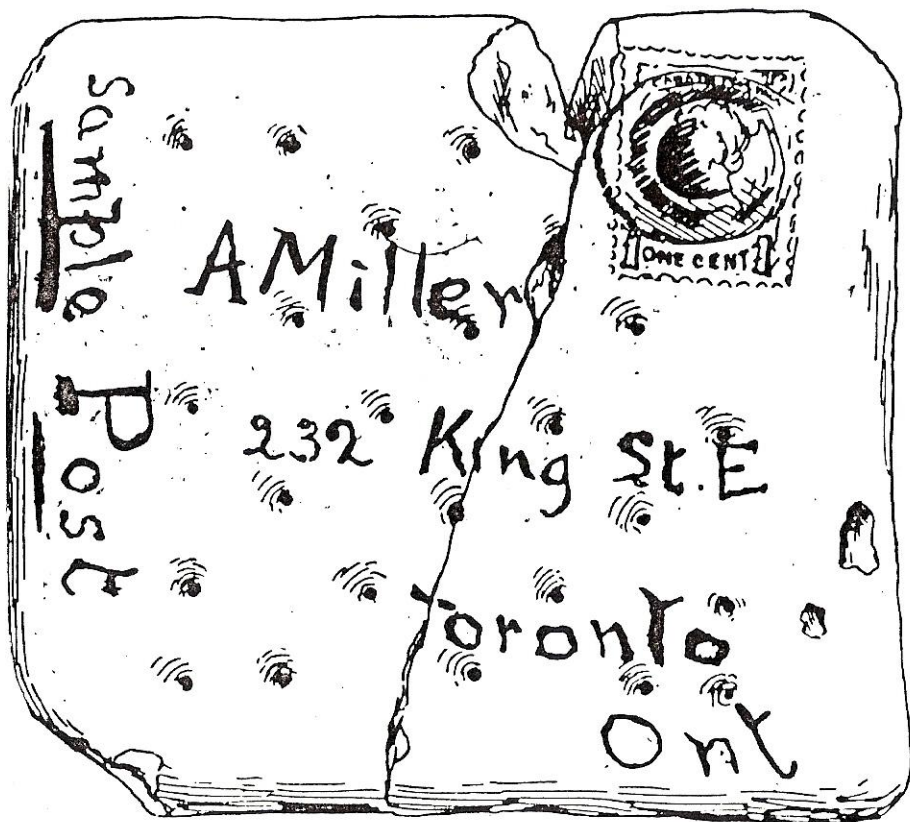


CALGARY PHILATELIST

Issue 76

February 2006



The above illustration comes from the June 1892 issue of the TORONTO JOURNAL OF PHILATELY, and shows a hard-tack biscuit that was used as a postcard from Swift Current, Saskatchewan, during the Second Riel Rebellion of 1885. An indelible pencil was used to write on it, and the crack occurred after it was delivered.

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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 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: www.calgaryphilatelicsociety.com 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.

A cumulative subject index from issue #1 to date for the CALGARY PHILATELIST exists but because of its length is too long to be published in this bulletin. A copy can be had for free from the editorial address at Box 6830.

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by Dale Speirs

Introduction.

Postal historians usually think of mail transport in terms of delivery by government post offices and private couriers which is nominally reliable, albeit sometimes untrustworthy in practice. There is another class of mail not meant to follow a postal route, which I shall refer to collectively as scattered mail. I define scattered mail as being letters or leaflets deliberately scattered about with delivery left to random chance. Bags of mail from a wrecked ship or a bag of mail dropped from a balloon are not scattered mail, the former because it was not deliberate and the latter because it was not scattered but intended for a specific target.

Scattered mail can be divided into several groups.

- a) Drift mail is that which is spread out to the winds and water, usually to track currents or for personal messages in a bottle. Propaganda leaflets are a subtype of drift mail, in which the intent is to scatter them within a specified geographic area. Balloon mail is not drift mail since such mail is taken up in bags, not as individual letters, and is meant for an exact destination.
- b) Lost mail is another group, used by academics studying human behaviour, and is stamped, addressed letters deliberately dropped on city sidewalks to see if anyone picks them up and puts them in a street letter box. The letters have varying addresses which are used to study public opinion, about which more later.
- c) Small world mail is letters handed to a person with instructions to pass them on to someone in the general direction of the addressee. It is based on the fact that most people on this planet can be linked to each other within two to ten steps, even if they don't know the intermediaries. Also known as six degrees of separation. A modern variation is the add-and-pass-on sheet, used by mail artists.

