



Van-Fraser News

VAN - FRASER HERITAGE CLUB

SANTA SAYS KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON!

The Covid 19 Pandemic has forced all of us to make many changes in our work habits and daily routines. Santa's elves, like everyone, have had to make some serious adjustments to ensure a safe Holiday Season for all. As Santa says, *Keep Calm and Carry On*. And Santa's Elves carry on with their usual dedication and enthusiasm!

As access to large work areas in Postal Facilities is not available elves have been working in smaller groups at residences or worked alone at home. The distribution of Santa's Mail to the Elves has required some adjustment with items being delivered via pickup at Letter Carrier Depots or to individual homes.

Santa's Main Workshop, normally located in a large conference room at the Pacific



Taka Nukina answering Santa Letters from Japan received a beautiful "Thank You" in Japanese Characters.



Nick and Margaret Lee collecting Santa Letters from the Workshop.

Processing Centre was unavailable and for this year is located in an undisclosed basement.

Staff at the Processing Centre made extra efforts to ensure that Santa's mail was specially handled during these difficult times.

Volumes overall have been impacted with a marked reduction in receipts from some Asian countries.

Despite all the problems created by the Pandemic the Elves have enthusiastically taken their task to heart as they do every year. Calls have constantly been received asking for more letters.

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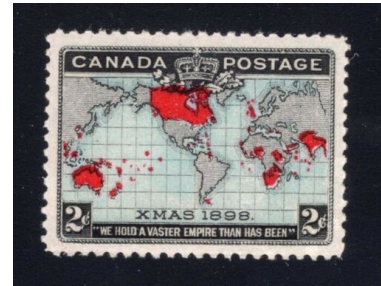
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FIRST CHRISTMAS STAMPS

Christmas Stamps are taken for granted as they appear in the Fall of each year in many countries around the world. Many people assume they have been printed as long as Postal Service has been in existence. However, Christmas Stamps, issued specifically to celebrate the Christmas Season is relatively new.

The first stamp issued at Christmas, although to celebrate in the introduction of the new Imperial Postage and not Christmas itself, was issued on December 7, 1898. The new rates were to take effect on December 25, 1898 and by virtue of the date the stamp is labeled with Xmas 1898. Canada did not its first stamps designed specifically to celebrate Christmas until over 66 years later. (See Canadian Christmas Stamps-Page 3)



In 1935 British Troops stationed in Egypt were issued stamps to be used specifically for Christmas Letters. It was not until the 1960's that these were recognized as "The First Christmas Stamps" as up until that time they had been classed as a "Seal" rather than a Stamp.

Brazil issued a set of four stamps in 1939-40 featuring religious various religious scenes. These are classed as semipostals by philatelists as they were issued to raise money for a number of charitable organizations.



Hungary issued its first set of three Christmas Stamps in 1943 each featuring a depiction of a Nativity Scene. The Hungarian Postal Administration did not issue further Christmas Stamps until 1988.



In 1950 the Austrian Post Office set up a special Post Office at the Church of Christkindl in Upper Austria to provide Christmas cancellations. A service still available and extensively used.

The first Austrian Christmas Stamp was issued in 1953 depicting a child and a Christmas Tree. The stamp was duplicated 1954 but no Christmas Stamps were issued by Austria until 1967.

Countries began to issue Christmas Stamps in the 1950's with Cuba-1951, Haiti-1954, Luxembourg and Spain-1955 with Australia, Korea, and Lichtenstein-1957.



In the 1960's other Postal Administrations began the issuing of Christmas Stamps with the USA-1962, Canada -1964 and the United Kingdom-1967. The initial USA issue (left) caused some controversy and resulted in Constitutional Challenges regarding the Separation of Church and State. These challenges were ultimately dismissed.

The issuing of Christmas stamps has now expanded to over 160 countries. While specifically issued for use on Christmas Cards "leftovers" appear well after Christmas. In Australia and the Netherlands Christmas Stamps are sold at a discount rate after Christmas and may be used with other stamps to make up the correct postage.

SOME CANADA CHRISTMAS STAMP FIRSTS

October 14, 1964 marked the first release of Canada Post Stamps issued specifically to mark the Holiday Season. Each year, since then, Canada Post has issued a series of stamps, religious and secular, for this purpose.



