

JOURNAL OF ALBERTA POSTAL HISTORY

Issue #24

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POSTAL HISTORY OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN CALGARY, ALBERTA

by Dale Speirs

In late 2019, news began filtering out of China concerning a novel coronavirus severely afflicting humans unfortunate enough to be infected with it. In early 2020 the virus, now named COVID-19, began spreading rapidly through the world. Although the actual numbers of infected humans at that time were not even one percentage point of the population, the virus had a 10% fatality rate. In March, governments around the world, including Canada, began locking down their citizens and dynamiting their economies.

By July, the infection rate seemed to be leveling off, and step by step governments allowed businesses to open. There was a second wave by October which caused reversals of the re-openings. There was no consistency whatsoever in local and provincial government responses in Canada. Some jurisdictions required face masks as mandatory wear inside buildings while others didn't. Gatherings were restricted to arbitrary numbers such as a maximum of 10, 50, or 100 people, with no consistency between one municipality and the next.

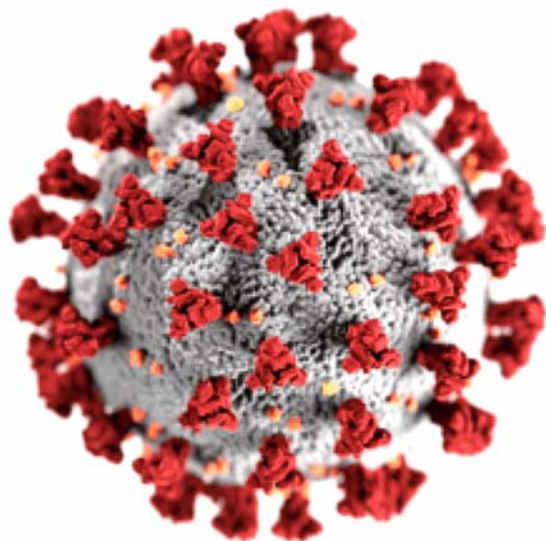
The economic impact on Canada was worse than the Great Depression. Canadian unemployment insurance applications were normally about 27,000 per week in a country with 37 million citizens. In late March, 2 million Canadians applied for unemployment benefits during a two-week period. Economic activity fell by 30% and unemployment soared into double digits. The federal government deficit was about \$20 billion in 2019. For the 2020 calendar year, it was over \$400 billion, an unprecedented leap exceeding even the sudden spending when World War Two was declared.

Essential businesses were allowed to continue operating, one of which was Canada Post. This article looks at the response of Canada Post and how businesses restarted, as illustrated with Calgary as an example. In particular, many businesses desperate for customers began sending unaddressed householder mail, a category often neglected by philatelists, yet of greater importance than letter mail, which was almost extinct because of the Internet.

The time frame covered is to the end of 2021.

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COVID-19 coronavirus

INITIAL RESPONSES

On March 11, the World Health Organization officially declared the COVID-19 virus a pandemic. On March 27, the Alberta government declared a state of emergency and shut down schools, sports events, public gatherings, and non-essential businesses. However even before then many businesses had been responding by setting up social distancing measures to keep customers 2 metres apart inside the premises.

Canada Post.

I get my mail at the Central Post Office downtown at 6 Street SW and 5 Avenue. Initially, like most businesses and government agencies, jury-rig signs were put up.

I took this photo on March 17 showing the front door to the CPO. An enlargement of the text is on the next page.





If you're exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19 (coronavirus), such as fever or a cough, please arrange for someone else to come into this facility on your behalf.

While you're here, protect yourself and others:

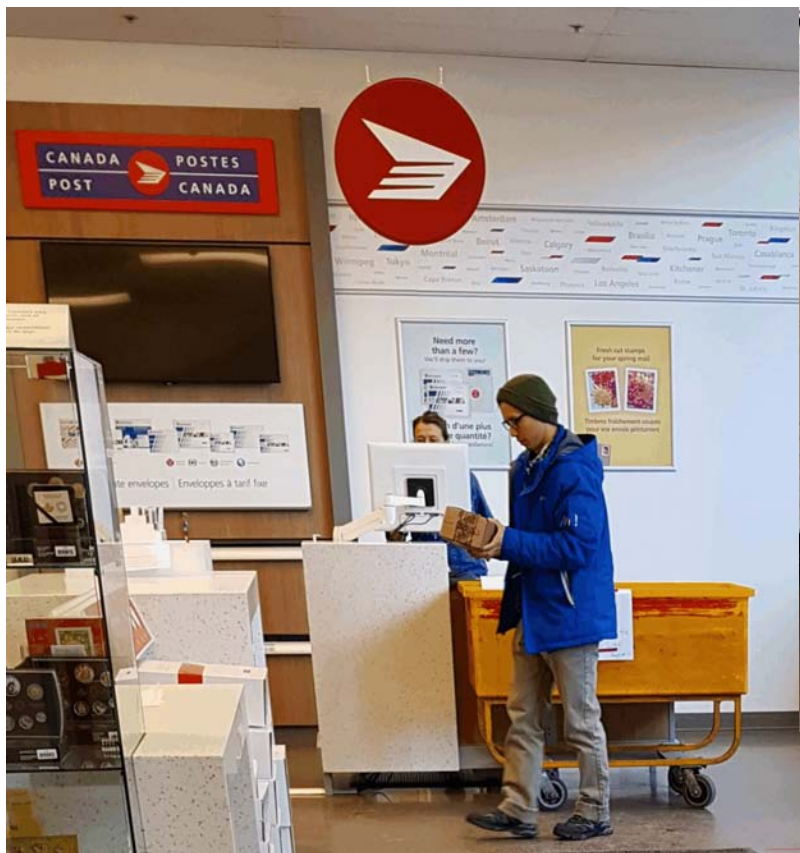
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose or eyes
- Cough or sneeze into your arm
- Avoid close contact – don't lean over the counters
- Use digital payment options if possible
- Maintain space between yourself and others

