

# THE CANADIAN AEROPHILATELIST



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Index - Gord Mallett - (see contacts above)

**CAS CALENDAR**

**ROYAL 2020 ROYALE** - Cancelled.

**ROYAL 2021 ROYALE** - will be held in Peterborough, Ontario, June 25th - 27th. See [www.rpsc.org](http://www.rpsc.org) for further information

**BNAPLEX 2020** - Cancelled.

**BNAPLEX 2021** - will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, at the beginning of September 2021. See [www.bnaps.org](http://www.bnaps.org) for further information.

**CALTAPEX 2020.** The annual show of the Calgary Philatelic Society is normally held in October at the Kerby Centre, 1133-7th Ave SW, Calgary, AB, T2P 1B2. See: <https://calgaryphilatelicsociety.com> For latest information.

**CANPEX 2020** -- Scheduled for October 31st - November 1st at The Hellenic Community Centre, 133 Southdale Rd. West, London, Ontario. CANPEX is a National level show, and part of the APS "World Series of Philately". See [www.canpex.ca](http://www.canpex.ca) for latest information.

**TORONTO DAY OF AEROPHILATELY 2020** - Sunday November 1st, 11.15 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Held at the Vincent Greene Foundation, 10 Summerhill Avenue, Toronto, which is close to Summerhill subway station. - Displays, trading, and lots of excellent conversation. For more information contact Chris Hargreaves: [hargreavescp@sympatico.ca](mailto:hargreavescp@sympatico.ca)

**EDMONTON SPRING NATIONAL SHOW 2021**. Usually held at the end March. For more information see [www.edmonton-stampclub.com](http://www.edmonton-stampclub.com)

**ORAPEX 2021** - May 1st and 2nd at the RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Dr., Ottawa ON.

ORAPEX is a National Level show, and part of the "World Series of Philately". It features some 40 dealers and 150 frames of exhibits. Free admission and parking. The theme of ORAPEX for 2021 will be "Topicals, Thematics and Illustrated Mail". For more information see - [www.orapex.ca](http://www.orapex.ca) THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CAS WILL BE HELD DURING ORAPEX.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

Welcome to three new members:

#497 Sam Kloda of Hampstead, QC

#498 Terry Judge of Gloucester, ON

#499 Len Townsend of Qualicum Beach, BC

**Brian Wolfenden**

## EDITOR'S REPORT

I hope that all readers are well, and that this journal will provide a pleasant distraction from the problems of the COVID 19 era.

It would, however, feel strange to produce an issue that made no mention of the impact that COVID 19 is having. I am therefore including a very interesting account from George Stewart of New Zealand, about the impact that COVID 19 had on the NZ 2020 International stamp show in Auckland.

I have also included some information about the impact of COVID 19 restrictions on current air mail / the delivery of mail by air.

Stay well!

**Chris Hargreaves**

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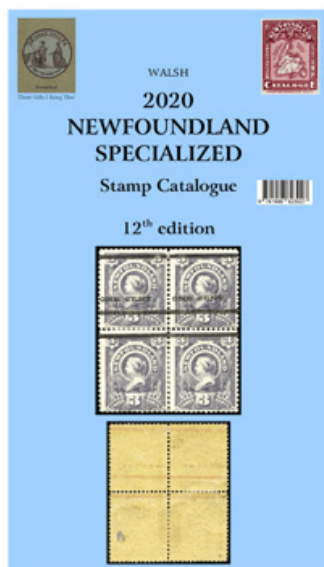
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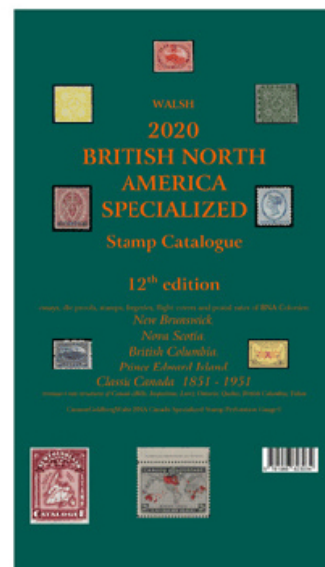


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## A PRE LOCKDOWN TRIP TO AUCKLAND

By George Stewart

### Reason for trip

On Thursday March 18th, a week before lockdown my wife Violet and I set off from Invercargill on a trip to Auckland for the International Stamp Exhibition, the first in New Zealand for 36 years. This had been reduced to a National Exhibition when the two-week self-isolation rules came in that ruled out visitors from overseas. We had planned a year ahead for this, to go to Wellington, night stop there and by Northern Explorer to Auckland. So we flew Thursday afternoon and checked into a not so flash hotel chosen for its location opposite the station. Late that afternoon the Government introduced the 100 gathering rule which thankfully did not apply to public transport.

### The Northern Explorer

Next morning we checked in at the station just after 7am for the 7.55 train. It is a luxury tourist train, quiet, air conditioned and only when you went on to the open viewing carriage did you hear the clickity click and the train noise. The food was good, we had four seats with a table just for the two of us. Single people were in two seat rows bus style, so nobody was next to strangers. There was a commentary of the journey, if you wanted it, via headphones. The trip went along the Kapiti Coast then up through the central plateau via National Park which has an enormous car park in the middle of nowhere. The train crossed five spectacular viaducts.



After we left National Park the train went down the Raurimu Spiral. Violet and I took the opportunity to go to the observation carriage at the rear of the train which is open, cold and noisy. We took pictures of the train going around the curves. After a little time we were down in altitude from a high of 2600 feet which is why it was cold outside at National Park.

A Hamilton stop allowed passengers to get off the train for a very short walk, as we had in Palmerston North. We travelled through a variety of countryside, small towns and alongside some very big rivers. Huntly was interesting with the imposing towers of its natural gas power station.



Before we knew it, the 11 hour trip was coming to an end as we approached Auckland, even arriving 10 minutes early, at 6.40 pm.

### The exhibition

We stayed at Novatel/Ibis Ellerslie Hotel and the next morning I went to a 7.30am Royal Breakfast. This was for members of the Royal Philatelic Society New Zealand (I am a Vice President of it) and the Royal Philatelic Society London (I am a fellow of it) and normally any other Royals in Australia who were not there. The guest speaker was Paul Woods, from Tyneside UK. The breakfast had poached eggs instead of my usual fried eggs but the abundance of creamed mushrooms made up for the lack of fried eggs. For anyone feeling hungry, there was also sausages, tomatoes and bacon.

Aside from the meal, it was great to catch up with old friends.

The arrangement for the Stamp exhibition was over two floors, exhibits on one and the dealers on another.

The restriction was 100 at a venue so there could be 200 over the exhibition, 100 on each floor. As you entered a floor you signed in with contact details and got a numbered lanyard. There were only 100 numbers. When you left that floor you signed out, handed in your lanyard and went through the same procedure on the next floor. I must have written my email out 10 times.

Violet had joined me at this stage. We went down stairs for a spot of lunch and sat with friends, when it was announced that our leader had said over 70s go home. The committee decided to pull the plug at 1pm Saturday rather than 4pm Sunday. So we went back to our hotel to sit out until our 7.30 flight home

Sunday

### The long wait

On Sunday we had to wait until 7.30pm for our flight. The exhibition was meant to have stopped at 4pm Sunday and we had planned to leave for the airport trip then and sit out a couple of hours at the airport. However, we were given a later check out by the hotel until 12 noon so we watched four sermons and some cartoons on TV before checking out. I see the government is using some hotels in this area for returning New Zealanders for their two-week quarantine. The room we had was well appointed but I wouldn't want to be in quarantine there for 14 days, not able to go out for a breath of fresh air.

### Auckland Airport

The cab arrived on time and we got to the airport at 12.30pm, ready for a 7 hour wait until our flight! Thankfully, we were able to check our luggage in when we arrived.

No public was allowed into the airport and there was plenty of seating so we were well spaced from others. Every four minutes there were two announcements, each commencing with Attention Attention, telling International passengers they had to quarantine and the other was telling us how to cough. I calculated that we had 105 announcements in the seven hours. When an airline announcement was made it interrupted the government one, and when the airline announcement stopped the government one started again, Attention Attention. It was torture! We went for a walk outside, had meals, avoided others and two hours out we went airside, got on the Invercargill jet and glad to be home by 10pm.

**George Stewart**

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## American Air Mail Society Annual Convention 2020 - CONGRATULATIONS TO AEROPHILATELIC EXHIBITORS

The AAMS Annual Convention was held in conjunction with the Sarasota National Stamp Expo in Sarasota, Florida, from February 7th to 9th 2020, before the major COVID 19 restrictions began.

Congratulations to the CAS members who exhibited in Sarasota:

- Cheryl R. Ganz** - *Zeppelins and the United States*  
Large Gold, also AAPE  
Creativity Award
- Jack Forbes** - *Cyprus: King George VI*  
*Definitives Used in Making Up*  
*Postage Rates of Air Mail*  
Letters Gold, also: Postal  
History Society Award
- David Crotty** - *Wake Island Mail,*  
Transportation and Patriotism  
Gold
- Allen Klein** - *Salute to the U.S.S. Shenandoah:*  
*America's First Giant Rigid*  
*Airship (One Frame)*  
Gold
- Ray Simrak** - *The R-100, 1930 Airship Flight*  
*from England to Canada and*  
*Return (One Frame)*  
Vermeil, also AAPE Exhibiting  
Excellence Award

## IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON AIR MAIL -

### Governments urged to deliver on global air mail

May 04, 2020

The collapse in passenger flights combined with a surge in online purchasing during the coronavirus crisis is slowing the delivery of air mail, the global aviation and postal industries warned Monday.

In a joint statement, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) called on governments to take action to

keep mail moving by air.

The Swiss-based organizations said there had been a 95 percent reduction in passenger flights, which are typically used to transport mail.

