



Nova Scotia Stamp Club Newsletter

December 2007
Volume 37, Issue 4
Number 377

Up and Coming

Every Saturday 4pm Auction
Seaside Book and Stamp

December 8 Burnside Stamp Fair,
Burnside Motel, Dartmouth

December 11 Club Meeting, Char-
ity Auction, Christmas Stamps,
RPSC Slide Show - M. Peach

December 20 Friends of Philately,
Bloomfield School, Halifax

January 5 Moncton Stamp Fair,
Park House Inn, Moncton

January 8 Club Meeting, Hugh
Rathbun presents (TBA), Club
Member's Fair

January 12 Burnside Stamp Fair

January 17 Friends of Philately

Every December the Nova Scotia
Stamp Club supports two local
charities with the proceeds of our
anything goes auction.
Please bring any items
that you have been
saving for this big
auction.



Happy Holidays

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The First Christmas Card

by Michael Peach

Did you know that the first Christmas card was produced in Great Britain 1843? In the early 19th century it was common practice to hand write seasonal messages on calling cards or in letters, particularly after the introduction of Penny Post in 1840. The year 1843 also saw the publication of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

Christmas celebrations flourished in England in the 1840s, and many

the first Christmas card. He employed the London artist John Calcott Horsley to design a card. In the centre there is a family raising their glasses in a toast around a Christmas feast, with side panels showing feeding and clothing the poor. The Christmas symbols sprigs of Holly and Ivy are used throughout the design. There is a space at the top for the name of the recipient, and a line at the bottom for the sender's name, with



German traditions, such as Christmas trees, were popularized by in the 1840s by Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband. It was however Henry Cole (right), a friend of Prince Albert, who was too busy, or maybe he found it too much of an imposition, to write long personal Christmas Greetings to his numerous friends and relations, and produced



A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You in a sash. Cole printed 1000 cards and after having used as many as he needed, he sold the remainder at 6d (sixpence) each, now probably about \$5. These were advertised in the *Athenaeum* paper: Just published. A Christmas Congratulation Card: or picture emblematical of

Continued on Page 2

... Christmas Card Continued

Old English Festivity to Perpetuate kind recollections between Dear Friends. The card was criticized by temperance groups as it pictured a family, particularly a young girl, sipping wine.

The cards soon became very popular. The London printers Charles Goodall & Sons were the first to mass-produce Christmas cards in 1862. Incidentally Goodall & Sons produced most of the cards used in Great Britain at that time. With the introduction of halfpenny stamps in 1870 for the printed matter rate, the popularity of Christmas cards soared. By 1880 more than 11.5 million cards were being sent. In the U.S.A. greetings cards were imported from England, until 1875, when Louis Prang, a German immigrant, opened a lithographic shop with \$250 and started publishing the first U.S. Christmas cards. Initially the cards were unrelated to the Christmas scene and featured flowers and birds. By the early 1880s he was producing over 5 million cards each year, and began to show typical Christmas scenes, such as snow scenes, children playing with toys, fir trees, etc..

Does the name Henry Cole sound familiar? He was associated with Rowland Hill and from 1837 to 1840

was his assistant, playing a key role in the introduction of the Penny Post. He is sometimes credited with the design of the world's first postage stamp, the Penny Black. He was the manager of the Great Exhibition of 1851, which was an enormously popular and a financial success. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1875, becoming Sir Henry.

So we have to thank Sir Henry Cole for the tradition of sending Christmas Cards, which, of course, generates much business for card publishers and also the Post Office.



Holiday Towns

Everyone knows that the Santa lives at the North Pole, Canada. The Post Office says so and has even provided Santa with his own postal code - H0H 0H0 - since 1982. Given the starting "H" in the Postal Code, one would think that the North Pole is somewhere in Montreal, but it seems that the Post Office has discreetly used this PC with no specific geographic frame of reference. Over 11,000 volunteers reply to more than a million pieces of mail annually in the originating language be it Japanese, German or Braille.

So as a geographer I must ask if the North Pole is the axial (geographic) pole or the magnetic pole. If the former then we share this point in the Arctic Ocean with several nations including Denmark, Russia Norway, and United States, although Canada has laid claim to it in the mid th century. The magnetic pole is in Canada's North (82.7° N, 114.4° W in 2005) west of Ellsmere Island. This pole can wander as much as 80 km per day around an average value. The magnetic pole has been on a northwesterly track towards Russian territory since measurements were first began in the 1800s. Well, at least for now we do have some claim on ownership of the Santa's legendary home, which ever pole it may be.

