

Should Aerophilately be a subset of Postal History?

Frank Walton RDP FRPSL

Stuart Rossiter Trust Lecture
9 November 2018

Why am I interested Aerophilately?

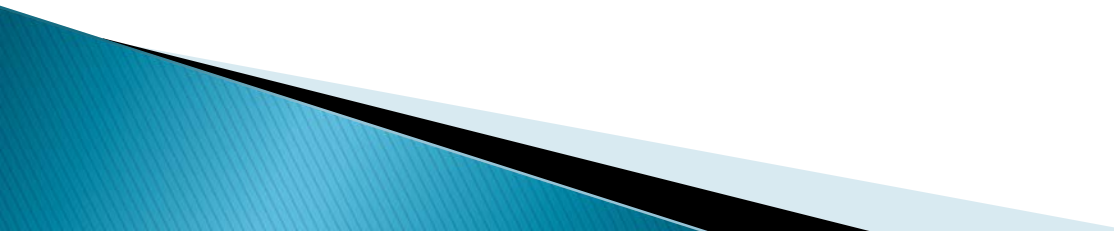
My own background in philately:

- ▶ Collector of all aspects of Sierra Leone to 1961
 - ▶ Exhibitor of Sierra Leone in traditional class
 - ▶ Collector of all aspects of China to 1949
 - ▶ Exhibitor of Chinese Air Mail in postal history class
 - ▶ Plus about a dozen 'sideline collections'...
 - ▶ National judge in traditional, postal history, literature and air mail
 - ▶ FIP judge in traditional class
- 


Why am I interested in Aerophilately?

- ▶ Thoroughly enjoyed visiting FIP shows
- ▶ Seen some great places and great exhibits
- ▶ Met like-minded souls from all over the world
- ▶ On a coach on the way to a dinner in Vienna sat next to Charles Verge from Canada
- ▶ Charles started telling me about his philatelic life-long goal:
 - To achieve a national gold medal in every class
 - But one very difficult and one impossible!

Why am I interested in Aerophilately?

- ▶ This every class challenge struck a chord
 - ▶ I'd already got good medals in Traditional, Postal History and Literature, so what else could I do?
 - ▶ New collections started in Stationery and Revenue
 - ▶ But the 'low hanging fruit' was to put my *Chinese Air Mails* into Aerophilately
 - ▶ That would be easy wouldn't it?
 - ▶ At least it should be easy!
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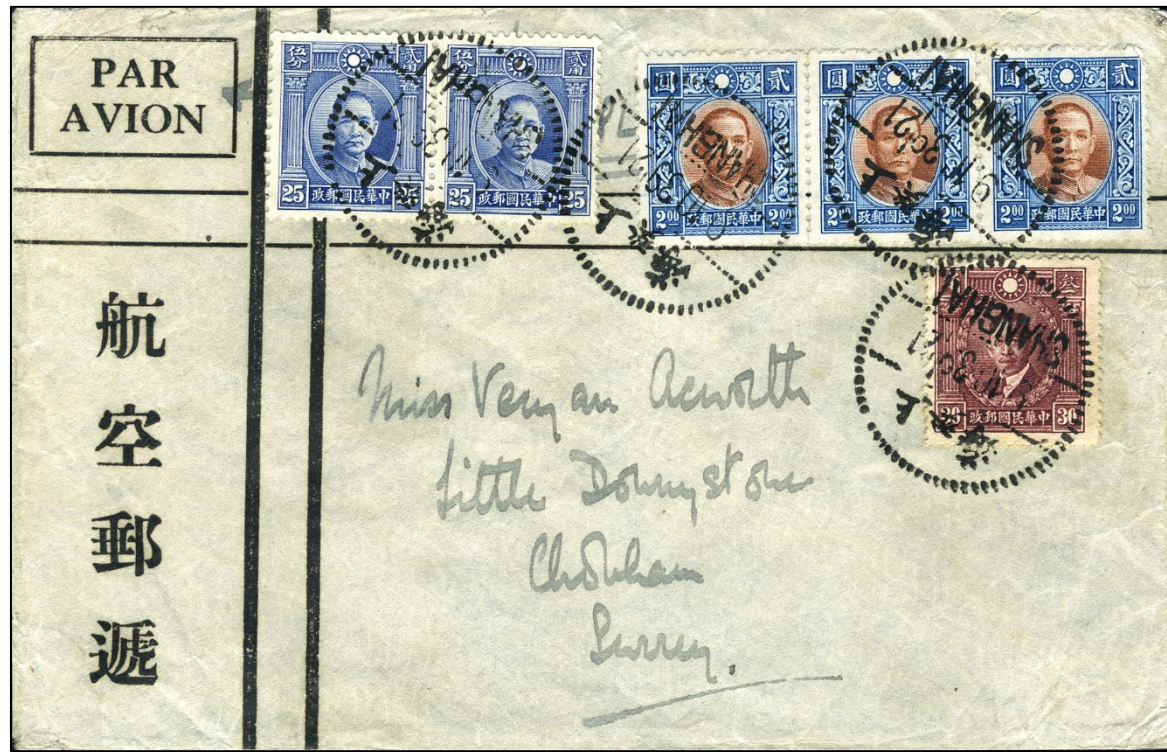
Perspective