Meanwhile there had been a 25-30 percent increase in demand for online purchasing during lockdown restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19.

Postal administrations are therefore facing a challenge in shipping international mail, the statement said.

"The cancellation of more than 4.5 million passenger flights — the primary means of transporting post — has meant that capacity is scarce, costs more and takes longer," said UPU director general Bishar A. Hussein.

"Action needs to be swiftly taken to address the shortfall in air cargo capacity and to keep the mail moving."

The statement urged governments to remove border blockages, avoid unnecessary regulations and speed up issuing permits for chartered operations.

IATA said it was helping to get mail onto cargo flights by providing information on availability and new alternative routes.

"It's vital that everything is done to support the smooth movement of mail which is an important component of society," said IATA director general Alexandre de Juniac.

The UPU is a United Nations agency which coordinates the global postal system, while IATA represents some 290 airlines comprising 82 percent of global air traffic.

(From: <https://www.expatica.com/ch/> )

Thanks to **Denice Guimond** for passing on this article. - Denice added a comment:

*"The following statement caught my attention: "IATA said it was helping to get mail onto cargo flights by providing information on availability and new alternative routes."*

*"Up till now, the expression "alternative routes" related mostly to WWII Air routes. May be one day, in a far future, there will be philatelic exhibits on "Alternate air mail routes during COVID-19 era".*

Given the recent concerns about mail without postmarks, I wondered whether there would be any covers with enough markings on them to indicate that



they took an alternate route due to COVID-19?

The answer to that speculation came the next day in the May 12th issue of Canadian Stamp News, which contained an article about the impact of COVID 19 on Canadian mail service. The article reported that :

*Postal services to more than 150 international destinations were suspended by Canada Post "at the request of the receiving postal operator or due to the lack of available transportation," the Crown corporation said in a statement on April 7.*

*While Canada Post is still accepting letters and parcels for nearly 50 countries, including the United States, 26 of those destinations have only "partial service availability".*

*There were also delays within Canada, including in Ontario, where the Binbrook post office was closed for 14 days - from March 27-April 11 - after an employee tested positive for COVID-19. Further east, in Newfoundland, a St. John's mail distribution centre was closed - and delivery suspended in St. John's and Mount Pearl - from March 25-30.*

*On Jan.23, China Post began disinfecting all mail and postal vehicles sent through Wuhan - the original epicentre of the COVID-19 outbreak - at least twice.*

*The CSN article described a package mailed to an eBay buyer in China that was returned to Canada, "inside a clear plastic wrapper with the word 'DISINFECTED' and Chinese writing presumably meaning 'disinfected') on it".*

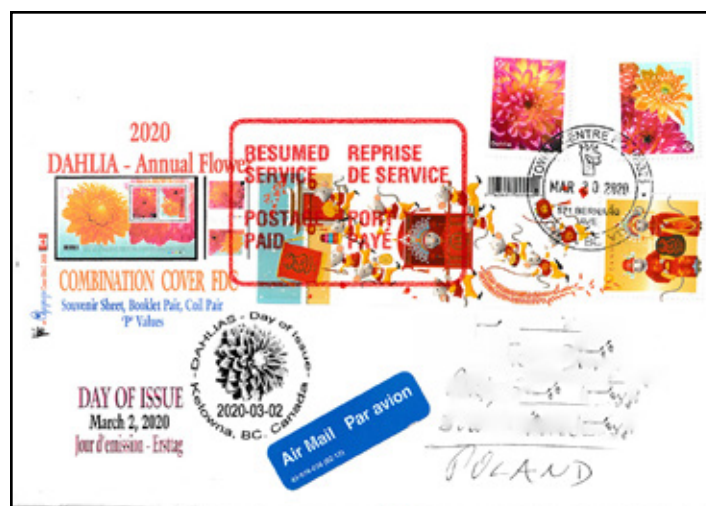
*It also illustrated one of the covers from Peter Lepold shown on the right*

## RETURNED TO SENDER

CAS member Peter Lepold regularly produces commemorative covers. On March 20th he mailed several covers to Poland from his local post office, but received them back 5 days later.



According to Peter:, the first label the PO used was in two parts: peeling the top one, leaves a see through second label underneath. (Cont. next page)



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Then about 1 1/2 to two weeks later, the PO changed the format: now the label was a plain white address label with text on it.

German philatelic magazines writing about the impact that the virus had on mail overseas also printed scans of these covers.

After checking the PO website to see if mail service was suspended, I kept sending letters to Poland, Russia and Namibia, and for the past 3 weeks my letters were not returned. So I'm wondering if the PO is storing them?

For information on Peters covers see <https://photos.app.goo.gl/NFLRkZxyBcDdTxXdA> or email [lepold@telus.net](mailto:lepold@telus.net)

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## World One Frame Stamp Exhibition - June 9th - 12th 2022 in Toronto.

The venue is now set as the Constitution Hall in the 100 level of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, North Building. Plans for an international launch at London 2020 were waylaid by Covid 19. However in early May there will be a virtual international launch with an awareness email marketing campaign to 470 international exhibitors in over 70 countries, excluding Canada and USA. Facilities have been reserved for USA launches at both the Great American Stamp Show in August and at Chicagopex 2020 in November. Facebook and Twitter pages have been established.

The Facebook URL is <https://www.facebook.com/CAPEX22>

The Twitter URL is <https://twitter.com/capex22> The

Twitter page can also be found with a Google search for @capex22

For more information about CAPEX 22 and other international exhibitions, contact David McLaughlin at [david.mclaughlin@rogers.com](mailto:david.mclaughlin@rogers.com)

## FOLLOW UP - CARRIED AS OUTSIDE AIR MAIL Handstamp



This cover was shown as number 5 in the article in the March 2020 *Canadian Aerophilatelist*, where it was described as:

*Postmarked OTTAWA J?? 1940 Addressed to Toronto. Ont. It was franked 6 cents, but had neither an endorsement nor air mail postage stamp to indicate that air mail service was expected. There was therefore no need for the type of marking suggested by option 3, (the handstamp applied to show that the letter was sent by surface routes in spite of being paid for airmail), to indicate that air mail service was not being provided.*

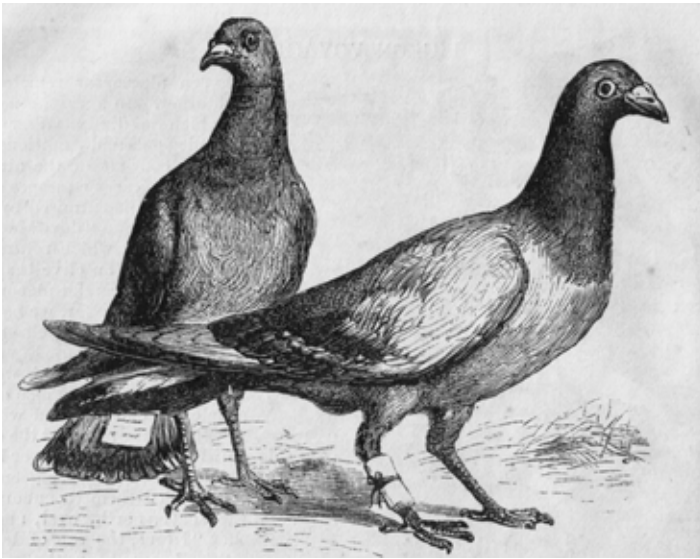
Mike Street has pointed out that the cover has 9¢ postage, not 6 cents. - The cancellation is very unclear, but the last digit of the date is rounded, so 1940 was a deduction as the only date that fitted with a 6 cents franking for air mail. 9 cents franking suggests an overpayment of the 7 cents air mail rate, and the cancellation could equally well be JUN or JUL 1943.

However, the rest of the analysis is still valid: since the cover was paid for air mail, and there was a regular air mail service between Ottawa and Toronto, there was no need for a marking indicating that air mail service was not being provided.

The conclusion is still that the CARRIED AS OUTSIDE AIR MAIL handstamp was applied in Toronto, to indicate a cover which arrived at the Toronto Air Mail Field outside a regular airmail bag. After being handstamped to show how it arrived in Toronto, the mail was then put into the regular (surface) mailstream. **Thanks Mike.**

## PIGEON POST in CANADA

Chris Hargreaves



Engraving of "carrier pigeons" with messages attached.  
From Harper's New Monthly Magazine, April, 1873.

Section 21 of The Air Mails of Canada and Newfoundland gives a short history of Pigeon Post. It describes pigeons carrying messages at many times and in various places around the world, but comments that "no official communication by pigeon is recorded" in Canada.

Although there was no regular mail carried by pigeons in Canada, there was a sustained attempt in the 1890's to carry emergency messages from Sable Island to the Canadian mainland.

Some twenty years later, messenger pigeons played a major part in communication during World War I. Although interest in messenger pigeons declined as radio communication was developed, several thousand pigeons were used to carry emergency and clandestine messages during World War II.

### The Messenger Pigeon Service - Sable Island

Sable Island is situated 300 km (190 mi) southeast of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and about 175 km (109 mi) southeast of the closest point of mainland Nova Scotia in the Atlantic Ocean - see map. Thick fogs, treacherous currents, and the island's location in the middle of a major transatlantic shipping route and rich fishing grounds, led to a large number of ships being wrecked on the Island. At the end of the 19th

Century, an attempt was made to improve communications between the life saving station on Sable Island and the Canadian mainland using message carrying pigeons.

In the early eighteen nineties, Major-General Donald Roderick Cameron, then Commandant of the Royal Military College at Kingston, wrote a paper entitled "Messenger Pigeons, a National Question" in which he covered the subject at great length envisaging a day when an international pigeon service, if lacking the regularity of the modern air carrier, might at least be credited with some of the services to which we have now become accustomed by that means. General Cameron had married the daughter of Sir Charles Tupper, and his brother-in-law, Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, was Minister of Marine and Fisheries when the general advocated a pigeon policy. Not unnaturally, marine aspects of the matter were by no means neglected.

