

CALGARY PHILATELIST

Issue 54

June 2002

80 YEARS!

It was in 1922
that the CPS
was organized.

This clipping
comes from
the May 3
issue of the
CALGARY
HERALD,
and reports
on the initial
adoption of
the club's
constitution.

PHILATELISTS IN CALGARY FORM AN ASSOCIATION

Election of Officers Takes Place at Meeting In June

The Calgary Philatelic Society was organized at a meeting of local stamp collectors, held in 510 Lancaster buildings, on Tuesday evening. The committee, which had been appointed to draw up a constitution presented their report and a constitution was adopted. The election of officers will be held at the next regular meeting, which has been set for the first Tuesday in June.

Mr. Martin Thomas, of the Department of Soldier Civil Re-Establishment, was appointed secretary pro tem.

There are a great number of enthusiastic collectors in Calgary and it is thought that through the new organization the scientific collecting of stamps can be carried out. One of the objects of the society is to promote fellowship amongst the members while a determined effort will be made to stamp out the circulation of forgeries and counterfeit.

Among those present at the organization meeting were: Col. Potter, C. H. King, M. Thomas, W. K. Hall, F. W. Herring, Mr. Hinds, Mr. Kelly, Dr. E. C. Mason and others.

A number of juniors were also present but the constitution provides that all members shall be 21 years or over. The society will take steps to organize a junior society and will endeavor to give all the help and guidance possible to the younger collectors.

At the next meeting Mr. W. Kelsey Hall will give a paper describing the different types of papers used in the production of stamps and will endeavor to illustrate his lecture by exhibiting the various types.

Any stamp collectors in the city desirous of joining the new society are requested to forward their names to Mr. Thomas, at the H. C. H. offices in the Lancaster building.

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Articles or advertisements for Calgary Philatelist should be sent to the Editor, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. Small ads are free to paid-up CPS members. Display ads are \$10 per full page per issue for camera-ready copy (photographs extra). No partial-page ads accepted.

Membership dues for the 2001/2002 season are \$15, plus an initiation fee of \$10 for new members. Send to the CPS, Box 1478, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2L6. Notice of address changes or enquiries about missing copies should be sent to the Membership Chairman, not the Editor.

The CPS mailing address is Box 1478, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2L6. The Web site is: <http://members.shaw.net/calphilso> All articles as hard copy only, mailed to Box 6830, Calgary, T2P 2E7, or handed to Dale Speirs at meetings.

The CPS was founded in April 1922 by Dr. Edward George Mason. It is Chapter 66 of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, Chapter 1360 of the American Philatelic Society, and Chapter 91 of the American Topical Association.

2001/2002 EXECUTIVE

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- 1st year	Keith Brown	248-0688

COMMITTEES - see page 13 for list of committee chairpersons

Stickiness And Curling Problems.

The United States Post Office was getting complaints both ways because of the great climatic variations in the USA. Its earliest stamps were criticized for lack of stickiness, then in the later 1800s the complaint was too much gum on the stamps, causing them to curl [29 and 30]. The USPO tried to address this problem circa 1904 to 1906 by producing stamps with either summer gum or winter gum [28]. Winter gum had more glucose, was softer, and more flexible. Summer gum had less glucose so the sheets wouldn't stick together in the heat and humidity. Although a good idea in theory, problems arose when post offices sold winter stamps in summer and vice versa. This would be especially so in smaller post offices which might order a batch of stamps in winter and still be selling them next summer.

The Canadian Post Office had trouble in the 1930s with stamp booklets [33]. A warning had to be issued not to carry them in inside pockets because the gum might stick.

Complaints about gum stickiness seem to occur in bursts, whether because someone brought the subject up and inspired others to write, or because the current printing of stamps had a bad batch of gum. Historically-minded readers will note that these outbursts coincided with new issues for new kings. In 1911, the 'scrawny lion' issue for King George V not only produced strong criticism about the poor stamp design but the gum as well. When questions were asked in the House of Commons, the Minister responsible replied that the Post Office was testing its gum arabic weekly but was unable to determine why the new stamps wouldn't stick. One M.P. tried to pin the blame on the stamp printer using German-made machines to produce the stamps [63 and 64].

