

# Stamps on the Bay



The Voice of the  
Owen Sound Stamp Club

In Person Meeting Cancelled

Zoom Meeting March 16 @ 7 PM

**Volume 3, Edition 2, March 2022**



## From the President

Hello my philatelic friends! 'May you live in interesting times' I believe that line is an ancient Chinese curse. Somehow I don't think the lifting of social distancing restrictions means that it is okay to invade your neighbour's nuclear plants or bomb their cities! Now that we can see a few stamp shows on the horizon the question is whether we can afford the gas to get there. Interesting times indeed!

I hope you enjoyed our Zoom meeting with guest speaker Peter McCarthy in February. His chat about railway posts and markings was very informative. I didn't realize you could discern so much information from railway cancels. In the mid to late 1800s trains played a vital role in mail transportation in Canada and much of the world. Phil has a lot more to say on the subject I'm sure.

We had a few problems arise with the stamp auction website this month. Issues have been sorted but our auction is/was delayed to Thursday the 10th. I hope you could join in.

I have no major plans for the Zoom meeting on March 16th. Rose van Sickle may be showing us a few treasured items and I hope that everyone might find an item to share. I am hoping to do a small presentation about the Berlin airlift in 1948/49. This event is basically the beginning of the 'cold war'. We will have a lot to talk about though. We are renting the room at the New Life Centre for a live meeting in April. For our first meeting back together we will have John Cortan setting up his wares. I am hoping that we can get him set up early so more people get a chance to look over his philatelic stock. This means we will need a few volunteers to help John unload and a few more later to help him load back up. We don't know for sure what restrictions may be in place by then so be prepared to show vaccination proof or wear a mask or whatever may be required.

Thanks to having a website we are regularly getting inquiries from people looking to dispose of stamp collections of theirs or their loved ones. Bill Findlay is fielding offers for items from one such collection and there may be more coming shortly. Please contact Bill to make offers. Thanks Randy for such a great website

and thank you Bill for assisting these collectors. While I'm at it, thanks to Phil for his great effort at producing this newsletter!

The prospect of some live meetings in the near future is exciting. The Saugeen Club is going full steam ahead with their plans for a May 7th show. I hope to see a lot of you in Hanover for their meetings too.

Marion Ace, President  
Owen Sound Stamp Club

## Editors Greeting

I hope this sees you all safe and healthy. As a recipient of this newsletter it is believed that there is an interest in philately. The remaining pages contain three articles, a report on February's meeting and a listing of upcoming shows. That must be an unusual feeling about attending shows after a two year wait for them to start again. It has always been in my collecting history to attend the OXPEX Show in Woodstock. I plan on attending this one on the 19th, just two weeks before the writing of this welcome. It is also my first attempt at making a competitive exhibit and I will find out what the judges think of the attempt.

These last two years have really changed our world and now we need to adjust to new comfort levels. Questions arise on whether to meet in person or not, wear a mask, and how about vaccination status, and finally are we really done with Covid-19? These pages won't provide answers to those questions, but this is a reminder to consider what level of comfort each one has on meeting in person or attending shows. Please be kind enough to let the leadership know what your thoughts are. Whatever your thoughts are, we are still guided by the Health Units advice. Hope is always with us and so we all feel and look forward with positive thoughts.

Last months teaser scan was fairly easy to tie with with the story of Eleanor Collins. The scan below is tied in to a story (on further inside). Enjoy the read!



## The Mermaid of the Strudengau

by Ralph Wyndham



The third stamp in the series, 'Tales and Legends of Austria', from Austria Post is the 14 schilling Die Donaunixe vom Strudengau, issued September 19, 1997.

The Strudengau is a deep valley cut through the Alps of Austria by the Danube River. Today, thanks to the Wallsee-Mitterkirchen power plant, the river has been tamed and the

valley has become part of a 34 kilometre-long reservoir. In centuries past, however, the river was full of whirlpools and rocky reefs where it flowed through the valley making it one of the most dangerous stretches along the whole of the Danube's 2850 km course down to the Black Sea.

Long before the river was tamed, Danube sailors referred to the Strudengau as the "Herberge des Todes" – the Hostel of Death. Nevertheless, a few brave men made their livings ferrying people across its dangerous waters. On a sunny summer day, one such ferryman undertook a river crossing with a group of boisterous, possibly even a little drunk, young men. The skipper put up with their antics as he guided his boat across the treacherous river – jostling one another, shouting lewd jokes and laughing at their wit, rocking the boat and hanging over the sides.

