



Since 1935

Bulletin

The Newsletter of the West Toronto Stamp Club
www.westtorontostampclub.org

The Club meets at
Fairfield Seniors' Centre
80 Lothian Ave., Etobicoke, ON
416-394-8687

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B. Timberg, Editor

President Sid's Message

One of the joys during my covid-19 stay at home has been the opportunity to peruse, at leisure, a favourite philatelic journal *BNA Topics*, one that I recently found in my mail box; a good read over morning coffee. This quarter's Topics, the official journal of BNAPS, the Society for Canadian Philately, again contains many informative articles. Every article is a great jumping off spot for further philatelic exploration and learning. *Update on Wing Roller Cancels* encourages a new area to collect and research. For those who appreciate and collect WWI postal history, *War Correspondence of Emile Martin 1914-1916* is a terrific philatelic and human interest story. If you enjoy searching for re-entries, dots and scratches, you will wish you never threw out those duplicate # 208's after you read *Anomalies in 1934 Cartier Postage Stamp*. This quarter's Topics also announced that *Squared Circle Postmarks of Canada*, 6th edition, January 2020 is now available to the general public on the BNAPS website in the online resources and exhibits section. *BNA Topics* never disappoints! Yes, this month may be an opportune time to consider BNAPS membership. Go to <http://www.bnaps.org/>.

I am pleased to report that your WTSC executive successfully met via Zoom this past week. A number of important decisions were made that will enable WTSC to move forward and to adapt positively to the current covid-19 reality. As you will understand, it continues to be unsafe to meet face-to-face. As well, when we can again meet at the Fairfield Centre is uncertain. In fact we may possibly not be able to meet there until early 2021.

On behalf of your executive, I am pleased to share the following:

New for this year, the WTSC Bulletin will be prepared and sent to members during July and August. This will facilitate communications between members and the club during this time of isolation. Members are encouraged to take advantage of the current emphasis and opportunity to use the Bulletin as a sharing platform. Your sharing continues to be of interest and encouragement to your fellow club members. Send your stories, notes and images for the July Bulletin to our editor at timberg@bell.net or me at sidmensinga@gmail.com.

WTSC is moving to a virtual format, our new meeting reality. Our first virtual club meeting via Zoom will take place on June 16. See details on page 5 from

Garfield. Anticipating success, further club virtual meetings are being planned for July and August. Instructions on how to access and download the Zoom app will be sent by separate email. We want to be sure that no one misses out on this opportunity. If you need help, let me know and it will be provided.

The 2020/2021 WTSC philatelic year will be a NO FEE YEAR for all 2019/2020 paid up members. Our finances are more than adequate and in good order. As well, the City of Toronto reimbursed the club for the full 2019/2020 permit fee for our use of the Fairfield Centre. Since we have been unable to meet face-to-face since early March, and when we can meet in person again remains uncertain, your board believes the decision is most appropriate and will help maintain and encourage our membership.

As well, your executive is pleased to announce that a virtual SINGLE PAGE EXHIBITION will be held in October. Preliminary details are on page 5. Your participation is encouraged. Our single-frame and multi-frame competitions will not take place until we can again meet at the Fairfield Centre.

There are still some hurdles to overcome regarding how and when we might be able to celebrate our 85th anniversary. Details will be provided when available.

We know that our very successful circuit book program and auctions are definitely missed. We understand you will be disappointed but we have come to the decision that these activities will have to wait until we can meet face-to-face sometime in the future.

Your executive believes that these strategic decisions provide participation opportunities and clear direction for WTSC that will maintain and encourage continued membership and foster a positive spirit amongst members. I look forward to your active participation during these coming weeks and months.

WTSC Board of Directors

President: Sid Mensinga
Vice-President: Ian Robertson
Past President: Frank Alusio
Secretary: Rhonda Kavanagh
Treasurer: Lawrence Pinkney
Membership: Patricia Blanchard

Directors: Simon Cloughton, Fred Colbourn, Jose Restrepo, Rob Taylor, Bob Timberg

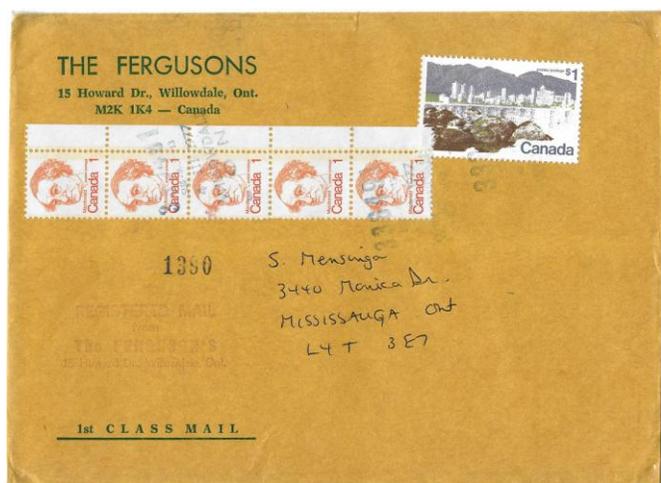
Staying in Touch: Notes from Members

A More Than Unusual Registered Cover - What a Find!!!