There was another flurry in Britain circa 1936-37 about non-stick gum, this time from the Leeds branch of the Association of Sub-Postmasters. The Postmaster General said that pure gum arabic was used and that tests showed it was okay, although he was willing to acknowledge the complaint that the taste was not pleasant [34]. As usual with the great issues of the day, there were letters to THE TIMES [35 to 37]. This started off in May 1937, with H.H. Edmonds declaring that stamps wouldn't stick and something should be done. K. Turner replied a few days later, staunchly defending British gum as the best in Europe, writing that " ... the more democratic a country the more adhesive are its stamps." Philatelist F. Bonnett leaped into the fray by saying that he found it difficult to soak Austrian stamps off paper due to the tenacity of the gum.

Just after World War Two, a Briton visiting Sicily reported that the quality of Italian stamps was so poor that every post office had a pot of gum for patrons to use [38]. In 1955, the Communist satraps could not prevent East Germans from complaining about their stamps not sticking to the envelope [39]. From Australia in 1960, one correspondent took a more constructive approach about complaints that the aerogramme flaps would not seal by writing that she used marmalade to stick the envelope shut. She also found it useful for stamps as well [40]. This would have I'm sure, had the issue arisen, also eliminated any complaints about the taste of the gum. Lack of stickiness afflicted the 1969 British aerogrammes [11]. About that time there were complaints from Lesotho, Uganda, and Montserrat that newly-introduced PVA gum was not as adhesive as gum arabic [41].

In 1978, the U.S. Postal Service came under fire for stamps shipped with little or no gum. This was revealed to be the fault of the printer, not the gum. The final result was that the printer switched to pre-gummed paper instead of doing it during the printing operations [62].

Postal administrations were well aware of complaints about gum stickiness, and were always experimenting for better gums. There is no single stamp gum. In the history of postage stamps, all sorts of ingredients have been used, although most stamps were gummed with a variation of gum arabic, dextrine (made from corn or potato starch), or PVA (70% polyvinyl acetate and 30% polyvinyl alcohol) [43]. The changes were sometimes forced on stamp printers. In the late 1960s there was increasing difficulty in obtaining gum arabic, the traditional mucilage, which was one reason that stamp printers began switching to alternatives such as PVA [42]. Another reason for the switch was that gum arabic is an extract of acacia trees, and the quality was variable, whereas PVA is synthetic and produced to an exact formula. Dextrine caused stamp paper to curl during printing [43]. PVA is invisible on the stamp, which led to complaints from customers that there wasn't any on their stamps. This also seemed to produce a brief burst of stamps printed on the gummed side in Canada during the late 1960s, since the printers also had problems [60].

Gum cannot be considered in isolation when printing stamps. The porosity of paper and the temperature to which gum is heated when sprayed on affect its stickiness and propensity to curl the paper. Originally it was necessary to put gummed paper through rollers to 'break' the gum and prevent it from curling, but in recent times it is the chemistry of the gum that is adjusted. When gum is applied to paper, it must dry in as little as eight seconds, as the web-fed rolls of paper move at high speed. The exact formulas and application processes of gum are machine specific for stamp printing and not at all just a matter of splashing on some PVA or dextrine [58 and 59].

PVA gum will not sit on the surface of sized paper, whereas dextrine gum will [61]. PVA was therefore applied to unsized paper and penetrates into the fibres. Due to PVA's transparency causing post office patrons to return stamps because they thought there was no gum on them, the printers used additives to make it more visible.

[to be continued]

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THE 1913 CALGARY POST OFFICE FIRE

by Dale Speirs

On the evening of October 15, 1913, a fire broke out in a temporary facility being used by the Calgary post office on the corner of 7 Avenue SE and 2 Street. The fire began about 19h50 in the evening after a gas stove exploded. The stove was on the upper floor in a room where mail bags were stored. The upper floor of the facility was destroyed by the fire and the lower floors damaged by water from the firefighters [1, 2]. All of the mail was safely removed and stored at the police station, and sustained no water or fire damage. It is therefore unlikely that any postal markings would have been applied to the letters.

