 May 1908. Post Office archives reveal that that was also the date on which the Franco British Exhibition handstamps were despatched to Western

District Office for onward despatch to the Exhibition post office. The question is, when were they brought into use? I have had examples dated 27 May for many years, but at last it can be confirmed that at least one of the two dies was brought into use on the day of receipt. The cancel of 26 May 1908 is therefore doubly significant: it marks the first day of use of the Exhibition die, and also the Official Opening of the Stadium.



As to the BallyMacLinton cancel, the example in the Post Office Impressions Book is dated May 30. However it is not until 14 July that the opening of the post office is announced in a Post Office Circular. The date of its first use is not known, but, as can be seen, it was in use on 13 July, the date of the Olympic Opening Ceremony.



OLYMPHILEX 2004: 12 - 22 August, Athens- PRESS RELEASE

This year Olympic Games are returning to their homeland again and mark our newly born century.

Greece is happy to host for the third time, since 1896 and 1906, a modern Olympiad.

At the same time, Olympic Philately celebrates its exhibition year with the well established specialized world philatelic Exhibition under the name OLYMPHILEX which will be held concurrently with the Athens Olympic Games 2004.

The Hellenic Post is participating in this great world event as one of the great national sponsors of the Olympic Games 2004, and is organizing OLYMPHILEX 2004 with the cooperation of the Hellenic Philatelic Federation and the support of Hellenic Union of Olympic and Sports Philately under the patronage of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Federation Internationale de Philatelie Olympique (FIPO) and the auspices of the International Philatelic Federation (FIP). The rules governing this specialized world exhibition devoted to the Olympic and Sports Philately, Coins and Memorabilia are those of:

General Regulations of FIP for Exhibitions (GREX),

General Regulations for the evaluation of competitive exhibits at FIP Exhibitions (GREV),

Special Regulations for the evaluation of competitive exhibits at FIP Exhibitions (SREV), and

The Special Regulations for OLYMPHILEX 2004.

The venue of the Exhibition occupying 3.000 square meters approximately will be the modern fully air-conditioned European Exhibition and Promotion Center (EKEP) in the northwest Athens area, 35 minutes from the airport and 25 minutes from the center of Athens.

The available frame capacity will not exceed 1,000 of 16 sheets each, for all classes. The participation is free. There will be also adequate number of stands for Postal Authorities and dealers.

Consultants to the Exhibition have been appointed Mr. Fernando Aranaz del Rio and Mr. Maurizio Tecardi by FIP and FIPO, respectively.

Mr. Anthony B. Virvilis FRPSL, AIJP, AEP has been appointed General Commissioner of OLYMPHILEX 2004.

The address of the Organizing Committee is:

OLYMPHILEX 2004

60, Stadiou str.

102 10 Athens

P.O. Box 3370

GR- 102 10 ATHENS

Tel: (+30) 210 3353 521 and (+30) 210 3353 528

Fax: (+30) 210 3353 531

e-mail address: olymp1@otenet.gr and olymp2@otenet.gr

to which any correspondence relating to OLYMPHILEX 2004 may be addressed.

News of the Exhibition can be found at a later stage either at the web sites of the Organization Committee ATHENS 2004 www.ATHENS2004.com or of the Hellenic Philatelic Society www.hps.gr

Athens, 20 March 2004

Society Business - Minutes of 2003 A.G.M & E.G.M.

19th July 2003, Henley Rowing Museum.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman at 2.35p.m., with 8 persons present. There were three apologies for absence. The Chairman bade everyone welcome.

The minutes of the AGM held in 2002 were read, agreed and signed.

The Chairman's report was read and accepted.

The Secretary's report was read and accepted.

The Treasurer presented his report, with the accounts, and explained some of the figures. We have a new advertiser with effect from August Torchbearer, as one of our regulars was standing down for a year.

The Vice-Chairman has finished the 2002 torchbearer onto CD-ROM, with an index, and 2003 is also being input. He made comment on an article in Stamp Magazine, regarding our CD. The report was adopted.

Librarians report – Kenny reported that none of the members make use of our library, which is a shame, because of the unique material available. In the last few months he has purchased two very good books, and welcomes comments from the members of other books they feel may be useful for reference.

The Public Relations Officer reported that he sends articles off to various publications as and when he can. The Stamp Magazine article was a bonus for us.

Election of Officers - Bob Farley vacated the Chair to Bob Wilcock.

Bob Farley, Paula Burger and Brian Hammond were up for re-election. Bob Wilcock proposed, David Buxton seconded, with 70 votes from the members that they be re-elected en bloc. These members were duly re-elected.

International Packet Circuit update. There have been 2 responses so far from members other than the committee, who are interested. As the last edition of Torchbearer has only just gone out, there are hopefully more, and from abroad, in the pipeline. Information is with Mike for inclusion on the website. It was suggested and agreed that the index page of Torchbearer be passed to Mike, before printing, so that this is also available on site, to advertise forthcoming articles. Thanks were recorded to Brian for the work he has done so far on this project.

20th Anniversary questionnaire feedback. 11 members voted for the Much Wenlock venue; 9 voted for Athens, of which 6 said either venue was suitable. 2 others were interested in Much Wenlock, if a table were available for swaps or sales.

Bob Wilcock suggested and it was agreed, that we go ahead and contact the 2012 Olympic Bid Committee and introduce The Society to them in the hope that we may be involved in some way, in either supplying information to them, or passing on information to our members. Bob W agreed to take on this project. The comment was made that other city bids have information on websites, and we have our own that may be linked in.

Website update: Mike handed round the current pages, showing how he has progressed since the last meeting. We need to discuss the need for advertising on the site, and the charges to be made, and this was put on the agenda for the next meeting. An amendment was made to the wording on the membership page. It was agreed to list all the Society souvenirs. Much Wenlock have asked for information and it may be possible to set up a link to them. It has also been noticed that the link to Hieko Volks is not working, and this will be attended to. Mike will monitor and report back, and would welcome any suggestions in the mean time,

Any Other Business:

David Buxton had received a request on the questionnaires to add the telephone numbers of committee members in Torchbearer. After discussion it was unanimously agreed that this was to be 'NO', although individuals numbers are often given by personal choice.

Bob F raised the comment that in the last AGM reference had been made to a listing to be serialised on a regular basis, of postcards from the Sydney Olympics. There have been problems with other information on this subject, but a list is now available, and these will start to appear at the earliest opportunity.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 16.01 p.m.

Extraordinary General Meeting.

A proposed by Bob Farley, seconded Bob Wilcock and published in Torchbearer, that all references in the Constitution of the Society of Olympic Collectors to "Annual General Meeting" and the business to be transacted at such meeting, be considered properly held or transacted if carried out by written notification and response provided that reasonable time be given for responses and that the opportunity for a fully convened Annual General Meeting remains available on the request of at least **X** fully paid up members of the Society, on receipt of an initial request on or before 28th February of the operational year, and the support of **X** members being obtained by 30th April of the operational year.

X equals five (option a) X equals 10 (option b)

The case for this motion is based upon:

Potential costs of arranging suitable venues for such meetings. The international profile of our membership prohibiting economic attendance of a high proportion of the membership;
Previous attendance records at Annual General Meetings.

This matter had previously been discussed by committee, and although option b was just under 10% of the total membership, this was countered by the argument that if a request was received, and agreed upon by 5 members of the committee, then a meeting could be called. If there was no agreement within committee, then it could proceed, via Torchbearer, in accordance with the constitution rules.

It was unanimously agreed by those present that **option a – 5 votes** – be accepted, and this will be written into the constitution.

The meeting, was closed at 16.11 p.m. by the Chairman, who thanked everyone for there attendance.

Treasurer's Report to the Financial Accounts Ending 31st January 2004

I would like to explain the presentation of the accounts. The left hand column is the budget and the right hand column is the expenditure for the previous year and the right hand column are the figures for the recently completed financial year.

