BNAPEX'99 - VERNON - SEPTEMBER 16 TO 18, 1999

The BNAPEX convention in Vernon is the third major stamp show to be
held in Vernon in recent years.   The Royal Philatelic Society met
there in 1994 and Pipex was held in Vernon in 1998. The BNA show
completes the round of major shows to come to British Columbia.
Each of the preceeding show has produced a series of daily show
"cancellations" depicting various   aspects of the   Okanagan's
history.   The   previous shows also   produced commemorate postal
envelopes depicting local personalities, namely George Melvin
(1994) and Cornelius O'Keefe (1998). At time of going to press the
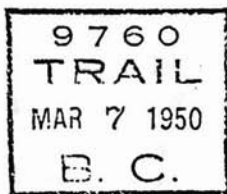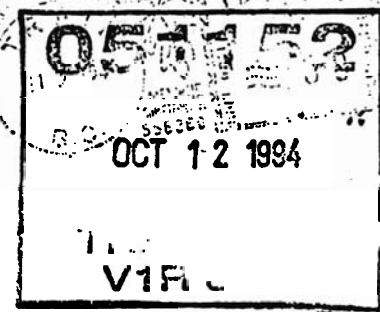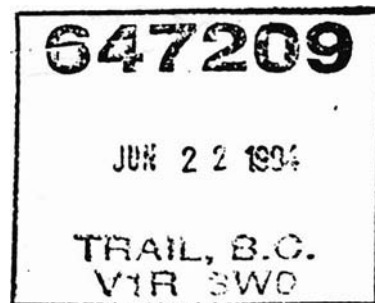details on the BNA show cancellations were not available.

In recent years the Canada Post Corporation has changed its policy
and now encourages the production of "special" cancellations which
in most cases are not intended to serve any postal function. These
"hand back" or "cancel to order" (CTO) items are becoming more and
more popular as in many cases they provide attractive souvenirs of
some special event. Canada Post, in response to public demand, now
produces other items such as "T" shirts, cover collections, and
special books or booklets to satisfy the demand of the 300,000
collectors who maintain deposit accounts with the Philatelic
Section. Unfortunately, many collectors have the impression that
these special items will increase in value which is extremely
unlikly because of the quantity produced. Special postal items
should be collected for fun and not as an investment.

TRAIL 647209

The postal code for the main post office in Trail (RC 647209) is V1R 3W0 and, in 1994, a 48 x 38 mm rectangular dater was introduced showing the RC number 647209 at the top and the postal code V1R 3W0 at the bottom. At the same time a similar date stamp with the RC number 051152 appeared showing the same postal code at the bottom. Shortly afterwards the RC number was removed but the basic dater, without the RC number, remained in use until 1997. In 1997, a smaller, 40 x 31 mm, dater was introduced with 637823 at the top and the V1R 3W0 at the bottom. A check of all available postal records failed to show any listing for RC numbers "051152" or "637823" and thus the question as to why Trail had three RC number arose.

On a recent visit to Trail Post Office the problem of the three RC numbers was presented to the postmaster, who explained the use as follows. The RC number of the Trail Post Office is 647209 and is the official RC number. It is used on all daters at the main service desk. Some time in the early 1990's the Trail MPP was reorganized and assigned two additional number for use in the Operations Section and the Letter Carrier Section, and one or more daters were produced. It appears that the number 051152 saw brief usage and was removed so that the daters could be used in the operations section of the plant as well. The two sections have since been combined under the Operations section which is assigned RC number 637823. Collectors of modern postal history should watch for these numbers.

Thanks to Bill Tidball

GEORGE H. MELVIN - 1905-1983
The Father of modern B.C. Postal History

To many British Columbia postal historians George
Melvin is only the name of the author of two books
on the Post Offices of British Columbia.   His
"Post Offices of British Columbia, 1858-1970", a
17 year labour of love, is still the definitive
work and much sought after by those who want the
full story of post offices in British Columbia.

George was born in Portmouth, England, on March 25, 1905 and died in
Vernon, B.C., on March 4, 1983. George came to Vernon as a member of
the Army Medical Corp from Kiska, Alaska to help demobolize that
group. He liked what he saw in the Okanagan and as a result he moved
his family from Ontario to Vernon where he entered the paint business.