The first release was entitled *The Family* and was intended to express Christmas as a family and religious holiday and portray a scene in the Canadian environment. A total of 100 million five cent and 300 million three cent stamps were printed. The three cent stamp used for unsealed greeting cards and the five cent for first class letters.



Canada Post has often included Inuit and First Nations art and themes for its Christmas Stamps.

The first use of Inuit art was in the November 1, 1968 with two stamps based upon traditional Inuit carvings. The five cent stamp used the carving entitled the *Family Group* by an unknown artist. The second is a carving entitled *Mother and Child* by Munamee, an artist from Cape Dorset, Baffin Island, Nunavut. The carving Munamee was presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during her Royal Visit to Halifax in 1951.

The Christmas issue of October 8, 1969 marked the change from engraved limited colour stamps to multi coloured printed stamps.

This year's issue, entitled *The Faces of Children* was meant to represent the joy that Christmas brings to children and the multi ethnic make up of the Canadian nation. It also represents the harmonious feelings that are experienced during the holiday season.



The Christmas Stamps, issued October 7 1970, were the first Canadian Stamps to be designed by children. A competition was held for children under the age of 13 for depictions of What Christmas Means to Me. Submissions were reviewed across Canada with 500 being forwarded to the Stamp Review Committee in Ottawa for final selection. Of the drawings submitted twelve were selected to be reproduced as stamps. The five cent stamp to the left was from a drawing by eight year old Lisa Wilson of Kamloops. This stamp also marks the first appearance of Santa Claus.

On November 1, 1974 Canada Post issued the first Christmas Stamps featuring Canadian artists. The four stamps are based upon; *Nativité* by Jean Paul Lemieux; *Skaters in Hull* by Henri Masson; *The Ice Cone*, *Montmorency Falls* by Robert C. Todd; *Village in the Laurentian Mountains* by Clarence A. Gagnon.



(Continued on Page 4)

SOME CANADA CHRISTMAS STAMP FIRSTS

The art of staining glass was first used by the ancient Egyptians and is a feature of Medieval Cathedrals and Churches. The 1976 Christmas Stamps featured three Stained Glass Windows presenting the Nativity and located in Canadian Churches. The left window, created by G. Maile and Sons of London England in 1664 is located in St. Jude Church, London ON. The centre stamp was created by Canadian artist Yvonne Williams in 1976. The right window was imported from England in the early 1800's and is in the church of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Kingston ON. It was restored by artist Mark Thomas in 1993.



The Christmas Stamps for 1981 featured depictions of Christmas Trees including one that is recognized as the First Christmas Tree in North America. The left stamp is an image of the illuminated Christmas Tree introduced into North America by Friedrich and Friedricke in 1781 in Sorel QC. The centre stamp depicts and tree from 1881 and the right from 1981.

For the first time Canada Post used the same theme in successive years with 1991, 92, and 93 featuring four stamps each year with Santa Claus.

The 35 and 40 cent stamps in 1991 depicted the Santa Claus most familiar in North America. The 46 cent stamp features the French Bonhomme Noel and the 80 cent stamp Sinterklaas well known in many European countries.



In 1992 the 37 cent stamp presented an image of a North American Santa Claus. The 42 cent featured Estonia's Joulavana, the 48 cent Italy's La Befana, a witch like woman who delivered presents and the 84 cent Germany's Weihnachtsmann

The 1993 issues completed the Santa Claus depictions with a North American Santa Claus on the 38 cent and Poland's Swiety Mikolj and Gwiazdma. The 49 cent stamp features Russia's Ded Moroz (Grandfather Frost) and the 86 cent shows a traditional Santa trading in his reindeer for a kangaroo in Australia.



More detail is available on these and other Canadian stamps at the website Canadian Stamps by Year or the address <https://postagestampguide.com/stamps/16764/father-christmas-australia-1993-canada-postage-stamp-christmas-christmas-personages>.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy New Year

Most of us are ready to say farewell to 2020 as we look forward with renewed energy to endless opportunities in 2021. It was with a collective sigh of relief that we welcomed the new vaccine and soon to be more vaccines. As Richard Fain, CEO of Royal Caribbean Cruise Line said, "this is a game changer".