- ▶ It is important to stress that the opinions expressed in this lecture are all completely personal to Frank Walton
 - ▶ Specifically my views are not necessarily endorsed by the SRT, ABPS, BAMS, RPSL or FIP
 - ▶ That said, I have been seeking views of several active exhibitors – and most people agree with the sentiments expressed
 - ▶ The majority of the comments made relate to competitive exhibiting and not to private collecting
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An Innocent's Take on Aero

- ▶ If a cover has an Air Mail sticker on it then it would fit into an aero collection
 - ▶ Yes, but maybe it wouldn't fit into an aero exhibit
 - ▶ Time to seek expert help...
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- ▶ At the New York 2016 exhibition I was delighted to receive a tour of the aero frames from Barry Scott, a vastly experienced FIP aero juror from New Zealand

Is this a Good Aero Cover – 1?



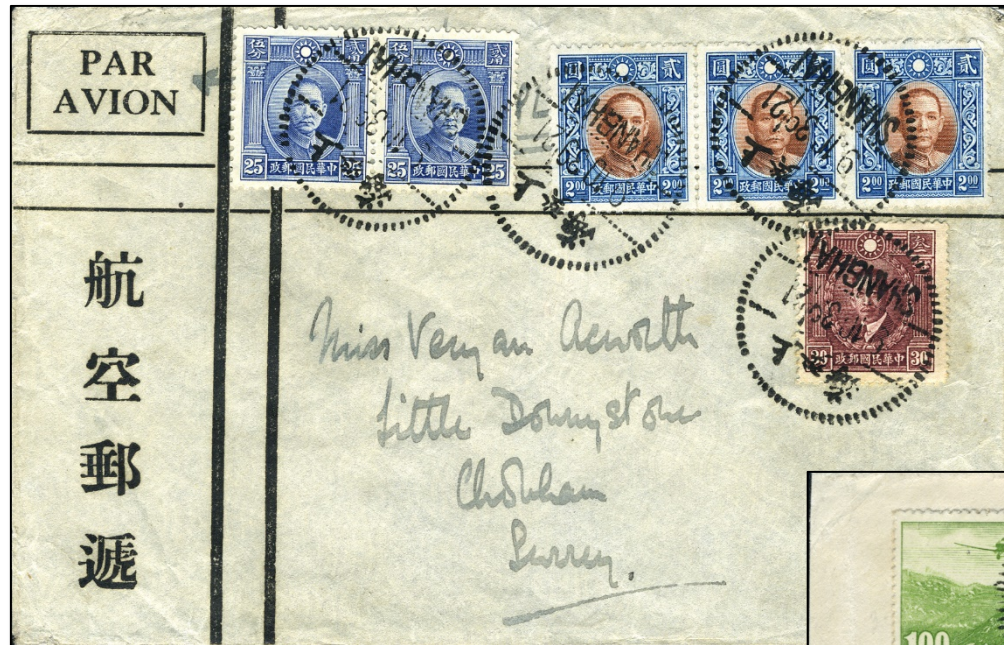
9 Oct 1939 Shanghai to Chobham. Surface to Hong Kong (13 Oct)
Six times rate (25-30g) $\$0.50 + \$0.30 + 6 \times \$1.00 = \6.80

Is this a Good Aero Cover – 2?