The whole thing was a comedy of errors from start to finish. It turned out that there was an automatic sprinkler system in the building but it had been shut off. One wonders how many other building code violations there were. The Fire Dept. had its problems getting out to the site. En route to the fire, one of the fire trucks was involved in a traffic accident, spilling oil from the wrecked vehicle. A passerby, Edward Feetham, lit a match the better to see the wreck in the dark, and promptly set the fire engine on fire [3]. An angry Fire Chief had him arrested for arson and hauled before a judge. I have been unable to determine how the case was rendered.

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PHILATELIC LEGENDS: THE MURDERED STAMP COLLECTOR by Dale Speirs

While searching a 1963 back issue of ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS for an unrelated item, I came across a filler item about the recent auction sale of an 1851 Hawaiian Missionary 2-cent stamp [1]. The caption read in part: "*The stamp was formerly in the collection of M. Gaston Leroux, who is thought to have been murdered because he refused to sell the stamp. Legend has it that a detective posing as a connoisseur bluffed the murderer into showing him the stamp.*"

The name Gaston Leroux seemed familiar and I quickly placed it; he was a French journalist who turned to writing detective and suspense novels. His single most famous work is THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, later turned into an equally-famous musical. Leroux died, not by murder, in 1927.

In a 1950 issue of SCOTT'S MONTHLY JOURNAL, the Gaston Leroux story was included as a factual account in an article on Hawaiian Missionary stamps and their history [5]. By 1978, the story had mutated to the murder of its owner in 1892, who had refused to part with it despite a L400 offer from a fellow collector [2]. A slightly different version mentioned that the stamp subsequently passed through the Ferrary and Burrus collections [3]. (Ferrary and Burrus were two early collectors of immense wealth who bought expensive stamps like candy.)

One of the most prolific philatelic authors since the hobby began was Herman Herst Jr. He noted the existence of the Leroux legend, and published a warning that it was fiction [4]. The story began as a French short story a century ago, which was subsequently translated into English and began circulating as fact. The French Surete were and probably still are put to the trouble of informing enquirers that no such case exists in their records. Despite Herst, the story still circulates in hack written articles or cut-and-paste stamp club bulletins.

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PHILATELIC LITERATURE REVIEWS

by Leanteri Polvikoski

PHSC Journal #109 (Sample copy is \$5 from David Platt, 8 Maple Avenue, RR#2, Elgin, Ontario K0G 1E0) A nicely produced quarterly in card covers, from the Postal History Society of Canada. The issue at hand has articles on ship mail, the new IPS 4900 postmarking machines that Canada Post is now converting to, assorted historical items, Arctic mail, and various reviews and news. Please note that postal history is not just things that happened a century ago; the term also covers modern on-going events such as new styles of postmarks or cover markings.

Ukrainian Philatelist V49#2 (Sample copy is US\$5 from Ukrainian Philatelic and Numismatic Society, Box 303, Southfields, New York 10975-0303) The 50th anniversary of this specialist society is celebrated in this 104-page square-bound issue. There is a history of the organization, which began in 1951 in the USA, and struggled along for many years. The membership in later years was about 300, which is low for a philatelic international specialist society, but soared when Ukraine regained its independence in 1991 and began issuing its own stamps again. It must be remembered that in 1951, Ukraine was considered a dead country not only by philatelists but by the general public at large, so the early specialists were as much concerned with preserving cultural heritage as in collecting stamps. Also summarized in this issue are the local chapters of UPNS, several of which are Canadian, and one of which is here in Calgary. From there, we go to articles on UKRAINPEX show covers, cinderellas issued by cultural organizations in the Ukrainian diaspora, and a checklist of stamps issued on Ukrainian themes by countries other than Ukraine. Canada, of course, with its significant proportion of Ukrainian-descended people in the western provinces, has issued several such stamps.

From Cover To Cover V17#4 (Details from Art Cover Exchange, c/o Joseph Dole, 105 Lawson Road, Rochester, New York 14616-1444) This club is for doers, not passive subscribers. Members exchange mail art with each other, and they are committed to a certain number of art covers each month. Some are first-day covers but most are event or thematic covers, many with very artistic cachets. If you enjoy preparing commemorative covers, and can do 15 or 20 a month, this group will be of interest to you.

