

WHEN THE POSTMASTER GENERAL WAS FORCED TO EAT HUMBLE PIE

BY AXEL OLSSON

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\$1⁰⁰



The Buffalo

A long time ago, back in 1876, when the British Colony of Hong Kong was a mere 35 years young, the then Postmaster General by the name of Lister felt disposed to vent his spleen to denounce stamp collectors in his Annual Report (this suggests that the hobby was already taking root there despite the small population.) According to the *Hong Kong Daily Press* he referred to them, in mild phraseology, as being of “feeble intellect,” a remark he would live to regret. The *Daily Press* report said he grumbled about everybody and everything, with possibly one exception: the Post Office Department which, under his control , was beyond reproach. Mr. Lister had no time for collectors , and was not even



disposed to look upon them as a necessary evil which might be tolerated in the interests of revenue. He preferred to gaze upon them with scorn, not even pity, as being subjects void of intellect, observed the *Daily Press*.

In his Annual Report for 1876 Lister states: “It is hoped, however, that sending letters around the world may not become a popular pastime, or it will constitute as serious a nuisance as the incessant demands of postage stamp collectors. It is difficult to make the votaries [supporters] of the great science of Philately [sarcasm] understand that post offices exist for any other purpose than to supply them with every conceivable variety and shade of postage stamps.

“The object of a postal administrator, on the other hand, is to get rid of all odds and ends, temporary or obsolete (stamp) issues as quickly as possible.”

In order to conform to the new UPU rates, the Hong Kong Post Office had to prepare fresh postage stamps in decimal currency for 1880 - 1891. Mr. Lister wisely ordered that the old printing plates be reused in order to save time and money. There would be changes to the inks to fugitive purple and green to deter forgers and removal of cancels from used stamps in conjunction with coloured (watermarked) paper. While the actual printing was carried out in London by Messrs. De La Rue & Co., the local

Government printer Naronha & Sons applied the surcharge overprints in black ink. The Postmaster General was extremely pleased with the cost-cutting plan he himself had developed that would employ the latest state-of-the-art security printing measures.

One of the denominations introduced was the \$1 surcharged on 96c issued in 1891. Purple ink on red paper was used in the printing before applying the overprints in English and Chinese characters. Unfortunately there was at the same time a 10c stamp in current use with exactly the same shade as the dollar stamp, something the PMG had overlooked. However, this similarity did

not escape the notice of a lowly postal clerk (another source says it was the postmaster) in one of the branch offices who went and produced a set of chops identical to the dollar surcharge before applying them to the stock of 10c stamps under his care.

For every phony \$1 stamp the clerk sold to the public he pocketed 90c, a considerable sum in those days. This meant the Post Office was out of pocket for the same amount over a long period of time, when finally, in 1897 , thanks to a sharp-eyed individual who reported the fakes, that the crook was caught. The postmark on the stamps enabled the authority to trace them to the source.

No prize for guessing it was a stamp collector (whom Mr. Lister despised) that spotted the counterfeit surcharges, which were of such good quality that they would escape the attention of many collectors even today, probably because the counterfeiter had lots of practice.

So be on the lookout for these fakes in dealer’s duplicates as there is a handsome bounty for them, if recent auction prices are any indication. One hopes demand won’t push the price up so high that others may be tempted to follow the path of that postal clerk 124 years ago..

Sources: Hong Kong Daily Press, *HK & Treaty Ports* by Col F W Webb



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R.P.S.C. Chapter 86 A.P.S. Chapter 813

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† A spouse of a member may become a member with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of membership, but does not receive *The Buffalo*.

Application filed July to April

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Application filed April, May, June

Regular	\$2.00	\$25.00	\$27.00*
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* includes dues for following year

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RENEWALS

Lapsed memberships or late renewals (paid after September 30th of each year) are charged a \$1.00 reinstatement fee.

All new applicants must undergo a 60-day orientation before receiving full membership privileges.

The Buffalo is published monthly except in July and August. Deadline for article submissions and advertising copy is the 15th of each month preceding the month of issue.

WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.WPS.MB.CA](http://www.wps.mb.ca)

COMING EVENTS

7:00 p.m. 1st & 3rd Thursdays
(except Jul. & Aug.). Visitors always welcome.
Main Floor, Deaf Centre Manitoba, located at the corner of 285 Pembina Hwy. & Nassau St.

2001

Nov. 1 - Business Meeting
- Auction

Nov. 15 - Business Meeting
- Presentation T.B.A.

Dec. 5 - Business Meeting
- Charity Auction

2002

Jan. 3 - Business Meeting
- Auction

Jan. 17 - Business Meeting
- Presentation T.B.A.

The first meetings of each month reserved for Auctions.

The second meetings of each month reserved for formal programs.

THE W.P.S. IS ONLINE

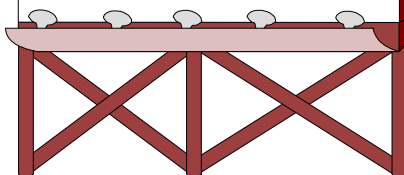
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MEMBERS' ADLETS

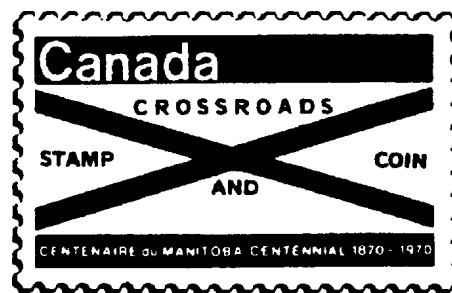
**Red River
Stamp Bourse
Charterhouse Hotel**

**November 11
10:00am - 4:30pm**

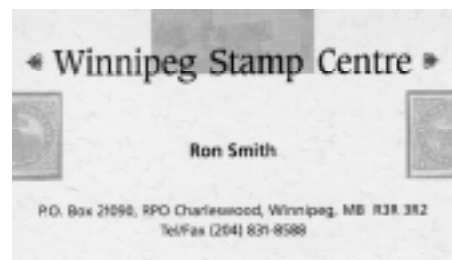


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EDITOR NOTES...

I still think it is a good idea, even though the first “From My Collection” that appeared in last month’s issue likely left most of you somewhat puzzled. As was I when I saw the printed version; the blank spaces had not shown up in the electronic copy that RP sends me for proofing after he has put the copy together. But there they were in all printed versions (and other articles had the same problem). Some kind of glitch occurred when the newsletter was published, I will not try to explain something I am not sure I understand myself (ask RP). “The best laid plans o’ mice and men...” Here is the text from the article, complete this time. And at least the illustration was clear.



When the zeppelin *Hindenburg* burnt at Lakehurst, New Jersey, on May 6, 1937, it marked the end of an era; only much later did civilians in significant numbers again fly across the Atlantic. The *Hindenburg* was carrying over 17,000 pieces of mail, of which 367 survived with various degrees of damage. If you wish to buy one, be prepared to spend in the neighbourhood of \$20,000. However, there are cheaper ways to buy a cover from that last flight. The *Hindenburg* began its last voyage at Frankfurt the evening of May 3. Later that evening it dropped a bag of mail at Köln. The illustrated postcard was franked in Frankfurt on May 1st, and after it was dropped late on the evening of May 3rd it was franked with a Köln postmark. The postcard was on the last flight, but it cost much less than \$20,000.

And we will try again. Please submit some items for “From My Collection,” we will be vigilant.

• • • • •



I missed seeing it, but am told that Ron DeWitt, not satisfied with having an article in a recent *Buffalo*, also received coverage in the *Free Press* last month.

• • • • •

Clark Grierson and his committee continue their work planning for our annual show next spring. He asked any volunteers to contact him, now he will be taking a more direct approach by asking you if you would help. There are many tasks, say “Yes” when asked; and don’t hesitate to volunteer if you have not yet been asked.