Just as the boat was passing by an island, a beautiful mermaid emerged from the water to bathe in the warm sun. Well! As soon as the young lads saw her, they got even louder directing waves of raucous laughter, hoots and catcalls, rude jokes and gestures towards the lovely maid of the river. Seeing her obvious fear and humiliation was more than the ferryman could bear. His anger boiled over and, as the shaken maiden slipped back into the water, he shouted at the young men to shut up or he would toss them over the side till the icy waters cleared their heads. Knowing full well that the skipper could make good on his threats, the merrymakers quickly fell silent.

A few nights later, as a fierce storm shook the little hut where he lived with his mother, he heard a knock at his door. There, illuminated by the lightning flashes, stood a well-dressed woman and her young children. At this time, the Turks were invading the country and bands of soldiers roamed the land burning huts and killing everyone they found. Even though he doubted the Turks would ever find his remote little hut, he felt he should help this family. Lantern in hand, he helped his passengers into his boat and set out for the distant shore.

Not long after setting out, a gust of wind blew the lantern over and extinguished the flame. The light from the lantern provided little more than comfort against darkness of the night anyway so the ferryman pressed on. Despite his heroic efforts and knowledge of the river, the boatman became disoriented in the

darkness, rain and din of the roaring wind and water. Just then, above it all, he heard a little voice, "Here. This way!" Steering his boat toward the voice, he soon reached the opposite shore and led the family to a boatman's hut where they could safely wait out the storm.

Now, not wanting to leave his mother alone on such a terrible night, he got back into his boat to head for home across the dark waters. As perilous as the first crossing was, the storm only grew worse as the sun set out. Having already used so much of his strength ferrying the little family to safety, the exhausted young man soon lost control of his boat against the howling wind and rushing water.

Resigned to his fate just as he was about to be drawn into a giant whirlpool, there appeared before him a tall, beautiful woman who shone with a warm, soft light that seemed to emanate from within her. As the amazing figure reached out and touched the man's oar, the boat surged away from the dangerous pool as if the wind and the current scarcely existed and, in no time at all, the boat was safely ashore. Before the worn out and confused sailor could fully comprehend what had just happened, his rescuer silently disappeared into the rushing waters of the river. In this way, the courageous young ferryman was thanked by the Mermaid of the Strudengau for defending her honour and dignity against the rude and vulgar young men just days before.

And the well-dressed mother whom he ferried to safety with her children that same stormy night? She, too, remembered and remained grateful. Once the Turks were driven out and the land was safe once more, she returned to the ferryman's modest little hut to thank him and paid him so well for his selfless service that he and his mother never lacked for anything for the rest of their lives.

### February Zoom Meeting

February 16th saw the cyber gathering of the Owen Sound Stamp Club and guests from other philatelic clubs in southern Ontario. Nineteen people attended the evening. Reports were received from Bob F. Bob also confirmed that the Club's donation to Oshare had been made. Marion G reported that the percentage of circuit book sales had been paid to the Club's account.

### Show and Tell

Dave P reported the recent acquisition of the 2017 Specialized US Scott's Catalogue. Should anyone seek information about US specialized items, just contact Dave and he will try to assist. Dave also mentioned that there was another Capex held in 1996 with a large sheet of transportation vehicles issued at the show. This corrected an error from last month's meeting.

Randy R showed three Korean revenue stamps plus one other that he had failed to identify. Randy also shared that a publisher "Barefoot Catalogues," publishes out of print catalogues. From that source, Randy purchased a revenue catalogue from "S.E. Asia Revenues" and Yugoslavia Revenues.

Phil V and Marion A both shared items which will appear below in the newsletter.

## Guest Speaker

Mr. Peter McCarthy spoke to us about his personal passion, Railway Post Offices. This is a massive topic, so it was condensed down to some history on rail in Canada, then onto cancellations indicating rail transport of the mail and general information about RPO cancels.

To begin, rail arrived in Canada in 1836 with a line joining St John to La Prairie (near Montreal). It was easy to see that the movement of mail by rail would be much quicker than by horse and rider. The first postmark from a railroad was on Oct 22, 1853. It was in use until January 28, 1854. Two new hammers were used following this first one. Initially there was no mail sorting on the train.