The main source of income is our subscriptions. This year, as in most non-Olympic years, the membership has fallen. The Treasurer and the Secretary have spent a considerable amount of time and postage in writing to recently lapsed members, sometimes with success and many times without any form of acknowledgement as to why members have not renewed. We review the subscription rate every four years (true Olympic spirit) and in Olympic year. During the last twelve months we have introduced the paypal facility and this is method of payment is beginning to be used more frequently.

Our advertising income has remained constant, with Coubertin.com and Ingrid O'Neil continuing to support us in every issue. We always welcome additional advertisers, even for one issue, as often happens. The Auction income is equal to the expenditure and is the amount of American Dollar cheque payments, that pass through the account. There was a considerable reduction in the sales of Society material during the year.

The expenditure shows the expenses of the various committee members, and these are always understated as many of the committee do not always make a claim. A new unbudgeted expense was incurred by the setting up of the Website. The Society has looked at various options in the past, and welcomed the offer of Mike Pagomenos to become our Web Manager. The Society continues to support and strengthen its links with Much Wenlock and as well as having an exhibition it sponsors the Archery competition. The room hire was incurred in connection with holding the AGM at Henley. The committee hoped that by holding the meeting at the River and Rowing Museum, with free entrance to all the Olympic exhibits that it would encourage the members to attend. The printing and distribution of Torch Bearer shows a slight decrease for the year despite the increase in postage costs.

The Society had a deficit of £594.84 for the year, before any transfer was agreed from the auction commission and society sales proceeds. The Society has bank and cash assets of £ 5,124.52. In addition the Society holds stock of postcards, covers and booklets which are written off in the year of purchase.

David Buxton. Treasurer

AUDITORS REPORT

To Society of Olympic Collectors

17th February 2004

Re: The Financial Accounts for the Year to 31st January 2004

I have audited the accounts of The Society of Olympic Collectors for the year to 31st January 2004 and obtained information and explanations to state that the accounts present a true and fair view of the activities of the Society.

M Splawska
Hon. Auditor.

SOCIETY OF OLYMPIC COLLECTORS - Accounts to January 31st, 2004

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2004

<u>Budget</u>	<u>2002/03</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>£'s</u>	<u>2003/04</u>	<u>£'s</u>
1800.00	1780.00	Subscriptions	1695.49		
		Less pre paid	115.50	1579.99	
100.00	110.00	Adverts		90.00	
10.00	17.00	Back Issues Torch Bearer		10.00	
500.00	63.00	Auction		758.16	
150.00	191.00	SOC Sales		18.50	
10.00	12.00	Interest		16.91	
	<u>184.19</u>	Deficit		<u>594.84</u>	
<u>2570.00</u>	<u>2357.19</u>			<u>3068.40</u>	
		<u>Expenditure</u>			<u>£'s</u>
		Administration			
80.00	182.12	Insurance		166.15	
130.00	127.25	Chairman		31.51	
200.00	39.37	Secretary		45.78	
25.00	94.00	Treasurer		55.27	
100.00	44.00	Public Relations		50.33	
30.00		Librarian			
30.00	36.00	Vice Chair		39.70	
50.00	23.00	Auction Manager			
50.00		Packet Manager			
		Website		245.56	
80.00	114.00	Much Wenlock		100.00	
150.00		Table & Room Hire		152.95	
800.00	830.00	Printing Torch Bearer		742.86	
600.00	590.00	Distribution Torch Bearer		653.41	
50.00		Library		9.99	
	195.00	Auction		758.16	
100.00		SOC Items Cost		16.73	
	82.00	Sundries			
95.00		Surplus			
<u>2570.00</u>	<u>2356.74</u>			<u>3068.40</u>	

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 JANUARY 2004

5590.24	Bank	5068.48
<u>98.76</u>	Cash	<u>56.04</u>
<u>5603.86</u>	Total	<u>5124.52</u>
5609.05	Balance B/Fwd	5603.86
179.00	Advanced Subs	115.50
<u>-184.19</u>	Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>-594.84</u>
<u>5603.86</u>		<u>5124.52</u>

2004 Torch Run, London 26 June 2004

Bob Wilcock

As Torch Bearer goes to press full details of the London stage of the Athens Torch Relay have not been released, but at a press conference on 5 May, presided over by Ken Livingstone of the Greater London Authority and Simon Clegg of the BOA the names of the 140 Torchbearers were released and a little more detail of the run itself.

The Torchbearers are a mix of 'extraordinary ordinary' people of all ages and from all over the country, together with well-known sportspeople and Olympians. The 'extraordinary ordinary' are unsung heroes, people who have triumphed over adversity, people who have made major contributions to sport and community life, people we can be proud of to represent London and Britain and who truly embody the Olympic ideals.

As well as Kriss Akabusi and Frank Bruno who were at the press conference, the famous Torchbearers include Sir Roger Bannister (whose 4-minute mile was marked by a handstamp on 6 May), Chris Boardman, Jonathan Edwards, Sally Gunnell, Tim Henman (will he be the first Torchbearer, at Wimbledon?), Colin Jackson, Mary Peters, Matthew Pinsent, Steve Redgrave, and the Men's Rowing Eight from Sydney.

From Wimbledon (Olympic venue in 1908) the Relay will follow a 48km route through 11 London boroughs, with numerous events en route especially at Brixton, Greenwich and Island Gardens on the Isle of Dogs. The day's events will finish with a concert in the Mall in the early evening, with the traditional lighting of the Olympic cauldron providing a memorable climax.

We shall try to post more details as they emerge, on the SOC web-site www.societyofolympiccollectors.org. You will also find details on the BOA site www.olympics.org.uk & www.london.gov.uk/torchrelay/welcome_olympic_flame.jsp the GLA site. So come to London for a great Olympic day – and there is Thematica at the Carisbrooke Hall, Marble Arch.



For information on the Torch Relay world-wide there are links on the above sites or visit www.athens2004.com. The Editor will welcome reports from members of Torch Relay celebrations in other countries.

Two options are currently under consideration for commemorating the Torch Relay on the 26th June in London.

- Commemorative covers utilising the new Royal Mail 'Smartstamp' service;
- Commemorative covers with special handstamps:
 - (a) Wimbledon the start point of the London celebrations and relay;
 - (b) Trafalgar Square 'Tourist' handstamp to represent the end of the London relay.

The designs illustrated are at the draft stage at the time of going to press.

Smartstamp text has to be finalised, and if approval is obtained to use the Torch Relay logo, it will be incorporated.

There are no plans for a special handstamp at Wimbledon at the time of writing, so the Society will have to act as sponsor. The design is again dependant on approval and may be subject to change.



Above: SmartStamp impression.



Above left: Draft handstamp design if use of the Torch Relay logo is granted.

Above right: Draft alternative design if use of the Torch Relay logo is not granted.

The regulations for use of SmartStamps with additional franking may allow the production of covers with a counter handstamp from the offices at announced 'celebration locations', if this is the case, a limited number of sets of such covers will be produced for the six known locations.

MUCH WENLOCK 2004

119th Wenlock Olympian Games;

Society of Olympic Collectors 20th Anniversary

The Society Anniversary celebrations are planned to coincide with the annual Wenlock Olympian Games.

This is particularly appropriate because one of the earliest meetings of the Society took place at Much Wenlock (cached souvenirs still available in limited quantities).

The main events of the Weekend, in addition to the annual celebration of the Games, will be:

Friday 9th July - 'Socialise' in bar of the Gaskil Arms for those arriving.

Saturday 10th July - Exhibition of Philatelic material and Memorabilia;

Reception;

Anniversary Dinner with members of the Wenlock Olympian Society and Guests.

Helen Cromarty will present a brief history of the Wenlock Olympian Society, and Dr. Penny Brookes.

Sunday 11th July Exhibition of Philatelic material and Memorabilia;

The exhibition is planned to be open between 11.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. on Saturday, and 11.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. on Sunday.

