

Hamble Post Office

Hamble Post Office in the High Street closed on 15th February 2008 and had served the community for over 100 years, the property being built in the very early 1900s. Previous to this the Cooper family ran a Sub-Post Office from Portland Cottages (now Portland House in Lower High Street). An earlier Post Office was situated near to where the Co-op is today.

At the beginning of the 1900s Richard Leaver was Sub-Postmaster of the new Post Office and some of the services offered were postal, telegraph, money order, savings bank, annuity and insurance. Similar to subsequent owners he also supplemented this business by selling stationery. At this time post arrived from Southampton at 7.30 am & 2.25 pm and dispatched at 9.30 am & 7.30 pm. Collection on Sunday was at 10.00 am.

His daughter Edith was a Clerk in the Post Office and after the First World War she took over from him as Sub-Postmistress. During Edith Leaver's time at the Post Office in the 1920s it was used as a Public Call Office as few people had a telephone at home. Arrangements could even be made for out of hours emergency calls with the Sub-Postmistress entitled to charge a 1s/- late charge fee in addition to the normal charge. Telegrams were also taken over to Warsash by the ferry.

As reported in a previous village magazine 'From the Council's Records' in April 1937 it was recorded that "..... Miss Leaver was retiring that it was desirable to ask the Postmaster to give full consideration to the need for the Post Office being near to the river, for which source a large amount of Post Office business is done".

Doris Lowe followed as Sub-Postmistress but the first person older Hamble residents are most likely to remember is Eddie Burnett who was Sub-Postmaster after the Second World War and he continued until he retired in 1968. His son-in-law Michael Hay took over the Post Office and as most Sub-Postmasters/Mistresses took an active interest in village activities.

Another 'From the Council's Records' reports that in February 1965 "Mr Batt of Parade Cleaners, had been approached by the G.P.O. and he had signed the necessary forms and is in agreement with various alterations required by the Post Office authority". This initiated a second Post Office for Hamble serving the Coronation Parade area of the village.

Many residents will remember the Post Office taking on young Hamble students for the busy Christmas period, with them arriving at 6.00 am to sort the mail in the back office. This was a handy source of income but getting up at that unseemly hour was a drawback and made them realise what regular postmen such as Dougie Barrell did throughout the year.

More recent people who ran the Hamble Post Office include Rashmi and Arvinda Chande, who went on to run a larger business in Southampton, John and Jane Hollinshead, Steve and Sue Hills and the last Sub-Postmaster Sri Kandiah who unfortunately suffered an armed robbery in 2003 when a substantial sum of money was stolen.

With the closure of the Post Office in the High Street, Hamble now has one Post Office at Coronation Parade operated by Jim and Jane Dart.