George had always been interested in stamps and assisting others and
had worked actively in Ontario forming childrens stamp clubs sponsored
by the Rotary Club.   When he came to Vernon he became actively
involved in many local activities with the result that he was named
Vernon's Good Citizen of the Year in 1970.   In 1978 he was made a
Freeman of the City.

His contributions to the Vernon community were many. George served as
an alderman in Vernon for 6 years.   He also served as chairman of
Vernon Winter Carnival Society, which under his chairmanship, became
the largest winter carnival in Western Canada.   At the same time he
chaired the Red Cross Blood Donors Clinic, and the Vernon Museum
Board. As a result of his leadership the Vernon Museum now houses one
of the finest collections of artifacts and handiwork of the Okanagan's
native peoples as well as many relics of Vernon's pioneer days.

George took an interst in all aspects of the Vernon community. He was
an honourary life member of the Vernon Rotary Club, the OMPA, and the
Royal Canadian Legion. He was a founding member the AOTS Men's Club
at the United Church where he assisted greatly in the upkeep of the
church.

His philatelic activities were many, serving both begining collectors
as well as senior philatelists. He was one of the founding members of
the Okanagan Mainline Regional Stamp Group.   He enjoyed presenting
local showings of postal history as well as post card displays for
Christmas, Valentine's Day, and on other special occasions. In 1972,
the Northwest Federation of Stamp Clubs recognized George as the
Distinguished Philatelist of the year in recognition of   his
outstanding contributions and service to philately.

For those who knew George he will be rememberd as a gentleman and a
friend.   For those who never met him, the British North America
Convention in Vernon seem a suitable time to review his past
contributions.

VERNON - A POSTAL STUDY

The first Post Office to serve the Okanagan Valley was the OKANAGON Post Office (1) which was probably established, in 1872 (2), on the O'Keefe Ranch some five miles to the north of the present city of Vernon. Mail for this post office was brought from DUCK & PRINGLE'S, on the South Thompson River, via the Monte Trail which followed the route of present Highway 97.
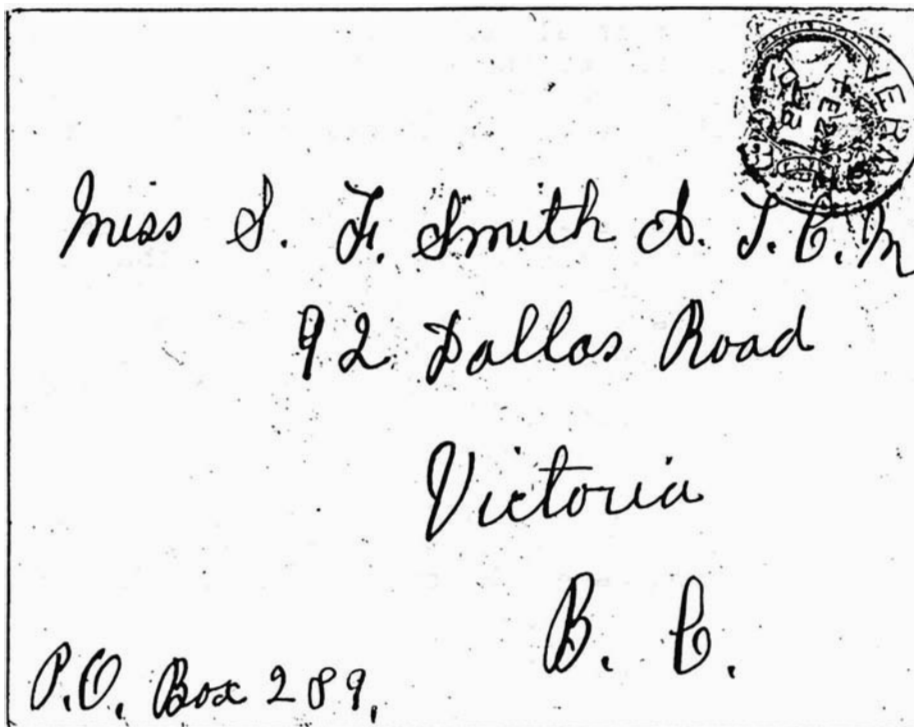
Canada Gazette - Nov. 1884, p 906

906

THE FOLLOWING NEW POST OFFICES WERE ESTABLISHED IN CANADA ON THE 1st NOVEMBER, 1884.

