



BRITISH COLUMBIA
POSTAL HISTORY
RESEARCH GROUP

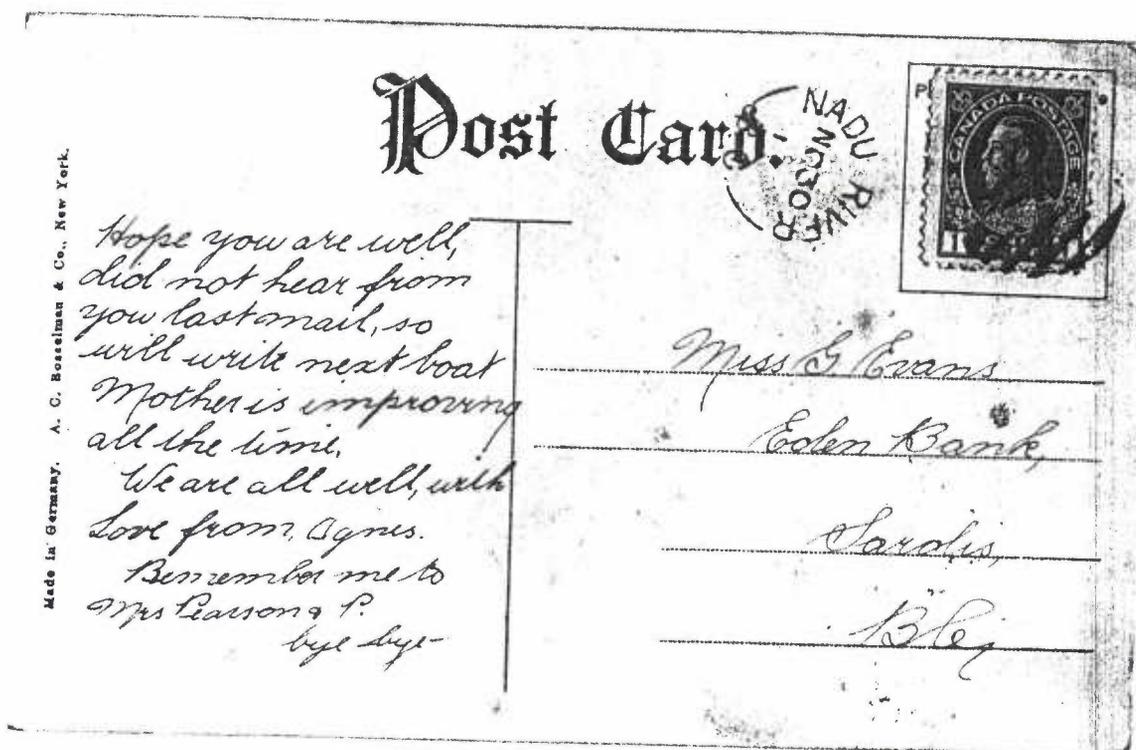
Volume 20 Number 1

Whole number 77

March 2011

NADU RIVER — PREVIOUSLY UNREPORTED BC POST OFFICE

Located in the Queen Charlotte Islands (now officially known as Haida Gwaii) on the east side of Masset Sound on Graham Island, 20 km south of Masset. The name comes from the Haida word for nose, and refers to the promontory created where the Nadu River enters the sound. The post office was opened on Feb 1, 1914, and closed on Sept 30, 1923.



A short-lived agricultural settlement formed here in the early 1900s, during the first rush of homesteaders to take up land in Haida Gwaii. A dock, store and post office were established on the site of an old seasonal Haida camp. The card's recipient, Miss G Evans, was a relative of the Nadu River PM, Mrs Elizabeth Mary Evans, who served from 1917 to 1923.

Three Nadu River split-ring cancels on postcards were found and reported to the editor by the granddaughter of Elizabeth Evans, who lives in Delta. The clearest example is shown above. A second split-ring from Watun River, another rare Haida Gwaii office, was also reported.

William G. (Bill) Robinson, FRPSC, FRPSL, OTB

Canadian philately has lost a great friend and student of the hobby. Bill Robinson died on December 4, 2010 in Vancouver General Hospital as a result of complications from pneumonia. He is survived by his wife of 53 years Megan, their daughters Gwyneth and Heather, and five grandchildren. He was a 1947 graduate of the University of British Columbia, achieving Honours in Civil Engineering. He worked with Parks Canada and the Department of Indian Affairs until his retirement in 1978. Bill attained the rank of Colonel with 30 years of service in the Canadian Militia.