Did you know there is a North Pole in New York (state); or how about North Pole, Arkansas? How about Santa Claus, Georgia or Indiana? In case that doesn't tweak your Christmas postal sprit then try looking up some of the following holiday towns:

Antler ND; Antlers OK; Bell CA & FL; Bethlehem CT, GA, IN, KY, MD, NH, & PA; Blessing TX; Chestnut IL; Christmas FL & MI; Christmas Valley OR; Evergreen AL, CO, LA, MT, NC & VA; Faith NC, SD; Frost MN, TX; Garland ME, NC, NE, PA, TX, UT; Holiday Island AR; Holly CO, MI; Hope AK, AR, ID, IN, KS, KY, MI, MN, ND, NJ, NM, RI; Jerusalem AR; Joy IL; Nazareth KY, MI, PA, TX; Noel MO (see postmark above); **Rudolph OH, WI; Saint Joseph IL, LA, MI, MN, MO, TN; Saint Mary KY, MO; Saint Marys AK, GA, IA, IN, KS, OH, PA, WV; St. Mary's City MD; Santa ID; Shepherd MI, MT, TX; Snow Hill NC; Snow Lake AR; Snow OK; Snow Shoe PA; Snowflake AZ; Spruce MI; Star City AR; Star ID, MS, NC, TX; Starlight PA; Winterville GA; Wiseman AR.**

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Don't forget our own Christmas Island, Noel, Noel Road, Noel Shore, Pine Tree, St. Marys, St. Joseph, Sugar Loaf Nova Scotia, all of which is or were a Post Office according to Macpherson.

Nova Scotia Stamp Club Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada <http://www.nsstampclub.ca/>

Nova Scotia Stamp Club meets at 7:30 p.m. on every second Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at the Nova Scotia Museum, 1747 Summer Street, Halifax, N.S. The club publishes a monthly newsletter (except summer) which is released on the first week of the month.

Dues are C\$15 per person (US\$20 US, US\$25 International) or C\$22.50 per couple payable to :

Nova Scotia Stamp Club
102 Birch Bear Run
Lewis Lake, NS B3Z 4B8
webnews@nsstampclub.ca

Advertising rate for the newsletter or website is \$25 (CDN) per year.

History Lesson - A Stamp Flap

These "Letters to Editors" were forwarded by David Jones. I can only surmise that may be all related however the were listed from different papers. I will provide the text and dates (where known - some are dated 1876,) over the next few newsletters. If nothing else they make for amusing reading. If you have more to contribute about this particular issue of the Post Office not selling stamps. Please let me know so that I can share - Jeff.

Correspondence.

The Sale of Postage Stamps

HALIFAX NS Nov 15. [1876]

To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle:

SIR, - I fully concur with your ideas respecting the current postage system, expressed in this morning's CHRONICLE, and, like many others, cannot agree with your correspondent "Common Sense." The present system would not be so bad if there were any person or persons authorized, and under obligation, to always keep a supply of stamps on hand; also to keep there stores open during Post Office hours.

But as far as I can learn, those who do keep stamps (occasionally) keep them for their own accommodation, and not for the public.

I was quite disgusted with the present system on my first arrival to this city, some six weeks since, when I had occasion to mail letters, and, as a matter of course, went to the Post Office for stamps, when I noticed over a wicket "Postage Stamp;" but while waiting for a clerk, I noticed in writing underneath, "not sold here." I concluded that the notice was there to sell individuals, as I was badly sold myself. I next inquired of a gentleman where I could obtain stamps. He directed me to Connolly's, where my present wants were supplied. A day or two after I had occasion for more stamps; I went directly to Connolly's, but found that they had none. I asked if they did not keep them. The reply was that they did sometimes, but were out at present. The result was that my letters were not mailed that night. If I understand the nature of the Post Office department correctly, it is for the accommodation of the public, and will only forward our mail matter by its being prepaid by postage stamps, and if that department does not furnish stamps, and the booksellers should come to the conclusion that the commission did not pay for the trouble, and should they decline keeping them, what are the public to do? Must everybody send to Ottawa for their stamps, or put up with the nuisance?