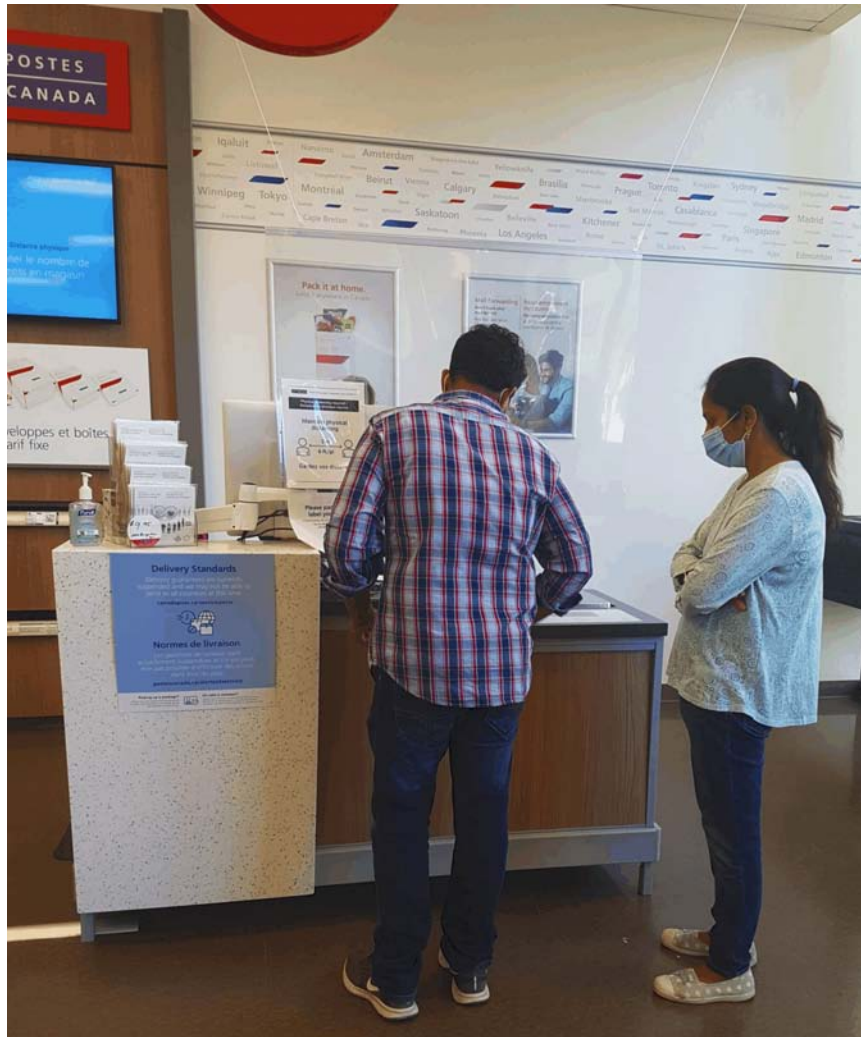


A week later, Canada Post corporate headquarters ordered reduced hours for post offices, as seen by the new signs on the door on March 24.

Canada Post announced on March 23 that undelivered parcels would not be returned to sender. Signature services were replaced by Knock, Drop, and Go, where the letter carrier or courier would not stop for a signature [1].

On March 25, I saw a clever use of mail bins to ensure social distancing by placing them across the front of the counters. Customers had to reach across to do their business. These were soon replaced by tape marks on the floor, and transparent plastic shields were placed on the counters.





Unfortunately I could not get a good photo of the transparent shields for obvious reasons. If you look closely you can see the reflection of part of the shield and the two white strings from the ceiling holding the shield.

Route and Tradition

LATER RESPONSES

Canada Post.

Beginning in 2020 May, Canada Post began using a spray-on slogan as shown below.

Personnel soignant, merci

Thanks, healthcare workers





Calgary City Council passed a bylaw mandating compulsory face masks inside non-residential buildings and public transit, which came into effect on August 1, 2020.

The action was far too late for any good it might have done but nonetheless Canada Post complied.

This sign was photographed on August 5 showing the front door of the Central Post Office.



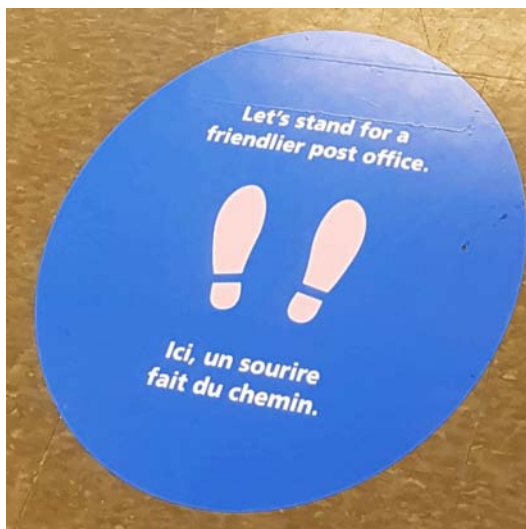
**MASK OR
FACE COVERING
RECOMMENDED**



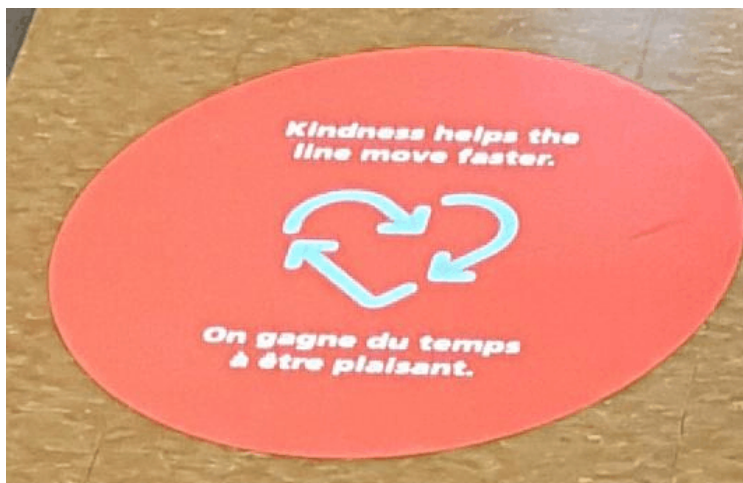
**PORT DU MASQUE
OU DU COUVRE VISAGE
RECOMMANDÉ**

Jumping ahead, the provincial government removed COVID-19 restrictions as of 2021-07-01, however the City of Calgary delayed changes until four days later. Confusingly, the City made masks still mandatory for public transit but optional for businesses.

The sign shown at left was photographed at the Central Post Office on 2021-07-12. Compare the text of the sign with the sign on the previous page and note the subtle difference.



Floor markings at Calgary Central Post Office in June 2021.



On 2020-08-24, while I was picking up my mail at the Central Post Office, a clerk asked me if I wanted to order any stamps between then and December. Because I buy large quantities to mail out the CALGARY PHILATELIST, as well as other items, she knew me as a regular.

She said that stamp supplies were no longer automatically shipped from the head office. Accordingly we went over the stamp issue schedule and I booked my orders with her for the rest of 2020. The schedule she had was a computer screen printout from an internal source, not the publicly released information. Canada Post's public announcements were months behind.