Bill Robinson's contributions to philately resulted from the organizational skills of a military man and the thoroughness and precision of an engineer, but importantly also the passion of a great collector. Bill quickly found himself in a leadership role in the broad range of interests in his life. These included over 50 years service to his Masonic Lodge and to his church, St. Stephen's United in Vancouver. He served as a Director, Vice-President, and President of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and was elected a Fellow of the Society in 1986. He similarly served in numerous executive positions with the British North America Philatelic Society including President from 1990-92, and was honoured by being included as a member of the Order of the Beaver in 1987. He was an active contributing member of many other philatelic societies including the Postal History Society of Canada (both President and Director), the Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain, and the American Society of Polar Philately. He contributed to many study-group newsletters. He was a nationally and internationally accredited judge, frequently serving as chair of the jury. His broad knowledge of so many aspects of collecting and exhibiting made him a popular choice for many show committees. He was a most worthy recipient of a Fellowship in the Royal Philatelic Society of London for his many years of service to philately.

Bill contributed many learned articles to the journals of his societies. Railway Post Offices were an important collecting interest, and he made significant contributions with Lew Ludlow to the RPO Cowcatcher in *BNA Topics* as well as a series on Canadian Airport Mail Facilities. He provided many updates to the recently published RPO catalogue. In the RPSC's *Canadian Philatelist*, articles on the Canadian Forces in Alaska and a series on Northern Post Offices of the Yukon and British Columbia were important additions to the knowledge of Canadian postal history. Bill also collected Canadian military mail, and his exhibit of Boer War material was published by BNAPS. With Bill Topping, he edited five books on the post offices and postal markings of the Western Provinces and Territories that are widely relied on by students and collectors of this material.

While Bill was a great volunteer and leader in all of his interests, he will probably be best remembered for his generous, mentoring role to so many keen collectors. He always had time to share knowledge and guidance to even the most novice. Canadian philately is much richer for the contributions of our late friend Bill Robinson.

John Keenlyside

CURNOW – Thanks to Alex Price – yes the date stamps read reads “CURNOW”

Bill. I continue to enjoy your Nicola post office writings, as mentioned earlier, an area I am fond of. Now as to the Curnow post office. I searched for this one for years, even spent an afternoon with a very old Curnow lady still living in the old ranch house, once a staging point. However, about five years ago, Tracy Cooper phoned to say that Joe Smith, Alberta BNAPSer had found what he thought was Curnow on a strip of four Edwards. Tracy bought it from him. There are three fairly faint but quite clear strikes of Curnow on the strip. Scan attached. Tracy cut the strip in two and gave me one half with a faint strike. The strike is Feb 15, 1906.

And another little bit is added for you, see scan. Letter from H.L.Roberts, Curnow PM dated Curnow BC 26 March 1906 to the Harvey Bailey Co in the correct period. Please use if you wish, but, as you know, no mention of me and HB Co. alex



Curnow. B.C. 26 March 1906

Messrs Harvey Bailey & Co
Ashcroft

Dear Sirs,
Enclosed is cheque
for \$25⁰⁰ which amount
please place to credit of my
ac & oblige

Yours truly
H.L. Roberts

NICOLA VALLEY - PART 3

Merritt



The Merritt Post Office was located in the G. B. Armstrong store - where Ben's Shell is today. It moved to the Gemmill and Rankine store - located then where Sherwood's is now. Mr. G. M. Gemmill was assistant postmaster.

In October 1911, Gemmill resigned to make way for Mr. Langstaff to become the first full time postmaster in the valley. Langstaff moved to the Clark building on the corner of Voght and Granite.

Postmasters of Merritt:

G. B. Armstrong	07.08.15 - 12.02.21
W. R. Langstaff	12.06.10 - 48.03.16
N. D. Dixon	48.03.17 - to date

We are still uncertain of all of the locations of the post offices in Merritt. Can anyone clarify this matter?

A new service was added to the Merritt postal system when the sub post office opened in Olsen's Western Drug Store on June 16, 1978 under the direction of sub postmaster Richard Olsen.



Merritt post office constructed during the years 1939-43.



