



The Nova Scotia Post

The Newsletter of the Nova Scotia Stamp Club

January 2019
Volume 48, Issue 474

UP and COMING

Jan 8 Club Meeting

Moncton Stamp Fair, RC Legion,
100 War Veterans Ave, Moncton
NB 10 am - 1 pm.

Jan 17 Friends of Philately

Travelling? Check out the time
and place of other shows at
www.rpsc.org/shows.html or
www.csdaonline.com/shows

JOHN ALEXANDER DOUGLAS MCCURDY AND THE SILVER DART (1886-1961)

by Glenna Metchette, President
100 Mile House & District Stamp Club

Douglas McCurdy was a Canadian aviation pioneer and the 20th Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia from 1947 to 1952.

On February 23, 1909, a frail, winged craft sat on the ice of Baddeck Bay in central Cape Breton. Douglas McCurdy perched confidently among the steel tubing, wires and friction tape. It was a cool Tuesday afternoon, and an expectant crowd waited to see what the ingenious Alexander Graham Bell and his local protégé were up to. McCurdy dubbed the machine “Silver” for the coating on its wings and “Dart” just because it seemed obvious. Someone cracked the propeller and McCurdy signalled to the crowd to get out of the way. The machine advanced rapidly over the ice with several skaters in hot pursuit. The spectators gawked as the Silver Dart rose gracefully into the air. Only five years since the Wright brothers had first taken flight at Kitty Hawk, it was the first time anyone had seen such a sight not only in Canada but anywhere in the British Empire. McCurdy deftly avoided two little girls playing on the ice and made a perfect landing.

Alexander Graham Bell was already world famous for inventing the telephone but his real passion now was flight. With money from his wife he formed the Aerial Experimental Association which included himself, McCurdy, Casey Baldwin, Thomas Selfridge, and Glenn Curtiss. Bell gave each man the task of designing his own aircraft. After three crashes due to gusty winds, the three associates designed a flap at the end of each wing which could be lifted or dropped to compensate for wind gusts. These balancing devices, which a French aviator named “ailerons” (meaning “little wings”) remain in use to this day. Putting his crash behind him, McCurdy used

the ailerons to become the first pilot to carve a figure eight in the sky.

After the success of the Silver Dart at Baddeck, McCurdy flew it for Army observers at Petawawa, Ontario. On its fifth flight, the craft caught a wheel in the sand and crashed, allowing the Army brass to declare that aircraft would never play a part in modern warfare. However, some Japanese observers took note and wasted no time placing orders for planes on behalf of their military.

In 1911, hoping to give the people of Cuba their first glimpse of mechanized flight, *The Havana Post* and the city of Havana offered McCurdy the princely sum of \$8,000 (equivalent to \$100,000 today) to be the first person to fly from Key West, Florida to Havana. “Being young and having the spirit of romance and adventure in my soul, to say nothing of the prize involved, I decided to attempt the flight,” said McCurdy. Just in case he didn’t make it all the way, he had a tinsmith make hollow pontoons to attach to the wings. Caught up in the excitement, the U.S. Navy offered to string six torpedo boats along the line of flight, each puffing out smoke to help McCurdy navigate, and they prepared to steam to his aid should he crash into the water.



MC CURDY'S SILVER DART MAKING FIRST FLIGHT IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE
BADDECK, N.S. FEBRUARY 23 RD, 1909

1959 Sc#383 First Flight RPPC Silver
Dart. Signed by JAD McCurdy (to faint
to see).



Augustin Parlá was the first Cuban to fly
from Key West, Florida, to Havana,
Cuba, on May 19, 1913.

McCurdy CONTINUED

McCurdy headed out to sea, reaching an altitude of 1,000 feet and a speed of 48 miles per hour. As he passed over each torpedo boat, he could hear sailors blowing their whistles. After two hours he spied Havana's waterfront "black with people", the harbour festive with hundreds of small sailboats. "Then I heard a terrific noise behind me," he recalled, "and one cylinder after another went, until I had no engine." Within

tantalizing sight of his destination, he had no choice but to hazard a water landing. A cry from the crowd as the black speck tumbled into the sea: "My God, he's fallen!" Thankfully, the water was smooth, and the pontoons did their job. As three tiger sharks circled the plane, the U.S.S. Pauling reached the downed craft in 4½ minutes. "I didn't even get wet feet," said McCurdy. He had broken two records: it was the longest and the first out-of-sight-of-land flight. McCurdy had taken the precaution of shipping another plane to Havana, so without changing clothes, he gave the Cubans a flying exhibition. Everywhere he went he was besieged by a mob.