• • • • •

For the past months three WPS members, Robert Zacharias, Michael Zacharias and Don Fraser have been working on organizing the many publications in our library and compiling a list of the resources we have. Robert now indicates that the list is almost complete, with items listed by category. It is now available for members who are looking for information

Additionally, a list of books that may be housed in the Winnipeg Public Library will be sent to the Library.

They will then choose titles that they wish to put into general circulation, after they have judged that the books would be of interest to Library members. Thus these selected WPS resources will still be available to members, through the Winnipeg Public Library, and by also being available to the general public may increase interest in philately. If the Library at some point in the future would like to remove any of these books from circulation, they will be returned to the WPS. Any books and other publications not listed by the Public Library will be available through our own library, and with a list available to members will be a continuing valuable resource.

Thanks to these three members for all their work.

• • • • •

My new email address: ocharon@shaw.ca





BUFFALO CHIPS



Stamp collectors have some say in stamp design; one of our members, RP, is one of several collectors on Canada's Stamp Advisory Committee. And once stamps are released collectors have their say and are not backward in commenting on stamps that have been issued. Let's look at the results of three recent polls of stamps of Canada and about Canada.



for 2000 is from Iceland, a miniature sheet issued in October, 2000, depicting the landing of Icelandic settlers at Willow Point in 1874 (Willow Point is located one mile south of the present Gimli Harbour). The stamp design is based on a painting of the event; you can see the painting in Gimli. The second choice is also from Iceland, a block of four celebrating the Vikings.

1. In its 11th annual poll, Canadian Stamp News asked its readers to select the best and the worst of the stamps issued by Canada Post in 2000. The winner for best design was the Tall Ships pair of self-adhesives, closely followed by The Year of the Dragon. Collectors also voted for worst design, and gave 'honours' to the Supreme Court commemorative. To indicate that royalists are still alive and well among us, voted the most relevant design was the stamp marking the 100th birthday of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. The choice for least relevant issue was the Petro-Canada stamp.



Last month Royal Mail (yes, still named that, although the British Post Office is now "Consignia") issued a miniature sheet showing four flags and ensigns. We all recognize the current flag of the United Kingdom, the Union Jack (although this title is only properly applied when the flag is flying from a 'jackstaff' on a ship of the Royal Navy), a combination of the crosses of Saints George, Andrew and Patrick. The others are: the White Ensign, with origins in the seventeenth century with the Royal Navy; the flag of the Chief of the Defence Staff; and the Jolly Roger. This last, its skull and crossbones associated by many as a flag flown by pirates, is the flag used on British submarines. Each submarine has its own variety of the Jolly Roger; the stamp shows the flag of HMS *Proteus*.



2. Over many years our 50 cent Bluenose of 1929 has consistently been chosen by collectors as Canada's most beautiful stamp, and is considered by many collectors as one of the most beautiful stamps issued worldwide. Recent visitors to the Canadian Postal Museum and to its website have decided that its time on top has ended, and have recently chosen the \$8.00 Grizzly definitive of 1997 as Canada's most beautiful stamp. Hopefully they did not designate it as "a classic;" time will tell on that issue.

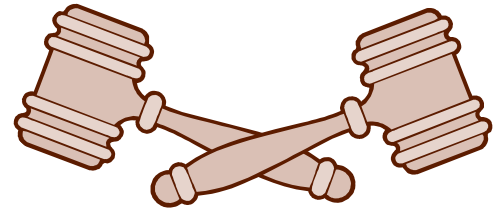
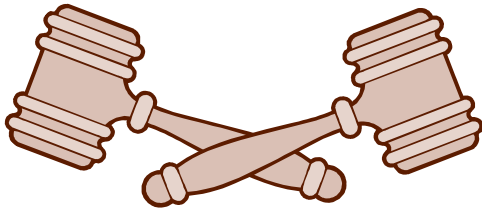


One far-reaching effect of the events of September 11th is a change in design of a future USA stamp.