Nicola Valley Historical QUARTERLY

Some Recollections of the Early Days in Merritt Post Office

Dorothy M. Horsman

When I remember the Merritt Post Office in my father's day, it is the smell which I recall so vividly - a mixture of dusty mailbags, printers' ink and in winter, coal smoke from the potbellied stove which stood in the corner and had to be lit (by the postmaster or his deputy) first thing every morning. This was when the post office was in the old Jackson block (today's Post's Meat Market) next to Archie Jackson's store which also had an aroma of its own - one peculiar to the general store of that day - a blending of everything from kerosene to cough drops. There was no custodian or janitor in those early days and so lighting the fire, dumping the mail sacks and shoveling snow in winter was all part of the duties of the postmaster. He was responsible, too, for every detail in the post office from changing the date stamp (a messy job) to handling of bank money packages containing (presumably) thousands of dollars. It amazes me in these days of armored cars servicing banks with armed guards on duty that we never gave a thought to robbery. It cost only 10¢ plus postage to register a letter or packet, yet that register was handled as carefully as nowadays and I never remember hearing of one being lost.

Before closing time every afternoon, money orders and stamps sold had to be checked against cash on hand. If the books didn't balance one worked at them checking and rechecking perhaps after hours until the mistake was found. This was quite a job because on a busy day after pay day, there might be a couple of hundred mail-order money orders entered up. If the mistake was not found and further checking of stamps in stock failed to show it up, my father had to make good the shortage out of his own pocket.

Unfortunately, he wasn't able to pocket the amount if the cash was over! On the rare occasion when this happened, someone usually turned up to claim that!

It seemed there was never a nice even flow of business for the post office staff. At one part of the day they would be rushed off their feet with incoming mail to sort and outgoing mail to be kept stamped up and dispatched as well as the money order and stamp business and the general delivery wicket to be attended to. Often the busiest time of the day was at noon hour and meals had to be eaten in a hurry and nerves got frayed.

At the times when the mail came in early in the morning and went out a few hours later it was not such a hectic rush. Also, early in the morning was not a popular time for those who liked to make the post office lobby a social meeting place. If the train came in later than that the old "faithfuls" would arrive at the front door as the mail truck pulled up at the back. Dad used to say they must think the mail jumped into the mail boxes. When the chit-chat in the lobby rose to an uproar, Dad would mildly ask the noise makers to go for a walk and come back when the mail was sorted. Sometimes they did and, in any case the noise usually subsided.

The worst time of all for the postmaster and staff was when the mail came in late in the afternoon or in the evening. My Dad didn't think the locked mail sacks should be left overnight; so at least the registers must be recorded and locked in the safe and the first class mail must be sorted that evening. My sister Glennie (Langstaff) Jones and Margaret (Stephenson) Mortimer were comparing notes the other evening about their days as postal assistants and turning out to sort the mail when the train was late, dressed for a dance and trying to keep their hands and dresses clean.

It was only in the last 12 or 15 years of my father's 36 years in the post office that there was a stamp-cancelling machine. Prior to that the mail was date-stamped by hand entirely; even after the machine was installed the hand date stamp must be used and remained as a menace to the safety and cleanliness of hands for there were no franking machines. Ink-stained hands and clothing and smashed left thumbnails were an occupational hazard for the postal staff.

Of course the hazards of printers' ink had been, from his early teens, a familiar part of life to my father for he had served his apprenticeship with the Whitehaven News in his home town in Cumberland. He left an excellent position on the staff of the "Graphic" and "Bystander" in London to seek a fuller life in Canada. One of his proud recollections of his Fleet Street life was that of showing King Edward VII through the composing room of the "Graphic".

There could not be a large staff in the post office because of the uneven flow of business. My Dad received a salary and commission based on stamp sales and from this he must pay his own staff. Part time help was not feasible, for unless one had learned quite a bit about each phase of the work, one couldn't be of much help. Mother and I were trained to pinch-hit in an emergency. The call for help was a newspaper in the post office window and Mother would put down her own work and hurry the half-block to the post office to help. After school hours, Saturdays and school holidays I too was available. During the Christmas rush our own Christmas preparations had to take second place to the post office rush. The wicket was opened after hours in order to let people get their parcels. Before we went to midnight service on Christmas Eve, every last Eaton's parcel had been picked up so that Santa Claus might start on his rounds.

