

THE NEWFIE NEWSLETTER
OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND STUDY GROUP OF BNAPS

Number 65

March/April, 1997

EDITOR'S NOTES

Welcome to the 65th edition of our study group newsletter. Snow is beginning to disappear from the fields and lawns in St. John's, maybe spring has sprung.

Preparations for BNAPEX 97 are in full swing. Don Wilson is finalizing the Registration package. The block of rooms at the Hotel Newfoundland are just about booked for full capacity; so everything will be ready on schedule.

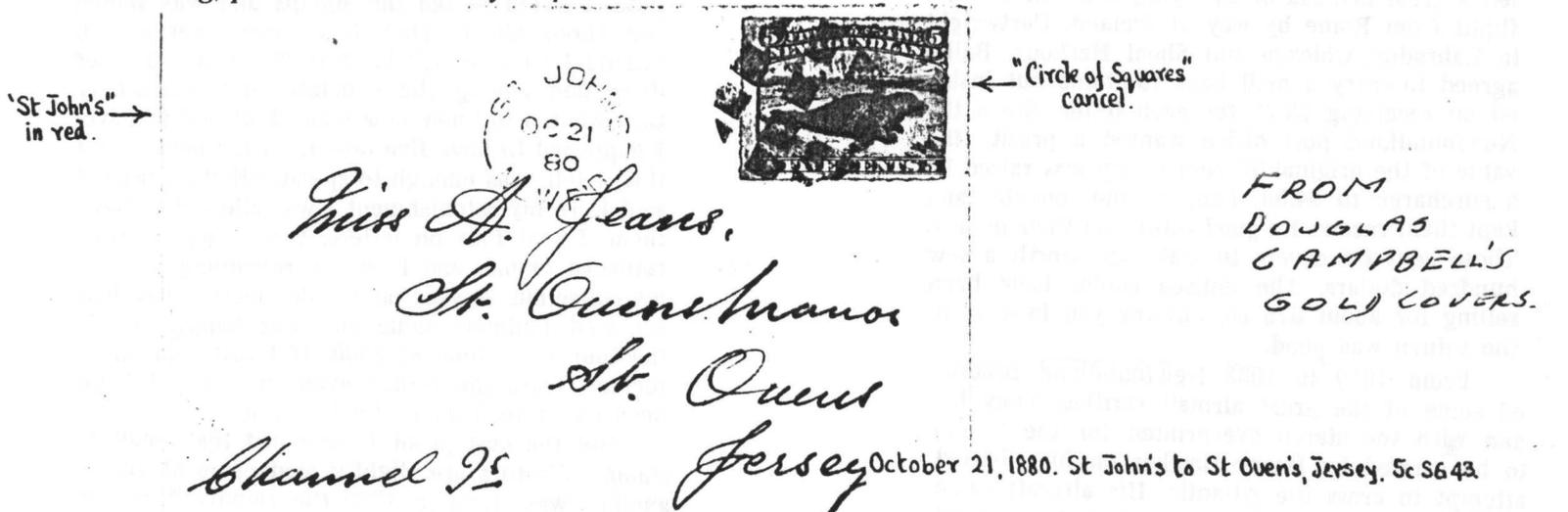
If you are exhibiting, please do so soon as the title pages from each exhibit have to be sent to the judges at least 6 weeks before the show.

I have had several requests to exhibit, 1 frame of 16 pages. There will be 15 frames reserved for 1 frame exhibits at the convention.

B.N.A.P.S. CONVENTION 1997 - ST. JOHN'S, NF

B.N.A.P.E.X. 97 will be held at Hotel Newfoundland - St. John's, NF, August 28-30, 1997

Hotel bookings are going very well but exhibits for the Exhibition are slow. If you are interested in attending or exhibiting, please do so as early as possible.