27 Feb 1937 Hankow to Linköping, Sweden. Hong Kong (4 Mar) backstamp. Directional handstamp **VIA HONGKONG AND BY I.A.L.** applied at Shanghai. Quadruple rate letter $\$0.25 + 4 \times \$0.55 = \$2.45$. Paid $\$2.65$; further $\$0.20$ for air to Sweden

Good Aero Cover?



What is the difference?

What is the first thing you see when you look at the cover?

On the first, I see 'pretty cover, nice \$ value adhesives'

On the second, I see 'air mail stamps with unusual directional handstamp'



Is this a Good Aero Cover – 3?



Franking appears to be \$4,000,000.01 – and is correct!

Inflation period rate equivalent to \$1.35, so super postal history but not necessarily aerophilately

Is this a Good Aero Cover – 4?



Question: what is the first thing you see on this cover?

It is a 6x rate – but the rarity is the 5s value used on cover

So could be traditional!

Treatment of Exhibit

- ▶ Picking good 'aero' covers is a start, but putting them together as an exhibit is an entirely different challenge
- ▶ What is the 'red thread' of the exhibit?
- ▶ Postal History could be:
 - Chronological
 - Destination based
- ▶ Aerophilately could be:
 - Airline
 - Type of aircraft = landplane or seaplane service
- ▶ Simply put, this is the Treatment

Treatment of Exhibit

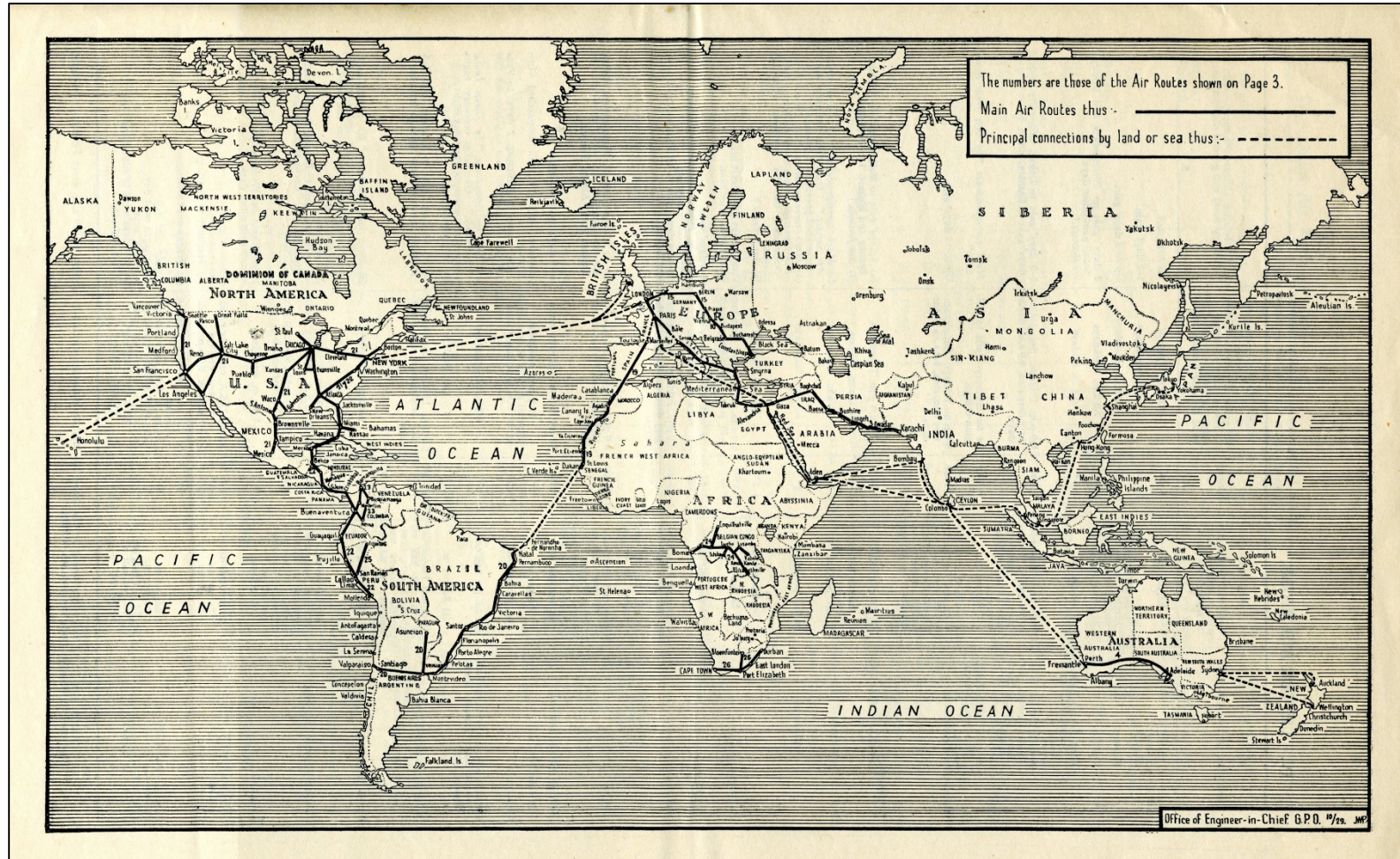
- ▶ Most gold medal aero exhibits include some ephemera
- ▶ But how much ancillary material is too much?