During the exhibition, an area to swap / exchange material will be available, and a table for sale of Society souvenirs and unsold auction lots.

Timing of the Reception is to be confirmed.

The Anniversary Dinner will take place at the Gaskill Arms, 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 p.m.

Accommodation is available at the Gaskill Arms, at a rate of £70.00 per double room including breakfast. The hotel has ample car parking, traditional bars with good snack and restaurant facilities.

All rooms have been provisionally reserved for the night of Saturday 10th., and requests for rooms should be made on the enclosed form to reach the Committee by 7th June at the latest.

Any members attending, who have material that they would like considered for display should contact John Crowther (details inside front cover).

Dr. William Penny Brookes

Reprinted from the programme of the 118th Wenlock Olympian Games

Founder in 1850 of the Wenlock Olympian Society

1. Born in 1809 in the home of his father, the local doctor, at 4 Wilmore Street, Much Wenlock, opposite the Parish Church.
2. Left Much Wenlock to study at Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals in London, and then in Padua and Paris.
3. After qualifying in 1831 he returned to Much Wenlock and took over his late father's practice. In 1841 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace and became a Commissioner of Roads and Taxes. Later he played an important role in the renovation of the council Chamber in the Guildhall, the building of the Corn Exchange, the formation of the Wenlock Gas Company and the building of the Much Wenlock and Severn Junction Railway.
4. In 1841 he founded the Agricultural Reading Society and it was from this that in 1850 he founded the Wenlock Olympian society to "promote the moral, physical and intellectual improvement of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Wenlock, and especially of the Working Classes, by the encouragement of out-door recreation and by the award of prizes annually at public meetings of skill in athletic exercises, and proficiency in intellectual and industrial attainments".
5. The first games, held in October 1850, were a mixture of old country sports, cricket, football, quoits and athletics. During the early years a fun event was usually added to the programme. Pageantry was an important element from the outset. A band led the procession of flag bearers, competitors and officials which marched through the decorated streets of the town to the Racecourse where the Games were held.
6. From the beginning some events were open to all comers. In the much expanded 1851 Games, for example, according to the newspaper report, Poyner of Albrighton won three events, Badger of Wolverhampton came second in the "half mile footrace", while Mainwaring of Birmingham won the "leaping in distance" event.
7. In 1859 Brookes was in contact with Greece, sending £10 to be presented to the winner of an event in the Athens Olympian Games organised by Zappas. The Greek Committee decided to award the Wenlock Prize to the winner of the "long or seven fold" race.
8. The Shropshire Olympian Games were founded in 1861 through his initiative, and in 1865 he was one of the leading lights in the formation of the National Olympian Society. Their first festival in 1866 at the Crystal Palace was a great success attracting 10,000 spectators. The King of Greece donated a silver cup to be awarded to the winner of the Pentathlon at the 1877 National Olympian Games.
9. Brookes had been for many years a persistent campaigner for the inclusion of physical education in schools. The Wenlock society petitioned Parliament in 1869, 1870, and 1890, while Brookes wrote to Gladstone and other notables on numerous occasions. He lived long enough to learn that the Board of Education had agreed to give special grants for physical education as part of the curriculum.

10. From 1880 Brookes was in contact with the Greek authorities, especially Gennadius the Greek minister in London advocating the holding of an international Olympic Games in Athens. The Greek newspaper "Clio" in June 1881 reported "Dr. Brookes, this enthusiastic Philhellene is endeavouring to organise an International Olympian Festival, to be held in Athens."

11. In 1889, Baron de Coubertin, the organiser of an International Congress on Physical Education, appealed for help in some English newspapers. Brookes responded. The Baron was so impressed that he came to Wenlock in October 1890 to see a meeting of the Wenlock Olympian Games. On his return to France he wrote in "La Revue Athletique" "If the Olympic Games that Modern Greece has not yet been able to revive still survives today, it is due, not to a Greek but to Dr. W.P. Brookes."

12. Although Brookes was listed as an honorary member of the 1894 Congress, he was unable to attend because of ill health. Regrettably he died in December 1895, and so did not see his dream come to fruition.

13. Since then the people of Much Wenlock have been able to keep the tradition going with some gaps in the event, notably during the two world wars. Since 1977, the latest revival date, the society has gone from strength to strength, with the good doctor's objectives first and foremost, i.e. provision of physical and cultural activities for those living in the area. There is a thriving athletic section with over 40 members, who compete in many athletic events. Including indoor athletics, track and field leagues and championships cross country and road races. The Fencing Section is flourishing with a number of internationals in the Club. The annual Live Arts Festival in March attracts over 200 young musicians, poets, prose writers, etc., The Games now are more wide ranging with a larger than ever athletic programme, including five Pentathlon events, a 10km Multi-Terrain Race (or Off-Road) and a Triathlon. Other events include Fencing, Archery, 5 a – side Soccer, Bowls, Cricket, Table Tennis, Golf, Karate, Volley Ball and Clay Pigeon shooting. Since 1981 athletic events for the Disabled have been incorporated into the programme. Special games have been mounted over the years.

In 1950 they were revived for the first time after the second world war and celebrated the centenary of their very first games.

In 1980 a special Festival was held to celebrated the founding of the Amateur Athletic Association in 1800.

In 1986 the society celebrated its own 100th games with distinguished visitors from the British Olympic Association, the International Olympic Committee, and the grand-nephew of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, Geoffrey de Navacelle, coming over from France as the guest of honour.

In 1990 it was the centenary of the visit of Baron Pierre de Coubertin to the Wenlock Games and the guest of honour was the President of the British Olympic Association, H.R.H. The Princess Royal, Princess Anne. She led representatives from the British Olympic Association, including their Chairman Sir Arthur Gold, and Dr. Don Anthony, who has done so much to forge the link between the Wenlock society and the British Olympic association.

The year 1994/1995 saw two important events: In July 1994 the President of the International Olympic Association, H.E. Juan Antonio Samaranch, visited Much Wenlock. When asked why he had come he replied "I have come because this where the Modern Olympics started". He visited the Brookes sites and planted a tree, a Spanish Oak, on the Linden Fields. On this visit he invited a party from the William Brookes School together with the Hon. Sec. Norman Wood and his wife Barbara, to visit the international H.Q. in Lausanne, Switzerland. This visit took place in April, 1995, and proved to be an exciting event.

A special event on the 4th and 5th July 1995 was the arrival of the Olympic Torch for the European Youth Olympics at Bath for an overnight stay in Much Wenlock.

There are several commemorative items to Dr. Brookes in Much Wenlock. A Plaque in Holy Trinity Church, another on the Corn Exchange and one on 4 Wilmore Street, the house of his birth. An oak tree in the Churchyard planted by Geoffrey de Navacelle. An oak tree on the Linden Fields planted by Baron Pierre de Coubertin and another oak tree on the Linden Fields planted by The Princess Royal, Princess Anne and one by H.E. Juan Samaranch, President of the International Olympic Association.

Special Handstamp - 11 July 2004

To celebrate our Anniversary and the celebration in conjunction with the Wenlock Olympian Society, a special handstamp will be in use on 11 July.

A special cover is currently in the design stages, and will be used to create a Society souvenir.

Quantities will be based on advance orders received, with only a small surplus for stock.

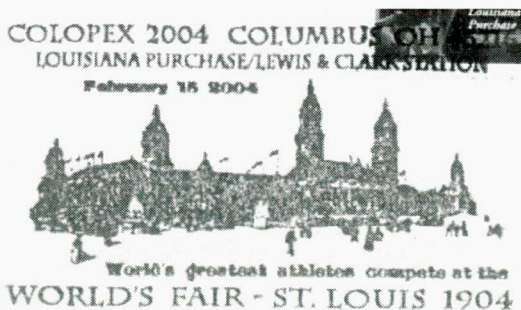
Please place advance orders on the enclosed flier.