SUPPORT OUR DEALER MEMBERS

R.J. McGillvary, STANLEY STAMPS, 1096 Richard's Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6B 3E1

J.C. Michaud, Box 31248, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3K 5Y1

Jon Jameison, Saskatoon Stamp Centre, P.O. Box 1879, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7K 3S2

Ed Wener, INDIGO, P.O. Box 89, Orewa, Hibiscus Coast, New Zealand

Chairman & Editor: John Butt, 264 Hamilton Avenue, St. John's, NF, A1E 1J7

Treasurer: Martin Goebel, 79 Highland Drive, St. John's, NF, A1A 3C3

In The News

By Wayfarer

NEWFOUNDLAND STAMPS

Several people who possess copies of the stamps overprinted for mail carried by General Balbo from Clarenville to Italy in 1933 have had false hopes raised by press reports on the outcome of a recent stamp auction in London. They saw it described as one of the world's rarest air-mail stamps. But this was not the regular Balbo stamp which was prepared by overprinting the regular 75 cent air mail stamp then in use. By mistake, or for trial purposes to see how the surcharge would look, one sheet of the ten cent regular air mail received this overprint. So far as I know there are only four of these stamps in existence. This accounts for their rarity. The specimen offered recently in London was expected to fetch \$5,000 which is a pretty considerable sum for a square inch of gummed paper. The Balbo issue was prepared for mail to be carried by the head of Mussolini's air force who led a great armada of 24 flying boats in a circle flight from Rome by way of Iceland, Cartwright in Labrador, Chicago and Shoal Harbour. Balbo agreed to carry a mail back to Rome but insisted on receiving \$3.75 for each letter. Since the Newfoundland post office wanted a profit, the value of the original 75 cent stamp was raised by a surcharge to \$4.50. People who bought and kept them received a good return on their money. Those sent on covers to Italy are worth a few hundred dollars. The unused copies have been selling for about \$75 so, anyway you look at it, the return was good.

From 1919 to 1933 Newfoundland produced some of the great airmail rarities. They began with the stamp overprinted for the letters to be carried by Harry Hawker on his ill-fated attempt to cross the Atlantic. His aircraft came down in mid-ocean. The airmen were rescued and so was the mail bag. The remainder of the stamps was sold by the Postmaster General at an arbitrary price of \$50 a stamp. He happened to be Dr. J. Alexander Robinson, then owner of the Daily News, and the amount received above the face value of the stamps was donated to the Permanent Marine Disasters Fund which the News had helped to found after the great sealing disasters in 1914 and which it continued to sponsor for many years. A stamp which was used for mail to be carried by the Raynham-Morgan Martynside plane which never got off the ground is also very rare. But the great rarity of the trans-Atlantic airmails is the de Pinedo. This

was the stamp overprinted for mail to be carried by the Marquess de Pinedo on his five-continent flight. A block of four which was originally in my possession has changed hands, I believe, at more than \$25,000. I fear that I parted with it long before the true value could be appreciated.

I actually owned eight of these stamps of which only 300 were printed. It was on a May day in 1927 and the secretary to the Minister of Posts, an old newspaper colleague, W. J. O'Neill, met me on the street and told me that the Minister would like to have something written about the Pinedo air mail. Would I come to the Post Office and get the story. The stamp used for the overprint was the 60 cent variety of the set issued in 1897 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Cabot's landfall. Its design was a portrait of King Henry VII who had granted the charter to Cabot, an Italian as was de Pinedo, to seek out new lands in the west. It was thought that this was an historic link that was worthy of note. I asked to see the stamps and was shown the three sheets that had been overprinted. "Could I have some," I asked. There was a brief discussion among the officials and eventually they wanted to know how many I wished to have. I happened to have five dollars in my pocket and this, I felt, was enough to spend. "Eight, please," said I. To my astonishment I was allowed to have them. I sent four on letters, two of which were returned to me, and kept the remaining four in my collection. A year later I discovered they had acquired fantastic value and was happy to sell the four for a total of \$500. If I had kept them for ten years the return even then would have been closer to \$10,000. Such is life.