Aero Ephemera



Chinese National Aviation Corporation bag label

Aero Ephemera



British Post Office publication

Aero Ephemera

Sierra Leone Airways
route map



Aero Ephemera

- ▶ How much ephemera is too much?
- ▶ It depends on the judge on the day!

Knowledge & Research

- ▶ Standard judging schema
 - Knowledge 20 marks
 - Research & personal study 15 marks
 - Total marks 35 marks
- ▶ Total cost to exhibitor £0

Knowledge & Research



Knowledge & Research

- ❖ BY I.A.L. /Hongkong handstamp applied in Shanghai
- ❖ Surface to Hong Kong arrived 15 May)
- ❖ Censored in Hong Kong
- ❖ Flown by *Delia* (HB237) from Hong Kong (15 May) to Bangkok (15 May)
- ❖ Flown by *Camilla* (S240) from Bangkok (16 May) to Poole, UK (22 May)
- ❖ NO SERVICE handstamp added in the UK
- ❖ Réexpédié par voie ordinaire après / avoir été retourné à Shanghai added in Shanghai



A super aero cover!

Knowledge & Research



What do you see?

- ❖ Gambia Air Mail cachet
- ❖ Range of stamps, total 1s 3d
- ❖ Possibly philatelic?

Knowledge & Research

(iii) BATHURST TO GERMANY AIR MAIL			
Closes at Bathurst at 7.00 p.m. on Fridays and normally reaches London on the following Tuesday morning. Elders' Express ships leaving on Thursday do not always effect connection.			
		Rates of Postage inclusive of Air Fee.	
A. United Kingdom, British Empire, U.S.A.	Letters	1s. 1d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce or part thereof.
	Papers, etc.	8d. per ounce or part thereof.
B. Other countries ...	Letters	1s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce or part thereof.
	Papers, etc.	8d. per ounce or part thereof.
If transmission by Air is specially desired "Special" should be written below the Air Mail label otherwise correspondence will be forwarded by ocean mail if delivery will be accelerated.			
For this Service, the letters "D.L.H." should be written in manuscript below the Air Mail label.			
The rates quoted do not include re-transmission by Air from London.			
Other information as to Air Mails can be obtained at General Post Office, Freetown.			

❖ Extract from contemporary
Sierra Leone post office leaflet

❖ Special!

Knowledge & Research



❖ Special!