ST. LOUIS 1904 REMEMBERED

The Columbus Philatelic Club Inc. produced a very attractive souvenir cover for COLOPEX 2004, COLUMBUS OHIO.

The handstamp commemorates:
'World's greatest athletes compete at the / World's Fair - St. Louis 1904'.



INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PACKET

The first circuit of the International exchange packet is now underway. The initial packet contains almost 60 sheets of very varied material spanning the whole period of the Modern Olympic Games, both Winter and Summer. Examples of the material are shown on the following pages.

CIRCULATION INFORMATION

1) Packets will consist of one copy sheet for each lot, a list of the lots (copies), to be signed on removal of a lot, a slip for requesting purchase and making payment, a circulation list, and a copy of these rules.

2) On receipt of the packet

- please count the number of copy sheets enclosed.

- Remove the copies of any lots you require and return them to the Packet Manager together with one of the purchase slips enclosed, and remittance or advice of Paypal transfer. Payments for the lots required and postage should be included.

3) Payment may be made as follows:

- UK: Cheque or Paypal transfer

- Overseas: GB Pounds Sterling by Paypal transfer, or by postal order or bankers draft, or by cash (sender's risk – registered post recommended).

4) Standard rates of postage will apply:

- UK: 1- 3 lots: 60p. 3-6 lots: 80p. 7 or more lots: £1

- Europe: 1 lot: 70p 2-6 lots: £1 7 or more lots: £1.50

- World: 1 lot: £1 2-6 lots: £1.50 7 or more lots: £2

Lots to Europe and worldwide will be sent by ordinary airmail at letter or small packet rate. All sendings are insured and a certificate of posting will be obtained by the Packet Manager.

In the rare event that postage is not standard, the amount will be indicated by the Packet Manager on the copy sheet for the lot affected.

5) Send the packet to the next member on the list within 7 days of receipt. First class post should be used within the UK, and the equivalent within another country. Airmail should be used if mailing from one country to another.

6) Members who will be away from home on holiday or business for more than 7days should advise the packet secretary.

7) Lots purchased will be sent to buyers in batches at intervals of not more than one month.

8) The Packet Manager will vary the circulation for each packet so that each member will from time to time be the first to receive a packet. To aid the speed of the packet and reduce postage costs, members will be grouped by country. When there are a large number of members participating separate circuits may be instituted.

9) If all lots in a Packet have been purchased, the person making the final purchase should return the circulating documents to the Packet Manager. The Packet Manager may retire a packet before this point, and will notify the appropriate member accordingly.

10) Any queries should be addressed to the Packet Manager.

Brian Hammond, 6 Lanark Road, Ipswich, IP4 3EH

phone: +44 (0)1473 412056..... e-mail: brian.hammond57@ntlworld.com

If you would like to receive this and further packets - **CONTACT BRIAN NOW.**

International Circulating Packet

Vendor:	Packet ref: 11035	Price: £20:00	Society of Olympic Collectors
Vendors ref:			

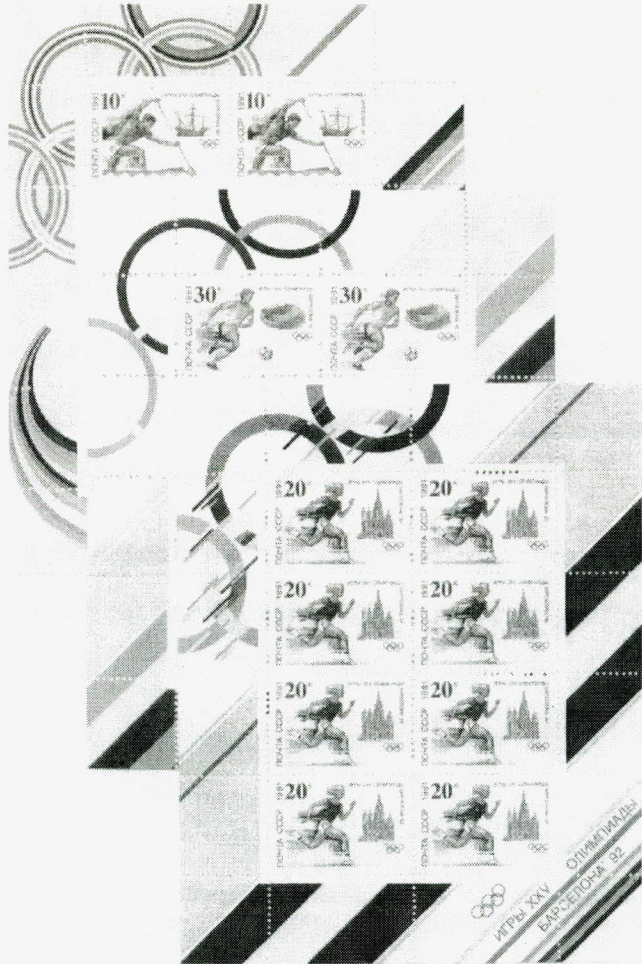


Description & notes:

1924 Paris. Kolarsine p/c 'Swimming'. Postally used from Poitiers 30.8.24 with Parthenay arr. Cancel. Shown above at 65%. Actual size 14cm x 9cm.

International Circulating Packet

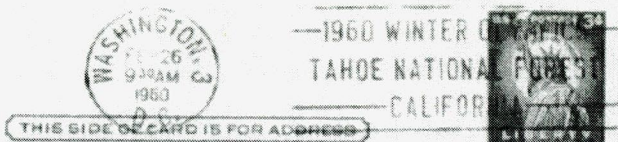
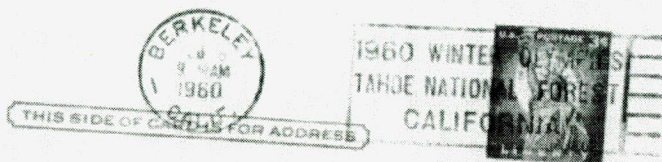
Vendors ref: 090306	Packet ref: 1/054	Price: £3	Society of Olympic Collectors
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Description & notes:
Barcelona '92: set of 3 Russian sheetlets of 8 unmounted mint (120 x 150mm)

**Society of Olympic Collectors
International Circulating Packet**

Vendor:	Vendor's ref: 040303	Packet ref: 1/011	Price: £12.50
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Description & notes: 1960 Winter Olympics Squaw Valley: 3 types of slogan postmark on 3 postal stationery cards (all to same address) Berkeley - boxed slogan, Sparks - 3 line, Washington 3 - 4 line. All fine legible copies of the slogans.

Vendors ref: 09002	Packet ref:	Price: £ 8.00	Society of Olympic Collectors
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U.S. Postal Service
CERTIFIED MAIL RECEIPT
(Domestic Mail Only; No Insurance Coverage Provided)

SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84121

Postage	\$ 0.34	UNIT ID: 0005
Certified Fee	2.10	Postmark Here
Return Receipt Fee (Enhancement Required)		Clerk: CLERK1
Restricted Delivery Fee (Enhancement Required)		02/24/02
Total Postage & Fees	\$ 2.44	

Sent To _____
Street, Apt. No., or PO Box No. _____
City, State, ZIP+4 _____

PS Form 3800, January 2001 See Reverse for Instructions

Salt Lake City 2002

Certified Mail cover, with receipt.

Olympic Partners fixed date handstamp.

Postal value label confirms mailing date as Feb 24 2002

Certified label has 'rings' handstamp only available at Crossroads Plaza.