Drift Mail: Bottles.

Undoubtedly over the centuries there were many sailors or passengers enclosing notes in bottles and tossing them into the ocean. The success rate of bottle mail is vanishingly small unless dropped near shore where currents could bring it in. Patience is a virtue in such matters. Herman Herst Jr made numerous trans-Atlantic passages during his life and sent messages in empty beer bottles over a period of many years [6]. He reported no success with mid-ocean replies, although he did get a couple of responses to near-shore bottle messages. On 1892-07-12, a man threw a bottle letter into the Straits of Belle Isle off Newfoundland [8]. It was recovered 485 days later by a Norwegian fisherman at Sogne Fjord. A Belgian sailor tossed a bottle into the Atlantic in 1957, which was recovered in 1998 by an Icelandic girl [12].

Bottle mail can travel considerable distances. In 1925, a sailor on board an oil tanker dropped a bottle letter off the coast of Palm Beach, Florida, expecting it to be quickly recovered on shore and the letter sent on to Chicago [9]. Instead the bottle took the Gulf Stream current and was carried to the Shetland Islands, where it was found and the letter mailed back to the USA. The complete journey from Florida to Chicago via the Shetlands took 14 months. Another sailor dropped a bottle letter near the Canary Islands in October 1980. In December 1981, it was recovered in the Bahamas [11].

An interesting application of bottle mail was done in 1945 by Hollywood game show host Art Linkletter [10]. His radio show "People Are Funny" involved assorted stunts and practical jokes. He announced during one show that his staff would be dropping twelve glass floats off the California coast near Catalina Island at a specified time. The message inside each float awarded \$1,000 to the finder who replied to Linkletter with the code word on the message. Linkletter flew out at the appointed time and, as he expected, saw a huge flotilla of small boats waiting to grab the floats. Just for fun, the plane buzzed the water in several locations, and Linkletter joyfully watched the mad rush of boats to the supposed drop sites. When this sport became tiring, the plane then flew far out to sea and dropped the glass floats away from any fortune hunters. After that, there was silence for two years. In 1947, one of the globes was recovered by a boy on Eller Island in the Marshall Islands. He had the correct code word and won the \$1,000.

Coast-wise drift mail has better returns if it doesn't get caught in an offshore current. As an example, English postmark collector William Reginald Bray set out a drift letter at Porthrudd Cromlech in 1900 and got it back a month later [14]. One person who made a habit of it in the 1950s was Capt. Charles E. Milbury, who created what he called the Sea Jug Post [13, 15]. He regularly sent mail ashore by drifting in glass jugs. He did this from 1949 to 1951 along the eastern and Gulf coasts of the USA, 1952 and 1953 in Japan and Korea, and 1954 in Florida. One wonders how many of his glass jugs in Korea and Japan were blown apart during the war by suspicious military coast-watchers or patrol boats.

Islanders have used coastal drift mail on occasion. St. Kilda, in the Hebrides of Scotland, has tried tin can mail on the tide turning inland [16, 17]. Only one in four cans made it to the mainland. The mainland could be just as easily Norway as Scotland.

Drift Mail: Distress.

Sending a message in a bottle while in distress at sea is an old story, but not particularly useful for any chance of rescue. Those who have done it were well aware of the low odds, and presumably just wanted to have a chance to let others

know what happened to them. A Japanese shipwreck victim's message floated into his home village 150 years later [7].

The first trans-Atlantic mail of any kind dates back to Christopher Columbus. On 1493-02-14, wallowing through a severe storm, he set a barrel adrift containing a letter to explain what happened, but the message was never received [1]. Fortunately, Columbus made it through, so his distress mail was moot. In 1806, an American sailor who had been impressed into the British navy threw a bottle letter into the Caribbean waters off South America [2, 3]. The letter was recovered at North Carolina five months later, and forwarded through the postal system. In 1870, the steamship 'Pacific' sank in the Atlantic Ocean, and a bottle with a note from an American citizen washed ashore in France [4]. It was reported in 1915 after the ocean liner Lusitania was torpedoed that a bottle containing a message from a passenger was washed ashore in the Netherlands [5]. The veracity of that story is uncertain.

