



BRITISH COLUMBIA
POSTAL HISTORY
RESEARCH GROUP

Volume 12 – Number 4

Whole number 48

January 2004

A WORD OF CAUTION!

Ever since the early days of stamp collecting there has always been a problem with faked, forged or fancy items that are not what they appear to be and as a result were usually produced for fraudulent purposes. In some cases the fakes are easy to spot, such as the case alluded to in the 1935 Postal Supplement where a postmaster was reprimanded for setting back the date on his dater at the request of a customer. The customer in question produced first day covers for the low values of the 1897 Jubilee Issue. Unfortunately the dater used was an oval duplex canceller that was proofed in the late 1920's and except for the most uninformed this fake is easy to spot. On the other hand the work of some of the early forgers is of very high quality and even an expert may have difficulty in identification.

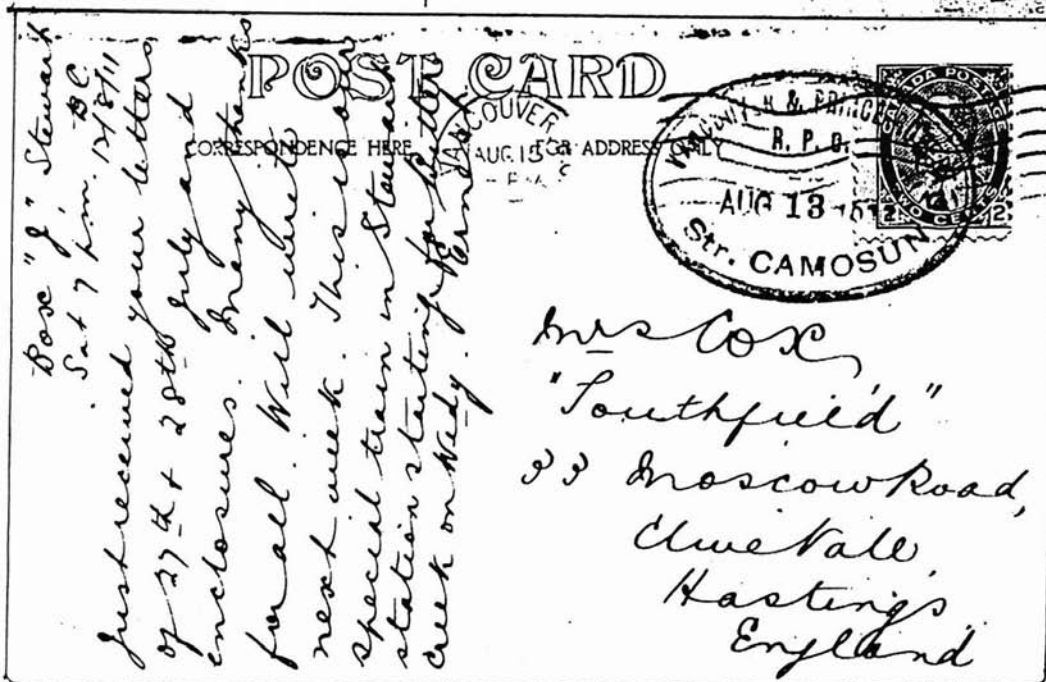
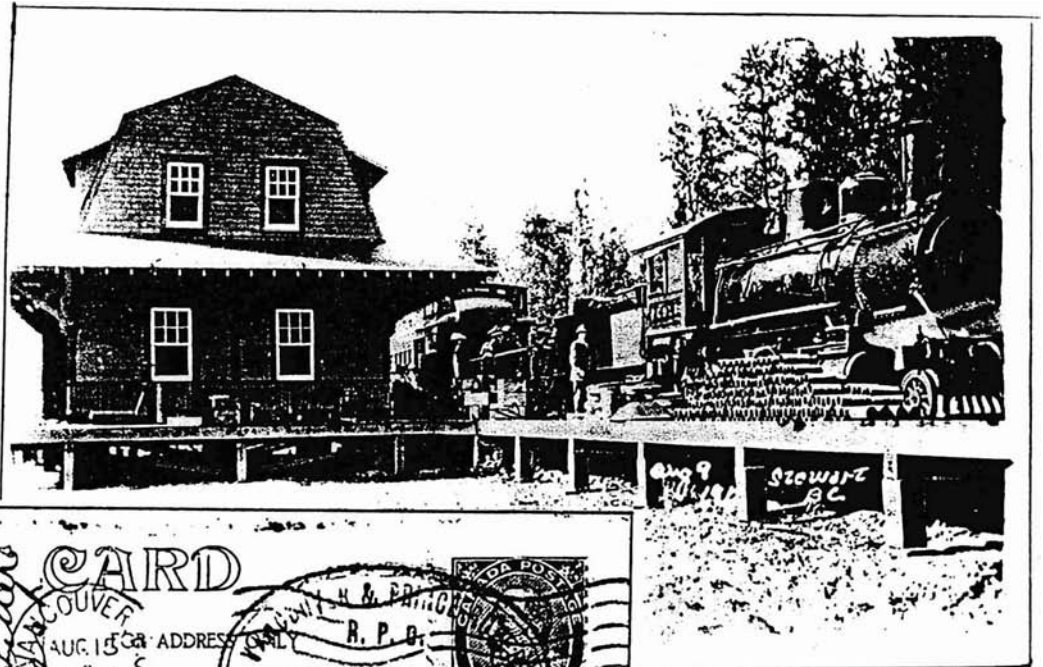
The latest round of fakery involves the use of laser jet equipment to produce unlisted or rare cancellation, mainly on stamps, but a few are reported on cover. In most cases the maker has copied cancellations appearing in the proof books and in some cases has changed the date to make the cancellation look more genuine. In most cases the cancellations are dead centre on the stamp and often look too good to be genuine, and are often listed at premium price because of the high quality of the strike. Unlike post office ink, which is absorbed into the paper, the ink used in Xerox machine and laser jet printers is usually surface printed ink and is not absorbed but remains on the surface of the paper. Thus a careful examination of the back of the stamp for ink penetration or the use of a sharp knife to gently scrape the surface of the cancellation to see if the ink is only on the surface of the paper. On the other hand if the item looks too good it is best to insist that that you be permitted to inspect the item before purchase and if this request is refused there may be a good reason.