Since the lockdown, I had been stockpiling commemoratives because they disappeared after a couple of weeks. Yes, they could still be ordered online, but that was a cumbersome process, with slow delivery. The difficulties of stamp supplies were part of the invisible postal history of the pandemic as supply lines broke down.

Another part of the Canada Post system that broke down was its bulletin DETAILS, which announced forthcoming stamp issues. It was normally published as both an online pdf and two different print versions, one mailed to past customers and the other distributed at post office counters. The latter were bilingual issues while the mailed versions were in the language preferred by the customer.

The April and May bulletins, numbers 3 and 4, were published only online as pdfs. No print versions exist. There followed a gap until late August when a special unnumbered edition was issued in both pdf and print which recapitulated the two previous bulletins. All the stamp announcements were repeated and some additional text added. I received a copy of the print version on August 25, although I saw the pdf version online a few days prior. There were no bilingual print versions set out on the counters. The subscribers received a unilingual copy.

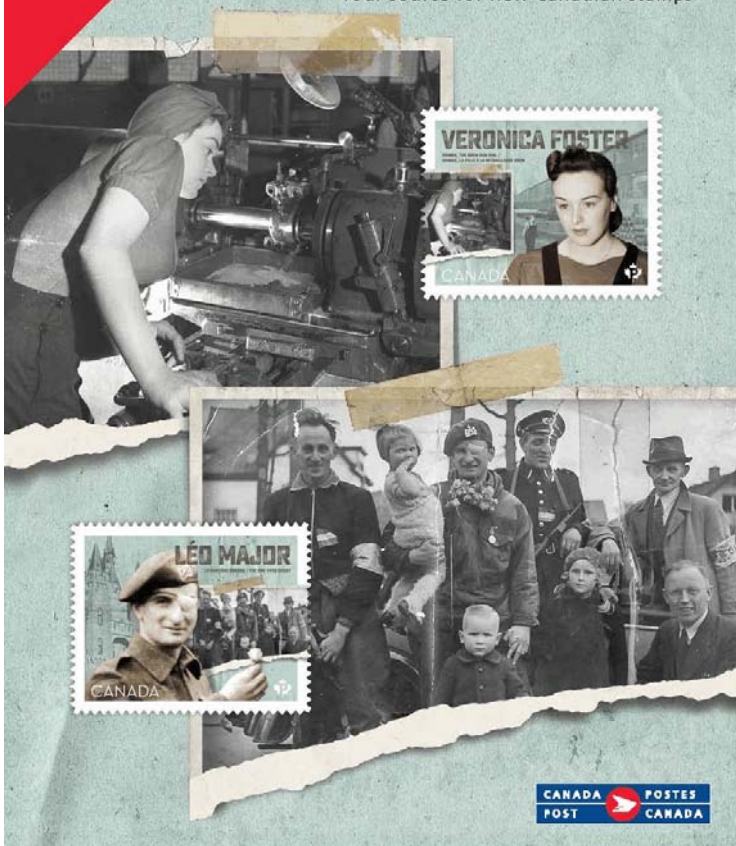
The next three pages show the covers of these three bulletins, as well as an explanatory message on page 2 about the situation from Jim Phillips, Director of Stamp Services.

Special
message on
Canada Post changes
due to COVID-19,
page 3.

APRIL 2020 | No. 3

Details

Your source for new Canadian stamps



DEAR COLLECTORS

A special message

As an essential service, Canada Post is doing everything it can to ensure the safety of its customers, employees and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since temporary changes have been made to how stamps are distributed to postal outlets, there is no guarantee that new issues will be available at all retail sites. To be sure you don't miss anything, our online store is ready to take your order at canadapost.ca/shop.

Other changes have also been made over the short term:

- *Details* No. 3 is available in digital format only.
- Fewer issues of *Details* will be published until the COVID-19 crisis has passed.
- Stamp unveiling events in April and May are cancelled.
- The shipment of April standing orders is delayed for several weeks.


Jim Phillips, Director, Stamp Services

Special
message on
Canada Post changes
due to COVID-19,
page 3.

MAY 2020 | No. 4

Details

Your source for new Canadian stamps



DEAR COLLECTORS

Stay safe and be well

Our priority during this challenging time is to safeguard the health of our customers, employees and communities, while continuing to provide Canadians with the important services they depend on. As a result, we have made some temporary changes to the stamp program and the way we distribute new issues to postal outlets. Be sure to order your stamps online at canadapost.ca/shop, so you don't miss out.

Other changes have been made over the short term:

- **Details No. 4 is currently available in digital format only.**
- **The publication of *Details* is limited until further notice.**
- **Stamp unveiling events are suspended until further notice.**
- **The shipment of standing orders are delayed until further notice.**


Jim Phillips, Director, Stamp Services

Details

Your source for new Canadian stamps



DEAR COLLECTORS

Moving forward

To reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for staff and customers, Canada Post made a few temporary changes to the stamp program, including the way it communicates information on new stamps. For example, *Details* 3 and 4 were published online.

This special edition brings these two issues together in print because you may have missed the online versions and still wish to add the stamps that they feature to your collection. As we hope our magazine will return to a more regular schedule, *Details* 5 will be available soon, with a preview of the Medical Groundbreakers issue and our annual semi-postal fundraising stamp for the Canada Post Community Foundation. Also, until further notice, please keep the following in mind:

- New stamps will be unveiled online.
- Post offices may have a limited selection of new stamp issues.
- Some stamp shipments may be delayed as we process and deliver unprecedented parcel volumes, while we apply health and safety measures such as physical distancing.

Thank you for your continued support through these challenging times.


Jim Phillips, Director, Stamp Services

DEAR COLLECTORS

We care about your well-being

At Canada Post, our priority during these challenging times continues to be the safety and health of our customers, employees and communities, while we work to provide Canadians with the essential services they depend on. Some of the temporary changes made to the stamp program and the way we distribute new issues to postal outlets remain in effect until further notice. Be sure to order your stamps online at canadapost.ca/shop, so you don't miss out.

Other changes have been made over the short term:

- Print versions of *Details* special edition (Nos. 3 and 4) and No. 5 were sent to subscribers and are available online.
- Stamp unveiling events will proceed in a virtual format. In-person events remain suspended until further notice.