But the best proof I have had that wealthy stamp collectors are slightly mad came about in another way. Late in 1930 the Deputy Minister of Posts asked if I could suggest designs for a permanent air mail set of three stamps. That night I produced my ideas in graphic form. I'm no artist but the sketches I drew were reasonably presentable. The Post Office accepted them. I declined a fee but asked if I could have my original sketches returned when the printers were through with them. In the course of time they came to me and a few years later, placing no value on these crude drawings, I included them in my Newfoundland collection which I sold through Harmers of London. Much to my astonishment, they fetched \$55. But about two years ago I had a letter from Cyril Harmer, head of

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the famous auction house. I thought, he wrote, you would like to know that your sketches for the 1931 airmail set have just come up for sale again and that they fetched \$2,250. That was approximately \$750 a square inch and I think I have been entitled since to claim that in terms of market value of my artistic effort, I deserve to be ranked with the Old Masters. It was a lot of fun, this stamp hunting business back in the twenties and early thirties, but I found in time that I could add nothing to my collection except extreme rarities that I could not afford. So I used

the collection as the basis of a history of Newfoundland postage stamps which was published in London by the organ of the Junior Philatelic Society. Then I sold it. If I could have afforded to keep some of the gems of that collection, they would be worth a small fortune today. But I found more than thirty years ago that stamp collecting took more time than I could afford and the relative pittance I received when I sold my collection were very useful to a young man in the depth of the great depression.

CENTENNIAL MAIL TRAIN

by J.G. Butt & J.D. Wilson

To commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Newfoundland Railway, a special Centennial Mail Train left Channel - Port Aux Basques on August 10, 1981, to begin the last Travelling Post Office mail run across Newfoundland. The Stops along the rail line were Corner Brook, Grand Falls, Bishop's Falls, Clarenville, Whitbourne and St. John's.

The Centennial Train was sponsored by the Newfoundland Transport Historical Society, in cooperation with Terra Transport. As a restored mail car was used for this occasion, with George Ledrew, a former railway mail clerk, in charge. An extra car was provided to show visitors railway memorabilia.

Canada Post provided seven cancelling devices, one for each stop along the route. Special cacheted envelopes (1300) were provided by the Historical Society to mark the occasion. Nine hundred picture postcards depicting a Newfoundland steam locomotive were also provided, and received the special cancellation. Approximately 3000 pieces of mail were handled by Mr. Ledrew (distribution table below).

NEWFOUNDLAND TRANSPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY ENVELOPES

	<i>ONE STRIKE</i>	<i>MULTIPLE STRIKES</i>
<i>Channel - Port aux Basques</i>	250	
<i>Corner Brook</i>	20	180
<i>Grand Falls</i>	10	50
<i>Bishop's Falls</i>	10	50
<i>Clarenville</i>	10	60
<i>Whitbourne</i>	10	60
<i>St. John's</i>	589	
TOTALS	899	400

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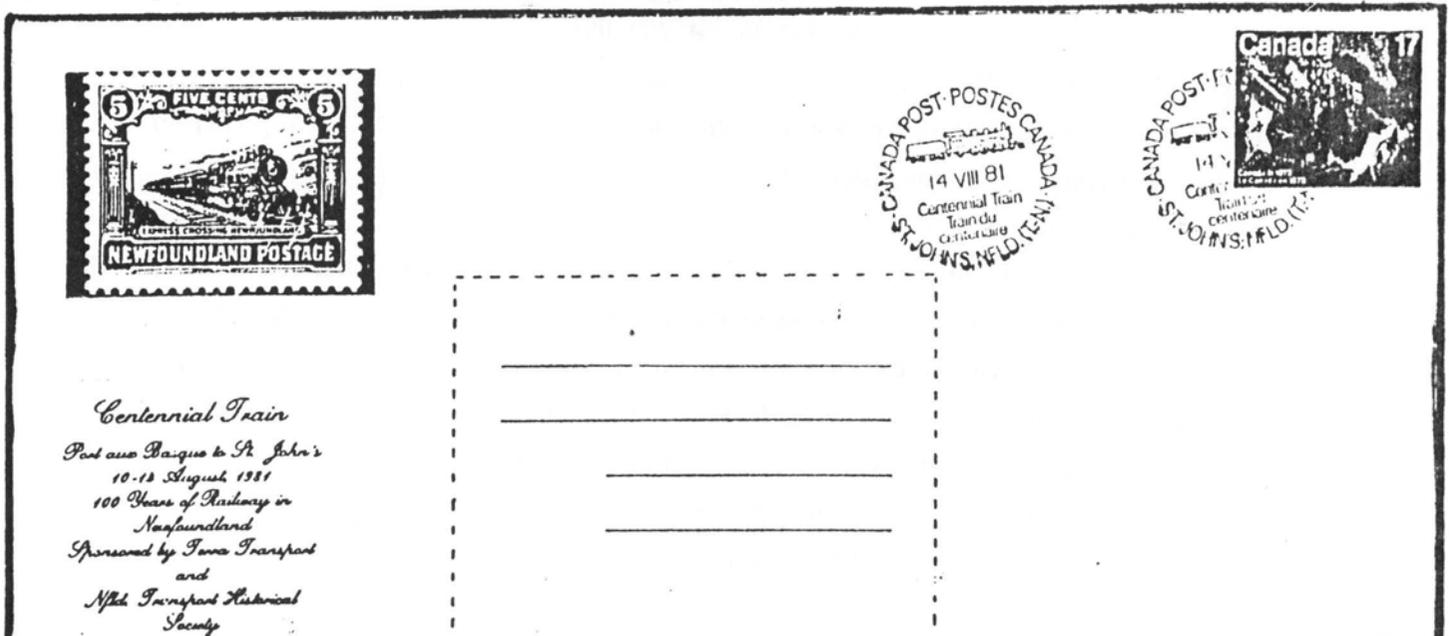
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N.T.H.S. Total = 1299 Pcs.
Picture Postcards = 900
Personal Mail = 1000
 = 3199