REDCLIFFE MINE – again

Thanks to Alex Price
See Vol. 12 No 3 p 367

During its short existence the Redcliffe Mine was served by the Portland Canal Short Line Railway. The original sponsors of the railway were Mackenzie and Mann, who had grandiose plans for the Stewart region that did not come to fruition. The railroad appears to have been part of these plans. The post card below was mailed on the Str. CAMOSUN on August 13, 1911 two months before the opening of the Redcliffe post office. The Portland Canal Short Line Railway engine is in front of the station at Stewart.



The British Columbia Postal History News Letter is published quarterly on behalf of the British North America Philatelic Society. Dues for the news letter are \$8.00 for one year or \$15.00 for two years (\$CAN or \$US). Checks should be payable to the editor, Bill Topping, 7430 Angus Drive, Vancouver, BC, V6P 5K2, Canada.

GAMBIER TRAVELING POST OFFICE

By Bill Topping,

The Gambier Traveling Post Offices was one of two traveling post offices established, in 1908, on coastal ships in British Columbia to serve the developing seaside settlements within the vicinity of the rapidly expanding city of Vancouver. Unlike the Burrard Inlet Traveling Post Office, which is well known to collectors because of the large quantity of philatally inspired mail it carried, the Gambier T.P.O. serviced only personal mail to and from the Howe Sound region of the south coast of British Columbia. The office ceased to operate in 1924 being listed in the postal records as "no longer required".