What is the FIP view of Aero?


From FIP Special Regulations for Evaluation (SREVs):

- ▶ Composed essentially of postal documents transmitted by air
- ▶ Or air mail stamps

Subclasses

- a) Development and operation of airmail services
 - b) Air mail stamps and their use
- 

Contents in Aero Subclass a)

1. Postal documents dispatched by air
 2. All types of postal and other marks, vignettes and labels relating to air transport
 3. Items connected with a particular means of aerial transport, not conveyed through a postal service but deemed important to development of airmail
 4. Leaflets, messages, and newspapers dropped from air, as a way of normal postal delivery or ... unforeseen events
 5. Mail recovered from aircraft accidents
- 

Contents in Aero Subclass a)

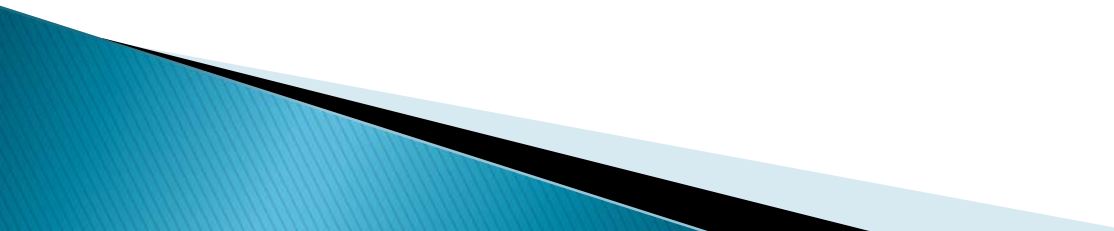
Frank's interpretation

1. Letters etc that have flown
2. Ephemera

What is the FIP View of Postal History?

From FIP Special Regulations for Evaluation (SREVs)
Article 2:

Subclasses

- A. **Postal History** exhibits which contain material carried by, and related to, official, local or private mails. Such exhibits generally emphasise routes, rates, markings, usages and other postal aspects, services, functions and activities related to the history of the development of the postal services
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What is Postal History?

Subclasses continued

- B. **Marcophily** exhibits showing classifications and/or studies of postal markings...
- C. **Historical, Social and Special Studies** exhibits which examines postal history in the broader sense and the interaction of commerce and society with the postal system

(Postal History 2C was added in 2008)



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Contents in PH Subclasses A & B

1. Pre-adhesive
2. Development of services
3. Rates
4. Routes
5. Postmarks
6. Military
7. Maritime
8. Railway
9. TPO
10. Disaster

11. Disinfected
12. Censored
13. Postage Due
14. Automation
15. Forwarding Agents
16. Official

And Maps, prints ... & similar materials that relate directly

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Contents in PH Subclass C

1. Material developed by commerce and society for use in postal system
2. May include non-philatelic material where relevant
3. Non-philatelic mustn't overwhelm the philatelic

