

## GUIDELINES FOR SPEAKERS

Certain collectors can be timid when showing off some of their treasures to an audience, even when presenting a display of their material to their local club. We have heard the excuse “ No one will be interested in what I collect” and “ I cannot stand up and speak in front of my club”. However, if you enjoy your collection why should not others enjoy it too? There is much good material, which is hardly ever seen, and the enjoyment of it is worth sharing.

Not everyone feels able to speak to an audience as they cannot express themselves easily and may be a little self-conscious. Speaking to friends about a subject that you enjoy should not be daunting. Set out a plan and follow it. You probably know more about the subject which you have chosen than your audience, so take care to explain your display clearly.

Do not show all of your material on the subject. Use the best items or the bits that illustrate your subject best. Too much similar material can be boring, try to maintain a good balance.

Start small and expand your display as you gain confidence. One or two frames of material initially, then develop to a partial or full evening show. After this you may feel able to visit nearby clubs to display either as part of a team from your society or as an individual.

When someone in the audience has advice to offer, take note. You can receive information as well as imparting it.

Back to the plan. Nowadays, it is good practice to start with a page explaining the title and content of

your display. This is what one is asked to do when preparing for competitions! If your display is written up, your writing should explain what you are showing. By repeating the information shown you are duplicating your effort. Explain the items that are special and say why you consider them so. People are expecting to see your fine material not to listen to too much talking. Be conscious of time, therefore, and leave enough to enable the audience to look at the material.

Find out from the convenor, the time you are allotted for your presentation, and how much time is normally taken for viewing. Ask for a glass of water, if you need one. If you are displaying your pages for a full evening, determine the length of any intervals and the time to finish.

Some presenters put “postit” notes on the pages that they feel they need to talk about, and remove these when they have spoken about that page. Make some notes and keep them with you, and know what you want to say before you start. It does not create the right impression if you peer at each page and mutter “now what did I want to say about this” or ‘um’ and ‘er’ too often.

Choose your subject to suit your audience. A local society with general collectors will not wish to see, for instance, a detailed study of fly-specks on one issue of stamps or colour variations on postal stationery items. Both of these examples may be perfectly acceptable to a Specialist Society or Study Group. One method of display contains stamps, postal history, postal stationery and some Cinderella items and an introduction which gives an insight into the political history leading up to that particular issue. This makes for a balanced display.

Instil a little humour into your talk as this serves to relax both the audience and the presenter. This hobby is to be enjoyed by all.

Use acid free page protectors on those pages which are being viewed as not everyone takes the same care when viewing, as you would do.

Now for some tips on presenting. Some presenters like to talk about their pages as they put them up, whilst others prefer to put all of their pages up and then talk. Some, however, prefer the latter, as it enables them to adjust the talk to suit the time available.

Always try to face the audience while talking and point to the pages about which you are talking. A laser pointer or stick of some sort can be useful as you can obscure the page if you stand in front of it.

Do not show nervousness by moving about a lot, using extravagant gestures or ( gentlemen - jingling the change in your pocket ) ( ladies - twirling your necklaces ).

The insurance of your collection, when taken outside of your house, should be considered. Most companies who insure philatelic material will give comprehensive cover whilst it is accompanied by the owner, or at a specific show. Never leave your collection in an unattended vehicle.

## AN AIDE - MEMOIRE FOR THE VISITOR

- Introduce yourself on arrival
- Talk to the audience not to your pages.
- Instil humour and make your talk interesting

## HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR VISITING SPEAKER

All club members should now be aware that showing to a society requires some preparation in assembling the pages to show, preparing a few notes and making sure that most if not all of the above tips are observed. Welcome your speakers, whether colleagues in your local society or visitors. They help to make the society function and give interest.

In one incident the visiting speaker arrived after a train journey. No one was looking out for this visitor who took a seat near the front of the room and ate the sandwich which they had brought with them, for she had not been offered a meal. The room gradually filled up and, just before the appointed hour, the secretary asked whether the visitor was a new member.

Finally, electronic gadgetry is advancing and there is, already, a trend to give displays by PowerPoint presentations. The display of material is still placed on the frames but is described by images from an overhead projector. Scanned images of the best items have to be made before the presentation, so there is still work to do. The presenter is, however, not as prominent as the talk is now a commentary on the items on the screen.

Imparting and disseminating philatelic information helps to broaden, continue and preserve the hobby for posterity. More society members should consider showing their collections off to others.

When inviting a speaker to give a display to your society remember to give them plenty of notice and confirm the details in writing. You have less chance

of being disappointed and it will give the speaker time to prepare a good evening for you.

The visitor is probably unaware of the surroundings. Give them a map of the venue. Indicate the number of pages required and in what format your display boards are configured i.e. ( 3 rows of 4) as well as timing. Offer to collect and deliver them to the local station and ask whether they require a meal or overnight accommodation to be arranged. Remember to offer expenses. Remind the speaker, again, about a fortnight before the date.

### AN AIDE – MEMOIRE FOR THE HOST SOCIETY [ ALMOST MANDATORY ]

- Provide a map of the venue, with directions.
- Confirm the number of pages & frame format.
- Send a society programme to the speaker.
- Confirm the topic, which your society wishes to see displayed.
- Give a two / three week reminder.
- Always offer a meal.
- Offer transport from and to a station, if needed.
- Give a warm welcome and show your appreciation.
- Always offer expenses.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**  
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# ABPS

## The visiting speaker !

Association of British Philatelic Societies