As more and more Canadians get the vaccine in the new year, we should start seeing our lives return to a better new normal. In our club, in anticipation of the change, we are working on plans for our luncheons, banquets and travel to begin as soon as it is safe for us to do so. We are also maintaining and expanding our data base and welcome your calls or emails with any updates to your information. Jim continues with his research and the cataloguing of documents, photographs, and equipment donated to the club.

In early January, you will receive the renewal form for the Heritage Club and we ask you to complete it and return with your dues as soon as possible. In particular, take a few minutes to go through the check list of activities and tick those that interest you, so we can have you on special distribution lists. Also, we would love it if you have other ideas other suggestions for our club in the new year— write them on the back of the form.

On behalf of all your executive, I wish you and your family a very Happy New Year and we can't wait til we can see you all in person in 2021!

Fred

*May the coming year be full of adventures
and great opportunities. Dream big and
make the most of 2021*



SANTA SAYS (continued from Page 1)



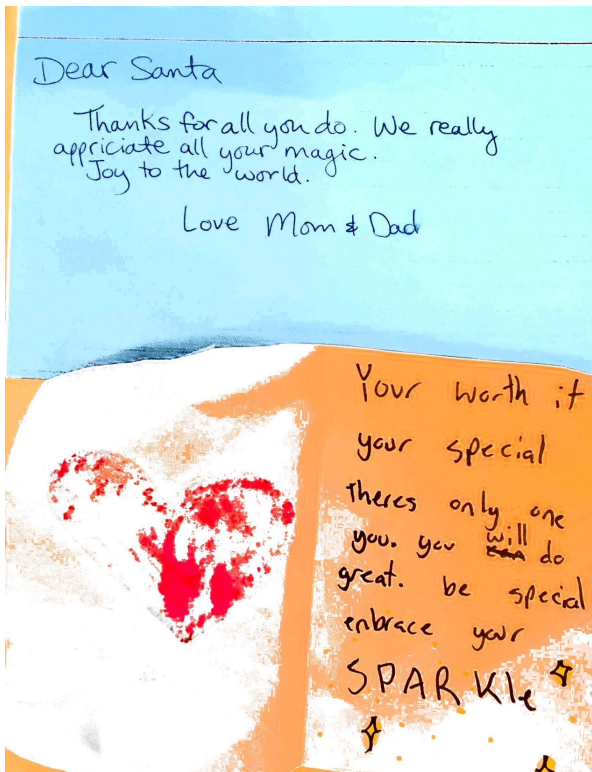
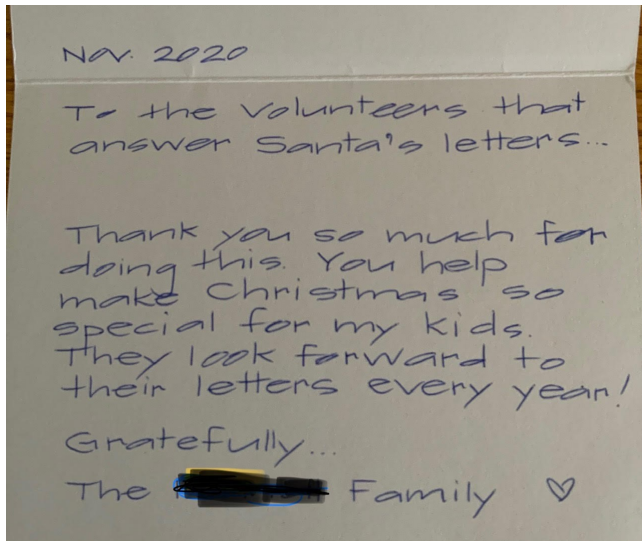
Santa's 2020 basement workshop.

Santa was pleased to welcome lots of new elves this year, especially employees who are excited to help and are also working on the mail from their homes at the North Pole. Initially the mail seemed slow arriving, but volumes continue to increase with a huge peak the week of December 14. The elves were amazing and as more and more mail arrived, they said "bring it on" and worked unwaveringly making sure every letter was answered.