It wasn't just ships at sea that sent distress mail by bottle. In April 1851, the lighthouse at Minot's Ledge, off Cohasset, Massachusetts, fell into the sea during stormy weather [70]. The lighthouse tower was known to sway in strong storms, and the keepers dreaded being in it. On the night of April 17, a severe gale passed through the area. The two lighthouse keepers scribbled a note and sent it off by bottle. The note floated around Nantasket peninsula and washed up in Hingham Harbor, while the bodies of the two men washed ashore elsewhere. The note read: *"The light won't stand over tonight. She shakes two feet each way now."*

In the Magdalen Islands of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the inhabitants were faced with a desperate situation in 1910 when the telegraph cable broke, cutting off communication to the mainland. The islanders filled a barrel with mail, attached a sail to it, and set it adrift when the wind was blowing to the Nova Scotia shore [18 to 20]. The barrel landed ten days later. The Ponchon, as it was known, was re-enacted twice in 2000.

In late May 2005, a group of Peruvians and Ecuadorians were being smuggled into the USA. Their boat ran into trouble off the coast of Costa Rica and drifted helplessly, with fresh water quickly running out. They spotted a fisherman's line floating in the water and tied a bottled message to it in the hopes that the fishermen would notice it when they returned to retrieve their catch. (Deep water commercial fishermen lay out long lines of baited hooks or nets, held up by buoys, which are left to drift for a few days and then retrieved.) The fishermen did in fact discover the bottle, and the castaways were rescued [71].

In my collection of philatelic fiction, I have one short story relating to drift mail [21]. T.M. Adam's "Message In A Bottle" tells of a man kept prisoner in a seaside clinic and who is released after he sends a message in a bottle.

Drift Mail: Scientific.

Letters or postcards in plastic envelopes or bottles have been used by scientists and engineers to track ocean currents or atmospheric conditions. In October 1886, the Drainage and Water Supply Commission of Chicago released postcards in bottles to trace the currents of Lake Michigan [22]. Franked postcards in plastic envelopes were dropped by the British Royal Air Force in the seas between Stornoway and Ireland in 1954, to be returned to the National Institute of Oceanography in Surrey [25 to 27]. These postcards offered a half-crown reward to encourage returns. Replies came from Britain, but also from distant places such as France and the Faroes Islands. In 2002, the Canadian Ministry of Fisheries dropped 2,400 bottles with letters inside into the Arctic Ocean to study the currents [28]. As of February 2003, 60 replies had been received. Most were from Nunavut or Alaska, but a few came from Ireland and France.

Aerial drift mail has been used for scientific study. The Air League of the British Empire released weather balloons from Newport, England, on 1948-08-22. These balloons had prepaid cards for return through the mails [23]. Some were found as far afield as the Netherlands and Poland. In June 1950, the Air Ministry Meteorological Research dropped 3,000 weather report postcards over northwest London [24]. About 200 were returned within a few days, and many more over a longer period of time.

Drift Mail: Propaganda Leaflets.

With the advent of balloons and winged aircraft, the military began to appreciate the value of propaganda leaflets. There is a substantial body of philatelic literature on this subject, and societies devoted to it, so I will only briefly discuss it.

The first serious use of military airplanes was during World War One, and dropping propaganda leaflets was an aspect of this. The French Army dropped leaflets on German positions, telling them they would be treated fairly if they surrendered [29]. The best exponent of propaganda was the Italian poet Gabrielle D'Annunzio, who led the 87th Squadron over Vienna and dropped 70 kg of leaflets urging peace and for Austrians to rise up against their government [30]. This incident prompted the Austrian Emperor to make his famous remark "Their poets fight like soldiers, and our soldiers fight like poets."

