

## August 2011 President's Report

### Officer, Board, and Committee Changes:

This has been a transitional year for BNAPS with a new Secretary, David Jones, and a new Vice-President Study Groups, Peter MacDonald. We also have a new Webmaster, Greg Spring. As First Vice-President Bob Dyer and I have adjusted to our new roles we have been greatly helped by them and by the other Officers (George Dresser, Jean-Claude Michaud and Jack Forbes) and Board members (and by several others who served in the past). When I agreed to stand for President it was with the feeling that I had a fairly good understanding of how the Society functions. Perhaps, but over the past year there have been a number of surprises, and the learning process continues. Following the 2010 convention in Victoria, Richard Fleet, Charles Livermore, Ron Majors and Adri Veenstra assumed their duties as newly elected members of the Board of Directors. Victor Willson was re-elected as Chairman of the Board.

The death of Marc Eisenberg last autumn was a loss to our Society. He was a regular exhibitor and convention attendee. However, he also was the Chairman of the BNAPS Board of Examiners (*i.e.*, our auditor), a position requiring a special set of professional skills. For several years Barry Shaulis, of West Virginia, has been the person retained by BNAPS to prepare our tax returns for the US IRS. This year Barry joined BNAPS and volunteered to take on the position of auditor. His first report (on our 2010 financial statements) was received this summer; thank you Barry.

### Dues & Benefits to Membership:

Dues were last increased to CDN\$30 in 2008. As was suggested would be the case by George Dresser last year, I am recommending that dues be increased to CDN\$35 for 2012. An increase has been strongly called for by our Treasurer, Jean-Claude Michaud. We still need to negotiate a printing contract for *BNA Topics* for 2012 and beyond, and postage costs keep rising. Nevertheless, at CDN\$35, our dues will be similar to those of many other societies. Unfortunately, the appreciation of the Canadian dollar against many other currencies makes such an increase even greater for most members outside Canada; however, the bulk of our expenses are in Canadian dollars.

BNAPS members continue to receive outstanding value in exchange for their dues: *BNA Topics*, access to approximately 20 study groups and more than 10 active regional groups, a discount on the purchase of BNAPS published books, an online sales circuit, a superb website, an outstanding annual convention, and wonderful friends with a shared interest in BNA philately. All this, even for CDN\$35, is a bargain—often less than the price of a single stamp or cover.

### Budget:

I am recommending a 2012 operating budget essentially unchanged from the 2011 operating budget. The income from the recommended increase in dues likely will be offset by the gradual decline in our membership base, by continued small increases in printing and postage costs, and by the cost of holding an election in 2012. I do not foresee the initiation of any new programs with significant associated costs, and therefore have not made any significant changes.

### Website:

The BNAPS website has become one of the key communication tools for the Society. Our new Webmaster, Greg Spring, with much help from Dave Bartlet, Charles Livermore and Gary Steele, has begun a complete redesign to make the site easier to use, and to eliminate duplication. The website is the primary source of new members and PayPal increasingly is found to be a convenient way for members to pay their annual dues.

Peter MacDonald has taken the initiative to open a Facebook page for the BNAPS Study Groups. This provides another link to the main BNAPS page. Also, Charles Livermore, Chairperson of the Membership Committee, has created both a BNAPS Twitter account and a Facebook page, and these will be linked to the redesigned BNAPS website. Furthermore, Charles has created an experimental site to allow documents to be distributed to Board members, and to provide an electronic version of the Policies and Procedures Manual. This should provide smoother communication between members of the Board. In the near future it is expected that this or a similar site will be made available to appointed officials.