Canadian Philatelist (2002 May/June) (Available from the CPS Library at meetings) This issue features the Queen of Canada's Jubilee celebrations, as well as a sadder article on the death of Princess Margaret. Other articles range from British railway mail during the Boxer Rebellion, Newfoundland's first postmasters, and modern Canadian stamps with error values.

SPRING MARKET REPORT

by Jan Brookes

Thank you again to the wonderful volunteers who helped with the April weekend Spring Market stamp show. Even on Friday, with its horrible weather (5 cm of snow), the keeners were all there. No complaints from the dealers either; sales were brisk!

My two V.I.P. volunteers for the weekend were Marge Hunt and Bob Hoffmann. Marge mailed over 300 posters, and fixed, filed, and cleaned up the youth table file folders. Bob did his usual extras at the show as well as looking after the circuit books. Thanks to both!

I have to tell you about the phone calls Dwayne Miner got about the Spring Market. One gentleman asked how much it would cost to set up his vegetable stand. The second one should go down in club folklore. Dwayne had a gentleman call and ask what the commission would be to sell several of his watercolours in our silent auction. Dwayne explained that this was probably not an appropriate auction for such items. The artist still insisted because 15% was such a reasonable commission. After about ten minutes he finally gave up when Dwayne explained it was a sale for philatelic material. As he was hanging up, the artist casually asked Dwayne, "By the way, what kind of medical disorder is philately?". My answer to Dwayne when I heard his story was "Why didn't you tell him it is an obsessive compulsive disorder!".

We are now looking ahead to autumn. Please be aware we may have a change of venue because the cultural hall will probably not be available on the Sunday. We are working on a new site. More in the next bulletin.

PROGRAMME FOR JUNE

by Marge Hunt

For the June meeting, the programme speaker will be Penny Borrowman. Her topic will be China.

A WORD ABOUT OUR WEB PAGE

by Penny Borrowman

The next time you access the Internet, take a look at our club's Web site. The address recently changed to <http://members.shaw.ca/calphilso>, so you may have to update your bookmarks. When you get to our site, if you see the old Welcome page with the <enter> button, click the Refresh or Reload button at the top of your screen on your browser window. You should then see the new front (or splash) page of our redesigned Web site. You will see that all the pages of our site are accessible from the navigation bar at the left side of the screen. If you click on a link that takes you away from our site, it will open in a new window. When you want to come back to our site, just close the new window.

I hope that everyone will visit our site and check it out. If you run into problems or want to state your impressions, just click on the e-mail address. It appears on nearly every page. Check in often as this is a work in progress, and will change frequently as more is added and re-organized. I look forward to hearing from you and will follow up on all suggestions. Thanks for your support.

POSTAL ARCHIVES ON-LINE

There are some very useful databases on-line from the Public Archives of Canada, via its Archivianet service. This is free to users by the way; your tax dollars in action!

The Postal archives are located at: http://www.archives.ca/08/080608_e.html and by following the Research link at that address you can find the following databases, among others.

Post Offices And Postmasters: This is a list of all post offices and postmasters in Canada from pre-Confederation to date. Very useful for writing postal history! These are transcribed from the original Canada Post field record cards, which until now were only accessible to researchers visiting Ottawa in person. The direct address is: http://www.archives.ca/02/02010902_e.html

Canadian Stamps: This is a detailed listing of every Canadian stamp, with illustrations, histories, and archival details. The direct address is: http://www.archives.ca/02/02011703_e.html

A ROYAL VISIT TO EDMONTON

by Penny Borrowman

The year the Edmonton Stamp Club hosted Royal*2002*Royale, the 74th convention of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Many members of the CPS took advantage of good roads and an otherwise dull weekend to take in the fun. Isobell Attrell and I drove up together Friday morning, booked in at the Fantasyland Hotel, and hit the show around noon. There we found things very much in full swing. We were very sorry to have missed the Opening Ceremonies, which included the unveiling of Canada Post's newest art stamp, featuring Alex Colville's "Church and Horse".