This issue of *Details* features our Medical Groundbreakers stamps, highlighting six physicians and researchers whose innovative work is more evidence why Canada is a global leader in medical research and treatments that change lives. We're also revealing our annual fundraising stamp for the Canada Post Community Foundation. The purchase of the stamp allows our customers to contribute directly to grassroots and community programs that benefit Canadian children and youth – initiatives that need our support now more than ever.

Happy (and safe!) collecting,



Jim Phillips, Director, Stamp Services

COMING SOON!

Don't miss a single issue



Check out our **preview list** and **on-sale dates** below and mark your calendar. Then visit canadapost.ca to add these soon-to-be-released issues to your collection.

- ✓ Diwali
October 15
- ✓ Mary Riter Hamilton
October 28
- ✓ Holiday: Maud Lewis
November 2
- ✓ Christmas: The Nativity
November 2
- ✓ Hanukkah
November 5

The September issue followed the new pattern of an online pdf version and a subscribers-only print version. The opening message confirmed what was already obvious to philatelists, that the stamp distribution network was running on one cylinder.

Some of the temporary changes made to the stamp program and the way we distribute new issues to postal outlets remain in effect until further notice.

The November issue once more repeated the message that the only print copies would be the unilingual subscriber issues. However, during the third week of November, the bilingual version appeared in postal outlets across Calgary. The bilingual version contained the self-contradictory message that it wouldn't be published.

DEAR COLLECTORS

Happy New Year!

There has rarely been a time in recent history when those three words have meant so much. We've finally turned the page on a tough year – and according to promising news on the vaccine front, the outlook for 2021 is cause for optimism.

As the world slowly makes its way toward recovery, Canada Post remains vigilant in its efforts to safeguard the health of its customers, employees and communities. Although some of the changes made to the issue and distribution of our stamps remain in effect for now, we're happy to resume the mailing of *Details* to all our subscribers.

This first issue of the new year is a special one, celebrating the wrap-up of our most recent Lunar New Year series with a 24-stamp retrospective based on all of the original designs from the past 12 years. Sharing the spotlight is a Black History Month issue paying homage to Black settlers who overcame substantial hardships to forge a future for their families in two communities 100 years and thousands of kilometres apart.

May the year ahead bring you health and happiness.



Jim Phillips, Director, Stamp Services

TIDBITS

Stamp printing specifications

- Perforations are all 13+ or simulated perforation.
- Tagging is on four sides, unless otherwise indicated.
- Paper is Tullis Russell, unless otherwise indicated.
- Gum type is pressure sensitive, unless otherwise indicated.

A first day of issue special envelope is a common term that refers to an Official First Day Cover (OFDC).

Items may not be exactly as shown.

Si vous n'avez pas reçu cette publication dans la langue officielle de votre choix, veuillez envoyer un courriel à endetail@postescanada.ca ou remplissez le bon de commande et postez-le à notre adresse :

EN DÉTAIL POSTES CANADA
2701 PROM RIVERSIDE BUREAU N1070
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1 CANADA

COMING SOON!

Don't miss a single issue



Check out our **preview list** and **on-sale dates** below and mark your calendar. Then visit canadapost.ca to add these soon-to-be-released issues to your collection.

- ✔ Snow Mammals
February 16
- ✔ Crabapple Blossoms
March 1
- ✔ Commemorative envelope:
Concordia University of
Edmonton, 100th anniversary
March 7
- ✔ "Award-winning" stamp
April 8
- ✔ Discovery of Insulin
April 15

Questions and comments

Write to
STAMP SERVICES – DETAILS
CANADA POST
2701 RIVERSIDE DR SUITE N0870
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1 CANADA

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Canada Post Corporation.

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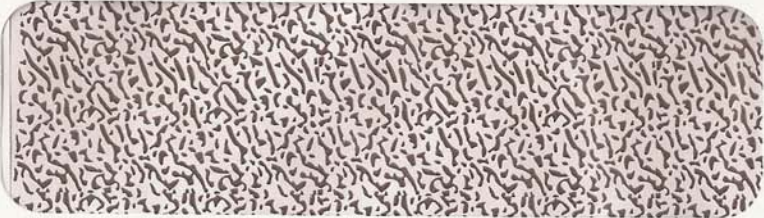
The January 2021 issue of *DETAILS* indicated a slow return to normality.

The City Of Calgary.

The 2020 property tax bills were mailed out on June 1. In addition to the bad news about taxes, the envelopes contained a brochure about the pandemic.



PO BOX 2100 STN M #8059
CALGARY AB CANADA T2P 2M5



**Find your 2020 property tax bill and
important COVID-19 information inside.**

I live in Ward 11 of Calgary and received on April 2 an unaddressed householder mail item, both sides shown here and next page, a postcard from a City councillor.



Calgary

Office of the Councillors



We're all in this together.

Do you need help? Are you able to help?

Please contact our office and sign up for our e-newsletter for regular updates and information. **My top priority is to support you** as we take necessary measures to address COVID-19, prevent the spread of illness, and **ensure the health of Calgarians.**

Please wash your hands, stay home if you are sick, and ensure physical distancing.

It is our collective responsibility to be informed and safeguard each other's health. For **the latest health information:** alberta.ca/coronavirus. For **City information** such as facility closures and local impacts: calgary.ca/covid19.

If you are struggling with social distancing, please contact our office and we will help connect you with resources. ENMAX is available at **403-310-2010** for deferrals on water, waste, and recycling bills for three months **without penalty or interest.**

Clean hands. Clear heads. Open hearts.

Physical distancing does not mean social isolation.

Now, more than ever, we need to support one another. Please reach out, at a safe distance, to seniors in particular to offer assistance. If you need help, please ask.

I am committed to remaining accountable to you. I have replaced our monthly Ward 11 town hall with a live weekly on-line meeting to report to constituents and answer your questions. For more details: calgary.ca/ward11.

COVID-19 has had a huge financial impact on our local economy. I am pushing for tax relief for homeowners and businesses. **Please contact me** with your thoughts on how City Hall should focus its efforts, both on the current situation and our economic recovery.



Jeromy Farkas, Councillor Ward 11

E: ward11@calgary.ca **P:** 403-268-2476

Office of the Councillors
PO Box 2100, Station M, #8001
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Nursing Homes.



We Relish
Our Friendly Socialization

*"...except now we must practice
socialization at a distance."*

The majority of COVID-19 fatalities were initially in nursing homes.

This one, a few blocks from my house, sent out unaddressed householder mail in middle June.

It was designed to look like a postcard, with a faux stamp and cancel.

RE-OPENING FOR BUSINESS

In July, the Alberta government initiated a complicated series of re-opening protocols, often contradicted by municipalities. There was no single unified plan to restart the economy and it is impossible to say that a particular date was the partial return to business.