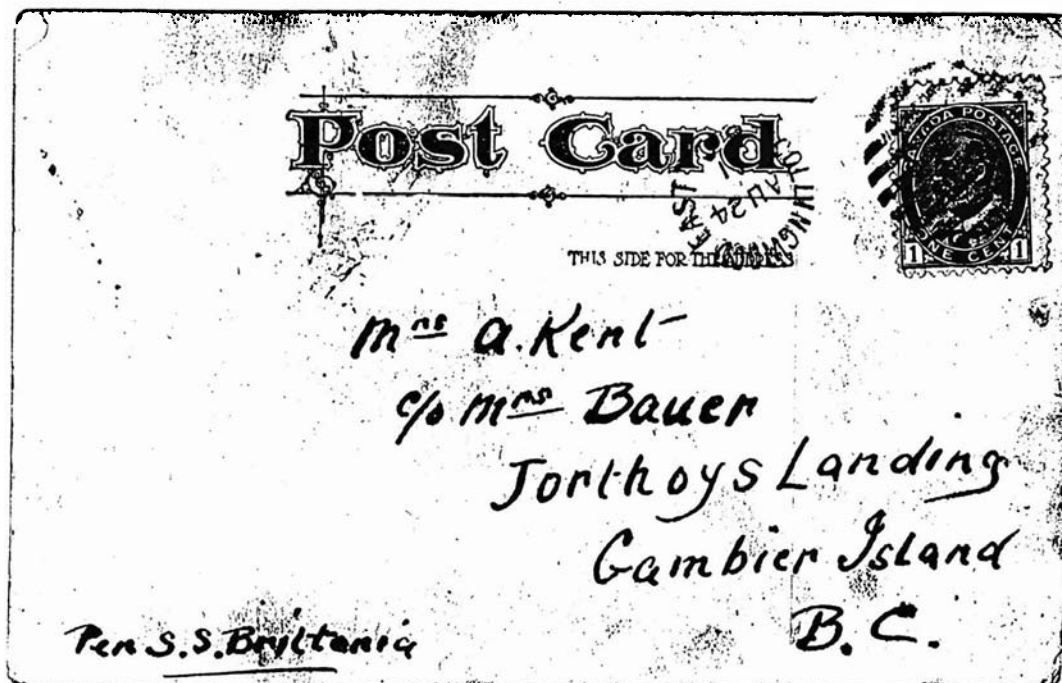
Gambier T.P.O. established July 1908

The Gambier T.P.O. was authorized by the Postmaster General under Post Office Order 38B on July 7, 1908. The proof date on the hammer reads "JUL 30 08", which is the same date as the Vancouver Post Office record book show the cancelling equipment was dispatched to the Gambier Post Office. On the other hand the *Canada Gazette* lists the opening date for the Gambier T.P.O. as July 16, 1908. Thus for the purist the only thing that can be said for certain is that the Gambier T.P.O. was established in July 1908 to serve the small settlements clustered around Howe Sound. Unlike most post offices during its 16 years of operation the post office was operated by at least five different companies and was located on at least three different ships.

Terminal Steam Navigation Company

The first Gambier postmaster was Robert K. Turner who was assistant manager of the Terminal Steam Navigation Co. Ltd., a well known British Columbia company founded by John A. Cates in the 1890's. At the time Mr. Turner is listed as serving as purser on the T.S.N. ship the S.S. *Britannia* and it is assumed that the job of postmaster was added to his regular duties. Thus the S.S. *Britannia* became the first ship to be used on the Gambier T.P.O. route, although there is some indication that the post office may have been carried on others T.S.N. ships, including the *Belcarra*, *Baramba* and *Bowena* which all served on the Howe Sound route. The Terminal Steam Navigation Company appears to have given up the mail contract as Mr. Turner resigned as postmaster on November 15, 1910 and it was not until March 1911 that a successor was appointed although there is no record of a temporary closing of the post office.

"Per S.S. Britannia" sic



Marine Navigation and Engineering Company

On March 1, 1911, the mail contract was transferred to the National Engineering Company, which after 1914, became known as the Marine Navigation and Engineering Company. Captain Alexander E. Brown, Captain of the National Engineering ship the S.S. *Buster B.*, was appointed as postmaster and the *Buster B.* became the second ship to operate as the Gambier T.P.O. Captain Brown remained as Gambier postmaster until August 19 1913 when the *Buster B.* which was little more than a tug boat, was replaced by the S.S. *Mariner Express*, a 73 foot passenger ferry, built by the Marine Navigation Company to serve on the Howe Sound route. The *Mariner Express* became the third ship to operate as the Gambier T.P.O. and, on October 1, 1913, John W. Thompson, general manager of National Engineering, was appointed as postmaster. Mr. Thompson only served as postmaster for a year and he resigned on April 14, 1914.