Contents in PH Subclasses

Frank's interpretation

Subclasses A & B

1. Letters showing routes and rates
2. A bit of relevant ephemera

Subclass C

1. Letters showing routes and rates
 2. Quite a bit of relevant ephemera
- 

Spot the Difference

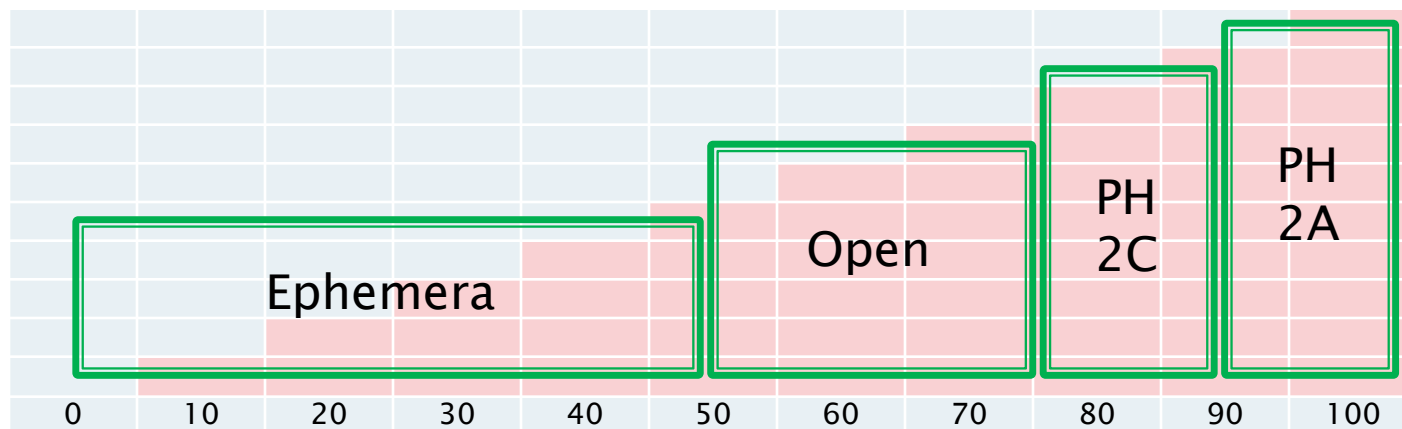
Postal History Subclass 2C

1. Letters etc
2. Ephemera

Aerophilately Subclass a

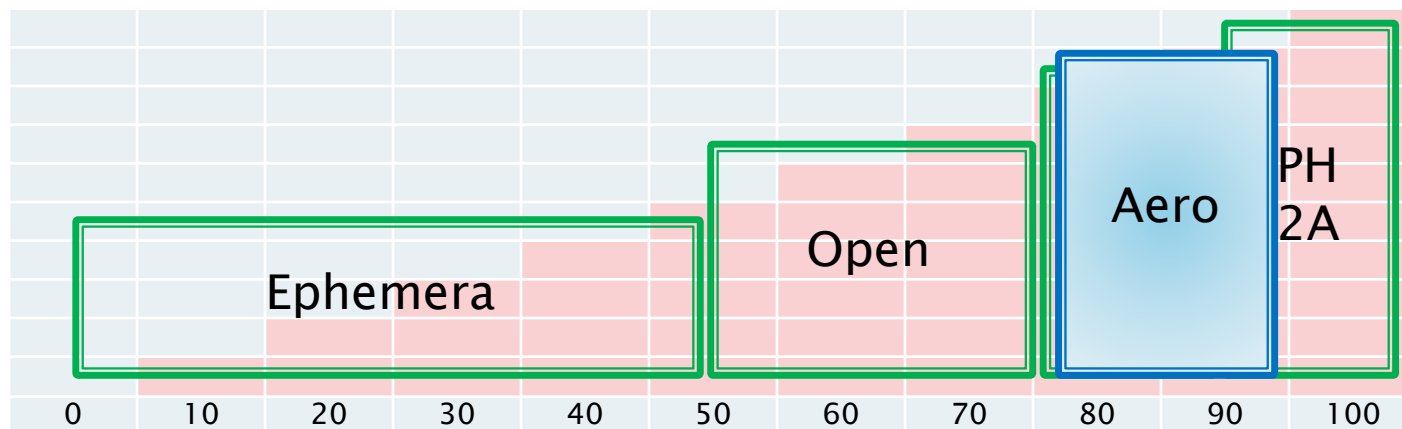
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Continuum of Postal History



Percentage of exhibit that is 'Routes & Rates'

