

*Bringing stamp and postal-history**collectors together since 1919*

BC Philatelic Society

NEWSLETTER

Town cancellations may tell only half the truth

By Bob Ingraham

Philatelists know that faked and forged stamps plague our hobby. Postal history collectors understand that covers sometimes have shady pedigrees. But what about a mundane letter or postcard, worth perhaps a buck-and-a-half?

Should we question such ordinary things as early 20th Century town postmarks? At times, yes indeed, because they are not necessarily what they seem to be.

An amusing anecdote in my father's autobiography, written before his death in 1995, unintentionally illustrates this very point.

My father, Robert M. Ingraham, wrote about the winter of 1917-1918, when he was a six-year-old boy living at home with his parents and older brother, Lee, in the small city of Hornell in western New York State.

(Even at this tender age, Dad understood the concept of duty to one's country. His own father was a member of a federalized National Guard company and had only recently returned home from active duty. Pancho Villa, the infamous Mexican bandit-turned-revolutionary, had attacked a U.S. Army post near Columbus, New Mexico, killing 14 soldiers, before ransacking Columbus itself, killing another 10 Americans. Although he never received payment for his service, my grandfather spent several months in Texas, trying to prevent further incursions into the U.S. by Villa's murderous "Villistas".)

On 6 April 1917, the United States declared war on Germany and the first American troops landed in France only three months later, on June 25th.

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A U.S. postal card postmarked in Hornell, NY, on September 22, 1911, the year my father was born. The year on the postmark looks a little like "1917", but it's really just an errant blob of ink.

But let's get my father to take up the story....

Our street ran parallel and very near to the Delaware-Lackawanna and Western Railroad over which thousands of troops were carried to the camps on the East Coast. Long troop trains went by almost every hour for a time and a shower of postcards and letters would be thrown from each one. We would go along the tracks and pick them up to be mailed. Now and then a train would be held up for several minutes until traffic cleared ahead and we would throng around it, talking to the men. The girls would take cookies out to them — sometimes even whole pies — and were often lifted up to the windows to be kissed. Everyone was in a patriotic fervour. Older women knitted like mad, making socks and woollen face masks for the boys overseas who were freezing in the bitter winter trench warfare.

In my mind's eye I can see my father and his older brother and their friends eagerly collecting those letters and postcards and running to the post office with them, where they would be handled like ordinary mail, receiving Hornell postmarks. (See "INGRAHAM" on page 3)

A Message from the President



Looking back....

The first half of our 2007-2008 collecting season is behind us. We have enjoyed

some very positive developments as well as some poignant moments.

We continued to take advantage of our new digital projector. Derren Carman deserves kudos for arranging its purchase and for learning the complex ins and outs of digital projecting.

It's amazing how quickly analog slide projectors have become obsolete, and how our hobby is embracing digital technology. The APS is now renting digital slide shows.

We've had a wide variety of programs, which is to my mind a primary reason for the existence of stamp clubs. I believe that philately combines the acquisition of new material as well as *knowledge* about the material.

A stamp without a story is just a piece of colored paper; a old cover without a history is just a crummy used envelope.

Over time, our programs can provide members with the equivalent of a university course in any number of collecting areas. Attend enough meetings, and you'll have the equivalent of a PhD in philately!

One of the most enjoyable programs this year was a philatelic quiz put together not by a member, but a regular Vanpex exhibitor known by the pseudonym "Napoleon."

Napoleon is an American collector who offered the quiz, in digital form, to any stamp clubs that wanted to use it. BC Phil member Arlene Sullivan presented the quiz, which left most of us

bemused by our philatelic ignorance!

The BC Phil has recently benefitted from donations by relatives of three deceased collectors, none of them BC Phil members.

Two of the donations were small, but one was a large collection of mostly mint Commonwealth and Canadian stamps, assembled by a collector named Robert Denholm from the 1930s through the early 1950s.

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*I share the **hope** of many members from past committees that new volunteers will **revive** Vanpex*
• • •

Most of the stamps in the Denholm collection were common, but several items put the catalogue value well into four figures.

We are selling this material in our own auctions and through the bidboards of member dealers.

I think of the BC Phil as a community, and two events in the recent past have confirmed my belief. Two of our members lost their partners, one last spring and the other this fall; that both members have continued to attend our meetings — and have even presented programs — testifies to the strength of our community.