NAME OF POST OFFICE.	TOWNSHIP OR PARISH.	ELECTORAL COUNTY AND TERRITORY.	POSTMASTER.
Priest's Valley		Yale—Kootenay.........B.C.	Luc Girouard.
Ralphtown	Sec. 1, Tp. 12, Range 24, West of 1st M.	Selkirk.......................M.	W. J. Helliwell.
		Colchester...............N.S	William Ramsay.

The first post office to actually serve the present Vernon area was the PRIEST'S VALLEY Post Office which was established 1st November, 1884 with Luc Girouard as postmaster. (3). In 1862, Father Paul Durieu, O.M.I., built a small cabin as an out-station of the Okanagon Mission, located near present day Kelowna, and as a result the name Priest's Valley was given to the region. Only one postal markings from PRIEST'S VALLEY has been reported to date.

The name Priest's Valley was not popular and, in 1887, the names Centreville and Forge Valley were suggested, but the name of the Vernon was finally selected and the name of the PRIEST'S VALLEY Post Office was officially changed to VERNON, 1st November, 1887 with Luc Girouard remaining as postmaster. (4)

VERNON
FE 23
1898

VERNON - A POSTAL STUDY (2)

Canada Gazette - Nov. 1887, p. 1249

1249

THE FOLLOWING NEW POST OFFICES WERE ESTABLISHED IN CANADA ON THE 1st NOVEMBER, 1887.

NAMES CHANGED.

Boakview............................	Assiniboia............................	to Perley.
Kilburn's Landing.	County of Victoria, N.B...............	to Kilburn.
Lower Caledonia.. ....:	" Guysborough, N.S.	to Lower Caledonia South Side.
Priests Valley.......	District of Yale-Kootenay, B.C......	to Vernon.

21-tf

Vernon was named in honour of Forbes George Vernon who arrived at the Coldstream Ranch in 1863 along with his brother Charles.   In 1869 the Vernon brothers purchased the Coldstream Ranch from Colonel C.F. Houghton.   Forbes Vernon entered into politics and became Chief Commissioner for Lands and Works for British Columbia and as a result was highly regarded in the community. (5)

Thanks to a number of land developments schemes the town of Vernon expanded rapidly and although a number of other post offices were established in the area, Vernon soon became the major office for the North Okanagan Region.

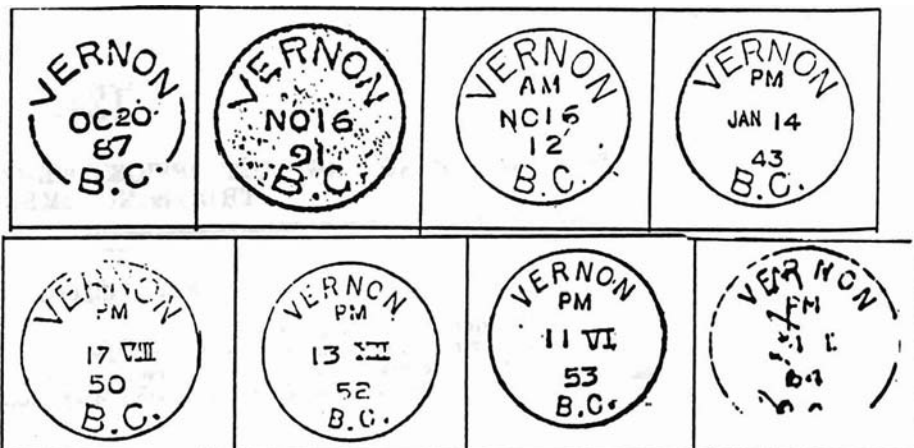Un-addressed 1 cent Edward Post Card c. 1905