Rail routes expanded greatly in the following years. A well-known railroad, the Grand Trunk Railroad (GTR), purchased the St Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad. Grand Trunk is now known to us as The Canadian National Railway. After the GTR went bankrupt in 1923 it was amalgamated with the CNR, a Crown Corporation. An early letter was mailed from Rimouski on July 21, 1854, arriving at its destination on July 23, 1854.

Victoria Bridge was built joining the south shore (La Prairie) of the St Lawrence across to the north shore (Montreal). This connection expanded the rail network greatly and improved mail delivery prior to Confederation. For instance, a letter mailed from London ON, to Brockville would take five days, but now by rail could be delivered in less than a day. The first letter to travel this route was mailed on February 1, 1856.

Collectors of RPO's refer to the "Transportation Proof Book: Proof Strikes of Canada, Vol. 17." There are many other reference books published since, two books by Shaw and one by Ludlow. The current reference book has been collated by R. Gray with a third edition at the presses right now. This book refers to over 5,000 different RPO cancels. This covers all the rail networks in Canada.

Great Western Railway was the first to have a mail car with people sorting mail during the travel along the rails. In 1859, Great Western had an 800-mile direct rail connection from Portland, Maine to Sarnia. This reduced the mail travel time from 10 days to 49 and half hours. There were five to six people working in a mail car. They sorted the mail for the various stops along the route as well as applied a cancel indicating the route the mail travelled on. Some stations would accept bulk mailings and a roller cancel would be applied. Peter showed a few bulk tags with postage on the tags and a roller cancel.

Following the presentation there was an open mic for people to ask questions and share. Rose VS shared that there is a Palmerston Railway Museum that is very interesting and worth a visit. It appears that the village of Palmerston is a creation of the train tracks and a junction between various routes.

A brief discussion was started about whether an in-



A mail tag from bag carried by rail. The cost was 1 cent per pound (weight), thus this tag was attached to a bag weighing 63 pounds.

person meeting might appear soon. We all wait in anticipation of the announcement and what exactly will come in March following the new health regulations. What is important is for all members to share what level of comfort there will be with meeting face to face again. Besides the comfort and safety, the next question will be is there a place where we can meet? Now the New Life Centre is available for getting together but we need to find out if the St Mary's High School might also be open soon. Please let the Executive know the level of comfort you have with meeting in person again.

As a last discussion there was the idea of having more than one meeting per month. One would be in Person and the second would be using the Zoom portal. Due to the expanded membership, we have members from New Brunswick, Clinton, Goderich, London, and guests from other clubs they would be able to join the Zoom meetings. We also have our southern members joining in from their winter locations. Input is requested, so please let the executive know your thoughts. The meeting ended at 9:40 PM. Lots of discussion for thought!

## Registered Mail from Owen Sound

by Phil Visser

Zoom has allowed me to "visit" other stamp club meetings. A regular visit on my itinerary is to join the West Toronto Stamp Club (WTSC). One of their meetings in a month is a forum for those who can share something about a chosen topic. The topic this month was "Registered Mail." Since I had a few covers on that topic I prepared a few PowerPoint slides showing registered mail from Owen Sound between the start of the post office and 1900.

Research is done before sharing some philatelic item. Consulting "The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Canada" by W.S. Boggs and "The Encyclopedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, Vol V; North America" published by Robson Lowe Ltd, some information was gleaned which was followed by leafing through my local postal history collection. Four letters were chosen to represent a little bit of information from this fair city.

Boggs shares that "As long ago as 1792 the British Post Office began the system of marking letters that

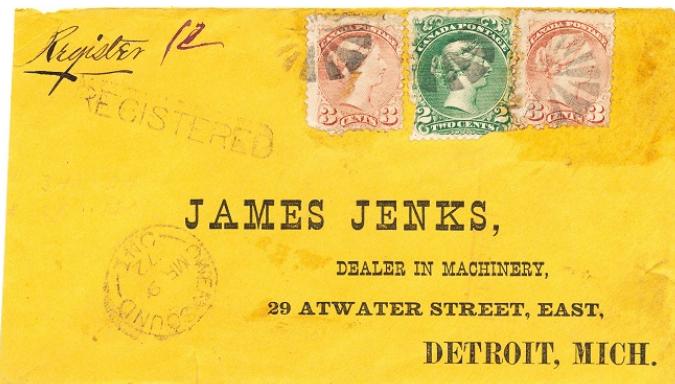
contained or appeared to contain money, "MONEY-Letters." As a colony, Canada was under the direction of the Post Master General in London, UK. These letters marked accordingly were treated special attention and so a fee was charged for that special care." This information predates mail from Owen Sound and is not pertinent to this story.