Looking ahead....

There is no Vanpex exhibition in our future, since we were unable to establish a Vanpex organizing committee. I believe that stamp exhibitions are the lifeblood of our hobby, and I share the hope of many members from past committees that new volunteers will revive Vanpex.

In the meantime, member Trevor Larden is organizing a small club-level show to be held June 21 in the Community Hall, on the floor above our meeting room at the West Burnaby United Church. It's going to be a one-day affair, on

a Saturday; we hope to encourage new exhibitors.

All clubs seem to be navel gazers, and *our* society is no different in that respect. Members often wonder why our membership is so small (only .005% of the population of Metro Vancouver), and why we rarely get more than 20 per cent of our 99 members out to meetings.

BC Phil member Jim Miller is concerned about this, and has been working on a questionnaire asking BCPS members for some suggestions on how to improve attendance and membership. Plans are to send out the questionnaire early in the new year so that the results will be ready in time for the AGM, on 12 March 2008.

Finally, a new executive of the Society will be elected at the upcoming AGM. I do not plan to stand for election again as President, and our Treasurer, Mike Strachan, is likewise stepping down. I ask that you please consider volunteering for one of these important positions.

Best wishes,

Bob Ingraham, President

ROGER'S

Really Useful Household Hints!

- ❖ **To prevent mosquitoes from breeding in small puddles of water around your home, pour in a few drops of cooking oil.**
- ❖ **The next time you change kitty litter, mix coffee grounds into the fresh litter. Every time kitty goes, the room will smell of fresh coffee!**
- ❖ **Dip soft and overripe tomatoes in cold water, add some salt and leave overnight in the fridge. They will be fresh and firm the next day.**
- ❖ **To keep wasps away while sitting outside, place a very ripe piece of banana in a jar. They'll be attracted to the jar and leave you alone.**

Courtesy of Roger Packer

INGRAHAM from page one.

Fast-forward to the 21st Century. The soldiers of the Great War are long dead. However, some of the covers and postcards that those same soldiers tossed from the troop trains speeding through Hornell may still exist in long-forgotten boxes or trunks, or sit lost among the stocks of postal history dealers.

Perhaps, someday, I will find such a cover or postcard. If I do, it just might be one that my dad clutched in his small hand as he carried out what he considered to be his patriotic duty, just as his father had done in Texas.



A real-photo postcard from 1916, picturing (from the left) Bob Ingraham's grandmother, Ratie Jane Ingraham; his father, Robert M. Ingraham, and his uncle, Lee W. Ingraham. Robert was five years old. The postcard is addressed, but has no stamp: it was probably mailed in an envelope.

ERRATUM

The fall issue of the newsletter, published in August, was inadvertently numbered Vol. 57 No. 3. It should have been Vol. 56 No. 3.

The editor is still working on a credible excuse... Many apologies, dear readers.



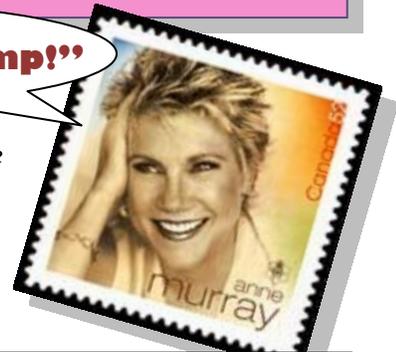
Five-year-old Kristi Lowe shares her design for a 10c Hawaiian stamp. Just the right view to offset those cold winter blues.

Stamp Art — Hawaiian Style



"I got a friggen' stamp!"

Canadian songbird Anne Murray eloquently expresses her pleasure at receiving this signal honour from Canada Post. (Duff Malkin)



New Members

Let's welcome the following new BC Phil members, who bring our membership to 99

- Benny Svensson
- Jim Boyko
- Firmin Wyndels
- Keith & Patrik Lowe
- Donald Tang
- Gary Davis
- Alex Hadden

These new members represent a net increase of five, compared to our total membership in 2006. Welcome to the club!