Looking for philatelic diversion during a recent "covid haze", I decided to delve into my accumulation of unsorted registered covers.

The cover I decided to learn more about is one registered March 4, 1977 from "The Fergusons", a local 1970s stamp auctioneer/mail order dealer addressed to me at that time.

The cover originally contained a multi-page typewritten auction listing. As a novice collector, I remember enjoying attending this auction with my



late brother-in-law, an avid philatelist. The auction was held in the crowded basement room of "The Fergusons" suburban residence. My purchase I have long forgotten, but the large bank vault in the corner of this basement room and the old gruff auctioneer collecting/counting the money at the end of the sale continue to be lasting memories. I often wonder who bought this house with a bank vault in the basement.

As a beginning collector in 1977, I saved the cover because it had a nice current dollar stamp on it. I was tempted to soak it off but didn't because it might have left a brown paper stain on the stamp. Years later, I kept it because it had an in-period dollar stamp with other stamps from the same definitive series. However, I had never tried to understand/calculate the rate.

This letter mailed March 4, 1977 from Willowdale to Mississauga used a one dollar landscape #599iii and a strip of 5 one cent caricature definitives #586 for a total postage of \$1.05. My calculation reveals that this amount paid the postage for a registered first class triple weight domestic letter. (\$.75 registration and \$.30 for a letter weighing more 2 oz. and less than 4 oz.) **I was most pleased to have saved this triple weighted letter, but there was more to**

uncover. The 60s and 70s were times of frequent rate changes.

Prior to March 1, 1977 the rate for a 2-4 oz. letter was \$0.25 + registration of \$0.75 = \$1.00.

Between March 1, 1977 and April 1, 1977 (when this letter was mailed) the rate for a 2-4 oz. letter had increased to \$0.30 + registration remained at \$0.75 = \$1.05.

One month later on April 1, 1977 the rate for a 2-4 oz. letter now remained the same at \$0.30 but registration had increased to \$1.00 = \$1.30

After 43 years in my possession, I just this month understood this cover's true collector value. **I had inadvertently saved a difficult to find registered first class triple weight cover paying a total rate that was valid for only a one month period.** Collecting modern domestic or international registered covers used during a very short rate period can be quite the challenge. Finding out you already own such a scarce/difficult to find cover is even more exhilarating.

Sid Mensinga

How Collectable are Newfoundland stamps With Out-of-Date, Off "The Rock" Cancellations?

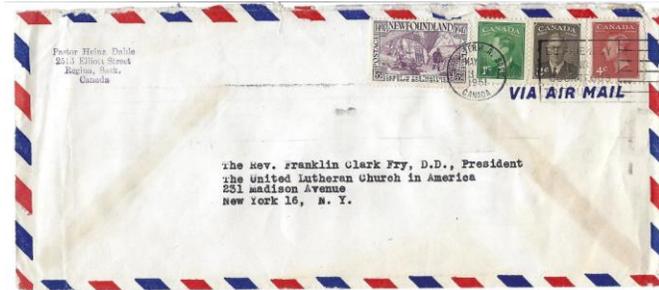
A nicely-cancelled plate block-of-four Newfoundland stamps recently offered on eBay poses two questions. Do collectors of Newfoundland stamps and postal history want examples with mainland Canada postmarks? Do cancellations applied years, sometimes decades, after any stamp was issued render them undesirable?

The illustrated plate-numbered corner block of 5-cent Newfoundland definitives from the 1919 'Trail of the Caribou' set has a nice, clear Hamilton, Ontario 1949-dated round black cancel in the center.



1919 Newfoundland 5-cent 'Trail of the Caribou' inscription block-of-four with Hamilton, Ontario postmark from 1949, the year 'The Rock' joined Canada

After consulting editor Rob Timberg about including a short article for discussion in our next club bulletin, he emailed me a scanned, related cover from his collection. Mailed by a Regina, Saskatchewan pastor to the head of a U.S. church in New York City, the No. 10 envelope has a May 31, 1951 machine cancel on a 5-cent Newfoundland commemorative depicting Giovanni Caboto — John Cabot, an Italian explorer who sailed from Bristol, England in 1497 and claimed the island in the Atlantic Ocean for Britain — plus 1-, 2- and 4-cent Canadian definitives featuring King George VI.