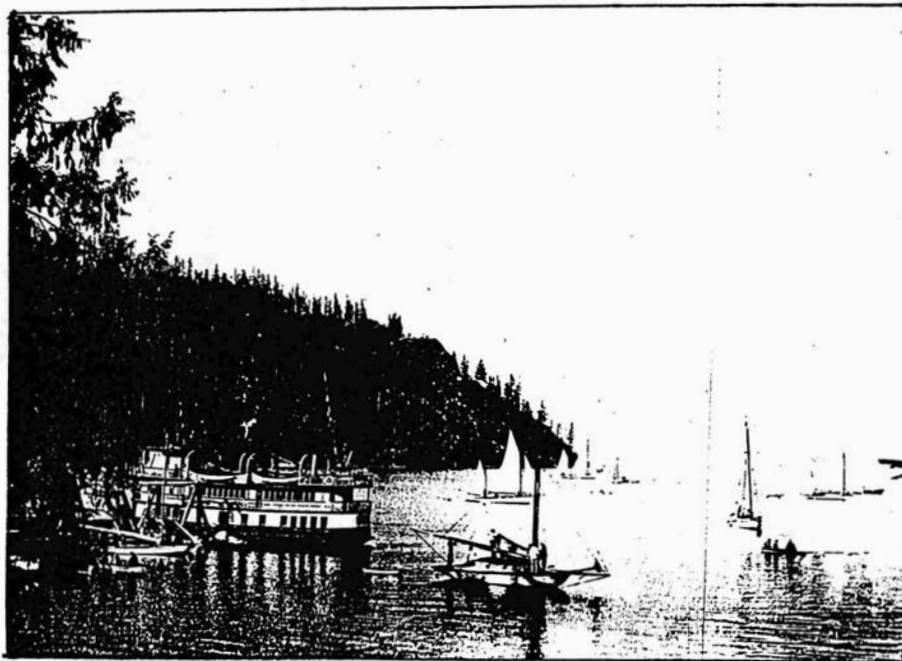
"Marine Express"

Post card mailed on the *Marine Express* at the Allan Wharf, Vancouver July 25, 1918 for delivery to Mr. Hopkins, postmaster at Hopkins Landing.

There is some confusion as to what happened following Mr. Thompson's resignation as the *Canadian Almanac* states that in 1914, the Inland Navigation, of Victoria, was operating the Gambier mail service. Nothing is known of this company and there is nothing in the postal records to indicate that this change took place.

The postal records show that on June 1, 1914, John Thompson's son, Robert Dinaham Thompson, manager of the Marine Navigation and Engineering Company, formerly the National Engineering Company, became postmaster of the Gambier T.P.O. and that the post office remained on the *Mariner Express* which left the Allan Wharf, Coal Harbour (foot of Bidwell Street, Vancouver) daily at 9 AM and returned to Vancouver at 6 PM.

Although John Thompson and his son Robert are listed as postmasters of the Gambier T.P.O. the actual duties appear to have fallen to Captain "Billy" Yates. Captain "Billy" (William Lawrence) Yates, formerly 2nd mate on the Union Steamship Company ship the S.S. *Cassiar*, had been hired as master of the *Marine Express* in 1913 and he continued on the *Marine Express* until May 19, 1919, when he became captain of the *Britannia*. In 1919, the Marine Navigation and Engineering Company acquired the *Britannia* from the Terminal Steam Navigation Company shortly before the Terminal Steam Navigation Company was sold to Union Steamships Limited in December 1920. Captain Yates took over as master of the *Britannia* and at the same time the Gambier Post Office was transferred back to the *Britannia* for the second time.



S.S. *Britannia* arriving at Snug Cove, Bowen Island c. 1915.

The S.S. *Britannia*

The *Britannia* probably operated as a separate company as it is listed in the *Canadian Almanac* as private operation providing daily mail service to the Howe Sound settlements. Captain Yates continued to act as unofficial postmaster on the *Britannia* until May 17, 1921 when he joined Union Steamships as captain of the newly acquired *Lady Evelyn*. The duties of postmaster were transferred to Roy G. (G.R.) Hutchinson who was officially appointed postmaster on October 25, 1923 following the resignation of Robert Dinaham Thompson as postmaster. Mr. Hutchinson served as postmaster until April 24, 1924 when it was considered by the Canadian Post Office Department that the Gambier Traveling Post was no longer required and the delivery of mail was taken over by Union Steamships Limited, thus ending a confusing but fascinating period of British Columbia marine postal history.

In closing it should be noted that in addition to the companies discussed above that a number of other shipping companies operated in Howe Sound and on occasion accepted mail as a convenience to the settlers. Among these were the All Red Line, Harbour Navigation, Howe Sound Navigation, Pacific Navigation, Sannie Transportation, and Union Steamships, too name a few.

Employees show courage and generosity through fire storms

THIS SUMMER, MANY BRITISH COLUMBIA and Alberta residents lived through the unimaginable, as walls of fire up to 100 metres high raced down the mountains into neighbouring towns. While 5,200 firefighters were busy battling the infernos, Canada Post teams worked hard to continue to serve some 40,000 customers who were evacuated from their homes. Their commitment was unflinching, often despite their own personal situation.