BC Philatelic Society Program Schedule
February-May – 2008
(See our fall newsletter for January programs)

February

- 6th **Social / Swap and Shop / Stamp Grab / Treasure Hunt / RPSC circuit books / Social (includes tea, coffee & cookies)**
- 13th **Presentation Night:** BC Phil member **Tracy Cooper**, a well-known postal historian with a deep interest in and knowledge of British Columbia history, presents “Cariboo Postal History 1871-1901: 30 years of searching for the gold!”
- 20th **February Auction:** Our monthly auction, open to members and guests. Submit up to six lots, keeping in mind that low- to moderate-priced material sells best. The club keeps 10% of hammer prices. Donations welcome.
- 27th **Club Program: Numeral 4 / Ordinal 4th night.** Bring any stamp, cover, or other philatelic item that can be associated with a the number 4 or the ordinal 4th. Possible examples: 4-cent (or 4-dollar) stamps, #4 of any country, or four-stamp sets, or blocks of four. Stamps featuring four of anything in their design are fair game, as are covers, which if you’re lucky may feature a score (4 X 5) of fours!

March

- 5th **Social / Swap and Shop / Stamp Grab / Treasure Hunt / RPSC circuit books / Social**
- 12th **The Annual General Meeting of the BC Philatelic Society:** featuring reports by the President and committee chairs, and the election of a new executive. Positions to be filled include the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. This is your chance to guide the Society through the coming year. Please attend if you can. Proposed amendments to our Constitution must be submitted in writing no later than January 12, 2008.
- 19th **March Auction:** Our monthly auction, featuring as many as 75 lots of philatelic and collateral material. Members and guests may submit up to six lots for sale, and get to keep 90% of the hammer price per lot. Donations eagerly accepted.
- 26th **Club Program: Letter “S” night.** A “Show & Tell” night for which you bring items from your collection that somehow incorporate the letter “S”. Obvious examples include Sweden, Sumatra, Saskatchewan Special Delivery, SS, Spain, and Saar. If any of your stamps, covers, postcards or collateral items include an “S,” they’re fair game! So, does that make SenSe?

April

- 2nd **Social / Swap and Shop / Stamp Grab / Treasure Hunt / RPSC circuit books / Social**
- 9th **Presentation Night:** BC Phil member **Tim Woodland** presents a program about Portugal (one of Europe’s “poor cousin” countries) and the country’s colonial history; concentrating on the “‘Mouchon’ omnibus issues used from 1895 to 1923 (a period characterized by regicide, abdication, and the establishment of the Portuguese Republic).” Sounds exciting! Tim will also touch on the omnibus “Ceres” issues which, as a result of colour, paper, perforation and printing varieties, rate their own specialized catalogue.
- 16th **Club auction:** Always the most popular night of each month, our club auctions usually include at least 75 lots ranging from sublimely philatelic through quirky collateral to non-philatelic oddities. 10% of the hammer price goes to the club, the rest to you! Visitors welcome.
- 23rd **Club Program: Really-Small-Topical-Collection Night.** Tonight, we share not our big but our small topical or thematic collections, the ones represented by so few issues that you probably have a complete collection already, perhaps of only one or two stamps. You may be in search of stamps that don’t even exist, but you keep hoping. Bring up to six of your very small topical collections to share.
- 30th **A “Fifth Night” Donation Auction:** These auctions come on the fifth Wednesday of months with five Wednesdays in them; any donations are welcome, but philatelic ones are especially appreciated. All proceeds go to the club.

May

- 7th **Social / Swap and Shop / Stamp Grab / Treasure Hunt / RPSC circuit books / Social (tea, coffee & cookies)** Come to enjoy the tea, coffee, cookies, and friends to chat with! What more do you need?
- 14th **Presentation Night: with Bruce Perkins.** Bruce will speak about his collection of First Day Covers.
- 21th **May Auction:** Our regular, and popular, monthly auction, featuring up to 75 lots of philatelic, collateral, and non-philatelic items. Sellers get 90% of the hammer price. Donations welcome.
- 28th **Club Program: 20-Question Mystery Night:** in which members will try to identify several unseen “Mystery Stamps” by asking pertinent questions like these: “Was the stamp issued before (or after) 1900?” “Is the stamp a definitive?” “Does the stamp feature a person?” Members are invited to bring their own stamps to try to stump the “panel.”