Packet Rules

- 1) Membership of the International Packet Circuit is available to all paid up members of SOC over the age of 18, wherever resident, who make written request to the Packet Manager to receive it.
- 2) Olympic material suitable for the International Packet includes stamps, covers, postcards and phone cards, but not pins, books and other heavy, large or fragile material, which will not be accepted. The Packet Manager reserves the right to reject any lot that he in his discretion considers unsuitable for circulation.
- 3) Original material is not circulated, only scans or photocopies provided by sellers.
- 4) Buyers and sellers should send full name and address details together with telephone number and, where appropriate, e-mail address.
- 5) Sellers need not be members of the Society of Olympic Collectors but non-members will be charged commission of 15%. SOC members will be charged only 10%.
- 6) Material for inclusion in the packet should be sent to the Packet Manager, at seller's risk. Material is covered by the society insurance from original receipt by the Packet Manager to receipt by purchaser or return unsold to vendor.
- 7) The Packet Manager will advise receipt by e-mail, or by post provided a stamped addressed envelope or International Reply Coupon is provided by the seller.
- 8) Lots may be a single item or a number of items.
- 9) Each lot must be submitted in an individual mount or protective envelope, and sent to the Packet Manager in a suitably stiffened outer cover. The Packet Manager cannot accept responsibility for lots received folded or in a damaged state.
- 10) Each lot must be accompanied by two photocopies/scans of the lot on A4 (or 8½ x 11) pages. Each page should bear the following information:
 - Seller's name; - Seller's reference, & space for Packet Manager's reference
 - A brief description of the lot, including all faults, whether or not visible on the scan/ copy
 - The price in GB Pounds Sterling. Lots priced in any other currency will be repriced by the Packet Manager at an appropriate rate of exchange. The Sterling price will prevail.A pro-forma will be published in Torch Bearer or may be copied from the SOC web site www.societyofolympiccollectors.org.
- 11) No photocopies will be included in the packet until the actual lot is received by the Packet Manager.
- 12) Photocopies will be put into circulation in the next available packet. Where a large number of lots are received in one sending they may be split and circulated in two or more separate packets.
- 13) A packet will be circulated when sufficient material is available.
- 14) Unsold material will be offered in a future packet or returned to the seller, postage costs to be borne by the seller.
- 15) Sales proceeds less commission and any postage costs will be paid by cheque to UK sellers. Sums due to overseas sellers will be advised as packets are wound up, and will, if requested in advance or specifically, be repaid to the seller by way of pounds Sterling cheque or Paypal credit, but will normally be held by the Packet Manager on account for the seller, who may use the monies to pay SOC subscriptions, or for purchases from the International Packet or from the SOC auction. At the packet Manager's discretion payment in pounds Sterling may also be made to third parties. Payments to sellers will not be made in advance of completion of packets, nor in anticipation of sales.
- 16) Sellers are advised that it will be a minimum of 3 months and up to a year before payment or credit may be expected.
- 17) The decision of the packet manager is final.

ATHENS 2004 - ELTA PHILATELIC ISSUES

The following details are extracts from an ELTA brochure detailing stamp issues for 2004. The information still has a number of gaps such as proposed values (impending rate increase?), and issue dates should be treated as provisional as changes have sometimes occurred.

For visitors to Greece it is also important to understand that not all products are actually available on a widespread basis on the day of issue. Thessalonika has for example received supplies of some issues up to three days after issue - and it is the 'second city' of Greece.

"Olympic Sports" 26 March 2004 - (changed to 24 March 2004).



Issue comprises:

Set of six stamps; sheetlet containing all six designs; official first day covers; official set of post paid maximum cards.

A 'Set Album' and 'Luxury Set Album' is also available.

In common with recent Olympic issues, the cancel on the face of the official maximum cards is imprinted with gold foil.

Issued values:

€ 0.05 Swimmer;	€ 0.47 Passing relay baton;
€ 0.10 Dusting hands;	€ 2.08 Rhythmic gymnast;
€ 0.20 Canoe;	€ 5.00 Gymnast - rings.

Designed: Myrsini Vardopoulou, Size: 27mm x 35mm.

ΑΘΗΝΑ 2004

Ολυμπιακοί Αγώνες



028051



ΑΘΗΝΑ 2004



Sheetlet (individually numbered) of the "Olympic Sports" issue cancelled 24.III.04 in Thessalonika - the revised date of issue.

Note: The inclusion of the 'Passing the baton' design made this issue a prime candidate for the preparation of Torch Relay souvenirs.

ELTA had been unusually silent about the locations of any planned handstamps on the route of the relay making it almost impossible to prepare covers for mail-in requests.

As the Torch Relay was scheduled to commence on 25 March, the change of issue date seemed to accommodate the use of a stamp or stamps from this issue on relay souvenir covers.

It later transpired that the lack of advance information regarding the Torch Relay may have been inspired by ELTA wishing to exploit a commercial advantage as will be seen later in this article.

"Olympic Flame" 04 May 2004



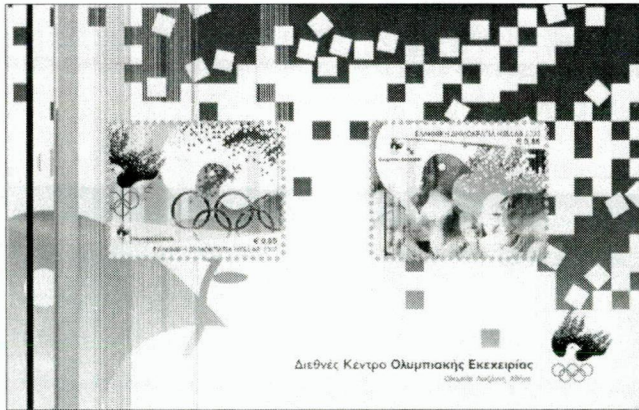
Issue comprises:

A single miniature sheet containing two stamps.

Total price of the sheet is advertised as not exceeding 3 Euros.

Design: George Stathopoulos
Size: 85mm x 105mm.

"Olympic Truce" 04 May 2004



Issue comprises:

A single miniature sheet containing two stamps.

Total price of the sheet is advertised as not exceeding 3 Euros.

Design: alterVision
Size: not stated.

"Ancient Olympic Coins" 15 June 2004



Issue comprises:

Set of four stamps; sheetlet containing all four designs; official first day covers; official set of post paid maximum cards.

A 'Set Album' and 'Luxury Set Album' will also be available.

Total price of the basic set is advertised as not exceeding 6 Euros.

Design: Myrsini Vardopoulou

Size: 27mm x 35mm.

"Modern Art and Olympic Games" 23 July 2004

Two miniature sheets, each containing two stamps.

Total price of the issue is advertised as not exceeding 6 Euros.

Size: 80mm x 120mm.





Issue comprises:
Set of two miniature sheets, but it is interesting that the promotional brochure also announces official first day covers; official set of post paid maximum cards and a sheetlet.

A 'Set Album' and 'Luxury Set Album' will also be available.

Size: 80mm x 120mm.

"Joint Issue: Athens - Beijing" 13 August 2004

Issue comprises:
Set of two stamps; official first day covers; official set of post paid maximum cards.

Total price of the basic set is advertised as not exceeding 4 Euros.



**"Greek Olympic Gold Medal Winners"
Issue date dictated by results.**

A 'template' for a potential design to commemorate Greek Gold Medal Winners is shown without any further details - simply the question "Who will win?"

It is assumed that ELTA intend to utilise similar technology to that introduced by Australia Post during the Sydney Games for rapid commemoration of the achievement of Greek athletes.



**"The power of will"
22 September 2004**

Issue comprises:

Set of four stamps; official first day covers; official set of post paid maximum cards.

A 'set album' will also be available.

Design: Alekos Fassianos

Size: 38mm x 30mm.



Athens 2004 Torch Relay.

The Torch Relay is split into three clearly defined stages:

- Domestic Torch Relay, Phase 1 - Olympia to Athens, March 2004.
- 'Global' Torch Relay to former host cities around the world and other significant locations.
- Domestic Torch Relay, Phase 2 - Touring the regions of Greece before arriving at the Opening Ceremony on August 13.

The following souvenirs were made available by ELTA in conjunction with the Domestic Torch Relay, Phase 1. There was little notice of these items and very limited supplies were available in Post Offices actually on the route at the time.