Throughout the crisis, unions and management worked closely to prepare daily contingency plans and ensure the safety of employees and contractors, while maintaining effective collection and delivery of mail.

Quick as a spark

In late July, a fire storm destroyed 66 homes and forced the evacuation of 7,000 residents of Barriere, Louis Creek and McLure in British Columbia.

"We didn't believe that the fire would reach us until we saw the mushroom cloud, smelled the smoke and felt the burnt twigs and ashes near our homes," says Jean St. Pierre, postmaster, Barriere. "It moved so fast!"

"We had to think quickly in this highly unusual situation," adds Stephen Krasikow, Local Area manager, Nicola/Fraser Canyon/Thompson. "Remarkably, all employees went above and beyond their duty to keep the mail moving."

Indeed, when the three towns were evacuated, the postmasters and staff volunteered to keep working. The Kamloops Mail Processing Plant became their temporary home. "Working took our mind off our worries," says St. Pierre.

...all employees went above and beyond their duty to keep the mail moving. ...

"It was like everything was normal again. Customers found it comforting to see familiar faces."

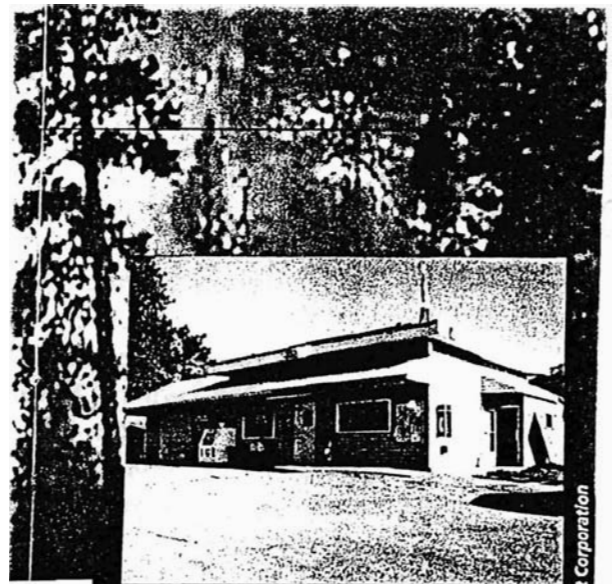
St. Pierre sighed in relief when she learned that no homes were destroyed in Barriere. Her colleagues from Louis

Creek weren't as lucky: the post office was burned to the ground and staff is still operating from the Barriere post office. Also, rural route contractor Rob Rutten lost his home and business (but he has since decided to rebuild).

Moreover, residents deeply feel the loss of the Tolko Industries sawmill. "The company decided not to rebuild," says Krasikow. "Many of our employees have spouses who used to work at the mill. This is a difficult time for them, as well as for residents who lost their homes and weren't insured. Employees and the community are doing everything they can to help, but there's still a lot of uncertainty in the air for the unemployed."

Heart on sleeve

Then, in early September, the Okanagan Mountain Park fire destroyed 248 homes in or near Kelowna and forced 30,000 people to evacuate. Canada Post Kelowna superintendent Fred Jarvis and supervisors Ben Bodnar and Joe Ryan, armed with respirators, eye drops and water bottles, courageously went behind the fire lines to clear mail from street furniture.



The Louis Creek post office in B.C., before and after the fires.

Inset photos: Stephen Krasikow, Canada Post Corporation

Evacuees came to the Okanagan Delivery Centre (ODC) to pick up their mail, where a volunteer "runner" went to the appropriate case to retrieve the mail. Office hours were even extended for better service. The Okanagan Mission post office in south Kelowna was evacuated and postmaster June Tooley set up mail delivery for her customers out of the ODC for a week.

"All of our employees pulled together and reached out as a team and as part of the community," says Rick Moore, Local Area manager, Okanagan/Similkameen. "Many were evacuated and came to work the same day. Many opened their homes to evacuated family members, friends, colleagues or their pets. They worked long hours to collect money and some even cancelled their holidays to help out."

Staff from the affected regions also raised funds for the relief effort. They were joined by employees from Terrace and Vancouver, as well as from several teams across Canada.

These lending hands have and are still providing comfort to those who have to rebuild their homes or their lives in the aftermath of the unimaginable. ■

FROM CANADA POST -

Again thanks to John Gannon and Darlene Lam of the staff at the Pacific Division of the Canada Post Corporation, we are able to provide a listing of the openings and closing dates for post offices in the Pacific Division. Again the format in which the information is provided has changed and as a result some changes of ownership may be shown as separate closings and openings rather than as changed to ...

