

Mike Bramwell, ESC 448: An Appreciation

The Circle is truly saddened to have to record the death on April 20, just a few days before his 88th birthday, of Michael Clifford Bramwell, our Circle member 448. He had been an active member since June 1994.

A virtual ever-present at our meetings despite his ill-health, Mike wore his maroon Circle tie with pride and was always to the fore in asking pointed and incisive questions - from safety at the back of the room - of the speaker of the day. Invariably the observations from his inquiring mind led to a change of direction in the display's parameters.

His collecting interests ranged widely, concentrating on postal paper and ephemera as much as "proper" philately, and he was delighted to be able to present markedly unusual material... a WWI passport belonging to a staff member of the Cairo consulate, for instance, or Instructional markings, TPO markings, duty labels on flown mails to the USA, a cover from Accra to Egypt signed by Kingsford-Smith.

Born in Darlington in 1938, he served his National Service in Wales and Gibraltar, followed by university in Glasgow. But Egypt always held a fascination for him and he joined the Circle before retirement at 65, somehow finding the time later to complete a music degree at Goldsmiths. His career was academic, a senior lecturer in mathematics who kept track as Woolwich Polytechnic metamorphosed into the University of Greenwich, where he spent virtually all his working life.

For several years he was librarian of the National Philatelic Society, a connection from which the Circle benefited, and served for a long period as a crucial member of our auction team as despatcher of lots won. But he was always an enthusiastic recycler, and several members expressed surprise at receiving costly material through the post in what were patently re-used envelopes.

Mike Bramwell was always enthusiastic, always ready to consider - and to challenge if necessary - a point of philatelic fact. And acted always with patience and good humour. We have lost a good friend. We shall miss him greatly.

Mike Murphy