Olympia
25-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation



Andritsaina
25-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation



Pyllos
26-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation



Kalamata
27-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation



Gythio
28-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation



Tripoli
29-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation



Epidavros
30-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation





Athens
31-3-2004
'P' stamp and
cancellation



ELTA souvenir covers.

A set of eight souvenir covers was produced utilising the 'P' stamps and cancellations illustrated above. The cover for Athens 31-03-04 is shown below.

A souvenir folder containing an outline map of the route with stamps and cancels adjacent to the relevant locations was also available.

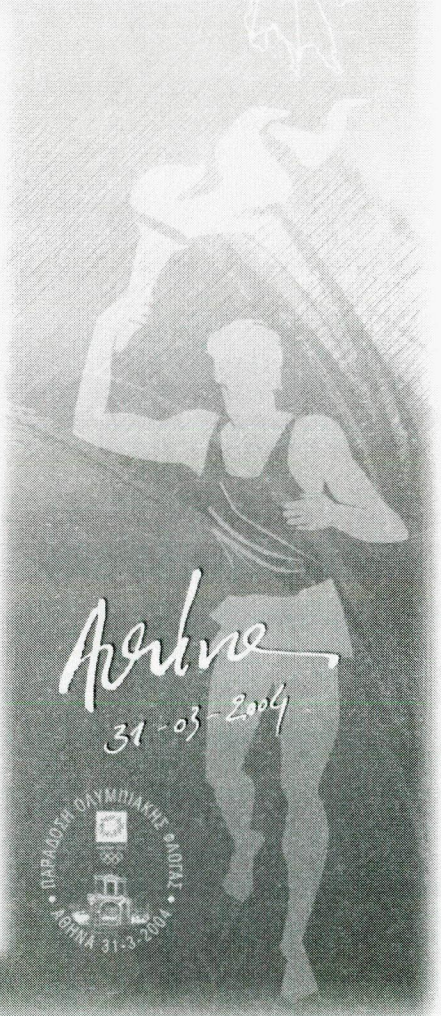


The 'P' stamps were produced in sheets of 5 stamps with 5 labels of a single design. A set of sheets therefore consists of 8 sheets - each with a label representing one of the cities / towns.

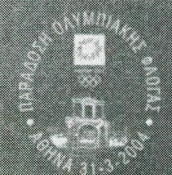
The margin of the sheet is illustrated with a 'Torch Bearer' and an inset map with the key cities / towns representing the start, finish and overnight stops of the relay marked. The location depicted on the label of the sheet is indicated in red on the map.

The sheet for Athens is illustrated on the following page:

Delivering The Flame
Τελετή Παράδοσης



Aθήνα
31-03-2004



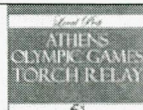
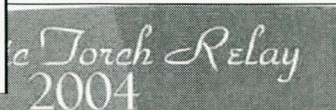
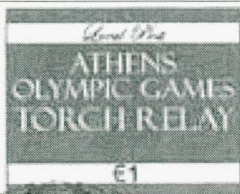
ATHENS 2004 - NOT THE TORCH RELAY

Unfortunately it is time once again for a 'Buyer beware' notice.

These 'interesting' covers are part of a series offered on ebay as 'local post, torch relay covers'.

At AU\$ 12.00 starting price, and being sold from Australia, it is interesting to note that the 'value' of the Local Post imprint is denominated in Euros.

At least this fabrication has had the common sense to change the date in the 'cancel' to match the cacheted image (no doubt taken from the daily website report).



CARRY THE FLAME



The first Olympic Torchbearer, Greek Javelin champion Kostas Gatsioudis, receives the Olympic Flame from high priestess Thalia Prokopiou in the ancient Olympia stadium moments after the Olympic Flame was lit by the sun rays in a parabolic mirror during the traditional Olympic lighting ceremony in ancient Olympia March 25, 2004.



CARRY THE FLAME

Olympic Torch Relay 2004



ATHENS 2004 President, Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, is holding the Olympic Torch during the Lighting Ceremony in the Panathinaiko stadium on Wednesday 31 March 2004.



Torino (Turin) 2006 UPDATE

A self explanatory from the Italian Postal Authority announced a new issue:



09/03/2004: 4 stamps for Turin 2006

The first pre-Olympic series of stamps was presented on 9th March 2004 by the Minister of Communication, Maurizio Gasparri.

The set consists of 4 stamps commemorating the Olympic Winter Games, Turin 2006.

The stamps are the first of a series that will include 3 further stamps with designs showing the towns of Sestrière, Cesana-San Sicario and Pinerolo to be issued in 2005. When the series is complete it will celebrate the 7 towns which will host the Olympic Winter Games 2006.

This series is designed by Leonardo Coen Cagli (architect and designer, born in Rome, currently residing and working in Milan). A professional graphic designer since 1976, he has worked on the films "Pirates" directed by Roman Polanski, "King Solomon's Mines" and "Hudson Hawk", starring Bruce Willis.

3.5 million copies of each stamp will be printed for general sale at all post offices in Italy..

For collectors, each stamp will be accompanied by a philatelic postcard which gives some details of the stamp. There is also an illustrated bulletin with an article by the President of the Turin Organising Committee (TOROC).

The announcement refers to the 'first pre-Olympic series', but collectors should not forget the earlier issue of a single stamp showing the Torino 2006 logo. Ed.

An excellent series of postcards promoting the 2006 Olympic Winter Games has also been produced.

Many of the photographs used show events at the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic Winter Games so they are likely to appeal to a wide range of collectors. A Paralympic card is included in the series.



Text on the reverse of the cards is generally in Italian (few English), and is translated below:

Olympic Dream. I have a vision. It is a vision that moves me. I have an idea in my mind. It is that idea which guides me. I have a hope in my soul. It is that hope that gives me strength. I have a dream in my heart. My dream is immense, warm and bright. It is the most beautiful dream: it is gold (*sweet*).

Loyalty. You are my antagonist not my enemy. If I look into your eyes, I see your beliefs, if I close my eyes I am sure I can count on your loyalty. Two antagonists that shake hands - the most beautiful thing in sport. Actually, this is sport.

Team Spirit. A team that behaves as a single entity, that is one of the scenarios that the Olympic Games gives us. It is the proof that when people work together for a common goal they can achieve great things.



Perfection. It seems so natural, so easy: perfection! A moment of harmony and elegance that stays with us for ever. For that moment there were hours, days, years of discipline and hard work. All for this instant of perfection.

Sacrifice. Victory and defeat, pleasure and pain, happiness and sacrifice. In sport, like in life, there are opposites. The opposite of a gold medal is the sadness that paralyses the heart after a fall, a mistake or just bad luck. Stand up again and carry on competing - that is the real victory.

Paralympics. Sledge, hockey, curling, downhill, biathlon - more than 500 athletes will compete with tenacity, courage and great technical ability. Men and women for whom determination overtake physical obstacles, showing that sport is for all. Disabled athletes from over forty countries participate in these events.

Luge. Feet towards the valley, controlling the luge with imperceptible leg movements, the athletes speed down like bullets in a breath-taking race. A sport that combines speed, technique and precision, and gives Italy extraordinary success at recent Olympic Winter Games.

Skeleton was reintroduced to the Olympic Games in Salt Lake City in 2002. The last time it appeared prior to 2002 was at St. Moritz in 1948, where the gold medal was won by Nino Bibbia from Valtellina. Athletes launch themselves facing ahead on their stomach with arms alongside the body at a speed of 80Km/hr.

Figure Skating. Grace and strength combine, for a show that feeds peoples dreams. Extraordinary and artistic combinations executed to music, for unforgettable moments. Tears and medals, but figure skating is not just sport - it is culture, art, passion.

Bobsleigh. At the start all of the crew push the bob for 50 metres, a distance covered in less than 6 seconds at a speed of 40 Km/hr., before the crew jump into the bob. Then down the run at speeds that can exceed 135 Km/hr.