Date	Name	Address	Town	Code	F-RC	N-RC	Remarks
03-01-13	Vernon GMO 2	#125 2306 Highway 6	Vernon	VIT 6L0	251054	closed	closed
03-01-28	Book Keeping Unlimited SSCF	7176A Departure Bay Road	Nanaimo	V9T 47V	357529	closed	closed
03-02-17	Vancerhoof PO	1981 Stewart Street	Vancerhoof	VOJ 3L0	651931	closed	closed
03-02-28	Victoria GMO 36	3831 Blenkinsop Street	Victoria	V8P 3P2	171735	closed	closed
03-04-05	Eastside CFSS	36498 79th Street	Oliver	V0H 2T0	100651	closed	closed
03-07-14	Newton Town Centre	101-13753 - 72nd Avenue	Surrey	V3W 2A0	100983	656917	new owner
03-07-23	Steveston Village PO	3811 Moncton Street	Richmond	V7E 3A0	100804	644625	reorganized
03-07-28	Belvedere PO	1007 Belvedere Street	Enderby	V0E 1V0	100848	135461	new owner
03-07-28	Office Depot # 703 (Lougheed)	4199 Lougheed Highway	Burnaby	V5C3Y6	100086	closed	test site
03-07-30	Oakridge	650 41st Avenue West	Vancouver	V5Z 2N0	165972	100979	new owner
03-08-24	Campbell River GMO 5	223 Dogwood Street	Campbell River	V9W 2Y0	653640	closed	closed
03-08-25	Yaletown PO	135 Davie Street	Vancouver	V6Z 2Y0	101059	closed	closed
03-08-30	Port Alberni GMO 8	4934 Johnston Road	Port Alberni	V9Y 5N0	653861	closed	closed
03-09-01	Oyama	16020 Oyama Road	Oyama	V4V 2E0	011428	101089	new owner
03-09-14	Winfield North Store	3191 Woodsdale Road	Lake Country (Winfield)	V4V 1C0	138827	closed	close
03-09-15	Fairway - Port Alberni	3737 10th Avenue	Port Alberni	V9Y 4W0	100972	new	new
03-09-19	Louis Creek	General delivery	Louis Creek	V0E 2E0	643874	closed	close
03-09-26	Burnaby Station North CSC	474 Macdonald Avenue	Burnaby	V5C 4N0	074713	closed	closed
03-09-08	Maple Ridge Square RO	102-22441 Dewdney Trunk Road	Maple Ridge	V2X 8R0	129755	101062	relocation
03-10-01	Barkerville SO	General delivery	Barkerville	V0K 1B0	640468	closed	SO closing
03-10-18	Klahanie Store CFSS	RR #2 Lund Road	Powell River	V8A 4Z3	348961	closed	closed
03-10-18	Wildflower Books & Store CFSS	4539 Marine Drive	Powell River	V8A 4K0	348945	closed	closed
03-10-18	West Park Hardware Rentals CFSS	1-20349 88th Avenue	Langley	V1S 2K5	348937	closed	closed
03-10-18	Wilshire's Varieties CFSS	6762 Cranberry Steet	Powell River	V8A 3Z4	100264	closed	closed
03-10-20	Broadmoor PO	105 - 10151 No. 3 Road	Richmond	V7A 1G0	352063	101069	new owner
03-10-21	Coquitlam Centre	1136 - 2929 Barnet Highway	Coquitlam	V3B 5R0	178429	101050	relocation
03-11-13	Country Club Centre PO	38 - 3200 Island Highway	Nanaimo	V9T 1W0	423483	101149	relocation
03-11-18	Dogwood PO	190 Dogwood Street	Campbell River	V9W 2X0	653640	100850	replacement
03-12-01	Seven Oaks PO	182 - 32900 South Fraser Way	Abbotsford	V2S 5A0	387304	101136	new owners
03-12-01	Metropolitan PO	126 West 3rd Street	North Vancouver	V7M 1E0	384933	101173	new owners
03-12-15	Meadow Creek PO	General Delivery	Meadow Creek	V0G 1N0	644196	101197	relocation

WILLIAMS LAKE – Klussendorf slogan

Available from Williams Lake Post Office, 48 2nd Avenue South, Williams Lake, V2G 1H0