In these circumstances, when a scheme was placed jointly in the hands of the marine agent at Halifax and the signal officers of the Royal Engineers at the Citadel, it was carried through with more than the usual dedication and enthusiasm. - "A loft was prepared on the south store at the marine wharf, according to the detailed specifications forwarded by General Cameron. It is divided into two compartments, one for free birds and the other for those to be kept in confinement. . . ."



Sable Island is currently staffed year round by four federal government staff, with extra staff during summer months when research projects and tourism increase. Famous for the Sable Island horse, the island is protected and managed by Parks Canada, which must grant permission prior to any visit. (Parks Canada map.)

Some two dozen birds were specially imported from Liverpool, England, where the fancy was especially strong among the industrial and mill workers of those parts. The credentials of the new flight were impressive, commencing with: "No. 1 Red Chequer, squeaker, Mr. Cottless No. 11, from dam No.

5 below, which flew from Card (138 miles) in London Flying Club 1889 Young Bird Races, and a splendid mealy cock lost at Marston (95 miles) last week. . . .”

To a long list of birds, carefully arranged in order of value by reputation, a gift of six of the best Belgian breed, donated by Count de Bury of Saint John, N.B., added a certain Continental flair to the undoubted stamina of a northern pedigree.

With the loft inhabited, the question of management and administration became paramount: “As none of the employees of the Department here had any special knowledge of the care and training of homing pigeons, the services of Mr. Downs, the well known and experienced naturalist, were secured on 16th., August.”

With professional custody assured, for which services Mr. Downs received \$100 annually, attention could be turned to an equally essential but more mundane task, and Mr. Neal, the storekeeper for Marine and Fisheries, was detailed to clean out the loft.

Mr. Downs, the eminent naturalist, acting for the marine agent, Mr. Johnston, reported to the Minister on January 12, 1891: “I make two or three visits to the station each week, and make necessary examinations and enquiries as to the food of the birds, their conditions as to cleanliness etc., and I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the fact that Mr. Neal and his assistant give all due attention to their duties.”

Nor were the military officers any less diligent. Colonel Goldie, Assistant Adjutant General and Major Waldron of the Royal Artillery, together with Captain Dopping-Hepenstal of the Royal Engineers: “. . . took much interest in the subject of messenger pigeons, hoping that they may be made available for communication between look-out stations at lighthouses on islands and the main-land a matter of much difficulty at present and of much importance in wartime.”

Thus encouraged, and with a regular training plan, the unit settled down to serious work. Unfortunately there was a heavy mortality among the pigeons, many never returned from operations, and few were able to complete the difficult flight to Sable Island.

With these matters on his mind General Cameron, in response to a telegram from the Minister, visited Halifax in August 1891. The situation was ominous.

“While some of the unsatisfactory results may be due to lack of proper attention, I think it is

mainly due to the circumstance that Mr. Downs who is officially responsible and alone receives remuneration in connection with the loft with all his desire to make progress and his great experience and interest in all that concerns natural history, is not physically fitted, at his age, to do what is needed. For these reasons I submit that Mr. Downs should be relieved of the charge of the loft and sole control transferred to Storekeeper Neal to whose pay some addition, say a dollar a week, should be made.”

In the face of this bold and economic measure, matters improved for a while but worse was to come. The birds could not be persuaded to work the Sable Island run in accordance with the plan and, faced with these difficulties, the loft was moved from the Marine and Fisheries wharf to the Citadel and military control. Regretfully dispensing with the help of Mr. Neal, whose duties were taken over by Sergeant Mulholland aided by Private Weaver, and owing to the transfer of Captain Dopping-Hepenstal, the directorship was placed under Captain Mills of the Royal Engineers, Superintendent of Signals.

Sea training resumed; in the Government ship *Newfield*, Sergeant Mulholland and Private Weaver, together with a Private Tansey whose role is not recorded, spent countless days rolling around between Halifax and Sable Island, only to record that: “. . . the birds seem to be put off their course, and much worried with sea gulls, these latter flying up to and circling round with the pigeons.”

It was highly disturbing because: “The weather was most favourable, but notwithstanding this fact the birds acted very badly and hung around the island for hours; two hours after liberation 6 were counted resting on a building, and at 2 p.m. next day, one was observed in the rigging of the *Newfield*.”

One bird in particular, H 190, gave cause for grave concern, arriving at its loft: “. . . on Tuesday 24th., inst., 22 days after being liberated.”

Faced with these events, it was only a matter of time, despite a last ditch stand by Captain Kent, who had succeeded Captain Mills, to shift the operation to an entirely new base at Canso, that the Messenger Pigeon Service should be dropped. It was discontinued in October 1895.

**Information from *A History of the Canadian Coast Guard and Marine Services* by Thomas E. Appleton.**



## World War I

In 1915 The Pigeon Service became a special branch of Signals controlling 2,000 birds and the Canadian corps used 100 pigeons a day.



Two Canadians signallers watering their messenger pigeons at Vimy Ridge in 1917. - Both men have signaller's insignia on their sleeves, and one can see the opening of a dugout behind them. Signallers like these would move up the lines into their positions carrying their pigeons in baskets. Pigeons were cared for carefully; being taken into the dugouts during bombardments, and protected as much as possible from the effects of gas.

From: <https://greatwarcentre.com/>

## 1930s - RCAF Pigeon Service



This "bird" is part of the collection of the Canadian War Museum. - The citation reads:

*THE LATE KING GEORGE V DONATED 50*

*RACING PIGEONS FROM THE ROYAL LOFTS, SANDRINGHAM; THE LOFT MANAGER WAS MR JONES, NEW BLOOD FOR OPERATIONS; RED CHEQ COCK-REX; NURP 25 WHS 925; DONATED TO THE RCAF PIGEON SERVICE; TAKEN ON STRENGTH JUNE 1929 AT STATION ROCKCLIFFE, OTTAWA ONT; REX HATCHED APRIL 1925, DIED MAY 1940 AT DARTMOUTH N.S.; REX WAS A BIRD TO REMEMBER A FAVORITE OF PIGEONS AND AIRCREW ALIKE; F/S THREILFALL.*

(<https://www.warmuseum.ca/collections/artifact/1049244/>)

## WORLD WAR II



*1942. Canadian PO (A) S Jess, wireless operator of an Avro Lancaster bomber operating from Waddington, Lincolnshire carrying two pigeon boxes. Homing pigeons served as a means of communications in the event of a crash, ditching or radio failure. (Photo and caption courtesy of the Imperial War Museum. Official RAF photo)*

Over 200,000 pigeons were trained for the Royal Air Force by the National Pigeon Service during WWII. The birds could reach 70/80 mph and cover several hundred miles. On many occasions the pigeons were dropped in small containers and a mini parachute into German occupied Europe; the pigeons were recovered by members of the resistance, an important message would be inserted into the capsule on the birds leg, released, the bird would return to its military base.

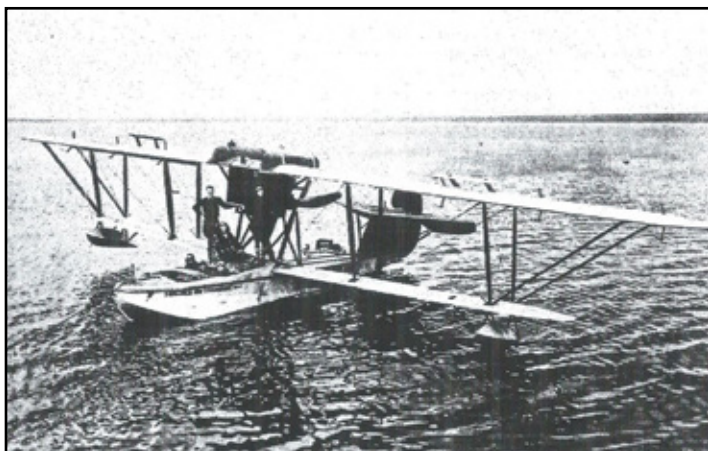
The RCAF credited pigeons for 14% of their locations and rescues of aircrew between the beginning of the war and the summer of 1943.

<https://comoxairforcemuseum.ca/war-birds-pigeons-at-war/>  
<https://www.classicwarbirds.co.uk/articles/pigeons-at-war-the-raf-and-the-national-pigeon-service.php>  
<https://archive.macleans.ca/article/1943/12/15/birds-of-war>

## Fairchild Air Transport Limited's Aeromarine AMC G-CAFD

John Lewington

As a part of my interest in Semi Official airmails the aircraft that flew the mails have fascinated me. What about this obscure and one-off flying boat?

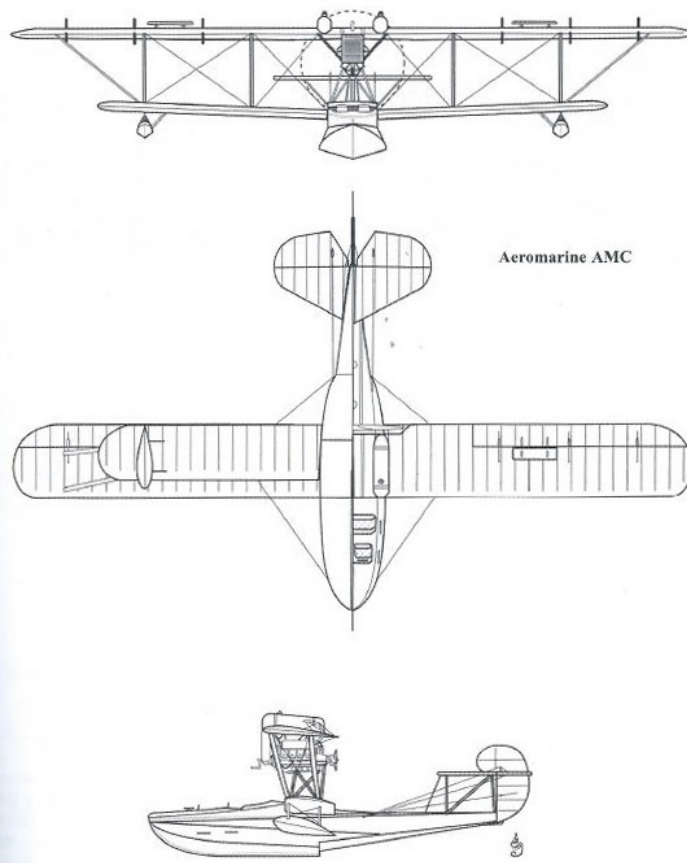


The picture depicts flying boat G-CAFD while in service with Fairchild Air Transport.