Ice hockey. A team game, fast, so fast that video cameras can be fooled. A disk instead of a ball, and ten players chasing the puck on skates in a spectacular show. Technique, strength, determination and enthusiasm displayed in every goal scored.

Curling. It is just like bowls but on ice. Born in Scotland, curling became famous in Switzerland, Canada and Scandinavia. It is a sport that requires precision: every player must push a smooth stone on the ice and put it into the target area, meantime the team brush the ice in front of the stone with a broom.

Snowboard. Surfing on waves of snow, performing acrobatic figures - that is what is fascinating about snowboarding, the youngest discipline of the Olympic Games. It combines technique, freedom and fashion. A short Olympic history that has already brought success to Italy.

Freestyle Skiing. Acrobatics on skis. Athletes with courage and no fear. Like divers but on snow, they jump and perform extraordinary geometric figures - or they just jump as if crazy. Freestyle is pure entertainment. A beautiful madness that enthralles spectators.

Speed Skating. Tight clothing for aerodynamics, head-down and hands behind the back: the athletes duel around an oval 400 metres long, side by side. The blades of their skates leave deep scores in the ice, looking for a new record, for medals and to conquer.

Ski jump. In flight, the body is straight, the skis are horizontal, a breath-taking position. The landing must be with parallel skis and one foot slightly in front of the other - hands must not touch the skis. Sondre Nordheim is considered the founder of ski jumping: an event that combines confidence and courage.

Short Track Speed Skating. Hands down to touch the ice, fast reactions at the start and anxious to overtake with skill to avoid dangerous collisions. Short track is fast and spectacular. A sport that gave Italy important success in Albertville and Lillehammer.



Alpine Skiing. The excitement of "downhill", the technique of slalom, the style of "giant slalom" and the strength of "super G". These are the elements that make skiing the most loved winter sport, and that made the fame of athletes such as Zeno Colò, Gustavo Thoeni, Piero Gros, Alberto Tomba and Deborah Compagnoni.

Cross-country Skiing. Cross-country is undoubtedly the most ancient form of skiing, and the earliest experience that men had on skis. It is the discipline with the highest number of events in the Olympic Games, twelve different races.

Biathlon. Strength and resistance of the cross-country athlete, dedication and concentration of a shooter. Biathlon combines the two sports creating a fascinating contrast between an energetic sport such as skiing and the calm of shooting. An old tradition that stands the test of time.

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Take the opportunity to reach fellow Olympic collectors

AFCOS, Paris and the Coubertin Foundation

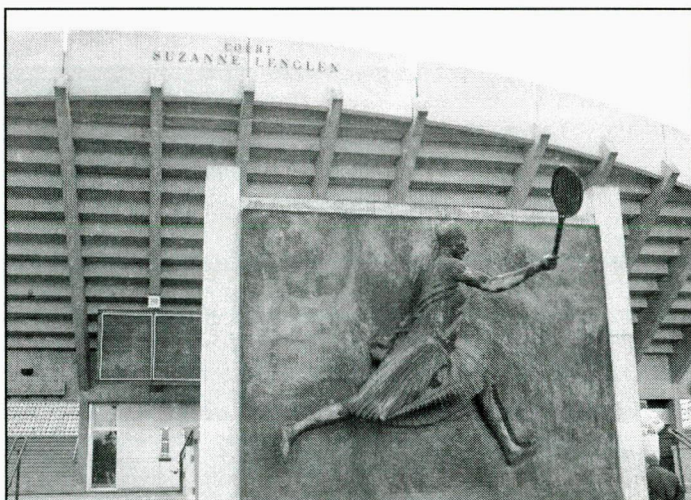
Bob Wilcock

Paris is a good place for Olympic philately at any time, and the annual general meeting of AFCOS, SOC's sister society in France proved an ideal opportunity to renew acquaintance with that lovely city.

It was snowing as our plane left Luton, but it was bright and sunny the following morning as we enjoyed the delights of the Marigny stamp market. Over two hours we found plenty to look at, some at bargain prices (and we bought), and others at outrageous prices – they looked as if they had been in the boxes at the time of our last visit, and will no doubt be there for our next!

Thirty-nine AFCOS members turned up for the AGM in the afternoon, at the prestigious Racing Club de France, and, thanks to the support AFCOS receives in France (that SOC does not) everyone received a DVD of the 2003 World Athletics Championships in Paris in 2003 and a French Post Office presentation pack. There was an opportunity to buy AFCOS philatelic souvenirs, and in particular the superb book on Chamonix 1924 at a discount price (reviewed later in this Torch Bearer). I listened to the livelier parts of the AGM but spent much of the afternoon checking the English text of the book on the Armand Noyer (AN) postcards of Paris 1924 being published later this year (previewed below also).

Thanks no doubt to the AFCOS President, Jean-Pierre Picquot, who is important in the world of tennis, we were treated to a guided tour of the Roland Garros tennis complex and museum.



Memorial to Suzanne Lenglen & Roland Garros court named after her Suzanne Lenglen was Olympic Champion in 1920, losing only four Games in the entire tournament. She was Wimbledon Champion, and lost only one match between 1919 and 1926. She withdrew from the 1924 Paris Olympics.

In this chauvinistic world it was heartening to see that not only did the museum highlight the sixteenth century origins in Italy of Real Tennis, but also the origins of modern tennis in nineteenth century England: I was astonished to learn that the game was actually patented in England in 1877, and the museum has a copy of the original patent document.

We then settled down to a sumptuous meal in the Roland Garros restaurant, enlivened by some IOC videos. One brief cameo demonstrated how to come second is still to win, a thought very apt when the Number 2 of the Paris 2012 Bid Committee gave a presentation, and comment around the table turned to London's competing bid. Needless to say, it was a Londoner that made the connection. It was a most interesting presentation. I like the imaginative touch of putting the Beach Volleyball directly underneath the Eiffel Tower. The speaker interestingly made the point that perhaps the biggest obstacle Paris has to overcome is that they are perceived as arrogant. Not a criticism that can be levelled at London I think, but has London sufficient determination?

Another guest was a senior official from the French Post Office. She had to say that it has not proved possible to move forward the date of issue of the French stamp for Athens 2004 to Friday 25 July, the day the Torch is in Paris. Its release remains the following day, to coincide with the opening of a philatelic exhibition. She did however confirm that there will be a special handstamp to commemorate the arrival of the Torch in Paris.

At that time final details of the Paris celebrations were not available, but it was made clear that the IOC had decreed that the occasion must not be used by candidate cities to publicise their bids. Thus, while the Torch may start its London run at Wimbledon on 26 June, because Wimbledon was a tennis venue in 1908 (there was no tennis in 1948), it may not visit Roland Garros because, although it is a proposed venue for 2012, neither the 1900 nor the 1924 Olympic tennis tournaments were held there.





At midnight, after good food and good wine in pleasant company, it was a refreshing walk back to the aptly chosen Olympic Hotel. The next morning we went by coach for a private visit to the Coubertin Foundation at Chevreuse on the outskirts of Paris. The chateau has belonged to the Coubertin family since 1577, and Pierre de Coubertin stayed there from time to time to escape the heat of Paris in the summer. There is no more Olympic connection than that. It was formed by Yvonne de Coubertin, his niece, and the philosophy of the foundation has great affinities with the Olympic aspirations of Pierre de Coubertin. The Foundation runs year-long courses in the chateau and adjacent workshops and bronze foundry, intended to develop even further the skills and experience of artists with at least 5 years experience who have already demonstrated high levels of skill and imagination in their chosen field. They provide opportunities for them to develop their artistic talents, and the chateau and grounds are a showcase for sculptures and other works of art of the highest quality (we only saw one bizarre and unfathomable work, a black and white object purporting to be three cows!). The Foundation does not just concentrate on pure art, but offers practical work at the highest level, including renovation work for historic buildings, and furniture, plus architectural and sculptural work for important modern buildings: particularly impressive were some elegant staircases in marble steel and glass.