Unaddressed householder mail was widely used by Calgary businesses to announce themselves as back in operation. On the next several pages are examples of postcards received at my house in the mail during 2020 July.



HELLO NEIGHBOUR

everyday, 2020
WHOLE BEAN COFFEE 340G

From the entire Monogram Family to you - We Miss You! We've missed seeing your smiling faces in the cafes and hearing about what's going on in your lives so we wanted to say hello. Use code: MISSYOU15 to get 15% off your next order online or in-store. It's our way of serving you through coffee.

We're still in this together, Family!

This postcard showed the ugly effects of the pandemic on Calgary real estate. Nationally, the situation was no better.

CALGARY ELITE REAL ESTATE TEAM

CALL US FOR A FREE MARKET EVALUATION OF YOUR HOME,
AND GET YOUR HOME SOLD FOR MAXIMUM PRICE!!
403.259.4141

REAL ESTATE STATISTICS IN CALGARY

ANNUAL/YTD	JUNE 2019	JUNE 2020	% CHANGE	2019 YTD	2020 YTD	% CHANGE
TOTAL SALES	1,775	1,744	1.75%	8,680	6,910	-20.39%
NEW LISTINGS	3,132	3,335	6.48%	17,961	15,074	-16.05%
AVERAGE PRICE	463,604	460,519	-0.67%	462,162	448,377	-2.98%



RE/MAX
REALTY PROFESSIONALS

#10, 6020 1A ST. SW. CALGARY, AB T2H 0G3

KEN MACAULAY PHIL LEPAGE CHAD CHAPMAN

INFO@CALGARYELITEREALESTATE.COM

CALGARYELITEREALESTATE.COM

Hotels.

During the pandemic, hotel vacancy rates ranged from 95% to 100%. Most shut down. During the re-opening phase, many hotels sent out unaddressed postcards to solicit new business, as shown on the next few pages.

Deerfoot

INN & CASINO



NEW HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS IN PLACE

GROUP RATES
starting at
\$119.00

Includes Complimentary:

- Meeting Space
- Business Boardroom Suite
- Welcome Reception

**ASK ABOUT
OUR EDUCATION
SPONSORSHIP**

SOUTH CALGARY'S PREMIER HOTEL

CONFERENCES | MEETING SPACE | CATERING | WEDDINGS

DEERFOOT INN & CASINO

1000, 11500 - 35 STREET SE
CALGARY, AB T2Z 3W4
403-723-4027

DEERFOOTINN.COM

The hotels in the mountain parks adjacent to Calgary were desperate for business, and sent this unaddressed postcard to Calgarians. Note the righthand side of the postcard. The front side of this postcard is shown on the next page.

We invite you to break away from the crowds!

Banff, Lake Louise and Jasper; three world-famous vacation destinations right in your own backyard! Explore hundreds of hiking trails, canoe crystal clear lakes, golf two of Canada's most iconic courses or simply relax and enjoy the view from the spa.

Now is the time to book our *Alberta Resident's Rate* and save up to 35% on accommodations at Fairmont Banff Springs, Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise or Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge. Plus, for a limited time, enjoy a complimentary room upgrade with this exclusive offer! Use promo code **PUAB** when you book on fairmont.com

Escape to the mountains and make this summer unforgettable!

YOUR EXCLUSIVE SPECIAL OFFER:

SAVE
UP TO

35%

+

**COMPLIMENTARY
ROOM UPGRADE***

AVAILABLE ON FAIRMONT.COM ONLY. USE PROMO CODE: **PUAB**

Fairmont

*This exclusive offer is only available on fairmont.com for stays at Fairmont Banff Springs, Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise and Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge. Offer is available for stays until December 22, 2020 based on availability. Complimentary room upgrade to the next room category is based on availability at time of arrival. Proof of Alberta residency (e.g. driver's license) is required upon arrival. Discount on accommodation ranges from 25% to 35% depending on the resort, and is based on the best available rate. Blackout dates may apply. See fairmont.com/alberta for details.



#ALLSAFE

We are committed to ensuring that you stay safe and stay well in all our hotels and resorts.

Visit ALLStayWell.com for details on our elevated cleaning & operational standards.



THIS SUMMER,

EXPLORE YOUR BACKYARD!

*Book this
exclusive offer
to save up to 35%
+ a complimentary
room upgrade!*

Fairmont

Banff

Lake Louise

Jasper

THE SECOND WAVE

Schools re-opened in September 2020, which caused a minor increase in COVID-19 cases. However, the second wave began in middle October after Thanksgiving. Despite warnings from health authorities, there were numerous gatherings of extended family and friends who assembled from afar for turkey dinners. Halloween parties at the end of the month further increased the infection rate. By the third week of October, a second wave was underway in Alberta, exceeding the counts of the first wave by a large margin. The provincial government had relaxed standards for social gatherings but on October 26 issued a ban on gatherings larger than 15 people, including family groups.

A case example was demonstrated by the Calgary Philatelic Society. Its monthly meetings and those of its study groups had been suspended in March but replaced by Zoom meetings beginning in September. The CPS also had a monthly auction. When it seemed reasonable, the auctions became the only live events of the club, held in September and October, using social distancing rules and face coverings. The new restrictions cancelled the November and subsequent auctions.

On the very day the ban was announced, the editor of the CALGARY PHILATELIST (myself), had just finished stuffing and sealing 170 envelopes of the November issue, which contained an announcement of a forthcoming auction. It was unrealistic to open 170 envelopes to slip in a cancellation notice and then re-seal them. I resorted to an old Trodat rubber stamp kit I hadn't used in years and put the cancellation notice on the envelopes, as shown on the next page.

I always mail a copy of each issue to myself with the rest so as to verify the speed of postal delivery. The November issue was mailed October 28 at a Calgary retail postal outlet. I received my copy the next day, as did other CPS members. This indicated that despite the pandemic Canada Post was back to normal speed.