VERNON - A POSTAL STUDY (3)
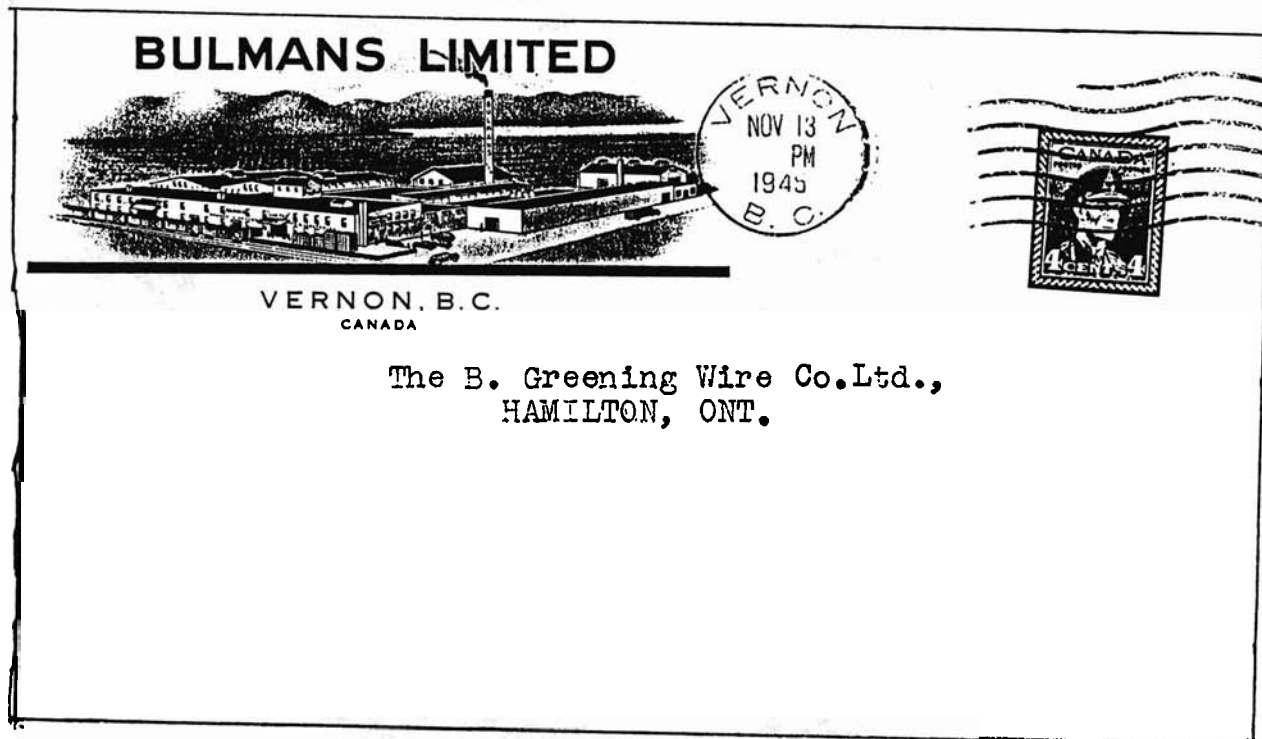
Selected proof strikes

Vernon Postmasters

L. Girouard	1887 11 01
R. McDougall	1991 07 01
A.J. Venn	1895 12 12
C.E. Costerton	1898 04 01
H.R. Parke	1899 05 15
C. Lefroy	1905 10 01
A.E. Lefroy	1949 07 18

Position changed to Zone
Postmaster about 1970

By 1930 the volume of mail passing through the Vernon Post Office had increased to the point that mechanized cancelling equipment was required and a Columbia Rapid Cancelling Machine (RCM) was supplied to the Vernon Post Office to speed up the processing of mail. An I.P.S. Rapid Cancelling Machine is still in use in Vernon although it is only used on local mail as all other mail is sent to Vancouver for processing.
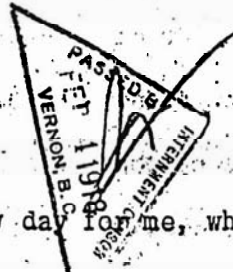
VERNON / NOV. 13 / PM / 1945 - Columbia RCM

(1) In 1905 the spelling of OKANAGON was officially changed to OKANAGAN.
(2) The exact date cannot be confirmed in official post office records.
(3) Canada Gazette 1 November 1884, postmasters name is mis-spelled in Melvin
(4) Canada Gazette 1 November 1887
(5) Akrigg, G.V.P. & H.B. British Columbia Place Names, 1986, p. 323

PASSED BY INTERNMENT CENSOR VERNON, B.C.

The Vernon Internment Camp was opened shortly after the start of World War I to house foreign nationals that were considered a security risk. Allan Steinhart in his book "Civil Censorship in Canada during World War I" discusses civil censorship but makes little reference to the censorship of prisoner of war mail. He also point out that almost no information is available in official records.

