

Synopsis

The Mails of the Kentville Sanatorium Post Office 1929 - 1971

Title Page – Shown is a picture of the actual building that housed the Sanatorium Post Office. As well as an exhibit plan and a map of the area to indicate where the Sanatorium was located showing Kentville, Windsor and their relationship with Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Treatment of content – With covers, cancels and history tried to relate the character of the Sanatorium as a small village where everything needed could be found on the 40 acres of the Sanatorium including Post Office (which allowed them to stay connected to their families and the world away from the Sanatorium), Radio Station, Newsletter, living quarters, hospital, and activities for residents and staff.

Subject knowledge and research – It was tuberculosis that gave rise to the Sanatoriums. More people died of TB than on the battlefield. It was in 1949 that there were 1200 beds for tuberculosis patients in Nova Scotia.

In the beginning of the 1900's TB ranked first among the cause of deaths in Canada and most of the world. The first Canadian Institution for TB patients was erected in 1897 in Ontario. It was in Kentville, Nova Scotia in 1904 that the first provincially operated Sanatorium was established. By 1918 the Sanatorium complex was made up of 24 buildings that housed 350 patients of these 300 were soldiers.

In 1910 Dr. A. F. Miller a native of Prince Edward Island became the first Medical Superintendent.

On March 1st, 1929 a Post Office was opened on the Sanatorium premises under the name "N. S. Sanatorium, Kentville, N. S." (under the Account Office No. X335). In 1960 the name of the Sanatorium Post Office Cancel changed from N. S. Sanatorium, Kentville, N. S. to Nova Scotia Sanatorium Kentville, N. S. It may be the original Sub Post Office. Sanatorium mail was collected from the Kentville Train Station and taken to the Kentville Post Office about 400m away. It was picked up by Sanatorium personnel using the ambulance, a van and later a station wagon and delivered to the Sanatorium Post Office. After 1956 the mail service changed to have mail delivered directly to Kentville Post Office by truck. Once it got to the San. Post Office the Postal Staff (2 people) sorted the mail and one of the two delivered the mail to the many buildings over the 40 acres and picked up any outgoing mail and brought it back to the Post Office "X335" and then this was delivered to the Kentville Post Office.

There were seven CDS cancels used by the Sanatorium Post Office, 2 Registration daters in black and red and 2 MOON cancels and 2 MOTO cancels both in either red or black.

The Sanatorium was a hot bed of philatelists. Numerous people from the San., what the people in the area called it, were members of the Valley Stamp Club and it has continued since it began in 1961. Two members I would like to note are Dr. J. E. Hiltz, considered one of Canada's best-known Philatelist of his time and Anne-Marie Belliveau who was a patient and was also Secretary of the Stamp Club for forty years. Members of the Club were Postmasters, patients and staff.

Modern chemotherapy helped change the course of the disease and the need for Sanatoriums. In 1947 with the introduction of streptomycin, six years later the most effective isoniazid and in 1956 the new x-rays hospital beds for Tuberculosis became surplus. Rifampicin became the most effective drug. All the drugs were administered in combination to get the best effect. In 1975 – 1976 the last two Sanatoriums, Kentville and Sydney, Nova Scotia were closed.

References – Various articles were used from "HEALTH RAYS", the San. Newsletter written by staff and patients, paper clippings, "History of the Post Offices in Kings County" by Anne-Marie Belliveau and helping her with researching the Post Office.

Epilogue – The last page shows a cover with the cancel from the last day the Sanatorium Post Office was open Sept. 16, 1971 and a cancel from the Kentville Post Office where all mail was to be handled from the Sanatorium from then onward.