The Newfoundland Railway Mail Service (later Canadian National) operated from 1898 - 1971, and was an integral part of Newfoundland's Postal Service. At its peak, mail was carried from St. John's to Port Aux Basques and along several branch lines, employing 35 Railway Mail Clerks. In late 1971 the rail mail service was replaced by road transport. So ended a remarkable period in our postal history.

(i.e. Multiple Strikes - One or more towns on single cover)



*Centennial Train
Port aux Basques to St. John's
10-13 August 1981
100 Years of Railway in
Newfoundland
Sponsored by Terra Transport
and
Nfld. Transport Historical
Society*



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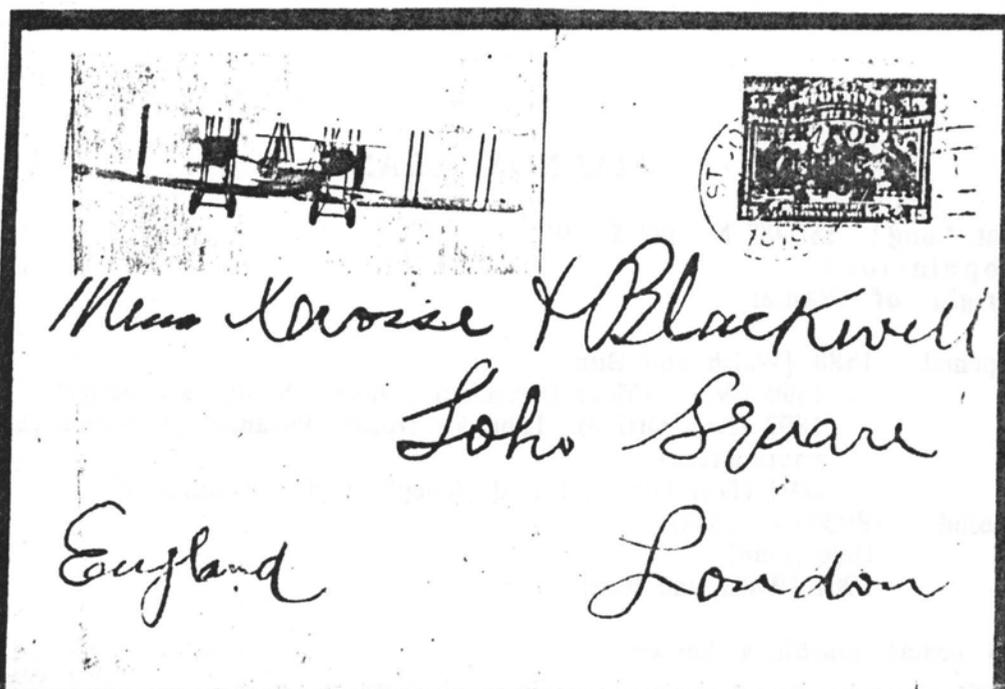
27 January 1997

Dear John:

Here's another short filler of a real photo postcard with an unusual view side! I've never seen a cover illustrated on an older postcard before. Have you or other members? Does any member own the "original" cover?