CPS
Box 1478
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 2L6

November auction
cancelled due to
COVID 2nd wave



Dale Speirs
PO Box 6830, Station D
Calgary AB T2P 2E7



Dale Speirs
PO Box 6830 Stn D
Calgary
Alberta
T2P 2E7
CANADA



51042327534410428

CA

**Va**[illegible]

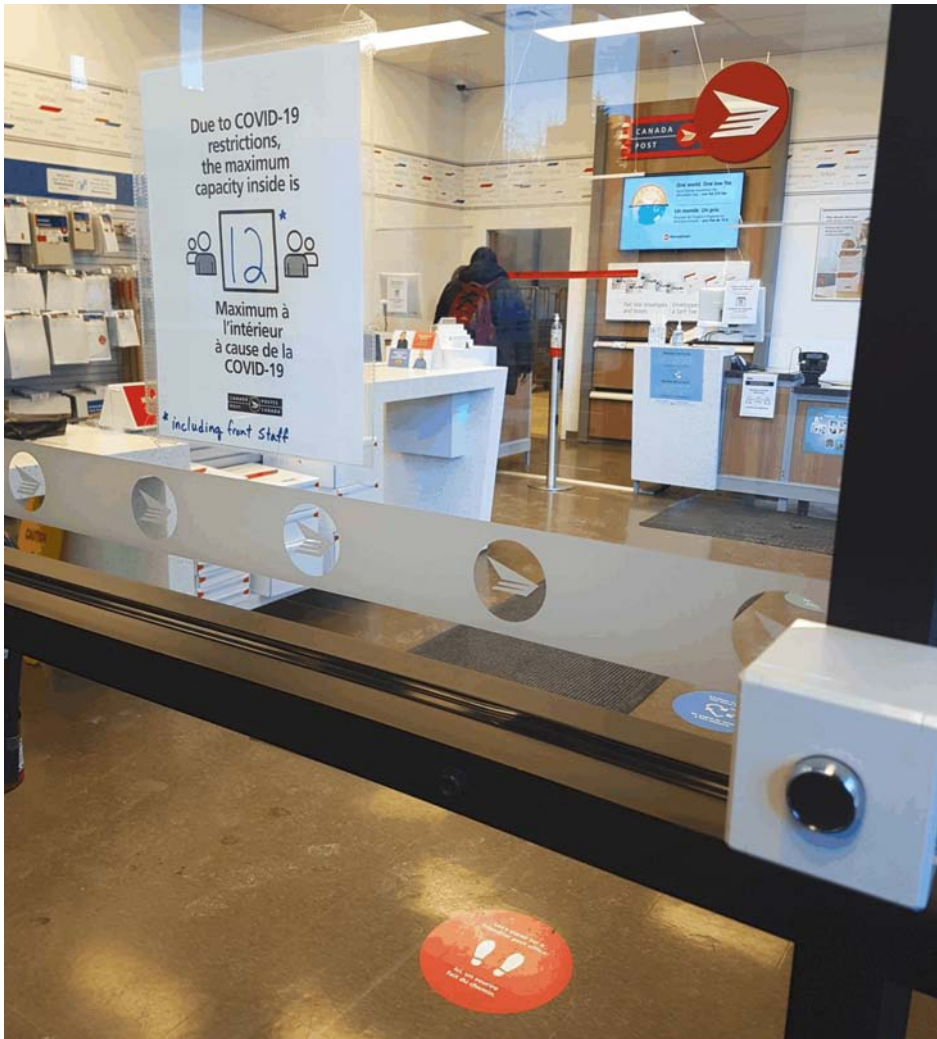
rumunfk - 381

Received in Calgary on 2020-12-17

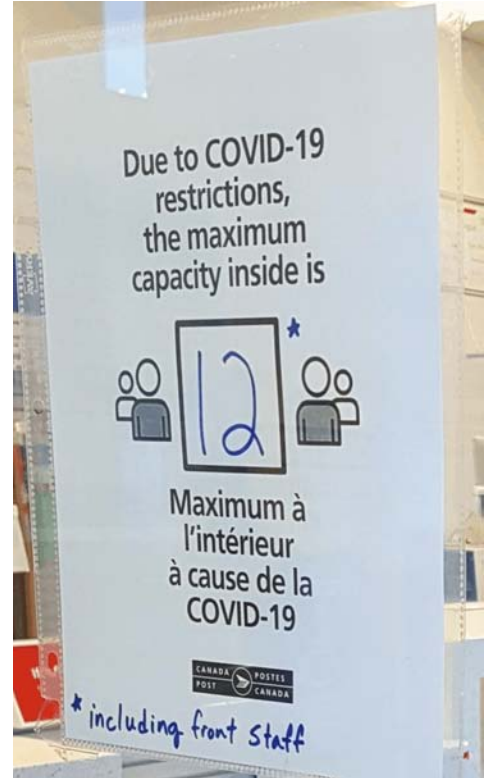


189244

33



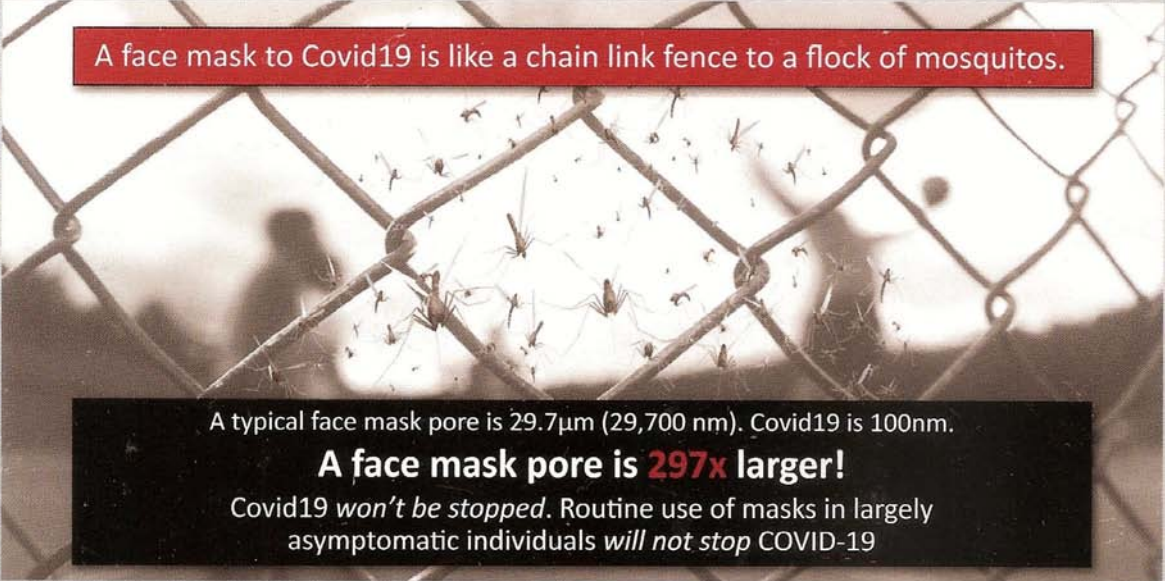
Regulations of the second wave required that all businesses reduce their customer capacity to 15% of rated capacity by the Fire Marshal. This photo and closeup show the effect on the Calgary Central Post Office.