Of the four letters used to highlight registered mail from this post office, the first one was mailed February 8, 1850. Looking at the letter below, the word "Money" is written in script (handwritten) and the rate of 9 pence is written as "Paid" in red ink. Before the Owen Sound post office became official, letters could be sent as unpaid, receiver pays, or paid by the sender. To differentiate, the local Post Master was to write the fee in either black (unpaid) or red (paid).



A rate of 9 pence was correct for the distance from Owen Sound to Dundas. At the time, postage was paid on weight and distance basis. Nine pence paid for 101-200 miles in distance. To support this distance to Dundas, in the book "People of Owen Sound" by Melba Croft she references several sources to identify people who lived in the town prior to 1900. One reference Croft lists is the "Province of Ontario Gazetteer and Directory" by C.E. Anderson and Co. that stated that the land distance to Guelph as 84 miles. Even with today's road system, Dundas is more than sixteen miles from Guelph.

A second Registered letter now includes postage stamps. Purchased from Eastern Auctions a year and a half ago, I didn't look at it that closely. Yes, it is a cover addressed to Detroit Michigan, but further thought was put aside. Researching this letter brought out some interesting things. In the upper left corner of the envelope is a hand scribed word "Registered" and the number 12. Registered letters started on March 31, 1855. Fees charged for having letters registered



changed several times over the period between 1855 and the mailing of this letter on March 9, 1872. Correct postage for a letter to the United States was 6 cents. Registration of a letter to the United States was set as 5 cents in 1859. A close inspection of this letter will show that the postage and registration fees were underpaid by 3 cents.

There is no further indication that postage was due at the receiver's end, nor are there any other post office marks between Owen Sound and Detroit to indicate the route and time it took for this letter to arrive at its destination. This letter did pass through another post office because a hand struck "Registered" was applied. Clearly a mystery exists with this cover.

As part of the registration process, each Post Office was to enter the letter in their Waybill register as being received, and then apply a new registration number applicable for sending it on to the next post office. To put this into context, the number "12" was likely applied in Owen Sound and it was the 12th entry made in the Waybill record. Several members of the WTSC pondered and then finally accepted that the letter was underpaid by the 3 cents mentioned above.

On November 15th, 1875, the Post Office required registered letters to have a special stamp put on it. This next letter shows one of those stamps, the 2 cent Registered Letter stamp, Unitrade number F1. The letter is addressed to Toronto and by the year of 1876, the railroad was completed, and the letter went directly to the destination. One wonders why a second waybill entry was not made, but there only appears one Waybill entry, 4701.



A final letter was shown, and it too shows something interesting. First things first, in 1889 the registration rate was increased to 5 cents while the postage rate at that time was 3 cents, thus the fee for mailing a registered letter in 1898 was 8 cents. Correct postage and registration rates was paid on this letter. Delving into the Unitrade catalogue reveals that the 8 cent Queen Victoria numeral stamp was released for use on September 24, 1898. Note also that the marking for a registered letter changed from a handstruck "Registered" to an oval with a large letter "R" inside it.

Nothing out of the ordinary with this letter, but a look at the postage rate shows that the introduction of Universal Penny Postage began on January 1, 1899. With the change to Universal Penny Postage, the cost of mailing a letter was now set at 2 cents, so a registered letter would now cost 7 cents to mail. That



means that there was a three month and one week window for this stamp to be correctly used for postage and registration. Amazing what can be found when research is done!

#### References:

- 1 The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Canada; W.S. Boggs; Quaterman Publications Inc; 1945
- 2 The Encyclopedia of British Empire Postage Stamps 1639-1952, Volume V, The Empire in North America; Robson Lowe Ltd; 1st Edition 1973
- 3 People of Owen Sound; M. Morris Croft; Self Published; Printed by Stan Brown Printers Owen Sound.
- 4 The Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps 2022

#### It's a Question of Etiquette!

by Marion Ace

When you see the word etiquette do you think of being very proper and polite and having all the appropriate cutlery in the right spots for a fancy dinner? As stamp collectors you may be thinking about the little air mail labels often found on covers sent overseas.