World War Two saw the Germans and Allies bombarding each other with aerial leaflets and postcards. Normally they were dropped from aircraft but the Germans also developed a method of launching them over the lines by rifle grenades [44]. The amount of scattered propaganda leaflets is astounding. During World War Two, the Allies dropped 6 billion leaflets in western Europe alone, and more than 1 billion in the Korean War [58]. Guerilla wars do use propaganda leaflets but not to the same extent since the enemy is intermixed into the friendlies and the fighting is not for terrain as much as it is for hearts and minds. Airborne scattering of mail and leaflets is a necessity where the land is clearly divided into enemy and friendly territory. In a guerilla war, the village baker will run his store by day selling bread to occupying soldiers and then take an AK-47 out at night and try to ambush those same soldiers. As an example, during the Vietnam War, leaflets were scattered by both sides but not to the same extent as the conventional wars of Europe and Korea [69]. The combatants generally preferred to use personal indoctrination, or leave propaganda or threatening mail by hand delivery to specific individuals.

[to be continued]

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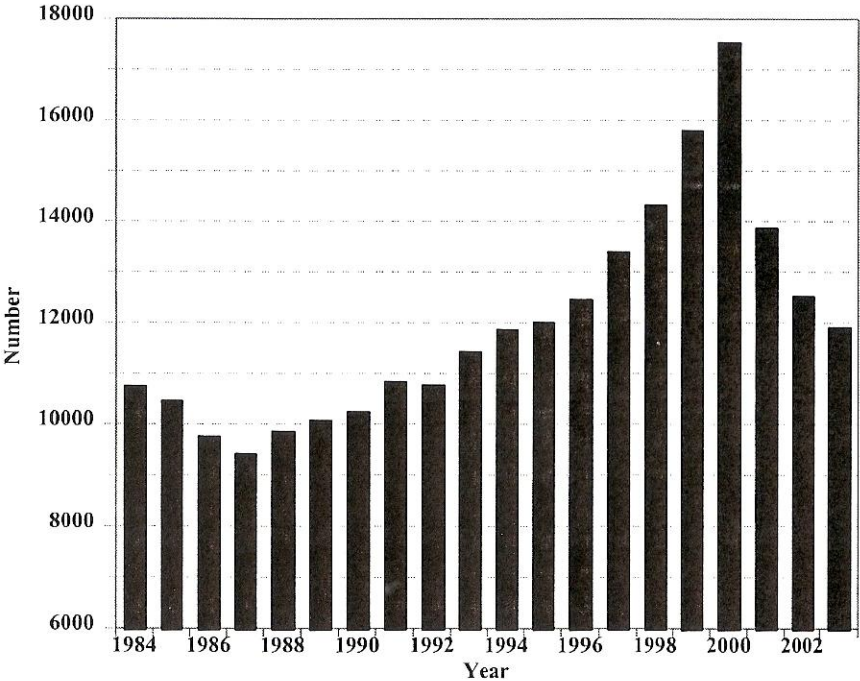
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WORLDWIDE ISSUES

The German periodical MICHEL RUNDSCHAU has published its annual survey of the number of worldwide stamps and souvenir sheets issued, up to the year 2003. (It usually takes a while to round up stray issues, which is why the results are two years behind.) As the chart below shows, the total number of issues continues to decline, albeit 11,911 stamps and sheets issued in 2003 was still way too many. It would have cost you \$8,905.57 to buy one of everything issued in 2003.

The usual suspects are still the worst offenders, such as perennial #1 St. Vincent with 251 issues (roughly one stamp per day, allowing for statutory holidays and weekends). Liberia was second with 199 issues, and Canada was 56th with a reasonable 69 issues. The USA had 123 issues, and Great Britain had 113, but those two countries have sufficient population to justify that many stamps, as opposed to Caribbean islands with a few thousand people, or, in some cases such as the Grenadines, none.



FOUNDERS' AWARD

At the Christmas Social on December 7, the Founders' Award was given to Dwayne Miner. This award is decided by the Life Members Committee, and is given to the member who is considered to have greatly contributed to the club during the previous season. Dwayne has put in considerable work on the Show Committee, not only the regular Spring Stamp Show and CALTAPEX, but the forthcoming Royal 2006 Royale, planning for which has already been underway for more than a year. Congratulations, Dwayne!

The cumulative list of Founders' Award winners is as follows.