1951 Regina, Saskatchewan machine cancel ties 1947 Newfoundland 5-cent John Cabot commemorative plus three Canadian definitives to U.S.-bound cover



Left, statue on Narrow Quay, Bristol, England, beside old portland docks, depicts Venetian explorer John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto) who sailed from there in 1497 and "discovered North America" (Newfoundland) and, right, full-size replica of John Cabot's ship 'The Matthew' awaiting passengers in harbour of Bristol, England in 2018. Both photos courtesy Ian Robertson.

When Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949, the former British colony's unissued stamp stock was taken over by Canada's post office and offered for sale at face value to collectors. Printed with decimal denominations, they were — and still are — valid for use on mail. My Gramps told me he selected a few good examples at a philatelic counter in the Post Office on Sparks Street in downtown Ottawa. I still have them.

Today, mint definitives and commemoratives issued by Newfoundland from the late 1930s through the 1940s are relatively common. Compared to those with machine-applied postmarks, well-centered used examples with nice round hand-applied cancels are tougher to find, though not that expensive.

Some collectors, however, shun stamps with out-of-date postmarks, and Newfoundland specialists tend to

avoid any from there that have identifiable Canadian cancels.

Alternatively, both the Caribou block postmarked 30 years after it first went on sale, plus the 1951 cover, provide interesting postal history about what happened to Newfoundland postage after it became a province in 1949.

On a final note, the Cabot commemorative issued in 1947 was the last stamp before 'The Rock' became a Canadian province.

Ian S. Robertson

Helen Mine

A staying in touch note in the April/May issue prompted this email from David McLaughlin recalling his days at the mine, and Wawa. David, many thanks!

Interestingly, I had a summer job in 1971 in the Helen Mine as a driller's helper and as blaster's helper. By that time the pit was spent and all the mining was underground.

I also saw a nice Helen Mine cancelled post card on eBay earlier this year. I wasn't looking for one and didn't even know the original Post Office was Helen Mine but picked it up because of the connection.

The last time that I was there was 2007. We stopped by Wawa on a driving trip west. The mine road is fenced off and the town has seen better days. Jonny Harris [Canadian comedian and actor] did one of his Still Standing shows in Wawa a year or so ago.

David McLaughlin

The Great Porcupine Fire of 1911

An Ontario historical plaque stands on the shore of Porcupine Lake in northeastern Ontario. The text reads:

In the summer of 1911, when the Porcupine gold rush was at its height the weather was hot and dry. On July 11, gale-force winds from the southwest whipped individual bush fires into a 16 km sea of flames that swiftly engulfed the drought-parched forest. The fire-storm swept through mining camps, razed the towns of South Porcupine and Pottsville, and partially destroyed Golden City (Porcupine) and Porquis Junction. Many people fled into Porcupine Lake to escape the flames. The blaze laid waste to about 200,000 hectares of forest and killed at least seventy-one people. Communities throughout Ontario responded generously with aid, and in a remarkably short time the towns were rebuilt and the mines back in operation.

The fire is regarded as one of the most devastating in the history of the north. While seventy-one were confirmed dead, an unknown number died in the bush and on farms, unable to escape.

My paternal grandfather was caught in the fire. Luckily

he was in South Porcupine and survived by spending hours in Porcupine Lake along with others as well as moose and bear and other animals. Everyone spent much of the time ducking underwater to avoid heat and burning embers. No one bothered the animals, and vice versa. When it was safe, animals and people went their separate ways. Some people sought refuge in the mines, only to suffocate when the fire raged overhead and sucked oxygen out of the shafts.

Recently, I was fortunate to acquire a real picture postcard (RPPC) showing the aftermath of the fire. The postcard bears a notation on the front, South Porcupine After Fire.



The card is addressed to a young lady in Christian Valley (south of Lake Nipissing). Someone, whose identity is now lost in time, had written, "This is where [indecipherable] store stood where I left my plows South Porcupine."

Bob Timberg

Tasmania

The first reported sighting of Tasmania by a European was by Dutch explorer Abel Tasman on November 24, 1642. He named the island Anthonij van Diemenslandt, after his sponsor the Governor of the Dutch East Indies. The name was later shortened by the British to Van Diemen's land.