CENTENNIAL COPTER



The F-28 was named “Helicopter of the Canadian Centennial” and was flown cross-country from east to west to promote the centennial. It was the creation of Enstrom Helicopters (Jack Christensen and Rudy Enstrom). The mark has been applied to various Centennial and Expo 67 covers, but never to an aerogramme. It is possible that the form was purchased in Saskatoon or perhaps the German addressee had some mailed to himself. The item was flown twice in delivery. *Duff Malkin*



A GENTLE REMINDER from our Membership Department

*Grrrrr...*It's time to fire up your BC Philatelic Society membership. (*membership...good, fire...bad!*)

It costs only \$20 for individuals (*torch-bearing villagers*), \$30 for families (*and friends of Dr. Frankenstein*), and \$7.50 for students (*preferably medical students studying the reanimation of dead tissue*).

Payment (cash or personal cheque*) may be given to any member of the executive, or mailed to:

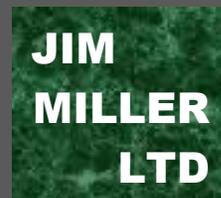
BC Philatelic Society
 Box 40, Grosvenor Bldg.
 1040 West Georgia Street
 Vancouver, BC V6E 4H1

**Please do not mail cash (mail cash....bad!)*

Remember...if your membership is expiring, it can be brought back to life...Renew it!

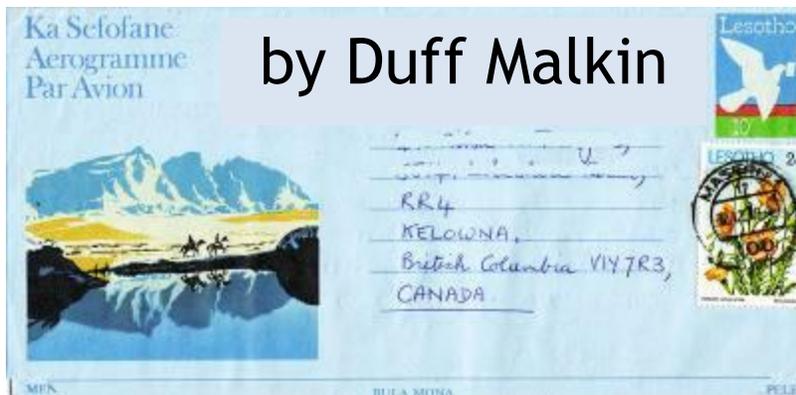


We all need friends to give us a boost sometimes, and the BC Phil is proud to claim the following as its friends indeed. Best of the season and a prosperous 2008 to all of our members and the good friends of the Phil!



Duff Guide: Adventures in Africa

Our intrepid correspondent covers the globe by aerogramme. This edition, Duff takes us on a pony ride through picturesque Lesotho



Sometime between 1978 and 1981 this Lesotho 10 cent aerogramme was issued. The catalogue that I have seen gives the dates of issue of the previous 10 cent aerogramme and the following 12 cent aerogramme. In any case, it was released before December 30, 1980, when this particular item was mailed out.

The major difference was the prominence of the Sotho language on the form. The previous form has "Aerogramme" at the top, while this one has the words *Ka Sefofane* (which apparently means "airplane"). Where the Sotho language is most notable is in its use of folding and opening instructions. This usage was either intended for people who were more familiar with the written Sotho language, or possibly as a reflection of cultural pride (or both). It may even have been a bit of tourism advertising — which would certainly explain the illustration on the front left-hand side.

Unfortunately, the language does not always perfectly mimic the English. *Bula Mona* translates to "open here" — when it really intends, "To open, slit here" and *Mena Mona Hape* seems to mean "fold here again" not "second fold here". As for the warning text, "If anything is enclosed, this aerogramme may be surcharged or sent by ordinary surface mail," I'm still working on the literal translation. *Tieho* means "delay," *ka hare* means "inside," *letho* means "something" and *qoba* is "to duck or avoid." The point being that it is difficult to say exactly the same thing in two languages, especially when one culture tries to translate concepts totally outside its own experiences.

The capital city of Lesotho is Maseru. The people inhabiting the country of Lesotho are called Basotho (thus the old name of Basutoland) and their language is Sotho. There is Northern Sotho and Southern Sotho, but they can each understand each other's different dialects.

The aerogrammes of these series (1978-?) are very large in terms of cover size and writing space. This may have been intentional, to get people to use the forms over air mail letters. The 100

number in the Maseru Klusendorf hand cancellation is the South African postal code for Lesotho (or at least it was at the time).