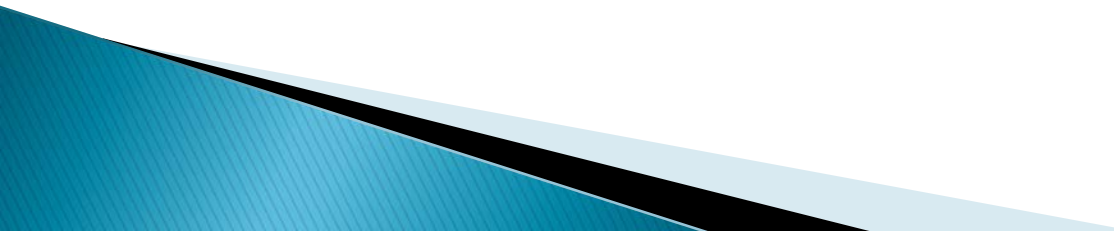
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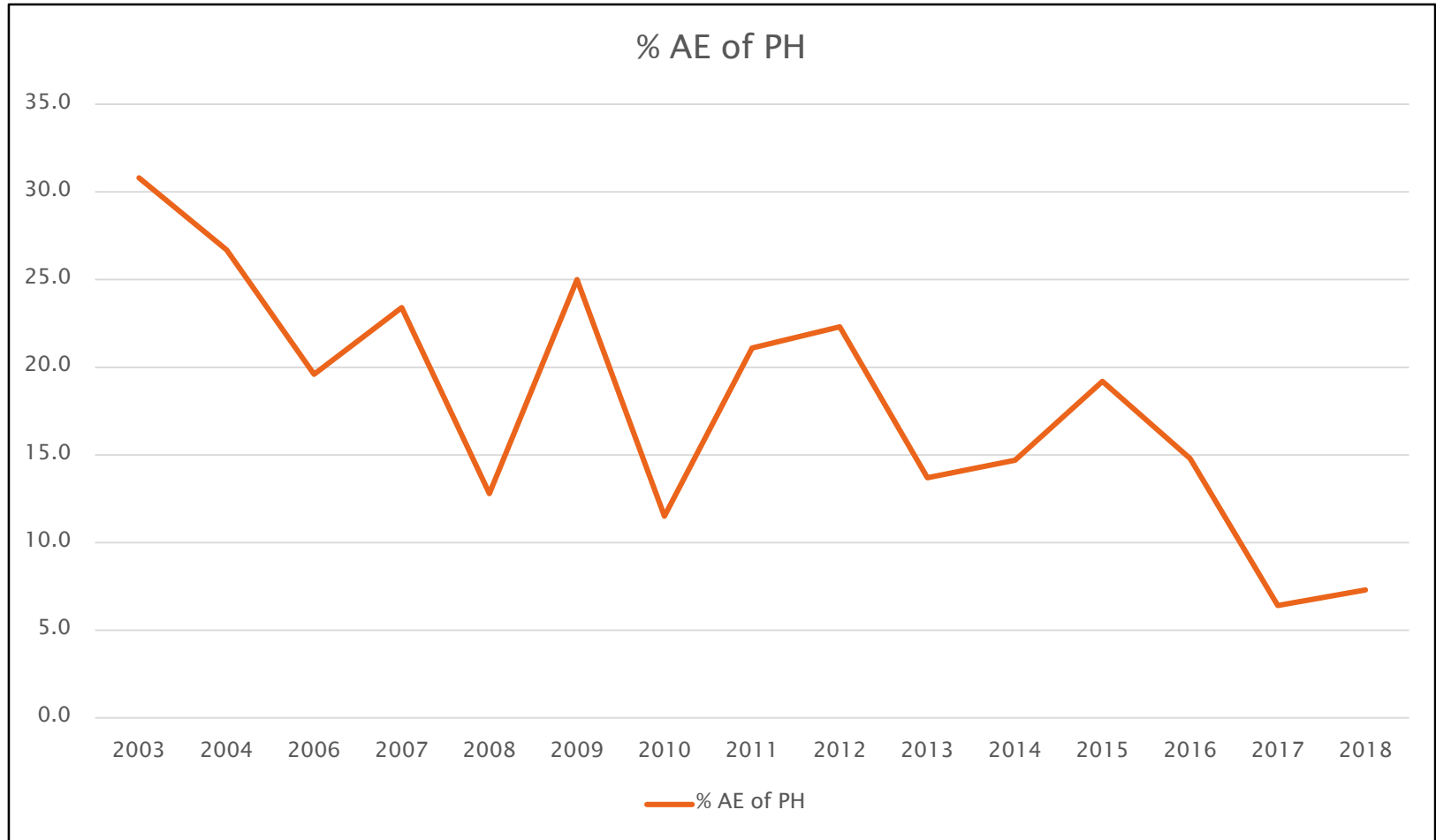
Percentage of exhibit that is 'Routes & Rates'