It was always moving to see the enthusiasm and caring each elf showed and to get feedback each day from them, asking for more work and supplies and commenting on their experience.

Comments included; "I so enjoyed answering the letters you sent. Please send me more!"; "I had a huge decorated box from a school and each class had made a very colourful book for Santa to read"; "Quite a few kids asked about Covid and expressed their wish that Santa and his family and elves keep safe."; "I so enjoy reading the letters the kids write"; "I received my letters and they made my day! Can I please request 40 more?" "Thank you soooo very much! "I'll be burning the midnight oil to get them (the letters) out ASAP. I've got the time."

It is also heart warming to receive Letters of Thanks from the children and their parents like the three below. The elves plan to reply enthusiastically to letters as long as possible to get them delivered before Christmas and after Boxing Day, they will prepare replies to those letters received too late for Christmas delivery. Every child will receive a reply!



VMPP REBUILD TO DATE

This photo of the remodelling of the former Vancouver Mail Processing Plant was taken December 20, 2020 and shows the Georgia Street face of the building taken from Library Square showing the new South Tower.

If any of our readers have occasion to be downtown and can take a photo please do so and send it to us showing the date it was taken. We'd like to have an ongoing record of the work,



AN ODE TO COVID

COVID VIRUS

by
Anita Polk

Who would have thought, just a short year ago,
What changes were coming; how were we to know?

Without much warning or time to prepare,
This virus arrived, spreading fast through the air..

“Corona” it’s called, such a sweet, lovely name
But ruthless and deadly, its real claim to fame.

Our dear Dr. Bonnie gently led us along,
Encouraging all to “Be kind, be safe, be calm.”

Wash your hands, wear a mask, stay six feet apart.
We can control it if we all do our part.

Now wearing a mask is a bit of a bother,
But you could save a life, maybe somebody’s father.

It’s become the “new normal”, our life somehow,
But it won’t be forever, it’ll just be for now.

Many scientists are working at a furious pace,
To develop vaccine for the whole human race.

So stay optimistic and don’t give up hope,
Buy plenty of wet wipes, toilet paper and soap.

JOHNSON INSURANCE-MEDOC: REMINDER

An important reminder to all Van Fraser Members regarding Johnson Insurance-MEDOC

The annual Johnson Insurance-MEDOC renewal package is being delivered to members during December. Be sure to read your package carefully and in particular, remember, if you paid for an Extended Trip, over 35-40 days, last year (September 2019 to December 2020), you must contact MEDOC to adjust your annual fee for 2021. Otherwise it is assumed you will be doing an extensive trip again in the new year and your payment will continue at the higher rate.

As you know, because of COVID, Johnson Insurance extended our coverage for the last four months of 2020 at no charge. Your payments will begin again in 2021. Also note that MEDOC now covers claims related to COVID. Read about it in your policy,

There are several changes to the policy that are highlighted in your renewal package. Take the time to be familiar with your coverage. Travel Insurance is critical for all out of province and out of country travel regardless of the number of days you are away,

In order for your coverage to be valid *you must be an active, dues paid, active member* of the Heritage Club. The 2021 Registration/Annual Renewal Forms for the Heritage Club will be mailed to you in early January.

Let’s hope that very soon it will be safe for us to begin our travels again!

HONOURING OUR OWN

Just prior to November 11th the Van Fraser Heritage Club host our Annual Honouring Our Own Ceremony in Remembrance of Canada Post employees who were lost in service, or as a result of service, in World Wars I and II. As prelude to the Ceremony memorial plaques for each of the 31 individuals are put on display for employees at the Pacific Processing Centre. The plaques, researched and prepared by Jim Bain, contain information on each individual and, where possible, a photo.

This year the Covid 19 Pandemic prevented us from holding the Ceremony and putting the plaques on display. As to ensure Remembrance on November 11th copies of the plaques were sent to Van Fraser members who receive the newsletter by email.