3. The Canadiana Study Group holds an annual poll to select the year's most beautiful stamp that relates to Canada or has a Canadian subject. The choice



Next April US Post will issue a sheet of fifty "Greeting" stamps, one for each state. Each stamp will show the state's name and some scenes typical of the state. The original stamp for New York showed the World Trade Center's twin towers. The revised design now will show a "generic skyscraper."



Winnipeg Philatelic Society Fall Auction

Saturday, November 17th 1:00 PM.

Manitoba Deaf Centre

Affleck Room

WPS members are limited to submitting 20 lots;
if the auction is not filled you may be able to submit additional lots.

Deadline for submitting lots is November 1

SPOT THE VARIETY 5 ANSWER





Dear Phil,

Please let the Editor know how much I enjoyed, in last month's *Buffalo*, another puzzle. I always enjoy "Spot the Variety," but the fill-in-the-blanks exercise in the article "From My Collection" was a bonus. I at first found it difficult, but then was able to figure it out (I think that I filled in all blanks correctly). I enclose the story as

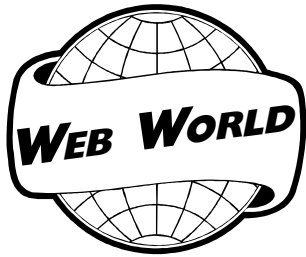
printed, with my additions, please tell me what I have won.

Excited

Dear Excited,

While I am pleased that readers like what is in *The Buffalo* each month, I must tell you that this was not a contest, that the blanks in the article you refer to were not intentional. But the editor has asked me to say that he hopes you continue to enjoy the efforts of all contributors to *The Buffalo* each month.

Phil



Internet Exhibiting *Linn's* recently reported on an innovation in philately, describing two sites that have philatelic exhibits online. www.hafniade.dk In conjunction with Hafnia 2001 in Copenhagen, a separate

Internet exhibition is available for view. All exhibits are judged by philatelic judges. One unusual class is "Works in Progress;" as the title implies, the exhibit can change and improve.

www.philaned.com Organized by philatelic societies in the Netherlands, this exhibition is housed and judged entirely on the Internet. It opens officially in April 2002, by which date the organizers hope to have more than 1000 pages available for viewing.

• • • • •

A collector is looking for Canadian private perfins, on postage and revenue stamps.

His web site: <http://www.kw.igs.net/~mjbehm/>

Michael Behm
39 Roslin Avenue South
Waterloo, ON N2L 2G7 mjbehm@kw.igs.net

• • • • •

Mike Mills, who writes a monthly column, *The Glassine Surfer*, in *The American Philatelist*, has had a site on About.com for some time. *The Glassine Surfer* is now on its own at www.glassinesurfer.com

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DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

Robert Zacharias received a Distinguished Service Award at the annual meeting on Oct 4. Robert joined the WPS in 1989. He is a philatelist, and has collecting interests from Germany, Scandinavia and northern Europe. He has been our Club librarian for the past ten years.

All this time, he has brought books, journals and newspaper publications to club meetings for members' borrowing convenience. The library was small when Robert took over, but it has grown significantly since then. He has catalogued all our philatelic reference material in preparation for the transfer of selected items to the Winnipeg Public Library.

At the Royal 2000 Show, Robert did an outstanding job as the exhibit chairman, where everything flowed smoothly and efficiently.

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Michael Zacharias received a Distinguished Service Award at the annual meeting on Oct 4. Michael was not a collector when he first joined the WPS in 1996. His current collecting interest is souvenir sheets.

Shortly after he joined the club, Mike volunteered to fill the vacant treasurer's position. Today, Michael is still the club treasurer, and did an excellent job in handling the finances for the 2000 Royal.

He has for several years been an active member of the Show committee, responsible for financial and administrative matters. In addition, he assists with the bi-annual stamp auctions. He has been and continues to be a major contributor to the club.