Kingsvale



Del King, son-in-law of Nicola Valley pioneer Jesus Garcia, took up the land on which the Kingsvale railway station and post office were located. The high hopes held for this settlement disappeared when Major Goldman acquired the main ranching properties in the Voght and Kane Valleys.

The postmasters:
 C. Buchanan 16.06.01 - 16.09.18
 A. Adams 17.03.15 - 18.05.16

It is believed that the postmasters were section foremen.

Brookmere



Louis H. Brooks and Phillip P. Brooks entered on Lots 659 and 590 YDYD respectively in 1909. In the spring of 1911 it appeared that both the Kettle Valley Railway and the Vancouver, Victoria and Eastern Railway and Navigation Co. would be running lines from Princeton to the coast. Surveys being carried out at that time indicated these two railways would be within a stone's throw of each other where Brookmere is today.

Plans were immediately set in motion for the survey of a large new townsite at the summit. Louis H. Brooks' land, Lot 659, YDYD, was the site chosen for the new town. The agreement between the Railway Company and Brooks called for each to get 1/2 of the 360 surveyed lots.

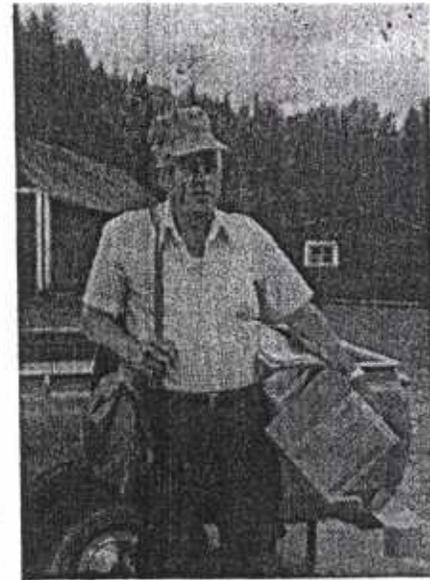


Brooksville, it was said, would have a very advantageous position being located at the summit and lying between Pass Creek and the west fork of the Otter.

Why Brooksville became Brookmere is not known.

The optimistic predictions of 1911 that Brooksville would become a large divisional point for the two railroads only materialized in part and then very slowly.

The post office opened in 1916. For many years it operated out of the hotel, then, in the early 30's the hotel burned and the post office moved to the general store.



Harry Percival for many years an engineer on the K.V.R. took early retirement and became postmaster. Harry may still be seen in Brookmere wearing his engineers cap.

Mr and Mrs E. W. Peale,
Kingsvale
Voght Valley
B.C.



Dot



Dot was originally known as the 22 Mile Ranch and was changed to honour Dalton (Dot) P. Marpole who owned the ranch and died in a tragic barn fire on January 29, 1908. Dot was the son of Richard Marpole the general superintendent of the CPR.

The Postmasters:
 Mrs. E. Slater 09.03.01 - 13.03.17
 Mrs. A. E. Rowan 13.08.01 - 16.09.25
 Mrs. E. F. Abbott 16.11.01 - 20.05.16
 Mrs. A. R. Seal 20.07.16 - 31.01.30
 Mrs. M. Woodward 31.04.29 - 36.03.16
 Mrs. V. Granier 36.04.01 - 44.03.14
 Mrs. A. N. Ransome 44.04.01 - 47.08.18

It is interesting that all the postmasters were women. Some were attached to the ranch such as Mrs. Abbott and Mrs. Ransome. Some were married to the section foreman, Mrs. Seal and Mrs. Granier were in this category.

The postmasters:
 E. J. Marshall 16.09.01 - 17.10.18.01.01 - 19.10.20.01.15 - 20.07.20.09.09 - 21.07.21.09.07 - 23.07.23.09.15 - 35.01.35.02.21 - 40.08.40.06.19 - 41.01.41.01.17 - 42.02.42.02.28 - 43.143.12.09 - 52.03.52.03.10 - 53.12.53.12.29 - 61.02.61.03.01 - 65.08.65.09.01 - 66.02.66.07.01 - 69.12.

Harry Percival, the last postmaster move it to the vacant teacherage in about 1967.

Nicola Valley Historical **QUARTERLY**

Brookmere



BROOKMERE
B.C.

THE N. SLATER Co. LTD.
P.O. Box 271
HAMILTON, ONTARIO.