The letter reproduced, in part, below provides information on the changes in regulations regarding POW mail and confirms the fact that all POW mail was censored in Ottawa and not, as had been suggested by some authors, at the nearest censorship branch, in the case of Vernon at Vancouver.

Dr.Otto Grunert   ·Vernon BC, ·Canada, Detention Camp, February 4th 18.
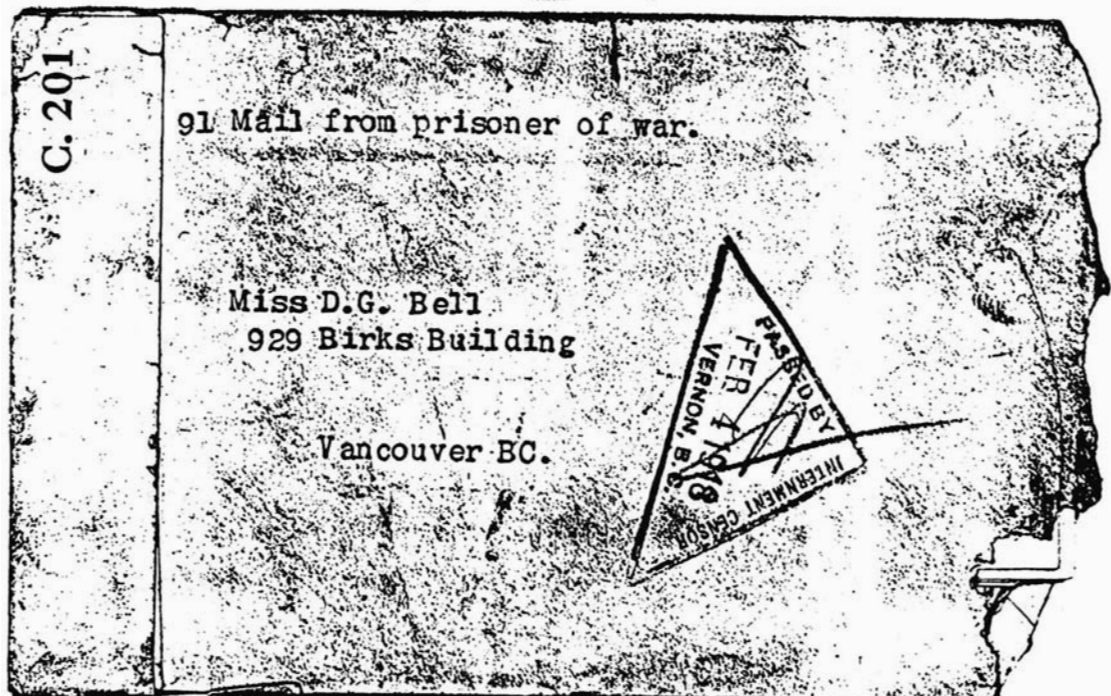P.o.W. 91

My dear little Dorothy:-

      It was indeed a happy day for me, when I received your long

dear letter of Jan.6th, which arrived end of last month here in the camp.

There are new regulations in regard to our mail, which first goes to

Ottawa for being censored there independently from the censorship here

in camp, and that delays the mail considerably. Furthermore we are not

permitted to write more than 2 pages in each letter and on each page only

25 lines. However this restriction I will replace by writing you more

often.

Face -

**PASSED BY
INTERNMENT CENSO(
FEB 1 1918
VERNON, B.C.**

**EXAMIND BY
CENSOR tapes
from OTTAWA
C.224 & C.201**

Back - nil

C. 201

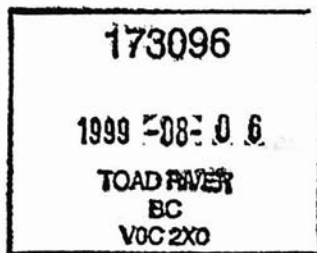91 Mail from prisoner of war.

Miss D.G. Bell
929 Birks Building

Vancouver BC.

TOAD RIVER - VOC 2X0

Toad River was established as TOAD RIVER - RPO 1 (RC 653497), on May 26, 1987, at
mile 422 on the Alaska Highway. The RPO 1 was a rather unusual designation as
there is no indication that it was an actual RPO. On July 30, 1992 it became a
regular Franchise "B" Rural post office with RC number 082511. On May 16, 1995
the office changed hands and a new RC number, 173096, was issued. The new dater
showed the postal code as VOX 2X0 rather than the correct postal code VOC 2X0.
The error was not corrected until early 1999 when a new dater was issued with
correct postal code.