The show was held in a series of rooms along a corridor in the conference center. The rooms seemed a bit small for the purpose intended. There was little room to navigate the aisles in the bourse room, or squeeze between the exhibit frames and the walls. But that added to a sense of intense participation. There were booths in the hall, including Canada Post and the Canadian Aerophilatelic Society.

The theme of the show was "The World of Airmails", so the Friday night President's Reception was held in the Alberta Aviation Museum. Those of us who thought we wouldn't need a coat suffered a rude awakening. It seems airplane museums must be kept at a temperature below 15°C, or the metal of the plane bodies will melt or stick to the floor or something. The food was great, the long speech was lost and never delivered, and we were treated to a unique event. In commemoration of the first freight flight in Alberta, between Edmonton and Wetaskiwin, a plane flew in from Wetaskiwin with a load of specially marked covers. These were distributed to all guests, and many of us had ours signed by the pilot John Kellner, and the co-pilot Kyle Miller.

Kyle resurfaced at the banquet on Saturday evening, where he won awards in the Youth category for his exhibit "Helicopters". Quite an accomplished young man. The banquet featured marvellous food, great company, a light, humorous atmosphere, and many awards presentations. The organizing committee for Royal 2003 showed a video aimed at attracting us all to Hanover, Ontario. It was lovely, showing everything but the town itself. Maybe it's too small to show. But they have big plans. I announced our Spring Stamp Market, and invited all 150 or so banqueters to attend. The evening ended with musical entertainment by four talented young women who sang a medley of WW2 songs, an inspired choice for the majority of attendees. Us young'uns enjoyed it too.

Many thanks to the Edmonton Stamp Club for a job well done, and a great Royal*2002*Royale.

by Penny Borrowman
CPS Librarian

Our club library has some very good resources and interesting reference works. Most of the books on the CPS shelves are purely informational, but we have a few that are just for fun. Some enterprising authors have written novels or true stories that center around the themes of postage stamps, collections, or auction lots. Inevitably greed takes its toll, and the results make intriguing reading. One such book is Stephen R. Datz's **The Wild Side: Philatelic Mischief, Murder, And Intrigue**. This book contains 19 short stories, all of which he says are based on actual incidents, with details changed to protect individual privacy. Quite a few of the stories come from or are about stamp dealers: how they were scammed, how they scammed, how they beat the scammers. One man was murdered for a stamp and coin collection he had boasted about but didn't really exist ... or did it?

Another book that provides great reading is George Amick's **The Inverted Jenny: Money, Mystery, Mania**. He has researched and reported on all 100 known copies of this printing error; all the adventures these stamps have had in the hands of rich collectors, eccentric millionaires, museums, thieves, federal agents, and wild hopefuls. This well-illustrated book also describes the original purchase by William Thomas Robey, and the first flight two days later of the first regularly scheduled airmail service in the USA, which went horribly wrong.

Thanks to a generous donation by Dale Speirs, we now have a genuine philatelic murder mystery in our collection. Ellery Queen's **The Chinese Orange Mystery** is as relevant and exciting today as it was when first released in 1934. This mystery story involves a nameless body, an exotic stamp, and everything turned backwards. Ellery Queen's puzzle keeps you guessing and reading, right to the very end. Especially recommended for the collector of Chinese philately!

Two other books in our collection that provide engrossing reading are **Wallis And Edward: Letters 1931-1937**, and **Abdication** by Christopher Warwick. The former provides insight into the romance that shook the western world, and contains copies of letters and many photographs. The latter looks at all aspects of Edward's life in Britain's royal family, and his all-consuming passion which resulted in his seemingly irresponsible decision. Anyone interested in Edward VIII and the few postage stamps that bear his image will enjoy the insight they gain by reading either of these engrossing books.

Be sure to stop by the library cabinet at the next general meeting. We are usually there by 7 pm. All you need is a paid-up membership to borrow good reading until the next general meeting.