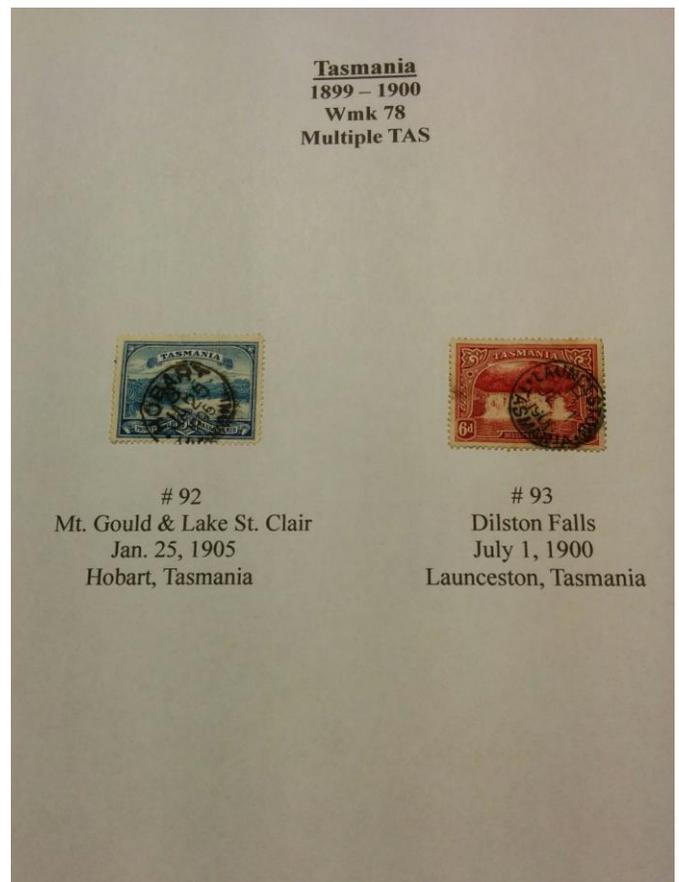
Tasmania issued their first postage stamps on November 1, 1853 under the name Van Diemen's Land, 1 penny and 4 pence versions. Tasmania became the name of the colony in 1855-1856, and the first stamps under the name were issued in 1858.

In 1899 a pictorial set was issued. They were printed with two different watermarks. The ones shown (on the right) were engraved and are more valuable than the lithographed versions.

The lithographed versions were released in 1902-03 and the watermark was a V with a Crown under it. The watermark for the engraved versions was a multiple TAS reversed on the back of the stamp.

The stamps were intended to promote tourism/travel.

Jim Dixon



Canada Post

Many of you are collecting stamps and postal history dealing with the pandemic. Postal history of course includes the usual such as covers and postal slogans. But don't ignore what Canada Post and its employees are doing in response to the virus. It is postal history too, just not in the usual form. Examples abound, such as this photo of a postal vehicle with a large sign reminding all to practise social (physical) distancing, taken by your editor.



When you're collecting mail from your letter carrier, remember to thank them for the essential service they provide. Many in my neighbourhood, typically seniors, look forward to the daily arrival of the mail. Whether it be parcels, bills or letters of a personal nature, this tangible connection to the outside world has been important. Think what it would have been like if there had not been mail delivery these past few months. Ed.

June 16 Online Meeting

Hello to all our friends from the West Toronto Stamp Club.

Things are changing rapidly under the conditions imposed by the coronavirus and our hobby is no exception. We were forced to cease operations back in March when isolation and social distancing rules were enacted by the City and the Province. We now recognize that it is unclear when we will be able to

resume normal operations so, in order to keep the club active, we need to examine alternate programs and methods of delivery.

No doubt, most folks have heard of a new online communications program called ZOOM that allows anyone with a computer, tablet or smart phone to participate (free of charge) in group meetings. On May 26 a meeting of the directors was held using ZOOM and it was agreed that we will attempt an online meeting of the club on June 16.

For our first online meeting we want to try a show and tell at which members are invited to show items that have been purchased or discovered for their collection during the isolation period. Here is how we will do it:

- Any member wishing to participate will scan the item in colour at 300 dpi saving the image as a jpeg.
- Members logon to the meeting following the instructions that will be emailed a few days before the 16th.
- Garfield will incorporate all submissions into a PowerPoint show that will be displayed during the meeting.
- As each item is shown, the contributing member will be invited to describe the item.

Following the meeting, anyone who wishes a copy of the PowerPoint need only ask and a copy will be sent electronically.

Please send your submissions by June 9 to Garfield at garfield.portch@gmail.com.

We look forward to participation by several members and hope that you will enjoy re-connecting if only electronically.

Let's make this work.

Garfield

Annual Club Exhibition

The suspension of club activities in March forced the cancellation of our annual exhibition in May. To help fill the gap, the board agreed that we will plan to hold the competition for the Frank Alusio Trophy for single page exhibits in October 2020. While the mechanics are still to be worked out, all members are encouraged to prepare a single page exhibit. Further details will be made available shortly. Now, however, is the time to think about and begin creating your entry. The competition for the Allan Cup (multi-page, open class) and the Drake Trophy (one frame) will be suspended until we are back to 'normal' meetings.

A Final Comment

Social (physical) distancing does not mean isolation. Stay in touch with your club. We are a community connected by our love of stamps.