Much of Lesotho is about a mile above sea level with many of its settlements accessible only by horseback (and this usually means on the backs of Lesotho ponies). Many of its citizens are expert horseback riders and there is a thriving tourism industry in that mode of transportation.

The mountain depicted is in the Maluti ("Blue") mountain range. It may be none other than Thaba Boisu, the historic spot where Moshoeshoe I (above) gathered together a good number of Africans, secured British protection and avoided annexation into South Africa. If it is, it is an indistinct reference to the Lesotho royal family, which most citizens of the country would probably understand. Moshoeshoe II was deposed a second time in 1990, when a military coup put his son on the throne.

The new king was, it seems, a better son than a ruler, and Moshoeshoe I reappeared as a constitutional monarch shortly before perishing in an automobile accident in 1996. A small profile of his head appears on many Lesotho stamps. Perhaps it was not possible to produce the same design on an aerogramme.

If there is any direct political message to the citizenry, it is in the aerogramme stamp. If it were placed horizontally with the bottom rotated left, and a Basotho hat was substituted for the dove, it would closely resemble the country's flag, dating 1966 to 1987. The blue represented the sky and the critical resource of rain. The green symbolized the land and red was for faith, while white stood for peace.

Unfortunately, these were the same colours employed by the militarily overthrown National Party — a fact that would not have been overlooked by those in and outside Lesotho. There was, therefore, a need for a new flag and this is the one Lesotho still flies.

Background to a Collector

By Tim Woodland

I first showed an interest in stamps at about the age of seven. My parents both had family in England, and friends in Australia and Malaysia, all of whom seemed to be frequent letter writers. A fresh supply of colourful worldwide stamps entered my home on a regular basis.

Although I lived on a street with only 20 houses, in Haney, BC (now Maple Ridge) there was quite a diversity of foreign origins among the residents, resulting in a further supply of stamps from Denmark, Holland, Germany and Sweden, all available for the asking. A childhood friend and I were quite competitive at our regular door-knocking stamp-acquisition walks up and down the street, in the late 1960's and early 1970's. After those walks, the debating and trading sessions would begin; although it was sometimes frustrating (she often got the "pretty cats and animals" stamps), I ended up with the basis of a better definitive and higher-values collection.

I also traded stamps with my grandfather in England for several years. I sent him Canadian new issues and he returned the same from Great Britain. Eventually I ended up with his basic worldwide collection.

Like many collectors my later teens and 20's were about starting a career and other life pursuits, and the collection was put away, out of mind and in storage, for 10 years or so. Regular winter shutdowns in the forest industry led me to bring the collection out again.

In 1990 I met my wife, Olga, who was born in the Azores Islands, once a possession of Portugal and now with Autonomous Region status. I embraced learning a new culture (the food is fantastic!) and language (to communicate with my five sisters-in-law, for whom English is spoken as second choice in their homes). You can see where this is going, a new excuse to learn about a culture's history through collecting their stamps.

About this time I met two influential people, Beverly Fox and Ron

Vanderholt. Beverly ran a Vancouver stamp shop, Weeda Stamps, with a good selection of Portugal and Colonies stamps, and a great selection of jazz music playing in the background. This customer/dealer friendship led me to the other Vancouver dealers (FvH Stamps, owned and operated by BC Phil members Frank von Hausen and his wife, Liza, keeps me supplied with the Azores one-page annual supplement and three new issues per year), and also introduced me to Roger Packer, who for over 10 years faithfully supplied BC Phil membership application forms until I ran out of excuses and became a regular member.

Ron Vanderholt had travelled and spent time in Goa, and became a Portuguese India stamp specialist.

... the collecting of Portuguese stamps has given me a sense of history of my wife's culture and allowed me to partially learn a new language and better communicate with my in-laws.

Several years into a good friendship and much enjoyment of our shared hobby, we discovered that Ron's wife and I were distantly related through family in England. Ron further introduced me to a Florida-based mail-sale stamp dealer who specialized in Portugal & Colonies. I was mentioned in their monthly newsletter as having placed the first order on their new computerized web site in 1996.