PROTESTORS

The lockdown of the first wave had some people squawking but objections were largely minimal. However, during the second wave the fringe elements, egged on by Internet social media, began protesting and defying regulations. The next two pages show the two sides of an unaddressed postcard delivered to Calgary homes.

In 2020 November, the following unaddressed postcard was distributed in Calgary by a group opposed to masking. As by then COVID-19 cases were soaring, the statistics were out-of-date but the fact that mandatory face covering bylaws made no difference to the second wave was noticeable to the general public. Nonetheless compliance with the bylaw was quite high in Calgary.



A face mask to Covid19 is like a chain link fence to a flock of mosquitos.

A typical face mask pore is $29.7\mu\text{m}$ (29,700 nm). Covid19 is 100nm.

A face mask pore is 297x larger!

Covid19 *won't be stopped*. Routine use of masks in largely asymptomatic individuals *will not stop* COVID-19

FIND OUT MORE:

- <https://www.rcreader.com/commentary/masks-dont-work-covid-a-review-of-science-relevant-to-covide-19-social-policy>
(Scroll to the bottom for linked scientific studies)
- <https://cv19news.wixsite.com/main/doctors-industry-experts>
- Find out how at risk you are and simple ways to enhance your immune system at:
<https://www.stopcovidcold.com/>

MASKS EXPLAINED

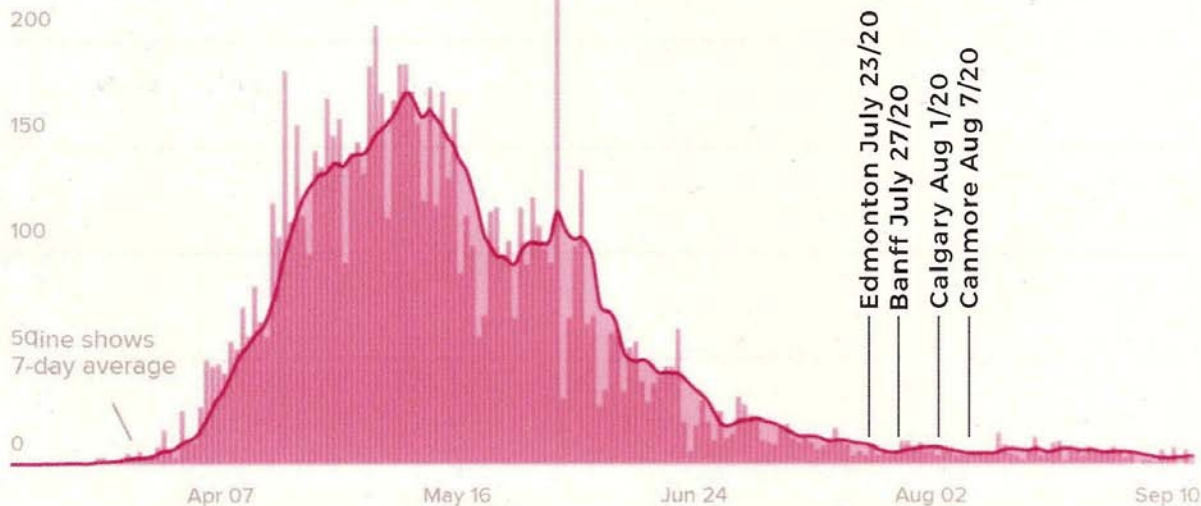
Canada

Cumulative

New

New deaths by day (+1 yesterday)

Mandatory Masking
Implemented



CANADA POST: VANS AND BOOKLETS



This van was seen on a Calgary residential street in 2020 June.

Canada Post began efforts in late 2020 to boost the morale of its employees by giving each of its 68,000 employees two booklets of thank-you stamps, not sold elsewhere. Below left: the cover of the booklet. Below right: the interior with 12 stamps.



In addition Canada Post painted some of its delivery vans in a similar style to the booklet. I photographed this van outside the Central Post Office on December 24.



CANADA POST: SPECIAL ISSUE POSTAL CARDS

Canada Post produced some postal cards during the pandemic which did not directly refer to the pandemic but were obviously related. Some were for communication by the organization, while others were for encouragement of letter writing by the general public. It was noted by Canada Post that non-philatelic sales of stamps increased as the pandemic progressed. Since almost all parcels and express packages were mailed with computer-printed labels, the conclusion was that the stamps were being used for letter mail.

Canada Post sends out a Christmas postal card to its philatelic customers each year. The 2020 card did not explicitly mention COVID-19 but the oblique references in the text of the greeting were clear to anyone receiving the card.

CANADA POST
N1070-2701 RIVERSIDE DRIVE
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1

2012050129

3883 H4T



*In this unparalleled year, we have
many reasons to be grateful.*

*Wishing you the simple joys of
the season and good health and spirits
over the holidays.*

POSTAGE PAID / PORT PAYÉ

For mailing in Canada and delivery worldwide.
Dépôt au Canada. Livraison à l'échelle internationale.

1016277-050002517#10126475

DC SPEIRS

PO BOX 6830 STN D

CALGARY AB T2P 2E7

In March 2021, Canada Post distributed a free prepaid postal card to every residential address in the country. This was part of its campaign to boost letter writing. There were six basic designs, each in two variations of English inscription over French translation and vice versa, making a total of 12 postal cards. The cards were attached to publicity material and rouletted to be torn off for mailing. The complete card and text were 41 cm long by 12.5 cm high. The reverse sides were the same for all the designs, as shown below. The designs are shown on the next six pages.



I miss you



Je m'ennuie de toi

I miss you



Je m'ennuie de toi

Je m'ennuie de toi



I miss you

Je m'ennuie de toi



I miss you

**I've been
meaning to write**



Je voulais t'écrire

**I've been
meaning to write**



Je voulais t'écrire

Je voulais t'écrire



**I've been
meaning to write**

Je voulais t'écrire



**I've been
meaning to write**

**Sending
hugs**



**Je t'envoie
des câlins**

**Sending
hugs**



**Je t'envoie
des câlins**

**Je t'envoie
des câlins**



**Sending
hugs**

**Je t'envoie
des câlins**



**Sending
hugs**



Sending smiles. Je t'embrasse.



Sending smiles. Je t'embrasse.



Je t'embrasse. Sending smiles.



Je t'embrasse. Sending smiles.