Yours truly

A STRANGER

Another Letter on the Same Subject

LUNENBURG, N.S. Nov. 14, 1876

To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle:

SIR, - I have just reading you r issue today the letter "Common Sense," in reference to the sale of postage stamps, and your common sense comments on it. Your statement that "the Post Office closes at 10 p.m., but the stores are often closed before that hour," I found on my last visit to Halifax to be quite correct. I received a letter late in the evening, which required an answer by the Western mail the next day. I hurriedly wrote the answer and went to the office and of course could purchase no stamp - went then to Morton's and Connolly's and found both closed. I could not mail my letter. Allow me now to make a suggestion; say the above shops close at 9 p.m., would it not meet the whole difficulty then for the Post Office to sell stamps from 9 to 10 p.m. only? Those who do not wish to walk to the office at that late hour could get their stamps earlier, and those who were compelled to do so would not be disappointed, as is many.

A VISITOR

Cover Story



In 1870, John E. Morse established J.E. Morse & Company - it's head office in a six story brick building on the Halifax waterfront depicted on this cover. The building, now a heritage property and part of Halifax's Historic Properties, still displays the Morse's Tea sign painted between the 5th and 6th floor windows. John blended his tea for a particular Nova Scotian taste. It is the oldest blended tea in Canada. Morse's Tea is still available through G.E. Barbour Inc. of Sussex, NB. Barbour's was founded in 1867 in Saint John and is famous for its King Cole Tea and Acadia brands. The cover depicts a 3c mufti of King George VI beside a graphic of the Morse's Tea building.

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Stamp Oddities

It is a matter of some debate as to which is the first Christmas stamp. The Canadian map stamp of 1898 bears an inscription "XMAS 1898", but it was



actually issued to mark the inauguration of the Imperial Penny Postage rate.

The Christmas connection has long been reported to have been the result of quick thinking; Mulock was proposing that it be issued on 9 November, to "honor the Prince" (meaning the Prince of Wales), but when Queen Victoria asked "what Prince?" in a displeased manner, Mulock realized the danger, and answered "Why, the Prince of Peace, ma'am".

In 1937, Austria issued two "Christmas greeting stamps" featuring a rose and zodiac signs. In 1939, Brazil issued four semi-postal stamps with designs featuring the three kings and a star, an angel and child, the Southern Cross and a child, and a mother and child. In 1941 Hungary also issued a semi-postal whose additional fees were to pay for "soldiers' Christmas". The first stamps to depict the Nativity was the Hungary issue of 1943. These were all one-time issues, more like commemorative stamps than regular issues.



The next Christmas stamps did not appear until 1951, when Cuba issued

designs with poinsettias and bells, followed by Haiti (1954), Luxembourg and Spain (1955), then Australia,

Korea, and Liechtenstein (1957). In cases such as Australia, the issuance marked the first of what became an annual tradition. Many more nations took up the practice during the 1960s.



By the 1990s, approximately 160 postal administrations were issuing Christmas stamps, mostly on an annual basis. Islamic countries constitute the largest group of non-participants, although the Palestinian Authority has issued Christmas stamps since 1995.

Source:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_stamp
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"Post Offices of Pre-Confederation Newfoundland"

Available on CD only from Carl Munden. Price CDN \$35.00. This project was completed in MS Word and may not be compatible with a Mac computer.

If you were not able to get to Novapex 07 and would like to have one or more of the souvenir postcards with the stamp and show cancel, the cost is \$2 each plus shipping. Volume discounts are available. Contact Jeff at the newsletter address shown below. These will only be available for a short time - order now.

DUES..DUES..DUES

There are still a few people who have not remitted their dues. If you are not going to renew please let us know so that we can stop sending you an invoice. The cut off date is fast approaching. Don't be left in the cold.

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Illustrator Needs Assistance

A local (HRM) illustrator and am working for a Newfoundland publisher on a children's book which is based on a factual story about the Gipsy Moth plane that flew airmail in that province. She was wanting to include in the book some examples of Newfoundland postal history particularly stamps available during the early 1930s. She is also trying to find some kind of visual reference for a postal carrier's outfit for the same time period but this is proving extremely difficult. She may be attending the December meeting to have discussions with us. If you have anything to contribute please contact the editor and I will put you in contact with the illustrator.

Newsletter Articles

If you have an item (article, cover, show & tell) for the newsletter please contact Jeff for details at:

webnews@nsstampclub.ca

Unless of a timely nature, items will be printed on a first come basis. **The deadline for the January '08 issue is Dec. 28, 2007.**