Kevin O'Reilly has provided an interesting cover showing both postal codes as well
as the Alaska-Canada highway marking of 1992. The latter marking was supposed to
be withdrawn on December 31, 1992 but appears to have remained in use until
December 31, 1997. Has anyone another example of use of the Alaska-Canada marking
used between December 1992 and December 1997?

Re- POSTAL, POSTALE, POSTLE

Bob Spencer has provided an answer to the question how do you spell "POSTAL" in
French, but in the mean time the Vancouver MPP appears to have reverted to
"POSTAL" for both spellings. At the same time OCR 081 now reads OCR 082.   The
change may be the result of a major re-organization of the Vancouver MPP as the
result of the transfer of the Parcel Depot to a new facility in Richmond.

After checking all the French dictionaries that were handy, I wasn't
much further ahead, since both were listed. However reading the finer
print revealed that "POSTALE" is the feminine form and , - since they
class "CODE" as masculing - "POSTAL" should be the grammatically
correct form.

Since CANADA POST appears to accept either form maybe they are just
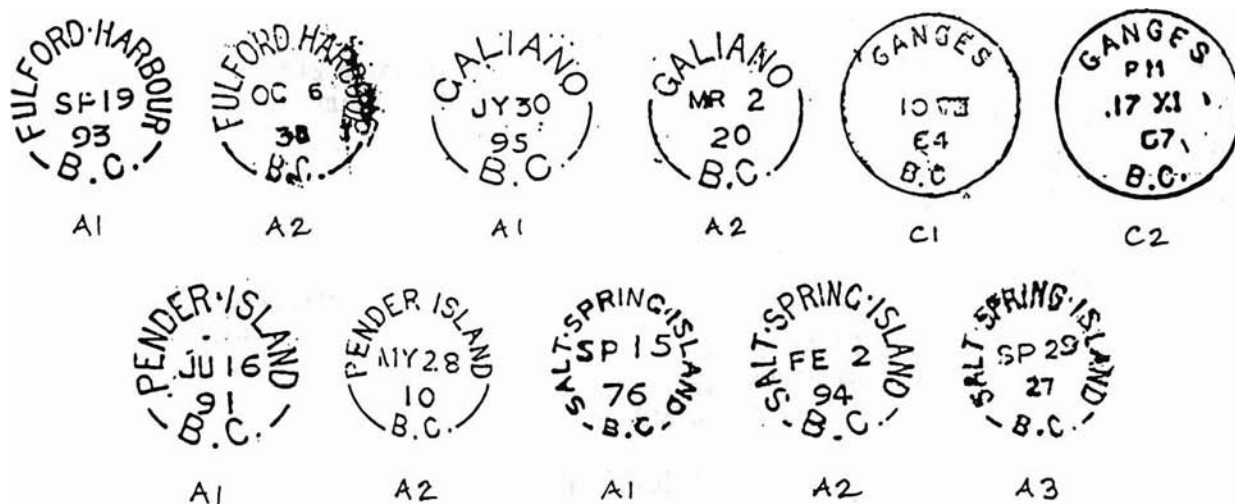trying to be "NEUTRAL" (politically correct) ?

Regards -

Bob Spencer

RESPONSE FORM for GULF ISLANDS POSTMARK SURVEY (Part I)

Please check your collection for early and late dates for the following Gulf Islands steel datestamps. Rubber datestamps and registration boxes will be surveyed in future issues. Photocopies of any unlisted metal hammers would be appreciated. Hammer types are those used in Topping's *B.C. Post Offices*, ie. A (split circle), B (closed circle, large letters), C (closed circle, small letters), D (duplex), G (30-mm+), M (machine). Rarity factors (RF) are B (common), C (in most collections), D (scarce), E (rare, less than 10 strikes noted), U (unreported). Please note any new ink colors or other pertinent uses. For scarce (RF D) and rare (RF E) offices, please note number and date of examples you hold, so an inventory can be compiled and precise rarity factors established. Thank you.