1973 - Jim Sadler	1975 - Tom Lemon
1974 - Ken Ford	1976 - Walter Jackson
1977 to 1980 - used as a show award	
1980/81 - Don Fraser	1993/94 - Penny Borrowman
1981/82 - Keith Brown	1994/95 - Ernie Bell
1982/83 - Al Munro	1995/96 - Bob Hoffmann
1983/84 - Leanna Johnson	1996/97 - Isobel Attrell
1984/85 - John Jarabek	1997/98 - Minaz Ramji
1985/86 - Guy Boissonneault	1998/99 - Andy Puczek
1986/87 - Dale Speirs	1999/2000 - Walter Herdzik
1987/88 - no award	2000/01 - Janice Brookes
1988/89 - Greg Lang	2001/02 - Gerry Vader
1989/90 - Mike McPhail	2002/03 - Marg Hunt
1990/91 - Doug Kollar	2003/04 - Jim Senecal
1991/92 - Perry Holinshead	2004/05 - Dwayne Miner
1992/93 - no award	

DR. EDWARD G. MASON AWARD

This is a new award created in late 2005, to be given to an individual member who displayed long service and demonstrated exemplary conduct and activity on behalf of the Society and the hobby. It is intended for behind-the-scenes work on behalf of the club over many years, usually not as a committee or executive head. This award is named after the founder of the CPS.

The first recipient, for the calendar year 2005, is Julius Szekrenyes. His specialty is taking the photographs for slide shows presented at the monthly meetings, and has been doing it for decades. Well done, Julius!

NEW LIFE MEMBER NAMED TO CPS

At the Christmas Social on December 7, the Life Members Committee announced a new addition to their ranks, Janice Brookes. Unlike other clubs where a life membership can be bought, the CPS only awards Honourary Life membership for long service to the CPS over many years and in many capacities. Well done, Jan!

The cumulative list of Life Members is as follows.

1 - Dr. Edward George Mason	1933
2 - William C. Black	1933
3 - Alfred B. Harris	1934
4 - William J.F. Emslie	1937
5 - Sid T. Richardson	1947
6 - Alan Sorby	1955
7 - Harlow M. Hartney	before 1962
8 - John Learmonth	1972
9 - Ted Chiswell	1976
10 - Brien Horne	1977
11 - John Jarabek	1978
12 - Bob Monilaws	1978
13 - Jack Cotton	1981
14 - Ed Harris	1981
15 - Phil Wolf	1983
16 - Jim Taylor	1984
17 - Walter Jackson	1989
18 - Jim Sadler	1989
19 - Bob Perry	1990
20 - Jon Johnson	1992
21 - Greg Sereda	1992
22 - Jim Karr	1994
23 - Al Munro	1994
24 - Dale Speirs	1994
25 - Jan van Staden	1996
26 - Don Wilson	1997
27 - Robbert Hoffmann	1998
28 - Doug Kollar	2000
29 - Mike McPhail	2001
30 - Bruce Irvine	2001
31 - Penny Borrowman	2002
32 - Isobel Attrell	2002
33 - Keith C.V. Brown	2003
34 - Janice Brookes	2005

ROYAL 2006 ROYALE: A SHOW LIKE NO OTHER
by Jan Brookes

Royal 2006 Royale is now only ten months away. Please register early as we only have seating for 160 people at the banquet. Already the dignitaries have taken a number of seats. This show was advertised at VANPEX 2005 and many people took advance registrations there. Registration forms are available on the Website at www.royal2006royale.com or from Penny Borrowman. Do not delay!

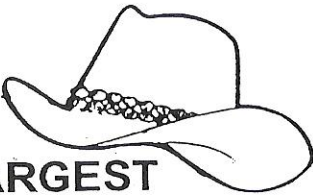
The 2006 show is a show like no other. The show will have a display from H.M. The Queen's collection, the first time it has appeared in western Canada. The Queen's Exhibit contains a complete section on Vancouver Island, some items of which have never been seen on public display anywhere. Charles Verge, the President of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (of which the CPS is a chapter), visited Buckingham Palace in late 2005 and picked out the items for exhibit. Two of these items are previously unknown to Canadian collectors as they have never been out of the Royal Philatelic Collection. Dwayne Miner found us a philatelic angel who donated \$25,000 to bring the Queen's Exhibit to Calgary.