ATTN: DIRECT MAIL DEPARTMENT



BROOKMERE
B.C.

Gault Brothers Ltd.
361 Water St.,
Vancouver 3
B.C.



FROM CANADA POST – Openings for 2010

Again thanks to John Gannon of the staff at the Pacific Division of the Canada Post Corporation, we are able to provide a listing of the opening dates for post offices in British Columbia. Unfortunately because of changes in the system Mr. Gannon was unable to print off the closing dates for the past year. Hopefully the problem will be rectified by next year.

Rc number	Outlet Name	Business	Address	City	Prov	Pcode	Old RC	Open
103743	THE COUNTRY PEDLAR	THE COUNTRY PEDLAR	7526 SHERIDAN FRONTAGE BLVD	LONE BUTTE	BC	V0K 1X0		01/01/2010
103762	MISSION PARK	PHARMASAVE # 242	41-3155 LAKESHORE RD	KELOWNA	BC	V1W 3S0	267376	02/01/2010
103735	TOPLEY PO	FARMHOUSE SALES & SERVICES	21628 TOPLEY POST OFFICE ROAD	TOPLEY	BC	V0J 2T0	103407	03/01/2010
103805	BRENTWOOD MALL	SHEFIELD & SONS	47A-4567 LOUGHHEED HWY	BURNABY	BC	V5C 2A0	438960	06/01/2010
103669	NEW AYANSH PO	NEW AYANSH VILLAGE GOVERNMENT	PO BOX 233	NEW AYANSH	BC	V0J 1A0	640107	11/01/2010
103932	LYNNMOUR PO	OFFICE SERVICES ETC	110-223 MOUNTAIN HWY	NORTH VANCOUVER	BC	V7J 2C0	103592	11/01/2010
103932	LOUGHHEED MALL PO	PRINT IMAGES	236-9855 AUSTIN AVENUE	BURNABY	BC	V3J 1N0	102187	12/01/2010
103860	NORTHERN MALL	MC GOO'S SMOKES 'N STUFF	70-700 TRANQUILLE RD	KAMLOOPS	BC	V2B 3J0	100124	08/03/2010
103887	PARSON PO	TWIG & BERRY TRADING CO	3392 HWY 95 SOUTH	PARSON	BC	V0A 1L0	102713	08/03/2010
103873	SAANICH CENTRE	REYNOLD'S DRY CLEANERS	405-3989 QUADRA ST	VICTORIA	BC	V8X 1J0	102853	08/03/2010
130746	KING EDWARD PO	ARLINE'S GIFTS 'N THINGS	968 WEST KING EDWARD	VANCOUVER	BC	V5Z 2E0	103483	22/03/2010
103773	BRIDGEPORT	BRIDGEPORT STAMPS AND STATIONARY	160-3031 BECKMAN PLACE	RICHMOND	BC	V6X 3R0	103242	26/04/2010
103575	OCEAN GROVE PO	ESSO OCEAN GROVE	3690 SOUTH ISLAND HWY	CAMPBELL RIVER	BC	V9H 1G0	100910	05/05/2010
103834	UNIVERSITY	NESTERS MARKET	9000 UNIVERSITY HIGH ST	BURNABY	BC	V5A 4Y0	103727	15/06/2010
103844	WEST KELOWNA	SHOPPERS DRUG MART # 2216	2475 DOBBIN RD UNIT 3	WEST KELOWNA	BC	V4T 2G0		06/07/2010
103841	DENMAN ISLAND PO	DENMAN ISLAND GENERAL STORE	1066 NORTHWEST RD	DENMAN ISLAND	BC	V0R 1T0	103106	07/07/2010
103826	MAIN STREET SOUTH	MAIN EXPRESS	8165 MAIN ST	VANCOUVER	BC	V5X 3L0	102692	15/07/2010
103728	FRASER	FRASER SPEEDWAY SHIPPING	6417 FRASER STREET	VANCOUVER	BC	V5W 3A0	102569	26/07/2010
103785	WESTEND GLOBAL MARKET AND DELI	WESTEND GLOBAL MARKET AND DELI	7689 20 ST	GRAND FORKS	BC	V0H 1H2		03/08/2010
103670	OGOPOGO	BLUENOSE COINS INC	210 MAIN ST	PENTICTON	BC	V2A 5B0	101451	03/08/2010
103876	CITY SQUARE	HYE PARK EXPRESS	15-555 12TH AVE W	VANCOUVER	BC	V5Z 3X0	102471	30/08/2010
103859	HOME STREET PO	THE FOOD POST	732 DAVIE ST	VANCOUVER	BC	V6Z 1B0	103112	07/09/2010
103900	GOODLOW PO	GOODLOW STORE (2010)	1606 CECIL LAKE RD	GOODLOW	BC	V0C 1S0	103429	27/09/2010
103847	HASLA PO	KITAMAAT VILLAGE COUNCIL	130 OWENENO STREET	GOODLOW	BC	V0T 2B0	650978	14/10/2010
104086	COWICHAN BAY PO	COWICHAN BAY PO	A - 1681 BOTWOOD LANE	HASLA	BC	V0R 1N0		12/11/2010
104078	CROFTON	CROFTON PO	8121 YORK AVENUE	COWICHAN BAY	BC	V0R 1R0		11/12/2010
103962	GILLIES BAY PO	GILLIES BAY GENERAL STORE	4101 GILLIES BAY ROAD	GILLIES BAY	BC	V0N 1W0		15/12/2010
103995	NEW ORLEANS PO	SCOTT EXECUTIVE PLUS	7921 - 120TH STREET	DELTA	BC	V4C 6P0	102863	04/01/2011
104001	GARDEN CITY PO	HOUSE OF CARDS	180 - 8780 BLUNDELL ROAD	RICHMOND	BC	V6Y 3Y0		04/01/2011
103952	SOOKE CENTER PO	SHOPPERS DRUG MART #0223	UNIT 4000 - 6660 SOOKE RD	SOOKE	BC	V5Z 0A0	656992	13/01/2011
					BC Count			30