In 1922-1923, The Aeromarine Plane and Motor Company, of Keyport, New Jersey, wanted to design a hull made of aluminum to replace the wooden hulls of the Aeromarine Airways Limited flying boat fleet. It was estimated that a large wooden hulled flying boat absorbing water from continuous immersion, increased the aircraft weight by approximately 450 lbs. The heavier weight had a detrimental effect on the performance of an aircraft which already operated at low cruising speeds. It also limited its carrying capacity at the heavier weight.

Experiments with aluminum sheeting resulted in the creation of a complete metal hull, wing tip pontoons and the framing for the tail planes. The wings were of wooden and doped fabric in the style usual to the period. Rigging and engine/propeller configuration was similar a Curtiss HS2L without the bow to wing engine/wing brace.

The resulting flying boat, company designation AMC, resembled a Curtiss HS2L with dimensions a little smaller, weighing less and operating with improved performance.

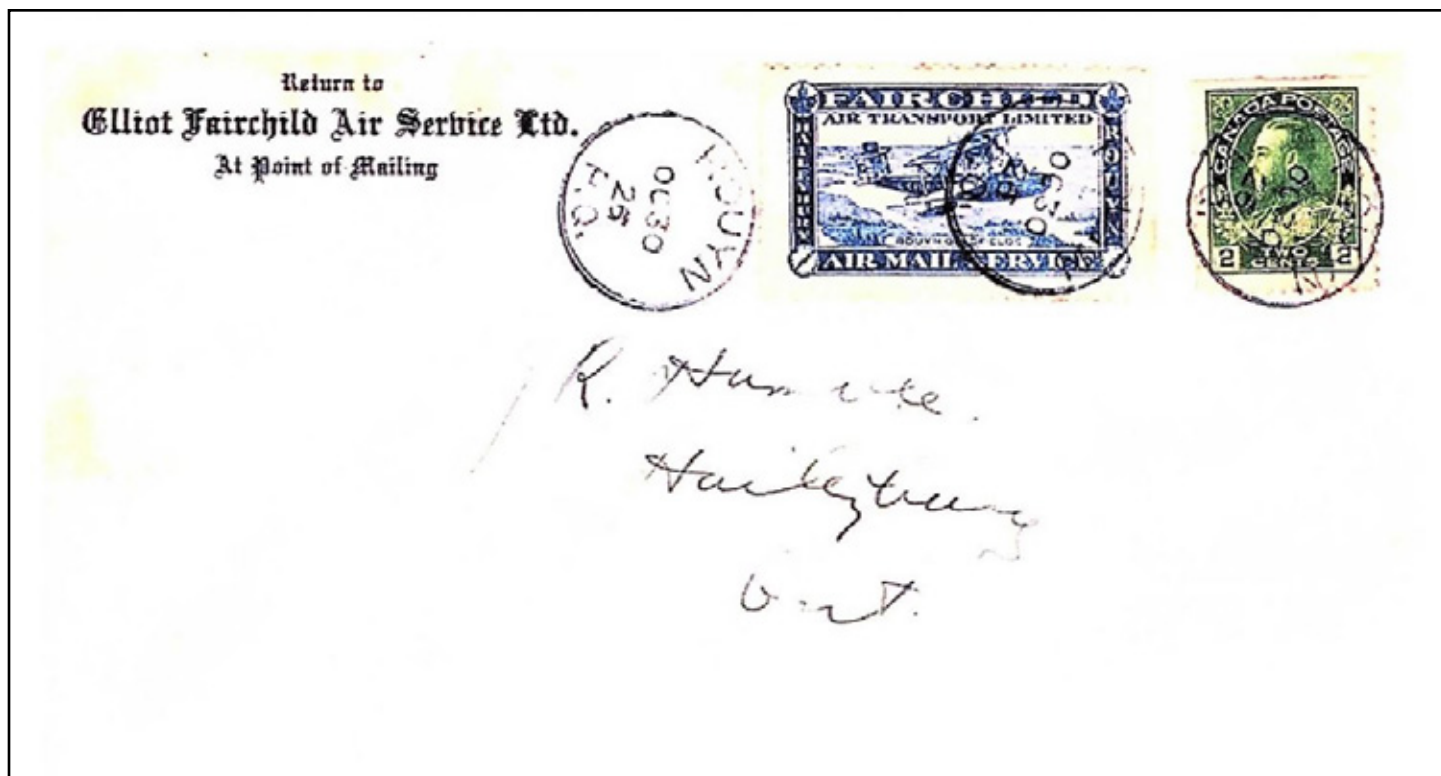


Only one aircraft to this design was completed. It was utilized in the Caribbean operation of Aeromarine Airways Limited, a companion company of The Aeromarine Plane and Motor Company, before being sold to Fairchild Aviation Limited, of Grand Mere and Montreal, Quebec.

This company registered the aircraft as G-CAFD, and used it for aerial photography, forest fire protection and timber cruising, for the International Paper Company. It also operated, on behalf Fairchild Air Transport Limited, flying semi-official air mail, passengers and freight, from Haileybury to the Rouyn Lake gold mining area.

The company also operated two other flying boats, a Curtiss Seagull and a Vickers Vedette. During the period May 26 to October 31, 1926, the company operated a weekly service and completed 141 flights. In addition to the mail, some 567 passengers and 24,000 pounds of freight were transported.

While we cannot be sure which company aircraft carried individual pieces of mail, the cover shown here may have been one of the last carried as it is date stamped, at Rouyn, October 30, 1926. It was



received at Haileybury on the same day.

In his book "The Pioneer and Semi Official Air Mails of Canada 1918-1934" Longworth-Dames has referred to this aircraft as 'Aeromarine All-Metal AMG 1'. As we have seen the design was not 'all metal' and the aircraft was actually company design AMC. The 1 may be a serial number or reference to the only aircraft constructed to this design.

The aircraft was dismantled and the G-CAFD registration was retired from use on February 28, 1930.

**John Lewington**

#### References:

Outaouais and Beyond: George Fuller

The Skytamer Archive: John Shupek

Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1924:

The Curtiss HS Flying Boats: Molson and Shortt

American Flying boats and Amphibious Aircraft: E.R. Johnson

The Canadian Civil Aircraft Register: John R. Ellis

The Pioneer and Semi Official Air Mails of Canada: C.A. Longworth-Dames

## NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE

### THE CANADIAN AEROPHILATELIST

is produced quarterly in March, June,  
September and December.

If you have anything you'd like to be included in  
the next issue, please send it to the editor:

(for images, make high res tifs/jpegs - 300 dpi)

**Chris Hargreaves**

4060 Bath Road, Kingston,  
Ontario K7M 4Y4

Email: [hargreavescp@sympatico.ca](mailto:hargreavescp@sympatico.ca)  
**by August 1st.**



## Canadian Dispatches on U.S. Navy Zeppelin Mail

by Cheryl R. Ganz

At the 2020 Sarasota (Florida) national stamp show, several zeppelin collectors discussed how many Canadian dispatches exist on U.S. Navy zeppelin flight mail. We found some discrepancies between AAMC's *The Air Mails of Canada and Newfoundland* catalog listing and the covers that we exhibit. In exhibits, judges want rare and scarce items identified with either number recorded (published number) or number known (unpublished research). The group decided that a census is needed to correct the catalog listing and to help collectors and judges to be more informed on just how rare some of these flown covers might be.

The census with this article shows an unlisted item for the ZR3 *Los Angeles* first flight to Bermuda, which so far is the only one known. The catalog identifies two recorded covers on the *Los Angeles* flight






to Puerto Rico, but we have already identified three so far. While no quantities are given for ZRS4 *Akron's* transcontinental flight, of the four that we have found to date, two have mixed franking and two do not. The catalog lists these covers from Estevan, but we have covers dispatched from Toronto and Montreal as well.

All of these examples were on official flights under the handling of the U.S. Post Office Department. To date, we have not found Canada dispatches on unofficial ZRI *Shenandoah* or ZRS5 *Macon* mail. We decided to limit this census to only U.S. zeppelins and only dispatches, not destinations.

The catalog is such a magnificent work, with much previously unpublished information. Over twenty years have now passed since it appeared, and it is time to update the research with new discoveries. Please check your collections for any Canada dispatches on U.S. Navy zeppelin flights, and send a scan of front and back to me at: [cheryl ganz@yahoo.com](mailto:cheryl ganz@yahoo.com).

Thanks to Bob Helms, Allen Klein, and John Pare.

Cover	U.S. Navy Zeppelin	Flight	Notes
	Los Angeles	to Bermuda, 1925	unlisted
	Los Angeles	to Puerto Rico 1925,	catalog shows 2 recorded
	Los Angeles	to Puerto Rico, 1925	

Cover	U.S. Navy Zeppelin	Flight	Notes
	Los Angeles	to Puerto Rico, 1925	
	Akron	Transcontinental Flight, 1932	Mixed franking No quantities listed in catalog
	Akron	Transcontinental Flight, 1932	Mixed franking
	Akron	Transcontinental Flight, 1932	
	Akron	Transcontinental Flight, 1932	



# SEMI-OFFICIAL NOTES

Tom Reyman

No. 10

## WESTERN CANADA AIRWAYS SERVICE

### WESTERN MANITOBA AND THE WESTERN PROVINCES

As the company added flights to Western Manitoba, Mr. W.R. Patton, a Winnipeg stamp dealer, continued to be involved with the preparation and mailing of many of the First Flight covers carried by Western Canada Airways (WCA). Figures 1, 3 and 5 show some of these Patton covers. Pilot F.J. Stevenson delivered equipment from Winnipeg to the Sherrit Gordon Mines in Cold Lake and made a stop at Cormorant Lake.