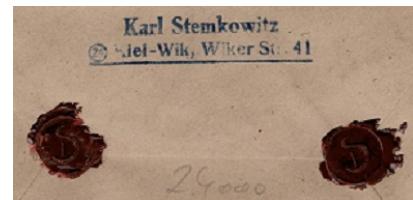
I recently acquired a German cover with a small label I was unfamiliar with. It has a large 'V' on the left. (See figure 1). This label is also an 'etiquette'. Registered mail also has etiquette labels on them with a large 'R' on the left. Looking at this cover we can see that it is 'worth' 500 Reich marks. It has considerable postage - 1.70 Rmks. The cancels are difficult to read but are probably posted in 1947 at Kiel-Wik. An online search of the word 'etiquette' got me nowhere. I searched Colnect.com with a few different words and still got

nowhere. I noticed that Germans selling items like this described the items as 'wertbrief'. We can easily imagine that 'wert' could mean 'worth' and I know that 'brief' means 'letter'. Wert also translates as



'value'. A search of 'wertbrief' hit the jackpot!

This is an insured letter label. But why the 'V'? From its earliest years the official language of the Universal Postal Union was French. So the 'V' stands for 'Valeur déclarée'. The letter has a declared value of 500 Rmks and is insured for that amount. For many years all insured letters also had to be properly sealed. On the back of this item we see there are two stamped wax seals. (Figure 2). Finding covers with insured letter labels is a great way to find high value stamps properly used in the postal service. It's a question of etiquette!



#### UPCOMING SHOWS

##### MAR 19, '22 70th Opxex-40th Otex

##### Note the Revised Location

Woodstock Christian School, 800 Juliana Dr., Woodstock, ON, N4V 1E8

The Oxford Philatelic Society will host the 70th Opxex-40th Otex shows at a new venue this March. Open from 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., the one-day show boasts dealers, competitive framed exhibits, a silent auction, club circuit books, a youth table, light refreshments plus free admission and parking. Dealer and exhibitor Brenda Hoyle is also set to lead a presentation.

Email: countyowl@rogers.com

Web: <http://www.oxfordphilsoc.com>

##### April 8, 2022 to April 10, 2022

Spring 2022 National Postage Stamp & Coin Show  
Hilton Mississauga/Meadowvale, 6750 Mississauga Rd., Mississauga, ON, L5N 2L3

The show starts Friday with Colonial Acres' Premier Auction, with daytime viewing and the auction going live at 5 p.m. For auction details, visit Colonial's website, [colonialacres.com](http://colonialacres.com). The two-day coin and stamp bourse opens at 10 a.m. and runs until 5 p.m. on Saturday and to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Admission on Saturday is \$5 and only \$2 on Sunday. Children under 16 are free. The popular Young Collectors Table will be open both days, and the Young Collectors Auction will be held on Sunday starting at 1 p.m. The Spring 2022 National Show will also feature the 79th annual exhibition of the North Toronto Stamp Club.

Phone: 905-646-4820

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Web: <http://www.stampandcoinshow.com>

##### APR 30, K-W Stampfest 2022

Trillium Lutheran Church, 22 Willow St., Waterloo, ON, N2J 1V5

One day only, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., the Kitchener-Waterloo Stampfest will feature 14 dealers, judged exhibits plus free admission and parking. The show will also feature a new/returning collector and youth area featuring the "Sea of Stamps," and the wheelchair-accessible venue includes a lunchroom.

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A few last words now that the previous five pages have been filled. It is surprising where the stories come from but many thanks to Ralph and Marion for contributing to this months newsletter. Philately is a worldwide hobby and opens fellow collectors to keep on learning more about it. Perhaps this is the month where a "trip" to the website will provide other ideas.

As always, the Editor is always looking for story contributions. Can you commit to writing one story in a year? Give it a try! As always, errors and omissions fall on the Editor, however, please let me know about those pesky errors and where possible, they will be fixed.

It looks like the world is opening up with shows and hopefully this will come with some form of peace with the pandemic.

**Soapbox**

In the never ending task of organizing my hobby room, I was sorting through a collection donated to me by a friend who was downsizing. Lots of interesting things from postal history to a variety of stamps. Below you will see one of those stamps, a printed but never issued for postal usage stamp from the Ukraine. The Cyrillic lettering gave me a hint that it was issued by an Eastern European country, but Colnect.com helped me find out it was a Ukrainian stamp. Unusual items also appeared in these collections and I was surprised to discover what I thought was a silver dime. On closer inspection I realized it was not a dime, but a silver nickle from 1920. No stamp was issued about the nickle from that era, but here is another scan of a coin on stamp to commemorate the founding of the Royal Canadian Mint in 1908. The nickle I found is just as tarnished as the coin shown on the stamp. Happy collecting!