MOUNT LEHMAN – correction – see page 359

Cec Counties has quite correctly pointed out that the last two entries on the table on page 359 are incorrect Part of the problem is that the four major sources that provide the information on the opening and closing of British Columbia post offices do not agree. At he present time three Post Office serve the area.

- 644471 Mount Lehman (Village) - 5855 Mount Lehman Road – Semi-staff Office
- 101404 Mount Lehman PO – 105-3240 Mount Lehman Road– Great Canadian Dollar Store
- 100475 McCallum PO – 1945 McCallum – Peoples Drug Mart

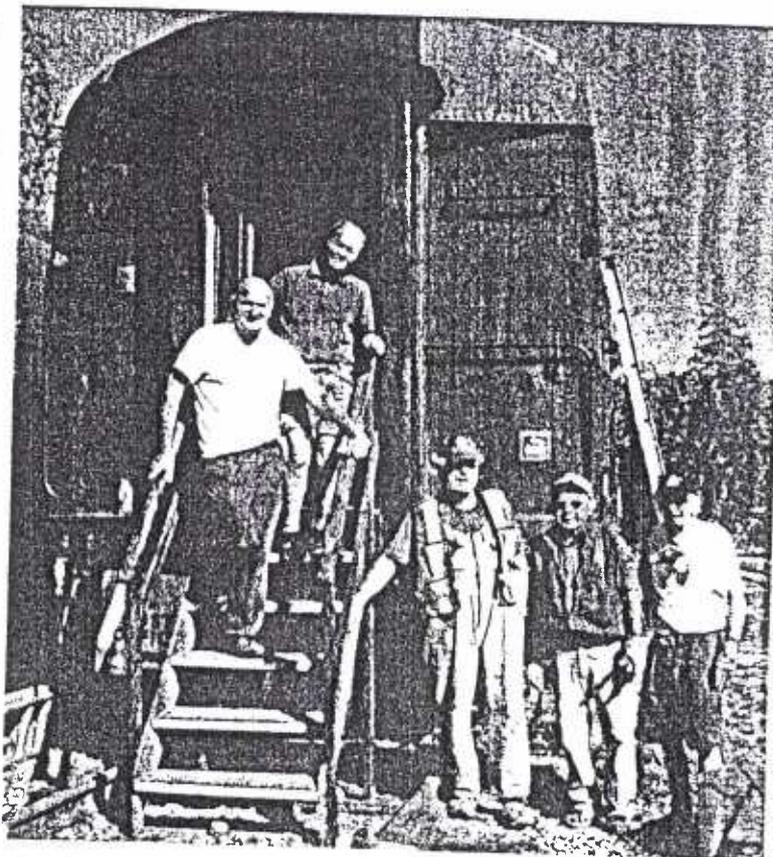
Railway Mail Car Readied for Winter

Winter will soon be here, bringing with it wind, rain, snow and freezing temperatures. To protect our display in the Railway Mail Car, at the Railway Museum in Squamish, a group of volunteers recently completed some repairs.