Figure 1 – This August 13 cover (flown on August 14) was sent from Cormorant Lake to Lac du Bonnet in care of Mr. Patton.

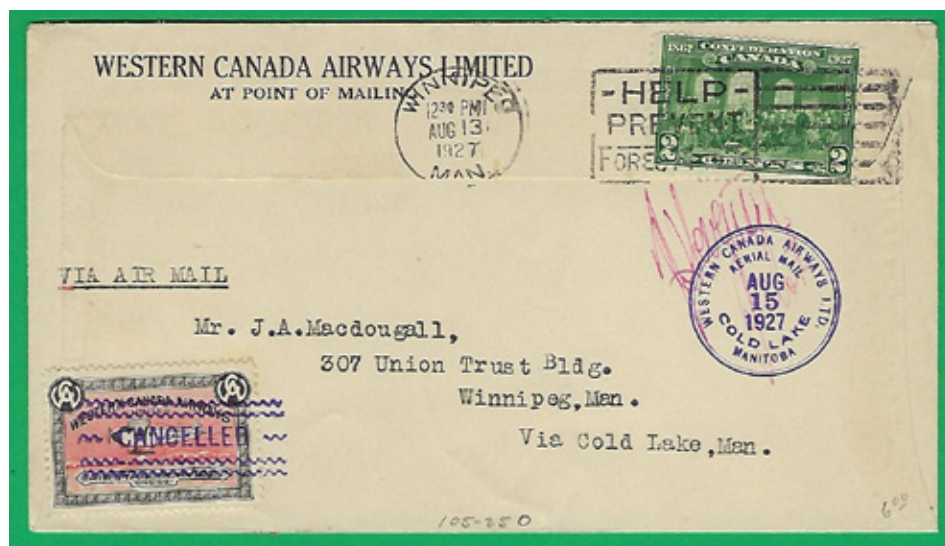


Figure 2 – This is an August 13, 1927 mailing (flown on August 14) from Winnipeg to Cold Lake. The cover is signed by the pilot, F. J. Stevenson



A major expansion of WCA occurred when, in 1927, the company opened a new base at The Pas, Manitoba. This location became the initiation point for flights to Manitoba and Saskatchewan and later to the West Coast of Canada.



Figure 3 – Another Patton cover for the flight from Winnipeg to Flin Flon (aka Schist Lake) through The Pas on December 23, 1927.

#### WCA Western Map

Figure 4 - This outline map shows the Western area towns and routes that were served by WCA in 1927 - 1930

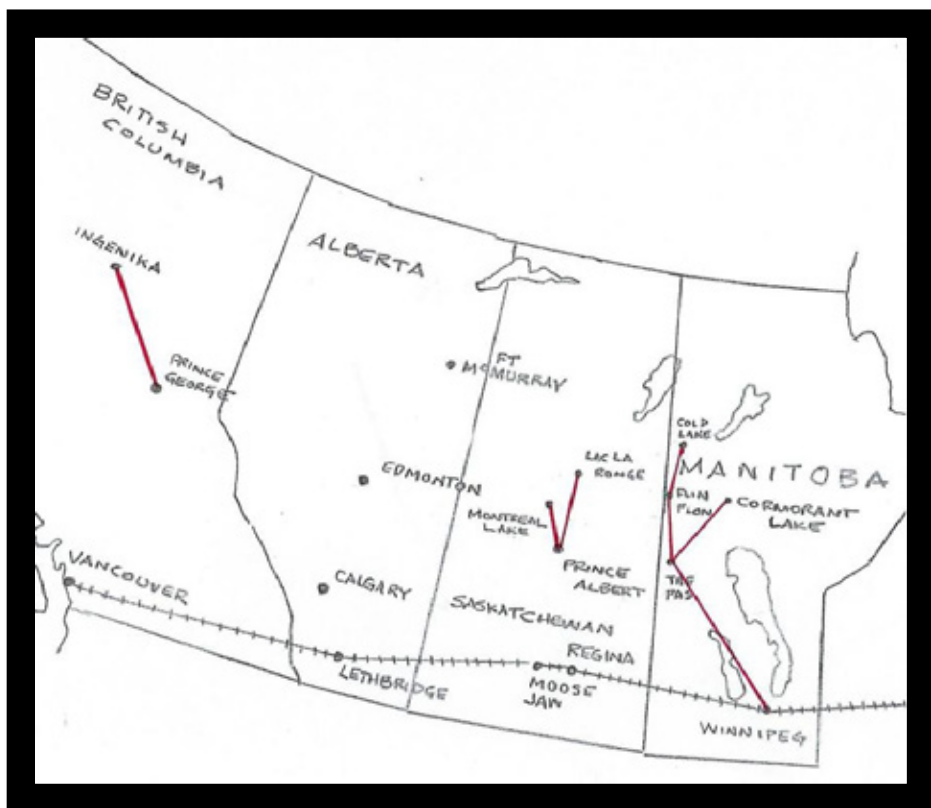




Figure 5 - Another First Flight on December 23, 1927 this from The Pas mining district to Winnipeg

A First Flight for WCA was completed between Prince Albert and Lac La Ronge, Saskatchewan on June 21, 1929. This flight occurred before Cherry Red Airline flew the same route in August. Later, a flight was made from Prince Albert to Montreal Lake, SK. The eight-sided First Flight rubber stamp is unusual. (Figure 6)



Figure 6 - This is the first WCA flight within Saskatchewan on June 21, 1929. The WCA stamp is on the back

In August 1929, WCA established a base at Prince George, British Columbia. Pilot Andy Cruickshank made a First Flight North from Prince George and back on a survey flight to the mining operations at Ingenika, BC. The return flight occurred the next day (Figures 7 and 8)



Figure 7 - Flight from Prince George to Ingenika on August 24, 1929 signed by Pilot Cruickshank. WCA stamp on back.



Figure 8 – from Ingenika to Prince George with the pilot's signature. The WCA stamp is on the back.

Because it was able to reliably deliver the mail WCA was awarded the Post Office contract for the Prairie air mail route starting with experimental in December 1928, and introduction of full service in 1930.

In late 1930, Mr. James Richardson, the WCA company president, participated in negotiations to establish Canadian Airways Limited and consolidate the resources of WCA, the Aviation Corporation of Canada, the Canadian National Railway, and the Canadian Pacific Railway. As a result, on November 25, 1930, Western Canada Airways ceased operations.

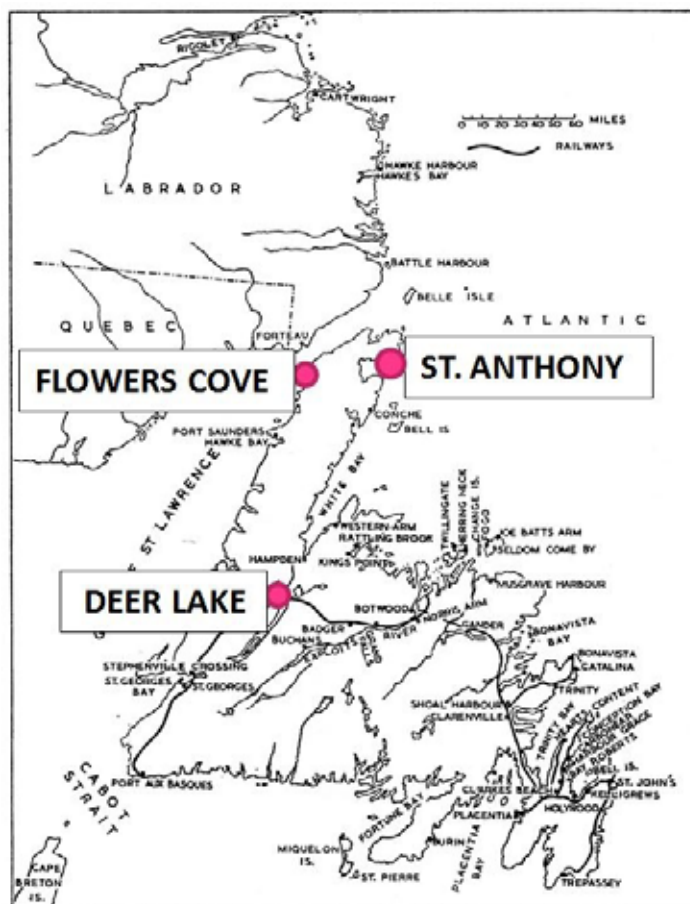
#### References:

- *Air Mails of Canada and Newfoundland*; Sixth Edition:1997, Pages 59-65.
- C. A. Longworth-Dames; *The Pioneer and Semi-Official Air Mails of Canada 1919-1934*: The Unitrade Press, Toronto, 1995. Pages 107-123.
- Milberry, Larry; *Aviation in Canada: The Formative Years*; CANAV Books, Toronto, 2009, Pages 72-77, 98, 110.
- Molson, K. M.; *Pioneering in Canadian Air Transport*; D.W. Friesen, Altona, Manitoba, 1974, Pages 60-64 and 95.
- *Unitrade Specialized Catalog of Canadian Stamps*, The Unitrade Press, Toronto, 2019, Page 607.



# WINTER AIR MAIL SERVICES IN NEWFOUNDLAND 1947 – 1949: Part 3 February - April 1949: Problems and Politics.

Terry Judge



Part 1 of this series was published in the July 2019 Canadian Aerophilatelist, and described the first year of operations in 1948, that were contracted to NASSCO - the Newfoundland Aero Sales and service Co. Ltd.