Still looking for Great War Nfld. material if you ever get any for sale. Best regards,

Dean
Dean Mario



POST CARD

CORRESPONDENCE

MADE IN CANADA

ADDRESS

□ A □ □
▲ PLACE ▲
Z STREET Z
O HERE O
□ AZO □

Photo of one of the first letters to reach London by Air Post, via the Vickers - Vimy Aeroplane (inset,) which successfully made the Trans-Atlantic flight from St. John's, N.F. to Clifden, Ireland in 16 hours, June 14-15, 1919. The envelope is post-marked at St. John's, N.F., June 13 and at London, June 17, 1919

Copyrighted by C. J. O'Keefe, St. John's, N.F.

MALTA

Lat. Long.: 55° 41' N 60° 19' W

Population:

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1893 (Post Office) [Pratt] [Patrick Walsh, postmaster]
1894 (Post Office) Labrador North [Almanac] [Patrick Walsh,
postmaster]

Closed: 1900? [Pratt]

No postal markings known.

MANNOX ISLAND

Lat. Long.: 55° 00' N 58° 55' W

Population:

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1888 [Walsh and Butt]
1890 (Way Office) [Almanac] [Thomas Smith, waymaster]
1892 (Post Office) Labrador North [Almanac] [Benjamin Smith,
postmaster]
1893 (Post Office) [Pratt] [Joseph Hoyles, postmaster]

Closed: 1895* [Almanac]
1896 [Pratt]
1901 [Walsh and Butt]

No postal markings known.

MURRAY'S HARBOR

Lat. Long.: 52° 27' N 55° 41' W

Population: 25 (1965)

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1888 [Walsh and Butt]
1890 (Way Office) [Almanac] [Mrs. Reilly, waymaster]
1892 (Post Office) Labrador North [Almanac] [Mrs. Reilly,
postmaster]

Closed: 1892?
1904 [Walsh and Butt]

No postal markings known.

MERCHANTMAN'S HARBOR

Lat. Long.: 52° 33' N 55° 47' W

Population:

Origin of Name:

Opened: 1893 (Post Office) [Pratt] [George Winsor, postmaster]
1893 (Post Office) Labrador North [Almanac] [George Winsor,
postmaster]

Closed: 1894 [Almanac, Pratt]

No postal markings known.

MUD LAKE

Lat. Long.: 53° 19' N 60° 10' W

Population: 86 (1971)

Origin of Name:

Opened: Sept. 11, 1964 Non-accounting MOON
POCON 003379

Postal Code: A0P 1K0

TYPE	COLOUR	PROOF DATE	EARLIEST	LATEST
C1		Apr. 24, 1964	Oct. 22, 1968	Jan. 27, 1976
E1			Jan. 18, 1984	
P1		Mar. 13, 1973	Feb. 24, 1978	
P2		June 15, 1981		



C1



E1

003379

MUD LAKE
N. F.

P1

003379

JUN 15 1981

MUD LAKE
NFLD. - T.N.

P2

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MARY'S HARBOUR

Lat. Long.: 52° 19' N 55° 50' W
Population: 134 (1971)
Origin of Name:

Opened: 1936 [Walsh and Butt] (as St. Mary's River)
Closed: before 1948
Reopened: 1954? Non-accounting MOON
POCON 003174

Postal Code: A0K 3P0

TYPE	COLOUR	PROOF DATE	EARLIEST	LATEST
C1		Mar. 5, 1954	Mar. 23, 1964	Jan. 19, 1981
G1			Oct. 12, 1982	Nov. 4, 1991
P1		Mar. 13, 1973		
P2			June 2, 1988	June 6, 1988
R1			Mar. 6, 1965	Jan. 19, 1988



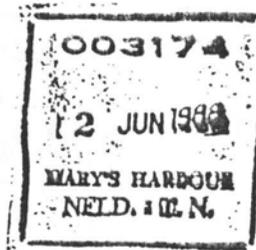
C1



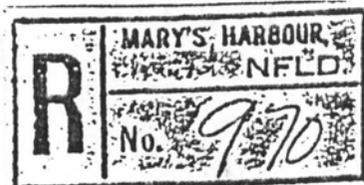
G1



P1



P2



R1