Please return forms to: Andrew Scott
Brooks Site C23, RR2, Halfmoon Bay, BC V0N 1Y0

Office (proof date)	Type	ERD	LRD	RF	Comments
Beaver Point (not in PB)	A1	02/JY/95	20/AU/10	C	22 mm
(29/MY/14)	A2	29/DE/27	30/DE/48		19 mm
Burgoyne Bay (02/JY/80)	A	15/DE/80	29/NO/98	E	
Denman Island (06/MY/92)	A	05/OC/94	11/AP/49	B	
(12/DE/50)	B	26/MY/56	30/AP/97		
Fulford Harbour (19/SP/93)	A1	13/OC/96	12/SP/99	E	dot in name, 3-mm arcs
19/MR/24	A2	09/JA/28	14/FE/49	B	no dot, 6-mm arcs
27/NO/51	B	15/MR/52	16/MY/79		
(not in PB)	G	30/AU/86	04/FE/93		30 mm
Gabriola (13/AU/31)	A	11/MR/48	05/MY/77	B	
(not in PB)	C	13/JU/77	23/AP/97		
Gabriola Island (not in PB)	A	17/DE/92	18/MR/29	D	
Galiano (30/JY/95)	A1	09/DE/95	25/DE/07	B	21 mm, 8.5 & 8-mm arcs
(02/MR/20)	A2	07/MY/26	30/JU/49		20 mm, 11.5 & 11-mm arcs
(07/OC/52)	B	10/JA/56	13/AU/92		

Ganges (not in PB)	A	22/JU/06	19/OC/34	B	
(22/MR/24)	B	22/DE/25	13/MY/64		
(19/MY/64, unclear)	C1	22/MY/64	31/AU/86		23 mm, proof strike distorted
(17/NO/67)	C2				24 mm
(29/JA/22)	D	08/AU/23	16/MY/28		DBC-135
Ganges Harbour (not in PB)	A			E	
Hornby Island (09/JA/91)	A	28/JA/97	21/MY/46	B	
(18/AP/49)	B	09/JU/55	20/JU/91		purple ink noted
James Island (16/AU/17)	A	16/NO/18		C	
(19/DE/25)	B	26/SP/31	29/MR/55		
Kuper Island (02/MY/92)	A	16/JY/92	26/SP/44	D	
Mayne (not in PB)	A	29/NO/02	14/FE/61	B	
(not in PB)	C	01/AP/63	25/OC/89		
Moresby (26/JA/19)	A			E	
Musgrave (PB unclear)	A	28/FE/39	03/MY/55	D	
Musgraves Landing (02/JU/23)	A	17/DE/23		E	
North Gabriola (not in PB)	A	13/MY/10	19/MY/31	E	
North Galiano (10/AU/23	A	10/AU/36	24/AU/42	D	
(14/MY/48)	B	24/MY/51	01/AU/52		
(24/OC/52)	C	21/JA/54	28/JY/69		
North Salt Spring (19/SP/93)	A	08/OC/95	26/FE/98	D	
Pender Island (16/JU/91)	A1	19/DE/91	14/AU/07	B	dot in name, 21.5 mm
(28/MY/10)	A2	08/AP/13	14/JU/89		no dot, 19 mm
Pikes Landing (31/MY/94)	A			U	
Plumper Pass (03/JA/81)	A	25/SP/83	17/MY/99	D	
Port Washington (02/FE/12)	A	23/NO/12	31/OC/50	C	
(21/NO/51)	B	02/JY/52	14/DE/79		
Retreat Cove (not in PB)	A	19/FE/06	19/SP/18	E	
Salt Spring Island (not in PB)	A1	15/SP/76	01/JA/92	D	20 mm, no period after C
(02/FE/94)	A2	02/SP/95	06/JU/04		21 mm, purple ink noted
(not in PB)	A3	20/NO/15	08/MR/32		20.5 mm, square letters
Saturna (26/JY/94)	A	01/FE/96	12/NO/55	B	
(26/JA/56)	C	14/FE/61	16/MR/98		
Sidney Island (23/SP/10)	A			U	
South Pender (not in PB)	A	31/DE/05	26/JU/60	C	
(not in PB)	C	22/JU/64	21/JU/69		
South Salt Spring (not in PB)	A	20/AU/03	24/DE/21	D	
Thetis Island (31/MY/46)	D	18/OC/47	28/NO/89	B	DBC-135
Valdez Island (29/JU/91)	A	04/JY/94	02/MR/96	E	

I can add no new information ☐

I do not collect Gulf Islands postmarks ☐

Name . . . .

Address . . . .

. . . .