Part 2, published in the January 2020 Canadian Aerophilatelist, described the first month of operations in 1949, which were contracted to Newfoundland Airways Ltd, a subsidiary of Maritime Central Airways that was based in Charlottetown, P.E.I. It ended with an article from the St. John's Evening Telegram, 28th January 1949, that began "Planes Catch Up With Mail Backlog". Unfortunately the winter air mail service soon ran into more problems:

1949.02.05 St. John's Evening Telegram p 3 (Sat).

## No Mail Flights During Past Week.

Due to continuous low ceilings and fling snow-drifts there were no mail flights by Newfoundland Airways Corp planes to the Northern Peninsula during the past week, it is reported.

As a consequence, a backlog of mail now awaits delivery at the Little Rapids airstrip. However, the quantity is not overly large and the airmail plane pilots believe that it can be delivered on regularly scheduled flights as soon as weather conditions will permit the planes to takeoff.

It is proposed to make the first flight to the Labrador side of the Straits early next week. On that trip mail will be taken for Forteau, Red Bay, Henley Harbour, St. Mary's Bay, St. Michael's Bay and Cartwright.

1949.02.23 St. John's Evening Telegram p 6 (Wed).

## Airmail Service to North Areas Draws Complaints.

### Mail flights to Labrador Straits shore region delayed.

Newfoundland's second wintry experiments with an airmail service to the Northern Peninsula and the Labrador side of the Straits of Belle Isle have not been altogether successful, particularly in the latter instance, reports received in the capital indicate.

Although several flights with mail have been made by planes to various sections of the northern Newfoundland area, up until yesterday no mail delivery by air had been made to the Labrador shore region, although the first flight was to have been made in January.

Majority of the complaints have been from the Labrador sector, the general tenor being that the people there have no mail service at all, and some claim that they had better mail service fifty years ago with dogteams.

So far as the Postal Department is concerned, every effort has been made to provide a satisfactory service, and it was felt this season that with the experience gained last year the attempt would meet with greater success. However, it is apparent that such has not been the case.

So concerned is the Department with the combination of bad weather and the mechanical failure of the charter planes that it is seriously

contemplating, for next year, the abandoning of the experiment for the transportation of mails by air to the Northern areas. The Department officials are as greatly concerned over the situation as the people affected.

1949.02.24 St. John's Daily News p 3 (Thur).

### **New Base for Airmail Planes.**

Regarding the airmail service to North Newfoundland, it is now proposed to have the planes use the bay at Corner Brook as their operating base. Yesterday the two planes were loaded with mail and took off from the Bay. Up to then the runway at Little Rapids had served as the base for these aircraft.

1949.02.28 St. John's Evening Telegram p 6 (Mon).

### **Topics of the Day: Air Mail Service Failure.**

The old adage coupled with the postal service – the mail must go through – was not maintained this winter by the air service which was given the General Post Office's franchise to fly mails to the icebound regions of the Northern Peninsula and part of Labrador. Some of those unfortunate districts have not received any mail for six or seven weeks.

Here on the Avalon Peninsula there is some dismay because foreign express mails are reduced to two weekly in the winter, but at least they come with very little delay and the local mails from the west and central sections of the country are moving with very little interference.

Business would be badly handicapped if the mails were any worse and the isolation unbearable, but that is the unhappy position of the residents in the almost mail-less north. They deserve a better service and it is hoped next winter they will receive at least one mail delivery a week, if not more.

The new contract for airmail delivery for the present winter was heralded with great fanfare last autumn and it is unfortunate that the service has proved a complete failure in the northern section of the route. Mechanical trouble and bad weather were given as principal obstacles to maintaining a schedule service of deliveries.

Worst crack of all for the airline handling the contract is the comparison placed on their efforts by the people still awaiting mail and their confident assertion that even the dog teams gave better service. In this modern mechanical age in which aviation

has advanced to a remarkable degree of perfection, it is not often the public swings back their preference to conditions prevalent forty or fifty years ago. But apparently the modern mechanical advancement cannot yet combat the various obstacles inherent in the mail contract.

On the other hand, the miners and trappers living in Canada's northern territories are being serviced by mail planes with little difficulty and there is no reason why a better service cannot be provided in this country.

1949.03.07 St. John's Evening Telegram p 6 (Mon).

### **Letters: Local Air Service Needs Encouragement.**

Dear Sir, - No tougher assignment could be given to an airman in peacetime than this one of flying up and down the Northern Peninsula in winter. The comparison between our Northern Peninsula and the Canadian North is not valid. Because our weather is island weather rather than continental, winter flying conditions in Northern Newfoundland are much worse than in Northern Quebec, Ontario or Manitoba.

The northern peninsula is a region of desolate mountains. The damp west winds blowing in off the Gulf swirl over these mountains discharging their moisture in almost continuous snow flurries and storms. Most of these storms we know nothing about on the east coast and even the inhabited sheltered valleys of the west may be ignorant of very many of them. The winds swirling over the mountains cause continuous and violent turbulence. Aids to air navigation are entirely non-existent, and even the base of operations is no more than a small pasture in the bottom of a canyon.

In spite of all this a successful airmail service is quite possible if only some help and encouragement is given. An operator would be in a much better position during a second year, after experience gained during the first, if only we are prepared to give any operator a second chance, which seems doubtful enough.

When the new company started, the struggling local operators were dropped like hot cakes. Now already we seem to be talking of dropping the new favourites. We will never get anywhere that way.

A good internal air service can be a great boon to this country. We can't get it by chopping

and changing and we can't get it for nothing; nor can we expect to find any supermen to do the job for us, either from among our new brethren across the Gulf or anywhere else. It is a tough job to be done which can be done and when done, will bring the country great benefits.

Of course dog teams can scramble down into holes in the mountains where it is unsafe and sometimes quite impossible for airplanes to go. For such purposes I daresay they will be useful. At the same time we cannot reasonably look forward to a general displacement of all air services by dogteams.

In the development of air services in Newfoundland airmen know they can depend upon the support of the people whom it is their principal duty to serve – the man who has to choose between doing the trip by air or scrambling over the ballycat-ters say from Lumsden to Lewisporte.

It is the man who sits comfortably enough behind a desk and criticises, but who yet holds or influences many purse strings that the airmen have to worry about.

It is sad indeed to see the ripping to shreds of every effort that is made to get an air service going in Newfoundland.

Yours truly, Edgar A. Baird.

*[Edgar Baird was a pilot, having joined Terra Nova Aviation in January 1948.]*

1949.03.09 St. John's Daily News p 6, 7 (Wed).

### **Letters: Mail Contracts.**

Dear Sir, - It would be very interesting to know, and I think the people especially those living on the Northern Peninsula and the Labrador coast have a right to know, on what basis the Commission of Government awarded the mail contract to another company other than NASSCO. I have very good reason to believe that the tender submitted by the favoured company was much lower than that submitted by NASSCO.

If the Government accepted a lower tender, what reason can they give for their actions. From a business standpoint, and I consider a Government should be run similar to any business enterprise, the following points would have, and should have been considered.

Did the Government make an estimate of what it might cost to run such a service? If they did, any tender much lower than their estimates should

have been frowned upon.

Did the Government consider that the tender might have been deliberately submitted at a lower figure? I should think acceptance of such tenders would have been poor policy.

Did the Government consider that they were offering the mail contract to a company that was not even in operation, and consequently the service could possibly be worse than the previous year?

Did the Government consider that this company was a subsidiary of a foreign company? No matter what experience a company might have in the aviation business, they have a great deal to learn when commencing operations in a foreign country.

Did the Government consider that by awarding the contract to this new company, they might be instrumental in forcing the local company out of business? A Company that has struggled along since the war against many obstacles, giving service to the Island, encouraging air-travel and bringing relief to the sick without help from any quarter. It can now be justly said that the Government of Newfoundland did nothing to encourage the local air service, and their action in awarding the mail contract to a foreign company was one of the greatest knocks it had ever received. It is apparent that the Government's unsympathetic decision not only affected NASSCO but the public were affected as well.

Mr. Edgar Baird in his very fitting letter which appeared in the Evening Telegram on March 7th mentioned the bad weather experienced on the mail route. I think I have had enough experience with the flying conditions in this part of the country to afford to disagree with him somewhat. The East Coast of the Northern Peninsula and the West Coast as far south as Port Saunders and Labrador experience better weather, especially during the winter season, than does any other part of the Island. I have flown on many occasions from Buchans up the east coast to St. Anthony when it was impossible to fly on the west side of the long range and the Corner Brook area. I have tried to fly down the west coast at many times but could only get a little further than Port Saunders because of the low clouds; yet I was able to turn back and fly down the east coast all the way. I do not say that the weather is anything to brag about and certainly does not compare with the fine weather experienced in many parts of Canada. But I do maintain that as far as weather conditions are concerned, if



mails cannot be carried by air on the present route successfully then it is useless to experiment with any other part of the country. One of the greatest mistakes that the new company made was to base their aircraft at Little Rapids, a landing strip which I consider unsafe for the operation of aircraft. Already one aircraft has been written off attempting to land on this strip, although no reports were made to the paper here at St. John's. At the present time there is not sufficient snow to enable ski equipped aircraft to land or take off. It would be interesting to know why the company based their aircraft even near Corner Brook for the operation of the mail service.

To carry out a successful mail operation to the Northern Peninsula it is necessary to base aircraft at a place where operations can be carried out from the 1st of January to the last of April. Such a place does exist, and very conveniently located also it is a place where some of the best weather conditions are experienced.

Had NASSCO been allowed to carry out its plans for the operation of the mail this year, I can safely say that the company would have made an outstanding success. I can give ample proof to substantiate my statement. Not only did the one plane which operated the mail route last year carry mails alone, it carried out many mercy flights. This year two planes are used exclusively for the mail, yet the mail service is no better than last year.