Many of our members expressed their thoughts on receiving the plaques; *"Thank you so much-lest we forget"; "Thanks Jim"; "Thanks Jim, I will miss the ceremony"; "Thanks for the Remembrance"; "Thank You, I feel sad but also proud. Thank you for the presentation."; "Well done Jim"; "Thank for your hard work putting all the names together"; "Thank you-we should never forget"; "Most celebrations will not go ahead but I want to say thank you for all the work you did making it a memorable day for the post office".*

Heritage Club President J.P, Legeurre shared the plaques with retired members of the Canadian Forces Postal Service and received a very positive response.

One of the CFPS retirees, the retired Commander of the Canadian Forces Postal Service, noted an error in the presentation. The badge used for members of the Postal Corps was the Canadian Forces Post Service Badge which had not been issued until after World War II. The error has been corrected in all of our reference and presentation material.



The Correct Badge for the Canadian Postal Corps in WWI and II.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL

As noted in the article regarding Johnson Insurance-MEDOC the yearly Membership/Renewal forms for the Van Fraser Heritage Club will be mailed in early January 2021. As noted in that article in order to maintain your MEDOC Coverage you must have paid your dues for 2021.



When completing the form please ensure your mailing address, contact information, and, if you are including it, your email address is correct and legible.

Also, please remember to sign your cheques. Many have to be returned each year for lack of a signature and this could cause delays in ensuring your membership is recorded.

Van- Fraser News

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2021 /22 Travel Opportunities Van Fraser Heritage Club Members, Family and Friends

April 24,2021 7 Day Repositioning cruise from San Diego to Vancouver on the Koningsdam. Visit San Diego; Avalon, California; Santa Barbara, California; San Francisco (overnight) and Victoria before arriving in Vancouver. Inside cabins from \$779.00 plus taxes and refundable deposit. (A lower price of \$649.00 plus taxes pp is available with a non refundable deposit and no amenities).Taxes are \$240.00 pp.

May1,2021 7 days Alaska on the Koningsdam, Vancouver return. Visit Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway and Glacier Bay. Inside cabins from \$1290.00 plus taxes CAD pp and includes the drink package, pre paid gratuities and SpecialDty dining. (A lower rate starting at \$864.00 plus taxes CAD pp is available with a non refundable deposit and no amenity packages). Taxes are \$273.00 pp. **NOTE:** These two cruises can be combined for a 14 day cruise.

May 2022. 13 day Spring Bus visiting Rapid City ,South Dakota for five days seeing all the parks in the area,including amount Rushmore, Custer, Badlands, Deadwood and 2 days in Yellowstone National Park. ****Watch for news about this popular trip in 2022. ****

June 20/21 and June 27/21 14 day cruise on the Nieuw Amsterdam to Alaska, Vancouver return. This is two 7 day cruises combined for a 14 day return trip. Call now for detailed itinerary and pricing with the special promo including drinks and prepaid gratuities. Mark you calendar to get back to Alaska for the awesome scenery and perhaps some fishing.

September 12-17, 2021 U-Drive trip to Yakima or Penticton. Drive your own vehicle or carpool for this fun trip, with golf, sightseeing and lots of pool/BBQ times.

November 21-24, 2021 Tulalip bus trip is **confirmed for 2021!!** □Registration form will be in next newsletter.

January 4, 2022 22 Day Antarctica cruise on the Westerdam, departing Santiago, Chile around South America to Buenos Aries, Argentina. On route visit Antarctica for 4 days.

January 27,2022 22 Day Antarctica cruise on the Westerdam, departing Buenos Aries, Argentina to Santiago,Chile with 4 days in Antarctica.

NOTE: these two cruises can be combined for a 44 day experience and double the time in Antarctica. Call for current prices and promotions.

June 14/22 CUNARD RETURNS TO VANCOUVER 10 days Alaska cruise on Cunard's Queen Elizabeth which is returning to Vancouver for a limited number of Alaska cruises. The Heritage Club has a group booked for this sailing and already a number members have booked this trip knowing it will sell out.

Note: Be sure you have adequate out of country medical and trip cancellation insurance before confirming your trip. Call The Heritage Club office,604-482-4311 for info on Medoc insurance.

🏠🏠🏠 *With the current Pandemic, cruise schedules and prices frequently change as sailings are cancelled And new itineraries and promos are introduced. Call or email the Heritage Club your preferences for travel and we will keep you advised of new offers. Also, new options will be sent to the travel club list as available.*