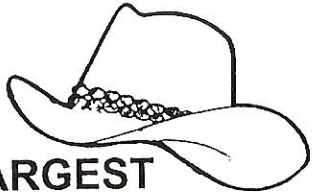
The CPS has a show award given each year at CALTAPEX to the best exhibit by a local member. The award is named in recognition of a long-service member and is re-named every five years. It began as the Norm Tunna Award, and has since been re-named in honour of Sid Richardson and John Jarabek. For the next five-year cycle, it will be known as the Bob Monilaws Award. The announcement at the April meeting was greeted by a standing ovation and prolonged applause for Bob, who was present to take his bows.

Bob's genial face is well known to meeting, auction, and show attendees. He is Honourary Life Member #12, granted in 1978. He won Author of the Year in 1994 for his D-Day article which was later reprinted in CANADIAN PHILATELIST as the cover story using his illustration. He held the following CPS positions: Circuit Books (1962 to 1967), Programmes (1979), Director (1975 to 1983, 1991 to 1998). He worked in a variety of positions on the Show Committee for decades, most notably as Security Chairman (Bob is a retired police officer). He was one of the behind-the-scenes clerks on the Auction Committee, also for decades. In recent years he worked to revitalize the Life Members Committee.

Well done, Bob!

COMMITTEES

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NOTE TO INTERNET VIEWERS: Unless stated otherwise, telephone numbers are area code 403. Alberta is on Mountain Daylight Time. Any advertiser can be reached through the CPS e-mail at calphilso@shaw.ca, but please allow time for forwarding to offline members.

WANTED: Stamp show catalogues, Canadian and international shows. The older the better. Please contact Ed at 274-0021 or harrise@shaw.ca

WANTED: Advanced collector of World Wildlife Fund (anything with the panda logo) stamps, postally-used covers, FDCs, postcards, maximum cards, even cookie cans. Top dollar paid! Phone Jan at 251-1769.

WANTED: Private collector pays cash for larger stamp collections. Phone Willi at 239-2273.

TRADE: Need automotive work done on your car? Let's trade my labour for your stamps that I need. I am a licenced mechanic with 20+ years experience (just ask Penny). Phone Doug Kollar at 547-3838.

FOR SALE: Ukrainian and Russian stamps new and used. Also Ukrainian FDCs and special cancels from 1991 to date. Call Andy at 236-2037.

WANTED: Stamps and covers from China to 1949. Special interest in overprints. Prefer bulk lots. Call Penny at 686-2662.

WANTED: Northern Rhodesia covers from 1925 to 1964. Will buy outright or trade for whatever. Call Walter Herdzik at 238-3171.

WANTED: Calgary Stampede philatelic memorabilia. I collect all phases of this fascinating field. You may have just the cover or cancel I need. Cash or generous exchange. Call Ed at 274-0021 or harrise@cadvision.com

FOR SALE: 19 stockbooks, 7 albums, including Minkus Canada, and 100 mint and used worldwide stamps. \$25. Call Milt at 243-0412.

TRADE: Worldwide stamps, old and new issues, dozens of countries to trade for same, based on Scott catalogues. Call Joe at 288-1267.

WANTED: Canada Scott 31241, fresh pane of 16 "Masterpieces of Canadian Art", 50-cent ceremonial frontlet. Phone Jim Karr at 287-0897 with price and availability.

MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

2002

June	5	Election meeting
	19	Auction
August	2	Deadline for September bulletin
September	4	General meeting
	4	Deadline for October bulletin
	18	Auction
October	2	General meeting
	16	Auction
November	6	General meeting
	6	Deadline for December bulletin
	20	Auction
December	4	Christmas social

MEETINGS and AUCTIONS are at the Kerby Centre, 2nd floor, 1133 - 7 Avenue SW, at 19h30. Auction lots should be in before 19h30 to allow bidder viewing

SUNDAY BOURSE is at Palliser Community Centre, 2323 Palliser Drive SW, from 10h00 to 16h00. Details and table rentals from Bill Szaroz at 337-3260.

CALGARY REGIONAL GROUP OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA PHILATELIC SOCIETY meets on the second Wednesday of the month except July and August. For details about meeting places and times, contact Ed Harris at 274-0021.

CALTAPEX details from Janice Brookes at 251-1769. Sometime in October but venue still undecided.