Fred Danells, Gerry Davy, Norm McIver, Roy Nukina, and Don Pao caulked the interior windows and doors and installed a roof over the entrance and exit doorways. The group has one more day of work to complete before the car is ready for winter.

The Railway Mail Car, complete with sortation cases, bag racks, and mail bags is a recreation of the Cars that ran on the Calgary—Vancouver Mail Route (known to former Forward Division staff as the Cal & Van).

The car is a popular attraction in the Railway Museum and attracts over 10 thousand visitors a year.



The Railway Mail Car Volunteer Repair Crew (l-r) Fred Danells, Don Pao, Gerry Davy, Roy Nukina and Norm McIver

**AIR MAIL
SPECIAL DELIVERY**



Call Mrs H Pout.
 2247(?) Bellevue Ave
 West Vancouver
 PLEASE SAVE STAMP. *BB*

The Railway Mail Service and its network of Railway Post Offices provided mail service to Canadians from 1853 to 1950. Mail was sorted and processed on Railway Mail Cars, such as the one on display in Squamish. There were three different sizes of mail cars; 72 feet with a 10 man crew, 60 feet with a five man crew and 30 feet with a three man crew. At its peak the Railway Mail Service had 192 Railway Post Offices, staffed by 1,385 men and covered 40,000 miles of route.

The end of the Railway Mail System began with introduction of air service in 1948 with the last run being made on April 24, 1971 from Campbellton NB to Levis QC.

A letter mailed on the Prince George—Prince Rupert Railway Post Office

ADDRESSED ADMAIL

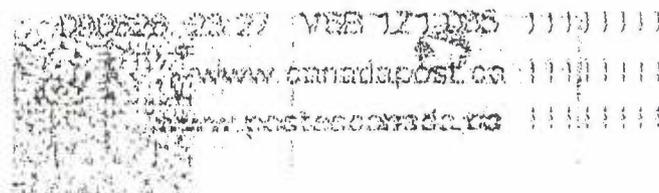
In recent years the Canada Post has been expanding its services in an attempt to compete with private operators that are attempting to skim off the more lucrative postal operations. One of the recent innovations is the "Addressed Admail" service that allows companies to do major mailings at considerably lower cost per item than by using the regular mail system. Letters must be pre-sorted and may be delayed for up to a week. Newly installed processing equipment in Vancouver is being used to integrate various pieces of admail to save the postman the tiresome job of combining the various inserts into individual letter drops. In Vancouver much of the add mail is processed on MLOCR 085.

The collecting of Addressed Admail has its problems and as a result very few collectors are interested in attempting to collect the material as most items are on number 10 size envelopes and as a result are hard to display. The item below is unusual in that meter date stamp shows the words "ADDRESSED ADMAIL" where as in most cases the only indication is the postage rate which in this case is 38 cents.



1150 Raymur Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6A 3T2

ADDRESSED
ADMAL



William G. Robinson
301-2108 W 38th Ave
Vancouver, BC V6M 1R9

Help us put food
in the cupboards

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.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2010-11

Surplus from previous year	\$ 850.00	
Dues		
Dues @ \$15 x 18	270.00	
@ \$ 8 x 5	256.00	
		<u>1376.00</u>
BNA grant		
		<u>1376.00</u>
News letters 340 @ \$2.00	680.00	
Dues carry over \$7 x 25	<u>256.00</u>	
	440.00	
Surplus	440.00	
Net Surplus		<u>440.00</u>

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Membership fees are;
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Individual Issues sell for
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Dues are payable to the Editor
 Bill Topping 604-261-1508
 7430 Angus Drive
 Vancouver, BC, V6P 5K2, Canada

DUES –

Dues notices have been included with this News Letter.
 Dues are \$8.00 for 1 year and \$15.00 for 2 years \$US/Can.

If you received a dues notice please return the notice with a check made out to Bill Topping.

NEW REPORT – VICTORIA DEC. 8 1911

Are any other similar markings known?