I feel that I am partly responsible for the poor mail service both this year and last. For it was I who spent hours discussing the air mail service with Mr. Roddis, the Secretary for Posts and Telegraphs. It was I who fought for the air mail service until the Government decided to experiment with it. Now it is apparent that the people prefer the dogteams, yet I am certain mails can be carried by air to many parts of Newfoundland with great efficiency.

Very truly yours, E.W. Blackwood  
(*Eric Blackwood was the founder of NASSCO.*)

1949.03.09 St. John's Evening Telegram p 3 (Wed).

### **Two Flights Clean Up Mail to Labrador. English airmail delayed reaching here.**

Although only two airmail flights have been made, all the mail for the Labrador Straits settlements have been delivered, it is reported.

The first flight was made some weeks ago, and the second two days past carried all the backlog

of mail which had accumulated up to the time of the flight.

For more than a week the weather has been unfavourable and as a result a great deal of English mail intended for Newfoundland had to be overcarried to Montreal and is still there awaiting a clearing in the weather in the Maritimes.

Surface mails are moving regularly, however, and the incoming foreign express, which has been delayed for about twelve hours due to flood conditions at Steady Brook, is bringing more than 1,000 sacks.

1949.04.01 Western Star p 2 (Fri).

### **Letters: Denounces Mail Service.**

Dear Sir: Please allow me space in your paper to make a few remarks regarding the air mail service we of the Northern Peninsula are getting.

So far, we have had five or six trips of the plane, and it hardly stops long enough here to get the mail out, and then goes direct to Corner Brook.

A lot of our people, myself included, would very much like to know why we do not get more frequent service, and also why we do not get any connections with St. Anthony.

Cloudless day after cloudless day have we had this winter, more especially the first six or seven weeks of the season, and after everyone arrives at the conclusion that we are not going to get any more mail, a plane comes along. Perhaps the service will say they keep the mail cleared up to date. If so, I would like to contradict that at once. For example, my son had an X-Ray of his chest taken on September 11th last, and it was duly taken to St. John's and developed, and the Department wrote informing my son that he had T.B. in an early stage. That report was written in St. John's on October 29th and mailed October 30th. It reached us here on February 16th, only a matter of nearly four months to get an important letter from St. John's.

In the meantime, Dr. Thomas of St. Anthony had received a report from the Department at St. John's and around the 10th of January he came here, examined my son and ordered him to bed for a month, and then to go to St. Anthony for another X-Ray. After the prescribed month was up, we wired the Mail Plane Company and asked if they would take a patient to St. Anthony next regular mail trip. I received a message stating that they would take a

patient on the next trip. I put the following week going from my home to Flower's Cove, a distance of four miles, every day, expecting the plane, as we could get no report on her.

At long last, a mail plane arrived and I met her with my boy, only to be casually informed by the pilot that he was not going to St. Anthony.

I then made arrangements to get my boy over by dog team, which trip took three days, and my son was in hospital at St. Anthony before his X-Ray report reached us from St. John's.

In conclusion, let me say that our mails when brought by overland teams from Deer Lake were far more regular, in fact, we could always count on one mail a week, so why take the taxpayer's money and give it away for a much worse service.

Thanking you Mr. Editor, I remain,

Yours truly,

Cyril Porter, Bear Cove, via Flower's Cove.



April 1st 1949 - Newfoundland became part of Canada

*It appears that the contract with Newfoundland Airways ended at the end of March, and the remaining air mail was delivered by Eric Blackwood, who had started a new company, Eastern Provincial Airlines, using a Cessna Crane VO-ACE, and Blackwood's own Norseman VO-ACD.*

1949.04.14 St John's Daily News p 3 (Thur).

### **Plane Makes Several Trips.**

Pilot Eric Blackwood has made several plane trips to northern areas during the week.

On Sunday the pilot took a cargo of mail from Millertown to Baie Verte and then returned to Millertown. Because of bad flying weather the plane was grounded on Monday. On Tuesday another flight with mail was made to Baie Verte and a load

of freight taken on board at that place for John Reeves Ltd, Englee. From Englee the plane went to St. Anthony and loaded food supplies for Mary's Harbour, Labrador. Returning to St. Anthony passengers and mail were taken on board and stops made at Roddickton and Englee. Pilot Blackwood arrived back at Millertown at 6:20 pm Tuesday.

Yesterday the plane took off from Millertown with 2,500 lbs of mail for Baie Verte and returned to Millertown later in the day.

1949.04.20 St John's Daily News p 3 (Wed).

### **All Air Mail Cleared Up.**

**Argentia used in some cases; Easter mailing a record.**

Despite the handicaps of bad visibility and frequent shut-outs of Torbay Airport during the past couple of weeks, no airmail is now on hand, states the postal department as airmails have been cleared via Argentia whenever Torbay was closed-in.

Mails for the west side of the northern peninsula go overland from Deer Lake to as far as Flower's Cove. For the east side of the peninsula the air service as far as St. Anthony is still operating using Joe Gloads pond, at Millertown Junction as its base.

Easter mail broke all records, according to the St. John's postmaster.

**Later in 1949, Eric Blackwood and his EPA were awarded the winter air mail contract for 1950.**

**Terry Judge**

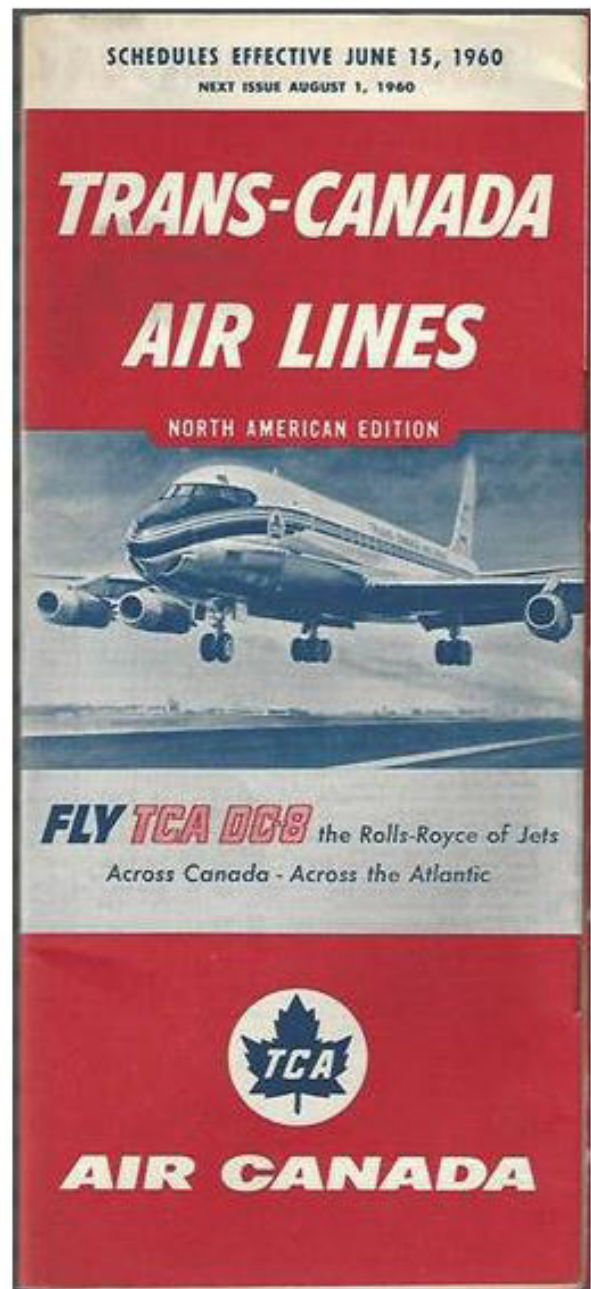
# 1960 - 2020 SIXTY YEARS SINCE TCA FIRST OFFERED JET TRAVEL

Ian Macdonald



SCHEDULES EFFECTIVE  
APRIL 1, 1960

This month, Canada's Jet Travel Age begins with  
TCA DC-8 JETLINER SERVICE  
NOW ACROSS CANADA, IN JUNE TO BRITAIN



SCHEDULES EFFECTIVE  
JUNE 15 1960

FLY TCA DC-8 the Rolls-Royce of Jets  
Across Canada - Across the Atlantic





**FIRST FLIGHT MONTREAL - VANCOUVER**  
 Postmarked: MONTREAL A.M.F. AM 1 IV 60 No backstamp.



**FIRST FLIGHT ACROSS THE ATLANTIC**  
 Postmarked LONDON F.S. 11.45AM 1 JNE 1960  
 Addressed to TRANS-CANADA AIR LINES, MONTREAL



**TCA POSTCARD:**  
 Trans-Canada Air Lines' magnificent new DC-8 cruises  
 at a speed of 550 miles per hour and accommodates  
 28 First Class and 99 Tourist passengers.

## GENE MAY and the DOUGLAS D558-2 SKYROCKET



This cover (above), dated 2 - 25 - 49, was included in David Ball's article on ASTROPHILATELY in the March 2020 journal, with the comment that it: was carried as a favor by test pilot Gene May in the D558-II on the first combination jet-rocket flight. Flown rocket plane covers remain rare. Generally just a small handful were carried and often just placed on the pilot's seat and sat on during the flight.

Denny May has written to me that Gene May had a Canadian Connection:

Here is a photo (below) of graduate Pilots & flight instructors at No. 2 Air Observer School in Edmonton during WWII - that is my Dad (in the tan jacket - front Centre) and second from the left of the photo in the front row is Gene May (no relation to me) - one of the flight instructors at No.2 A.O.S. All of the instructors were Canadian





*Airways Ltd Pilots and wore the wings below.*



## The Douglas D558-2 "SKYROCKET"

The "-2" in the aircraft's designation referred to the fact that the Skyrocket was the phase-two version of what had originally been conceived as a three-phase program. The phase-one aircraft, the D-558-1, was jet powered and had straight wings. The third phase, which never came to fruition, would have involved constructing a mock-up of a combat type aircraft embodying the results from the testing of the phase one and two aircraft.