JSP OCR 081 - 2003Top line reads:

081 V6B 3A0 YRMODA TI:ME //////////////

2003 slogans

Two line slogan reads:

www.canadaPost.ca //////////////

www.Postescanada.ca //////////////

Early 03 01 06 21:32 03 12 30 03:15

Late 03 12 10 02:26 in use

Single line slogan on B1 reads;

www.ePost.ca/www.ePoste.ca //////////////

Two line slogan reads:

Santa HOHOHO Pere Noel //////////////

Pere Noel HOHHO Santa //////////////

Early 03 12 11 11:22

Late 03 12 23 05:26

Single line slogan on B1 reads www...

JSP OCR 118 - 2003Top line reads:

118 V6Z 4B0 YRMODA TI:ME //////////////

2001 slogans

Two line slogan reads:

www.canafaPost.ca //////////////

www.Postescanada.ca //////////////

Early 03 02 06 19:55 03 11 19 22:24 03 12 04 09:22 03 12 09 19:01 03 12 30 19:09

Late 03 02 06 22:27 03 11 22 01:22 03 12 04 19:32 03 12 11 04:58 in use

Single line slogan on B1 reads:

www.ePost.ca/www.ePoste.ca //////////////

Two line slogan reads:

From anywhere to anyone //////////////

De partout jusqu'a vous //////////////

Early 03 01 02 22:54 03 02 07 20:15

Late 03 02 06 00:45 03 11 19 01:01

Single line slogan on B1 reads: www..

Top line has date first and reads:

YRMODA TI:ME V8Z 4B0 118 //////////////

www.canafaPost.ca //////////////

www.Postescanada.ca //////////////

Early 03 11 24 19:05 03 12 04

Late 03 12 04 03:16 03 12 09

www.ePost.ca/www.ePoste.ca //////////////

Two line slogan reads:

Santa HOHOHO Pere Noel //////////////

Pere Noel HOHOHO Santa //////////////

Early 03 12 11 22:22

Late 03 12 17 13:13

Single line slogan on B1 reads: www..

Top line has date first and reads:

YRMODA TI:ME V8Z 4B0 118 //////////////

Santa HOHOHO Pere Noel //////////////

Pere Noel HOHOHO Santa //////////////

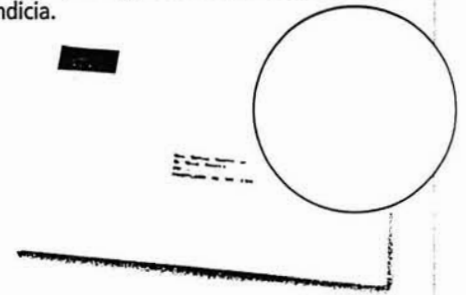
Early 03 12 18 03:08

Late 03 12 29 21:53

Single line slogan on B1 reads: www..

Patenting the future

The team that created the Remote Computer Reader has also created technology for which Canada Post now holds two North American patents. The Revenue Protection patent is for a system concept that enables sorting equipment to read special secure barcodes to identify stolen postage meters or stamps, stale-dated indicia, reused postage, and fraudulently generated indicia.



The second patent is for a family of "four-state" barcodes that include sophisticated error correction algorithms. These barcodes can be printed at high speed and can be read with greater than 99 per cent accuracy. Canada Post has provided these barcodes to other postal administrations such as USPS, Australia and Portugal.



Moreover, says Nicolson, the potential benefits are great. "This technology has given us more time, a very important commodity for us. Now we can decide how best to use that time. We may choose to divert some mail from air transportation to road, which means reduced costs and another transport option. Or we may offer enhanced services to large customers to reduce their mail handling workload, and charge a premium for it."

All this from a little computerized box. The RCR was developed by a small Canada Post team working in partnership with Siemens, and the project was completed on time and within budget. As of September 2003, the latest software upgrade was installed on MLOCs across the country. "The RCR has definitely lived up to expectations," says Pollard. "It has been a great success." ■

Making good time with machines that work smarter

By Michelle Stevenson

THERE'S NOT MUCH TO SEE, EXCEPT FOR THE results. The Remote Computer Reader (RCR) is just a small computer, but since it was introduced in December 2000, Canada Post's ability to machine-read the mail has improved dramatically. The need for manual processing has now been reduced by about 70 per cent, which means that in mail processing plants across the country the mail is moving much faster.