At a gala ceremony at Havana's ornate opera house, Cuba's President, José Gómez, lavishly praised the young man and handed him an envelope with fancy red and green seals – with no cheque inside. McCurdy later asked the American Minister to Cuba how he could get his money, but the diplomat advised him there was no easy political or legal way to do so and to let it go. Still, McCurdy remembered this as a happy time.

Even the onset of WWI didn't change the Canadian government's mind about using air power. Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia and Defence said, "The aeroplane is an invention of the devil and will never play any part in such a serious business as the defence of the nation." McCurdy replied, "I am sure you will live to regret those words General Hughes."



Strip of 5 Sc#383 Silver Dart stamps signed by JAD McCurdy

Throughout his life, McCurdy contributed to the growth of aeronautics in Canada. In the 1920's and '30s, he was President of the Curtiss-Reid aircraft company. In WWII he oversaw Canadian aircraft production. From 1947 to 1952 he served as Nova Scotia's Lieutenant-Governor. There are photos in the province's archives of him squiring the young-looking Crown Princess Elizabeth around Halifax.

McCurdy never retired from flying, becoming, before his death in 1961 at age 74, the oldest licensed pilot in the world.

Sources:

Canadian History

(<http://magazine.utoronto.ca/tag/faculty-of-applied-science-and-engineering-alumni>).

Silver Dart: Dawn of Flight in Canada – The Canadian Encyclopedia.

Wikipedia. John Alexander Douglas McCurdy.

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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.

Membership is C\$15 per person (C\$20 US, C\$25 International) or C\$22.50 per couple.

Send **new memberships** to...

NS Stamp Club c/o Jeff Parks
102 Birch Bear Run, Lewis Lake, NS B3Z 4B8

Membership renewals are sent to...

NS Stamp Club c/o John Harvey
46 Farquharson St, Dartmouth, NS B2W 4A8

MARCOPHILATELY FUN #8

March 23, 1948

Port Latour

South Ohio



March 21, 1956

Reserve Mines

River Hebert



CANADA POST INTERNAL HANDSTAMPS #13

by Gary Steele



51x33 mm

Single Frame Oval

Lebanon is considered part of Asia, as a result 15 cents for this cover was insufficient for air mail. In 1953 the air mail rates changed to A, B and C countries. The B air mail rate to Europe and Africa was 15 cents and C air mail rate to Asia 25 cents.

Franked with 3x 5-cent Wilding Issue stamps the Post Office British & Foreign Mail Br. internal department caught the short payment, crossed out the air mail etiquette label with a two bar purple handstamp (Jusqua marking) meaning 'it does not happen before that time and only starts happening at that time'. In addition a two line auxiliary marking was applied. From that point on this was not an air mail cover but a surface rate cover. Transit time was 36 days as indicated by a Beyrouth machine imprint dated Sep 3 1956 significantly longer than an air mail cover may have been.

At present Montreal, Quebec and Toronto are the only known cities to use British & Foreign Mail Branch handstamps.



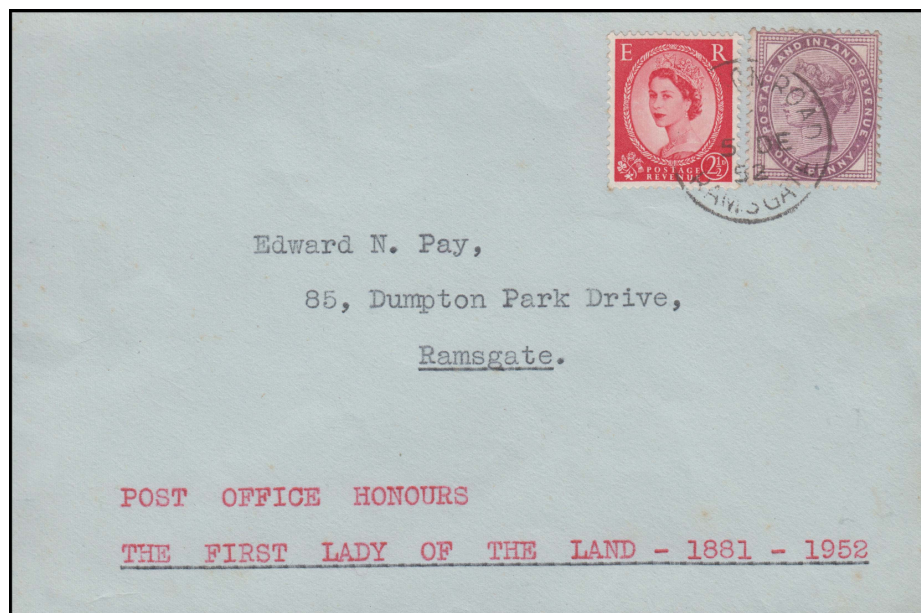
**BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION**