Perhaps the most fascinating part of the tour was of the foundry. It is astonishing how difficult and complex it is to cast an object in bronze. We were shown the seven or eight stages needed, even for the smallest bronzes. For the largest castings even casing the mould in thick concrete is not enough to ensure it will not crack when the hot metal is poured in, so it is lowered into a huge deep pit and encased in sand. Finally a pneumatic drill is needed to free the cast from the concrete casing! Incidentally, one of the works in progress was a fresh casting of a Rodin statue, Spirit of Eternal Rest.

Another excellent lunch followed, and in true French fashion, over-ran, so the afternoon bourse was condensed into a frantic half-hour, and then the coach took us back to Paris, to go our separate ways after a most enjoyable weekend. It was far from being totally philatelic, but philately formed the background to an excellent social and cultural experience. AFCOS have invited SOC to join them, in return for the visit SOC organised to Henley and Oxford. If they put on a weekend as good as this it really will be quite something!

BOOK REVIEWS -

Chamonix 1924 : La mémoire des 1ers Jeux Olympiques d'Hiver



AFCOS member Pierre Vitalien has produced a stunning record of the first Olympic Winter Games. All the factual and statistical information is there, from organisation and construction of the facilities and arenas, pre-Olympic trials, Opening Ceremony, every event, Closing Ceremony and post-Games activity, but it is far from just a dry record. There are background stories and anecdotes throughout, and the whole book is lavishly illustrated with postcards and photographs including eight superb colour plates. The book concludes with a biographical table covering every competitor, members of the Jury and other key personalities. The list of acknowledgements is long, but even without it one can see this is a thoroughly researched book; it has been a ten-year labour of love for the author.

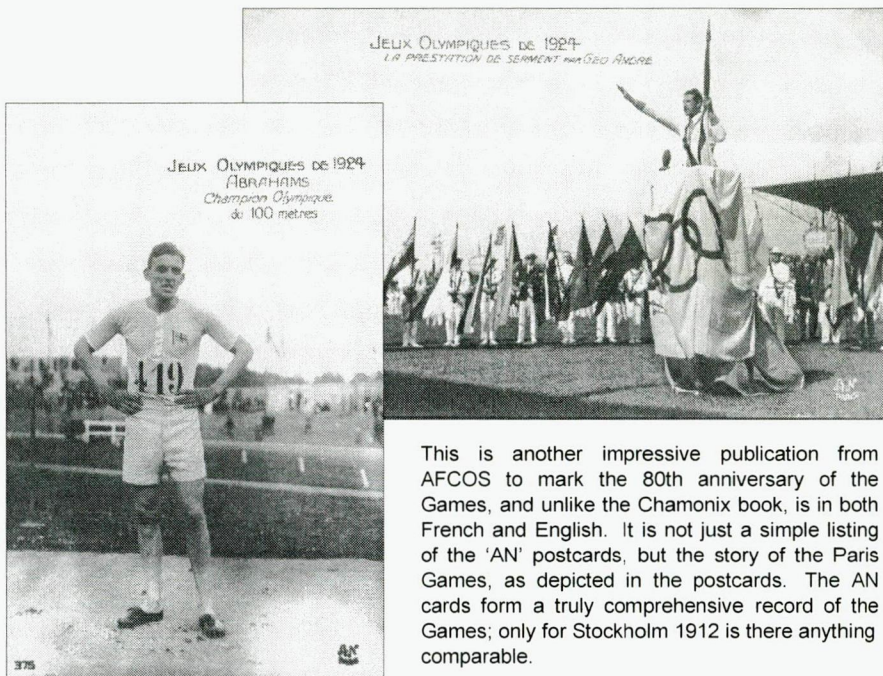
To get the fullest of value you do need to be able to read French, but with illustrations, plans or tables on virtually every page, anyone can follow the basic story. If you collect the Olympic Winter Games, this book is a must.

172 pages A4 size it costs €45 paperback, or €55 hardback. Postage is €10 for the UK, the rest of Europe & Africa, €13 for America, Asia and Australasia. Orders should be sent to: Pierre Vitalien, Chemin des Jardins, 84830 Serignan du Comtat, France (vitalien@club-internet.fr)

English members may order from Bob Wilcock (bob@towlard.freeserve.co.uk) and pay in Sterling, £39.50 softback, £46.50 hardback. Orders received by 26 May will be picked up at the Olympic Collectors Fair in Lausanne, and posted from England. A postage discount will be refunded with each book. Otherwise orders will be amalgamated at 30 June. Books will be sent individually from France. After 30 June orders will need to be placed directly with Pierre Vitalien.

If UK members would like to look at the book before buying, there is a copy in the library. Please contact Kenny Cook to make arrangements to borrow it.

Jeux Olympiques de Paris 1924: Les Cartes Postales Armand Noyer



This is another impressive publication from AFCOS to mark the 80th anniversary of the Games, and unlike the Chamonix book, is in both French and English. It is not just a simple listing of the 'AN' postcards, but the story of the Paris Games, as depicted in the postcards. The AN cards form a truly comprehensive record of the Games; only for Stockholm 1912 is there anything comparable.

Some 250 of the cards are illustrated, and for each section there is an introduction by an Olympic competitor. The date, venue and medal winners are given for each event beside the appropriate postcard(s). It is a very pleasing and easy to follow format. There is a preface by former IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch. The book is a must for every collector interested in the 1924 Games.

At the time of writing this review only the proofs have been seen, but it will be 240x340mm and about 160 pages.

Orders should be placed directly with:

AFCOS, Maison du Sport Français, 1 avenue Pierre de Coubertin, 75013 Paris, France
For orders placed by 31 May the price is €35 softback, €45 hardback including European postage. After 31 May the prices are €45 and €55; (add another €5 for postage outside Europe)

UK members may place orders with Bob Wilcock, by 26 May £25 and £32, by 30 June £32 and £39.25. Softback copies are expected to be available end May, hardback end June. Orders received after 26 May will be posted in July.

Once again, a copy is being purchased for the SOC library, and UK members will be welcome to borrow it in due course.

REVIEW OF MAGAZINES WITH OLYMPIC INTEREST

Esprit: Sports & Olympisme No 30

Issue 30 of the AFCOS journal has articles on a wide range of sports, leading with an article on the cyclist Paul de Vivie, known as "Velocio", followed by brief biographies of half a dozen French sporting and Olympic champions who would have been 100 in 2003. Curling was a demonstration sport in 1924, and Pierre Vitalien presents details and photographs from his book on the Chamonix Winter Olympics. René Christin explains pelota, illustrating various cancels. Medals and coins depicting field hockey are reproduced in colour. An article on Maureen Connolly reproduces Wimbledon postmarks from her era (the 1950s). Australian and New Zealand issues for the rugby World Cup are also illustrated.

On the Olympics there is a brief note on the candidature of Paris for 2012 (www.parisjo2012.fr), and illustration of a previously unknown meter for Albertville 1992:



Esprit: Sports & Olympisme No 31

Issue 31 marks the tenth anniversary of AFCOS and is virtually all in colour. The principal feature is ten pages of favourite pieces in members' collections, including a postcard from de Coubertin and other athlete signed cards. There is a brief article on the Kolarsine postcards of 1924, and another on Henri Didon (who devised 'Citius, Altius, Fortius'). Three world championships held in 2003 are covered, table tennis, handball, and the Rugby World Cup, with details of the 21 British postmarks for the first day of issue of the miniature sheet. With a look back to the formation in 1994 of AFCOS, and the IOC Centenary Congress, and the 80th anniversary of the Chamonix Winter Olympics, plus two pages on Serena Williams, all well illustrated, there is a lot to look at in this issue.

The Journal may be borrowed from the SOC library, and is also available from Christoph Ait-Braham, 11 Place Georges Braque, 95100 Argenteuil, France.

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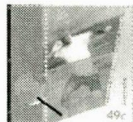
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