### Policy and Procedures Manual:

A number of proposed revisions and additions to the BNAPS Policy and Procedures Manual are now available on the Board of Directors website. Shortly after this convention these modified sections, and any

other changes approved by the Board in North Bay, will be incorporated in the main electronic version of the Policies and Procedures Manual. A few of the changes will be trivial, others more substantive. As part of the process, Bob Dyer has carried out a thorough review of Policies and Procedures that need to be modified to incorporate standing resolutions passed in previous Board meetings. The need for the updates and revisions was made particularly apparent by recent changes in several key BNAPS officers over the last two years. Progress has been slow, especially as many sections are interrelated. Over the next year a number of officers will be asked to help update sections related to their duties.

#### **Support for Conventions:**

Earle Covert, Chairman of the Convention Committee working with Mike Street reached an agreement with John Jamieson and Saskatoon Stamps Ltd., to donate CDN\$500 to sponsor the publication of the BNAPEX 2011 program. Eastern Auctions Ltd. (Gary Lyon) again is providing substantial assistance (CDN\$1000) to defray some of the significant costs of the exhibit portion of BNAPEX 2011. This is the second year that Eastern Auctions has sponsored this activity. These sponsorships help reduce the cost of the BNAPEX 2011 convention to participating members. Thank you Gary and John for your contributions.

We also acknowledge the assistance of the BNAPS Golden Horseshoe Regional Group, which is sponsoring snacks and soft drinks in the hospitality room, and the St. Lawrence Seaway Regional Group, which advanced a sum of money as a forgivable loan against early convention expenditures. Sponsorship is open to anyone—dealers, auctioneers, individuals, and philatelic organizations willing to make a contribution to a BNAPS convention.

#### **Publications:**

The publication of *BNA Topics* has been on schedule thanks to the dedication and hard work of Mike Street with help from Neil Philip, Neil Donen, Henk Burgers, and Robert Lemire, and layout-editing by Lorraine Street. We still are looking for a permanent *BNA Topics* editor. Your suggestions and/or recommendations are sought. Thanks also to the members who help maintain the high quality of our journal by contributing excellent articles.

As in previous years, Mike Street has continued to work industriously to produce new exhibit books and monographs (seven of each this year), as well as updates and supplements to earlier BNAPS publications. Ian Kimmerly Stamps in Ottawa continues to do a good job of handling the sales and distribution of all BNAPS books.

#### **Finance Committee:**

Special thanks go to Past-President George Dresser who agreed to continue to chair the very important Finance Committee, and to former Director John Keenlyside and Gary Steele who agreed to stay on the Committee (along with *ex officio* members Bob Dyer, Jean-Claude Michaud and Robert Lemire). These are not the smoothest of times for the economy, and the Committee has done a good job of safeguarding the Society's capital, while still generating income for our various activities.

#### **Education:**

Last autumn Leopold Beudet took on the task of leading the Education Committee, and produced a substantive outline on how he intended to proceed. Other members of the committee are George Dresser, John Burnett, Greg Spring, Vic Willson and Ken Lemke. The objective is to make tutorial information freely available on the BNAPS website to facilitate stamp collecting and exhibiting. "Stamp collecting" is used in a generic sense to encompass postage stamps, postal stationery, postage meter stamps, permit stamps, revenue stamps, the usage of these stamps, postal history, cinderellas, and ephemera. The emphasis will be on BNA material.

#### **Pratt Collection Project:**

This project, led by C. A. Stillions, is intended to convert 2 × 2 slides of the Pratt collection to a digital format, and is nearing completion. The slides have been scanned and all bills paid. There will be a short demo at the Newfoundland Study Group meeting at North Bay. The Society owes a debt of gratitude to C. A. for all his dedicated work on this project.

**Youth Program:**

Bob Dyer has persevered with this program despite a formal lack of funding (though this year he was aided by a substantial donation from one of our members, Robert Cagna). While cash grants are no longer offered, thousands of free stamps are still being made available. Also, cash prizes have been offered for promotion of youth philately in a contest ending August 31 (the contest is co-sponsored by MaryAnn Bowman, a member of the US National Postal Museum's New Initiatives Committee). The youth program continues to generate considerable favorable publicity for BNAPS.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert J. Lemire

President