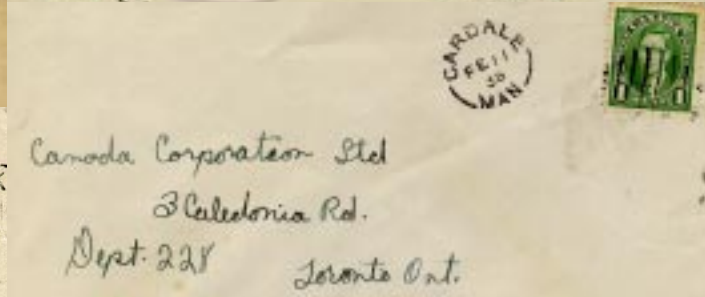
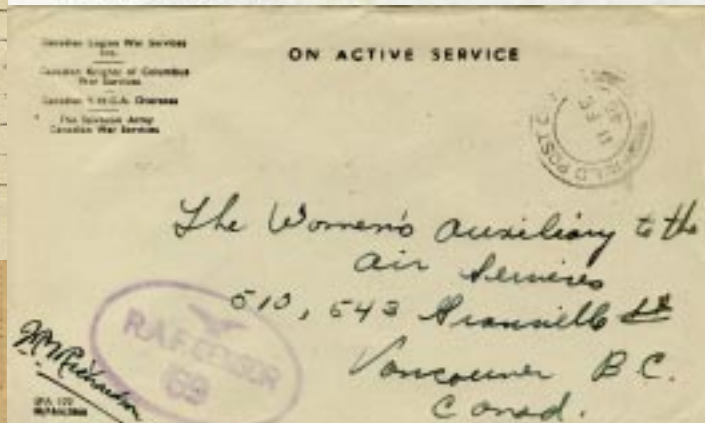
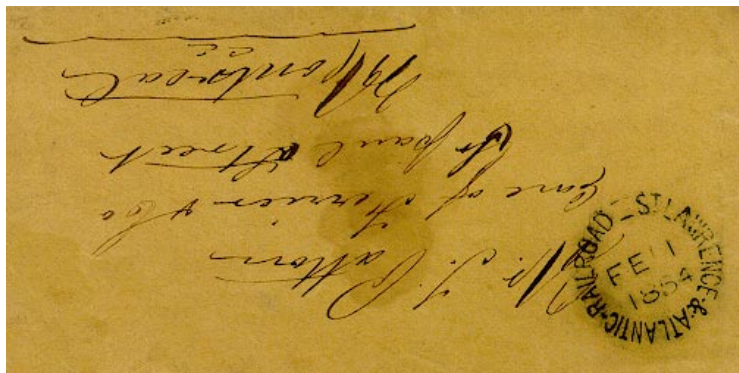
FROM MY COLLECTION

BY RICK PENKO

One of the joys of stamp collecting is that you can collect what ever you want. The only limitation is your imagination. Birthday cancels is one collection I have fun with. While going through accumulations, dealer's stock or bundles of covers I keep an eye out for my birthdate. This is a very personal collection that has little meaning to many but has been a fun and challenging search for many years.

Over the years I have accumulated over 50 different cancels that relate to February 11th. My favourite cover is cancelled exactly 100 years before my birth.

The most elusive cover which I have not obtained is a cover dated Feb. 11/54 from Winnipeg. Below is an assortment of cancels and covers from my collection. Enjoy.



MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 18/01

BY JUDY LIPSEY

(Note: The minutes for the meeting of October 4 and the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of October 4 are presently unavailable; they will be published at a later date)

- President Gord Turnbull called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM.

Announcements:

- Michael Zacharias: Will take membership payments for 2001-02.
- Alf Brooks: Thanked members for their articles for *The Buffalo* in the past and asked for continued submissions.
- Robert Zacharias: Two auctions: Scandinavian Club October 27.
- WPS November 17. Items for sale to be submitted no later than November 1, a list of items for sale will be available at the November 15 meeting.
- Clark Grierson: Will be asking members individually to work on committees for the spring show.
- Gerry Babij: The revived Youth stamp club is alive.

Draw Winners:

Tom Prescott, Don Flatt, Ralph Huuk, Bob Biggs, Guenther Sickert.

Presentation:

Bob Stanley introduced Ben Cohen, who gave a presentation on Canada's Large Queens issue.



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