Both Ron and Beverly supported my collecting interest and helped focus it from a budget-busting, "all Portugal and Colonies" to a specialized interest in the omnibus King Carlos issues. Like Machin Heads or any other large, monarch definitive series, these "Mouchons" as they are known to P&C specialists, are mostly affordable, have over 1000 Scott listings, and feature enough varieties (several actually catalogued) to keep both serious and fly-speck philatelists interested for many years.

So the collecting of Portuguese stamps has given me a sense of history of my wife's culture and allowed me to partially learn a new language and

better communicate with my in-laws. My collection has been featured in BC Phil presentations, and has justified a number of trips to San Francisco for the annual convention of the International Society for Portuguese Philately, held each spring. Within this group I have become a recognized specialist in the field, and have had several research notes and new findings published in their quarterly ISPP journal *Portu-Info*.

I have donated copies of the Portugal and Colonies specialized catalogues to the BC Phil library, and encourage any collector to have a look at this interesting area.

More recently I have combined stamp collecting with an interest in the history of the forest industry on the BC Coast, and become a cover, postcard and ephemera collector and exhibitor.

Peter Jacobi, several local dealers, and eBay have helped me to develop a decent collection. This has also led to presentations at BC Phil and BNAPS, an invitation to join the 21 Club, and a Silver Medal and AAPE "Best Novice Exhibitor" award at VANPEX 2005.

Stamp and cover collecting has not only been a satisfying

personal hobby, it has also stimulated social relationships as a customer, friend, and fellow hobbyist; catered to the extrovert in allowing me to publicly present and exhibit, and provided opportunities to "give back" to the hobby by volunteering in BC Phil and VANPEX roles.

(Anyone wishing to share their personal sojourn into the world of philately is encouraged to contribute their story. Please contact the editor for your inclusion in future editions.)

The B.C. Philatelic Society Newsletter is printed three times a year and is free to all members of the Society.

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Stamp News from the Royal Vaults

(Articles presented here were originally published in the March 1888 edition of the Halifax Philatelist and are reprinted with the kind permission of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada.)

My Super Power's bigger than your Super Power...

We notice in the February No. Of the Philatelic Journal of America that Mr. L.S. Morton, in an article on "History Dispensing Stamps" makes use of somewhat strong language in reference to England.

In speaking of the South African Republic stamps he says "This Republic began issueing (sic) stamps in 1869. In 1877 England stepped in and interfered (I mark well that England only interferes with weak nations, unable to protect themselves from her.)" The sentence in brackets is altogether uncalled for, and it merely shows that there still exists here and there in the United States, people who have still the same unreasoning hatred that their great grandfathers had reason for, but for which they have none. If Mr. Morton had made a search as to the cause of England's interference in the Transvaal he would hardly have written what he did. As for always interfering with only weaker nations than herself, it happens there are not many stronger than she is, so that it generally happens that in her wars she has, that they are the petty ones. She has never shown any lack of spirit in interfering with stronger nations, when her policy demands that she should do so, and Mr. Morton would know this if he follows up the history he writes about.

It is to be presumed that the Mexican War of 1849, and the unjustifiable territorial aggression which she received from the same was not a strong power interfering with a weak one.

Mr. Morton should look to his own country and her actions before he casts a reflection on another.

Now That's What I Call Putting In Your Two Cents...

A Washington correspondent tells an amusing story about a letter received at the postmaster-general's office, enclosing a two-cent stamp, with an explanatory note setting forth that the writer had been tempted to make use of the stamp which had not been properly cancelled, and becoming conscience smitten, had taken this mode of reparation. There is a fund in the treasury department into which "conscience" money can be paid, but there was no precedent to show how a postage stamp sent in under such circumstances should be disposed of, and the officials were correspondingly embarrassed. Finally a record was made of the fact in the book of letters by the chief clerk and sent to the third assistant postmaster-general. When it reached that official it was transferred, after due consideration, to the finance division. Another entry was here formally made of letters received, and the letter was then placed in the hands of the chief of the division, who pasted the stamp on the letter, drew his pen through it and wrote the word "cancelled" underneath. He then affixed his signature, which was witnessed by one of the clerks, who also signed his name. The letter was then carefully filed away for future reference.

The British Columbia Philatelic Society meets 7:30 pm every Wednesday (except during the summer) at the West Burnaby United Church 6050 Sussex Avenue, Burnaby. Call today about becoming a member!