Health warning! This is Frank's personal view only

Aero at FIP Exhibitions

1. Aero has been an independent class at FIP exhibitions since at least 1980s
 2. Aero had a strong following in the 20th century, but participation is now dwindling
 3. What are the statistics?
 4. An analysis was made of the number of exhibits at FIP exhibitions since 2003
- 

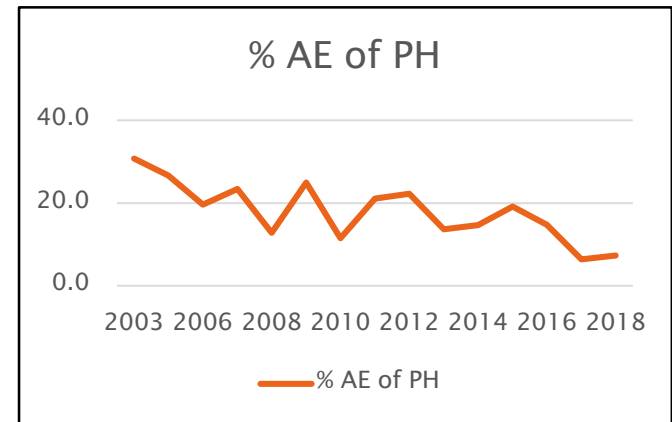
Aero v Postal History Exhibits



Aero v Postal History Exhibits

A dramatic drop off – but what are the reasons?

1. Fewer FIP exhibitions have an Aero Class
2. Hence fewer exhibits annually
3. Chicken and egg?



Why fewer Aero Classes?

1. Declining number of applications
2. Collectors moving away from 'classic' aero of First Flights etc and instead doing studies of flown covers with a postal history treatment
e.g. Chinese International Air Mail
3. Money!

An Exhibition Organiser's Perspective

1. For London 2020, there will be approx. 2,750 competitive frames
2. Given experience of London 2010 and London 2015, we expect:
 - 160 frames of aerophilately (25 exhibits)
 - 1300 frames of postal history (200 exhibits)
3. Typically a juror will judge 30 – 40 exhibits at a show in teams of three, min. three

Cost of a Juror

1. In very round terms, the cost of providing a qualified juror per exhibit is:
 - Aero £250
 - Postal history £150
2. Over the whole exhibition this is a considerable cost consideration
3. As many shows are now self-funded this is more important

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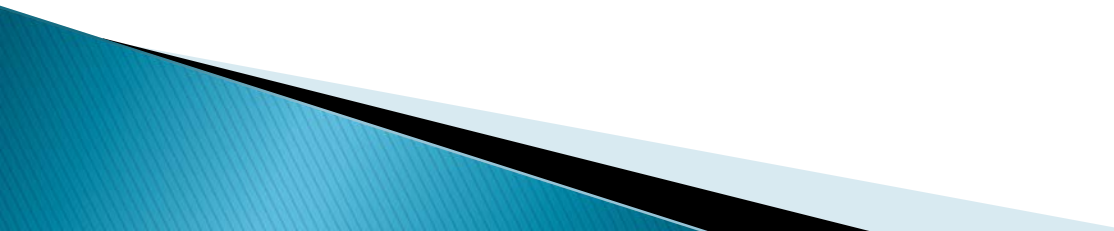
- Back to the initial question...
- Before you answer this in your own mind, consider a subsidiary question:
 - If there is no FIP class for mail that travelled by boat or train, why is one needed for mail that travelled by aeroplane?

Should Aerophilately be a
subset of Postal History?

YES



How?

- Aerophilately Subclass (a) should be treated as a new subclass of postal history
 - It could be known as Postal History 2D
 - The SREVs for Aero should be incorporated within the SREVs for postal history but as an independent section
 - When Postal History 2C was added, no juror training was deemed necessary
- 

How?

- Aerophilately Subclass (b) should be treated as a new subclass of traditional

Any Questions?