"Our 'D minus 1,' the rate at which we deliver a day ahead of schedule, is now well into the 80 per cent range," says Bruce Nicolson, general manager of Operations, Huron-Rideau region. "This technology is helping us provide better service to customers."

The magic is in the software. RCRs have been installed as second computers on Multi-Line Optical Character Readers (MLOCs), so these machines now have double the brain power (see *Performance* November/December 2002). The two computers work in parallel, together giving MLOCs the ability to machine-read all kinds of mail, including handwritten addresses, items with proportional fonts, and a variety of bar codes. The machines can even find the right postal code for letters mailed without one.

"With the RCRs we've seen a significant

improvement in our first-pass acceptance rate," says Fred Pollard, director of Operations at Toronto's South Central plant.

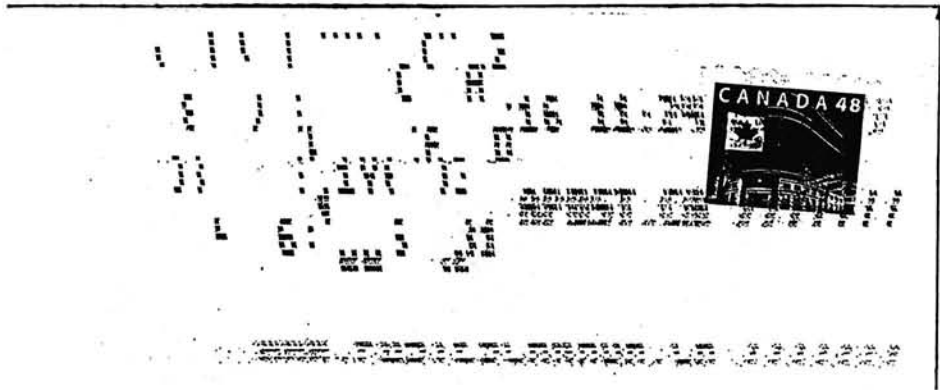
Faster processing has been the primary result, but it's not the only benefit. The RCRs can actually be programmed to sort finer than the postal code, even to individual points of call. This feature has had a significant impact in rural areas, where an entire town shares a postal code. "We're now receiving mail that has already been sorted at the plant by delivery mode—to lock boxes or rural routes," says Tad Wolanski, manager, Chatham Local Area, Huron-Rideau region. "Where there are many boxes, the mail arrives already sorted to box ranges. It's like having distinct postal codes."

More capacity

Efficiencies have been realized in other ways too. "With the RCR we've created capacity," says Barbara Critchley, project manager, RCR Project. "Mail that's manually processed by video encoding has to pass through the MLOC again for barcoding. But we've reduced so much manual processing that we actually freed up two MLOCs for Saskatoon and Windsor, centres that didn't previously have these machines."

JSP 084 - dated 03 12 16 11:24

An interesting variety -

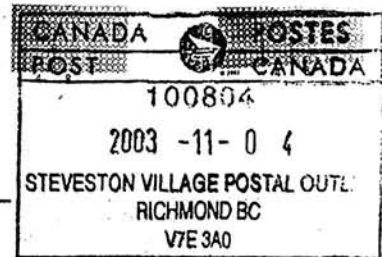


WINGS - see Vol 12 No 3 p. 373

Note; Prince George - College Heights, Downtown, and Hart show franchise name only and do not indicate they are franchises of Prince George.

Prince Rupert V8J 3T6 has been reported in red with the number excised.

New listings - Steveston Village 100804 V7E 3A0
Victoria (654744 ?) V8R 1G0 [Oak Bay]



LILLOOET KLUSSENDORF - See Vol 12 No 3 p376

It has been drawn to the attention of the Vancouver Post Office that the number shown in their records for the Salmon Arm Klussendorf machine that was transferred to Lillooet is incorrect and should read 02448 and not 02248 as shown in their records.

JSP 118 - During December 2003 the Victoria JSP 118 reversed the usual order shown on the top line of the jet spray cancel. Instead of reading -JSP number, postal code date, it read - date, postal code JSP number. The changes lasted from a few hours to a week or more. Similar changes have been noted on a few Eastern machines.

118 V8Z 4B0 03/12/23-31 1111111111
 POST
 www.canadaPost.ca 1111111111
 COC
 www.PostesCanada.ca 1111111111

03/12/23 22:28 V8Z 4B0 118 1111111111
 www.canadaPost.ca 1111111111
 www.PostesCanada.ca 1111111111