AN FDC WITH TWO QUEENS

by Michael Peach

Although not a cacheted FDC, the cover has portraits two queens. There are two stamps one of Queen Victoria and the other of her great, great-granddaughter, Queen Elizabeth, both facing left. The valid Queen Elizabeth carmine 2½ d Wilding definitive stamp for the standard letter rate, was issued on 5 December 1952. The penny lilac Victorian stamp issued on 12 July 1881 had been demonetized effective 1 July 1915 and is just a label. The cover probably philatelic and self addressed, was used locally in Ramsgate. It has a Hereson Road sub Post Office CDS. Hereson Road is a short distance from Dumpton Drive, a residential area.



CLUB NEWS

The Christmas Cheer Social and Charity Auction attracted 30 members and guests. Michael Pierce presented a well-received talk on the Canada 1970 Christmas issue. Heather offered another challenging quiz. The Club raised over \$320 during the auction: proceeds will be split between Feed Nova Scotia and the Salvation Army. Thanks to all who participated.

We kick off the new year at our January 8th meeting with a presentation by Bob Boehner: The Costa Rica Story. The meeting will also have the usual draw, perhaps some Show and Tell (if anyone received a nice philatelic holiday gift, now is the time to share your new treasure with the members), and an auction. Speaking of auctions, the experiment to speed up the auction process by having people indicate they were interested lots beforehand was a bust. We will go back, pronto, to the "old" system that everyone is used to.

The dates for Novapex 2019 have been set: September 21st and 22nd, a Saturday and a Sunday. Setup will be Friday evening. We are returning to the East Dartmouth Commu-

nity Centre for the show. Most volunteers for the show are in place. Our thanks to Joanne Hodder, who has stepped in as overall Show Chair. We still need someone to organize an on-site reception for Sunday afternoon: lite snacks for the awards presentation. There will be no banquet this year for the regional show.

The Executive, at the request of some of the members, is looking into the possibility of an occasional Saturday or Sunday stamp bourse, perhaps at the East Dartmouth Community Centre. It would be an opportunity for members and dealers to meet, and buy, sell and trade stamps. We'll keep you posted on progress. We are also looking for someone to help Dennis Bedley organize a new Facebook page for the NSSC. Let us know if you are interested.

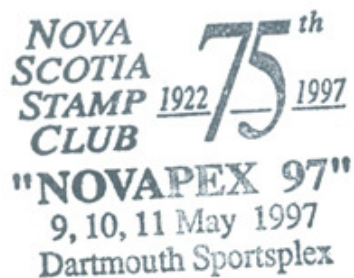
We have received membership applications from two people: Mr. Clem Royer, Lucasville, NS and Mr. Don MacNeil, Thorburn, NS. Consider this announcement the "official" notification of their joining. We welcome them to the Club.

NS STAMP CLUB CENTENARY

by Marty Zelenietz

The 75th anniversary of the Club, celebrated in 1997, was a big deal for us. Doug Allen and I designed a souvenir pin to mark the occasion, and to act as a fundraiser. The pin later became the model for the exhibition award pins that we now use.

To make sure that Club members were cognizant of the upcoming event, all club mail (i.e., the newsletter, in the days before electronic distribution), went out bearing a stamped cachet (measuring 5cm x 3.7cm), as illustrated below.



The show itself featured an oversized (23cm x 15cm) illustrated cover (shown right in reduced size here) with a Canada Post Novapex '97

cancel. The cover is franked with the 1996 Canadian Heraldry issue, signed by the stamps designers (Derek Sarty and Rand Gaynor), and marked on the rear flap "9 of 20".



NOVAPEX PROGRAMS

The Harry Sutherland Library of the Vincent Graves Greene Foundation is building an archive of philatelic show programs. If you have past Novapex programs you can donate, please contact John Hall at john_hall_13@hotmail.com

DUES

John Harvey is collecting dues for the 2018-2019 season. Last chance—if you have not paid your dues you may be in danger of being struck from the membership roll. See page 2 for details.