The dealer bourse sold out a year in advance. There will be one dealer from New York, and several from eastern Canada, in addition to the regulars from western Canada. A few highlights from the schedule of events include a stamp launch and the President's Reception on Friday, pancake breakfast Saturday morning, special show cancels every day of the show, the banquet Saturday evening, a BNAPS breakfast Sunday morning, seminars, a stamp camp for the kids, and many other items.

I thank my ongoing volunteers for the committees. If you have some time to volunteer during the show, please contact Marge Hunt, who is looking after the volunteer roster. Jon Johnson and the Calgary BNAPS Regional Group will be acting as tour guides for the Queen's Exhibit.

For more information about Royal 2006 Royale, contact Janice Brookes at 251-1769, or visit the Website at www.royal2006royale.com

[Note added by the Editor] I am on the Royal 2006 Royale committee and I would like to emphasize Jan's point about the urgency of registering early for the show banquet. The Royal show is not simply a bigger version of our regular CALTAPEX show. It is a national show that already has philatelists signing up from across Canada, and if you delay, you will be disappointed. The Queen's Exhibit has already attracted international attention in the philatelic press; Calgary has already been mentioned in GIBBON'S STAMP MONTHLY!



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These ads are free to paid-up CPS members, and will also appear on the CPS Website at no additional cost. Mail your ads to Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7, or hand them to me at meetings.

NOTE TO INTERNET VIEWERS: Unless stated otherwise, telephone numbers are area code 403. Alberta is on Mountain 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: used Greece 2003 and 2004 Olympic related stamps and covers (other than FDCs), CTO and special cancels considered. Cash or Canadian coils in trade. Phone Gordon at 249-1094.

WANTED: USA stamps, MNH, VF. Singles, sets, and sheets between 1980 and 2004. Paying face value plus exchange rate and GST. Call Bob at 257-1942 or email bob.dahl@shaw.ca

FOR SALE: Stamps of Australia, fine used. Up-to-date issues of the last couple of years, stamps and miniature sheets, good selection. Also have stamps and covers of Norfolk Island. Call Michael Teekens at 286-7927

WANTED: Collector of stamps, books, and history. Special interest in submarine material. Contact Wayne at 295-3275 or kingwi@shaw.ca

FOR SALE: Canadian plate blocks and mint stamps at face value. Call Henning at 271-2596.

WANTED: Canadian military covers and postcards with hospital ships (white with red crosses). Contact Jon Johnson at 253-8411 or jcjperfins@hotmail.com

WANTED: Tanna Tuva, especially covers. I used to have a few and now starting over. Phone Keith at (780)437-1787 (Edmonton)

WANTED: Owl stamps worldwide. Cash or trade. Call Pat at 238-3435.

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. 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, People's Republic of China, and Taiwan. Special interest in overprints and bulk lots. Prefer postally used. Call Penny at 686-2662 or pkborrowman@yahoo.ca.

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@shaw.ca

FOR SALE OR TRADE: Worldwide collections (mounted) by country. 30 to 50 countries still available. Also lots of individual stamps catalogued per Scott for trade. Call Joe at 277-7006

WANTED: 1986 USA series of 35 Presidents (Scott #2216 to 2219), postally used. Call Milt at 243-0412.

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- silent	Jim Senecal	547-7681
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MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS FOR 2006

January	18	Auction
February	1	General meeting
	5	Sunday bourse
	15	Auction
March	1	General meeting
	1	Deadline for April bulletin
	5	Sunday bourse
	15	Auction
April	2	Sunday bourse
	5	General meeting
	19	Auction
	29 and 30	Spring Stamp Bourse
May	3	General meeting
	3	Deadline for June bulletin
	7	Sunday bourse
September 29 to October 1		Royal 2006 Royale

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

SPRING STAMP BOURSE is at the Kerby Centre, main floor, 1133 - 7 Avenue SW. Details from Janice Brookes at 251-1769.

ROYAL 2006 ROYALE is at the Coast Plaza Hotel, 1316 - 33 Street NE. Details from Janice Brookes at 251-1769.

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 second Wednesdays. For details about meeting places and times, contact Ed Harris at 274-0021.

CALGARY ASSOCIATION OF PHILATELIC EXHIBITORS meets fourth Wednesdays. For details, contact Jim Taylor at 238-3698.