When it became obvious that the D558-1 fuselage could not be modified to accommodate both rocket and jet power, the D558-2 was conceived as an entirely different aircraft. A contract change order was issued on 27 January 1947 to formally drop the final three D558-1 aircraft and substitute three new D558-2 aircraft instead.

The Skyrocket featured wings with a 35-degree sweep and horizontal stabilizers with 40-degree sweep. The wings and empennage were fabricated from aluminum and the large fuselage was of primarily magnesium construction. The Skyrocket was powered by a Westinghouse J34-40 turbojet engine fed through side intakes in the forward fuselage. This engine was intended for takeoff, climb and landing. For high speed flight, a four-chamber Reaction Motors LR8-RM-6 engine was fitted. This engine was rated at 6,000 lbf (27 kN) static thrust at sea level. A total of 250 US gallons (950 L) of aviation fuel, 195 US gallons (740 L) of alcohol, and 180 US gallons (680 L) of liquid oxygen were carried in fuselage tanks.

The Skyrocket was configured with a flush cockpit canopy, but visibility from the cockpit was poor, so it was re-configured with a raised cockpit with conventional angled windows. This resulted in a greater profile area at the front of the aircraft, which was balanced by an additional 14 inches (36 cm) of height added to the vertical stabilizer. Like its predecessor, the D558-1, the D558-2 was designed so that the forward fuselage, including cockpit, could be separated from the rest of the aircraft in an emergency. Once the forward fuselage had decelerated sufficiently, the pilot would then be able to escape from the cockpit by parachute.

The goals of the "Skyrocket" program were to investigate the characteristics of swept-wing aircraft at transonic and supersonic speeds with particular attention to pitch-up (un-commanded rotation of the nose of the aircraft upwards), a problem prevalent in high-speed service aircraft of that era, particularly at low speeds during takeoff and landing, and in tight turns.



Douglas pilot John F. Martin made the first flight of D558-2 #1 at Muroc Army Airfield (later renamed Edwards Air Force Base) in California on 4 February 1948 in an aircraft equipped only with the jet engine.

Gene May flew D558-2 #2. - David's cover has a handwritten endorsement "First Jet Rocket Flight in History".

The Skyrocket could reach a speed of 720 mph (1,160 km/h) at 40,000 ft (12,000 m) on mixed power with conventional take-off

(Based on an article in Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas\\_D-558-2\\_Skyrocket](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_D-558-2_Skyrocket) )



An article in our December 2019 journal described a flight by Sir David Hempleman-Adams in 2003, "Crossing the Atlantic by Balloon in an Open Wicker basket". - In February this year, his daughter set a world altitude record for small hot air balloons after taking off from High River, Alberta.

## **Alicia Hempleman-Adams reaches record altitude of 4604 metres in a hot air balloon**



Alicia Hempleman-Adams (England), flew her Ultramagic hot air balloon to an altitude of 4604m, (15,100ft), breaking the female world altitude record for an AX4 Class hot air balloon of 4,272m (14,016 ft.) held by Pauline Baker since 2008

The flight took place from the High River Balloon Port near Calgary, on 7 February 2020. To achieve this height, she was in the air for 1 hour and 46 minutes, in a small balloon, a 3ft by 3ft basket, with a tiny oxygen tank.

"It was pretty frightening up there, I've never felt so cold and at that height you feel very alone and a little bit helpless," she said. "I love ballooning and have done a few flights a year since I got my licence eight years ago, but it's not like I can just pop up to Hyde Park and stick a balloon up."

Alicia broke the record for the AX4 class (600 to 900 m<sup>3</sup>) balloon. Her balloon was built last year in Barcelona from a new type of sustainable double-layered material.

The balloon is very small and required a constant below zero zone from the ground up to the 15100 level. - That factor was extremely well planned. It was minus 20 C at ground level and minus 30 C higher up.

The flight took place from High River, which is a great area for ballooning because of the cold, the big open fields where you can land when you're low on fuel, and the team of helpers available from the Calgary Balloon Club which is considered one of the best in the world.

It is not yet known whether any covers were carried on the flight.

Information from Nino Chiovelli, <https://www.fai.org/news> and <https://www.highriveronline.com>

**Thanks Nino.**

## Request for Information

I am researching Civilian Indian Airmails, and as part of my study, I was looking for access to the database Murray Heifetz created on covers with O.A.T. and A.V.2. marks while publishing the 3rd edition of his book. He had documented over 6,500 covers out of approximately 10,000 he believed to be in existence.

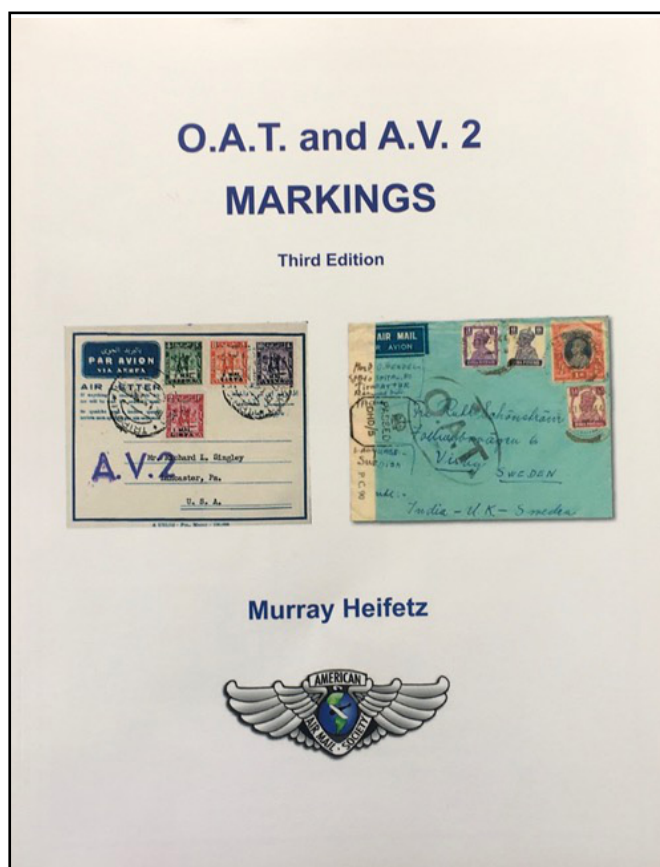
I would appreciate connecting with anyone

who has access to his database or his collection, or knows of someone who has this information.

I also invite correspondence with anyone having knowledge or willingness to share images of relevant material on this subject.

Piyush Khaitan, Mumbai, India.

[pk@khaitan.in](mailto:pk@khaitan.in)



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

The CANADIAN AEROPHILATELIC SOCIETY has about 150 members, and membership is open to all. The CAS aims to provide a forum for the exchange of information among Canadians who are interested in any aspect of world-wide aerophilately, and for collectors from around the world who are interested in Canadian aerophilately. - This is mainly achieved through our journal The Canadian Aerophilatelist which is published quarterly.

The Society also provides a number of other services, including: a question-and-answer service for mystery air mail stamps and covers; a small library that can be searched for information on particular topics; a "sales department", with discount prices on several publications, and a variety of modern covers for sale; representation of Canadian aerophilatelists at national and international levels.

For more information about these services, and/or a free copy of our Short Guide to Canadian Aerophilately, contact Chris Hargreaves, 4060 Bath Road, Kingston, Ontario K7M 4Y4. ( [hargreavescp@sympatico.ca](mailto:hargreavescp@sympatico.ca) ) OR check out our website: [www.aerophilately.ca](http://www.aerophilately.ca)

### Membership rates based on current exchange rates

#### The membership dues for members who receive The Canadian Aerophilatelist by EMAIL are:

- 1 year - \$15.00 Canadian or US\$12.00 or 10 GB pounds or 11 Euros - anywhere in the world
- 2 years - \$25.00 Canadian or US\$20 or 16 GB pounds or 17 Euros, anywhere in the world

#### The dues for members who prefer a PAPER COPY of The Canadian Aerophilatelist mailed to them are:

- 1 year - \$25.00 CDN in Canada, \$30.00 CDN in U.S.A. (or \$24.00 US),  
\$35.00 CDN for members Overseas, (or \$28.00 US, or 24 Euros, or 22 Pounds Sterling)
- 2 years - \$45.00 CDN in Canada, \$55.00 CDN in U.S.A. (or \$44.00 US)  
\$65.00 CDN for members Overseas, (or \$52.00 US, or 44 Euros, or 40 Pounds Sterling)

Members receiving a paper journal may also receive an emailed journal at no extra charge.

**Dues can be paid by cheque in Canadian \$, U.S.\$, Euros, or Sterling, payable to: The Canadian Aerophilatelic Society, or by PAYPAL in CANADIAN \$ to [bjnepean@trytel.com](mailto:bjnepean@trytel.com)**

If you would like to join, please send the following information with your dues to:

**Brian Wolfenden, Secretary-Treasurer CAS, 203A Woodfield Drive, Nepean, Ontario K2G 4P2**

Name: _____	
Address: _____	
Telephone: _____	Date of birth: _____
Period and Type of membership: _____	
E-mail: _____	
(For Secretary's use: Date joined: _____ Amount of dues paid: _____)	

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

All memberships were extended for three months in March, while Brian convalesced from his fall. The following members are now due for renewal before publication of the next newsletter. - Please send your renewal to Brian Wolfenden as soon as possible, in order that the next newsletter is sent to you without delay. PLEASE NOTE that new MEMBERSHIP CARDS are only sent to renewing members on request.

**In response to the COVID 19 disruptions,  
the CAS is not asking for membership renewals at this time.  
All memberships are again being automatically extended for 3 months  
at no charge.**