Wishing I were there



Tu me manques

Wishing I were there



Tu me manques

Tu me manques



Wishing I were there

Tu me manques



Wishing I were there

From me to you



Je t'envoie un mot

From me to you



Je t'envoie un mot

Je t'envoie un mot




From me to you


Je t'envoie un mot



From me to you


Complaints were received in Calgary and elsewhere in Canada that homeowners did not receive the free postal cards. I was one such individual who never got a card. With minimal publicity, Canada Post announced on a page buried inside its Website that residents who did not get a card could apply for one as per the screenshots below.

Canada Post Corporation
Canada Post
FREE - In Google Play[View](#)



Canada Post

Didn't receive your free postage-paid postcard from Canada Post?



Canada Post is delivering a free postage-paid postcard to every household in the country. Canadians can mail these postcards to anyone they want, anywhere in Canada, for free. There are six versions of the postcard, and each contains a simple message of love. It's our way of helping you connect to family and friends.

Fill out the form below to ensure that you receive your free postcard. One random postcard per household.

*** Required field**

First Name *

Dale

Last Name *

Speirs

Email address *

opuntia57@yahoo.ca

Canada Post will only contact you regarding delivery issues.

Mailing Address

Street address *

City *

Calgary

Province or state *





Alberta


Postal Code *


Example: A1A 1B1

[Submit](#)

For special requests, please email writenow@canadapost.ca. While Canada Post will do its best to send a postage-paid postcard to those who request one (limit 1 postcard per address), the number of available postcards is limited. The offer is only good while supplies last and Canada Post expressly disclaims any obligation to honour a request beyond available supplies.

<https://www.canadapost-p...>

Canada Post Corporation
Canada Post
FREE - In Google Play[View](#)




Canada Post

Didn't receive your free postage-paid postcard from Canada Post?

Thank you

Thank you for providing your information. We'll start preparing your postcard.

[Terms and Conditions](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Support](#)
© 2021 Canada Post Corporation



I received a postal card at my house on May 11, enclosed in a 8.5 x 5.5 envelope with a bilingual letter (both sides shown on next page).



CANADA POST
2701 RIVERSIDE DR SUITE N1070
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1

POSTES CANADA
2701 PROM RIVERSIDE BUREAU N1070
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1



DALE SPEIRS
----- SW
CALGARY AB T2T 0T7



Hello,

Enclosed you'll find the postcard you requested. It's free to mail anywhere in Canada. No stamp is required.

To help Canadians stay connected as they kept their distance to fight COVID-19, Canada Post delivered approximately 13.5 million postcards.

Sending a postcard is a way to help you stay in touch with the people who matter most, even if you can't be together right now. When a hug isn't possible, a handwritten message shows the people you care about that they're on your mind and in your heart.

Please stay safe and also stay in touch. It matters.

Canada Post



Bonjour,

Vous trouverez ci-joint la carte postale que vous avez demandée. Elle peut être postée sans frais n'importe où au Canada. Pas besoin de timbre.

Pour aider les Canadiens à rester en contact pendant qu'ils gardent leurs distances pour lutter contre la propagation de la COVID-19, Postes Canada a livré environ 13,5 millions de cartes postales.

Les cartes postales sont un moyen de garder le contact avec les êtres qui nous sont chers, même si on ne peut pas être ensemble pour le moment. Quand on ne peut pas faire un câlin, un message écrit à la main est une façon de montrer à nos proches qu'on pense à eux.

Soyez prudents, mais restez en contact. C'est important.

Postes Canada

THE THIRD WAVE

The third wave of COVID-19 began in 2021 April and was worse than the two previous waves. Both the federal government and the Alberta provincial government stumbled about with arbitrary rules and vaccine distribution problems. By early spring however, mass vaccinations had started and the percentage of immunized population began ramping up. Shown on this and the next page are the two sides of a postcard sent by the Alberta government as unaddressed householder mail and received at my house on May 11.



Here's why you should get immunized:

- ✦ Immunization is the best way to prevent yourself from getting sick with COVID-19
- ✦ Immunization is the fastest way to get back to normal and reopen our communities
- ✦ Immunization is safe, effective and necessary
- ✦ The right vaccine for you is the first one that's available
- ✦ Find all the facts about COVID-19 immunization and the rollout at alberta.ca/vaccine

See when it's your turn
at alberta.ca/vaccine

Sign up, show up, follow up:

SIGN UP

Millions of Albertans are now eligible.
Visit alberta.ca/vaccine and sign up as soon as it's your turn.

alberta.ca/vaccine



SHOW UP

Be sure to show up for your appointment to make sure as many Albertans as possible can get vaccinated.



FOLLOW UP

Follow up when it's time for your second shot to boost your immunity and get fully protected.



THE FOURTH WAVE

The third wave began fading in late June. As was becoming a typical pattern, governments relaxed precautions in July. As a result, the fourth wave began in late August. However, the difference was that the victims were almost entirely the unvaccinated. Even though they were by now a minority of the population, they quickly filled hospital beds. Yet another emergency was declared and restrictions re-imposed.

The Alberta government dithered but finally established a proof of vaccination programme, rolled out onto smartphones. Citizens had to register with their health care numbers and photo identification online. As a check against fraud, the activation code for the certificates was sent by real mail in September to the address of record. The codes were mailed in envelopes as shown below.



Health Canada decided to take advantage of the pandemic to scare the general public. This unaddressed postcard was received by Calgarians during the third week of November 2021.

RADON

GAS IN YOUR HOME

Radon is the #1 cause of lung cancer in non-smokers.
TEST to find out if you have a dangerous level.

Canadians are spending more time at home because of **COVID-19** increasing you and your family's risk of exposure to radon gas. **Now, more than ever, it is important to test your home for radon.**

1 PURCHASE

Purchase a long-term radon test online www.takeactiononradon.ca

2 TEST

Follow the instructions provided to properly place the test kit in your home.

After 3 months send your radon test kit to the lab to be analysed using the return packaging and instructions provided.

You will receive your result within a few weeks.

3 TAKE ACTION

If your radon level is below 200* no action is required.

For radon levels above 200*, take action to reduce.

Contact **1-833-723-6600**,
radon@hc-sc.gc.ca or
visit Canada.ca/radon

Health professionals visit:
radon.machealth.ca

* Radon is measured in becquerels per metre³ (Bq/m³)

<<<< note COVID-19 reference.



Health
Canada Santé
Canada

Canada

PHILATELY

A flood of postage stamps were released by postal administrations around the world. They are beyond the ken of this paper. As did other philatelists, I began collecting them as a topical. I took the opportunity to create some philatelic covers to help illustrate the pandemic.

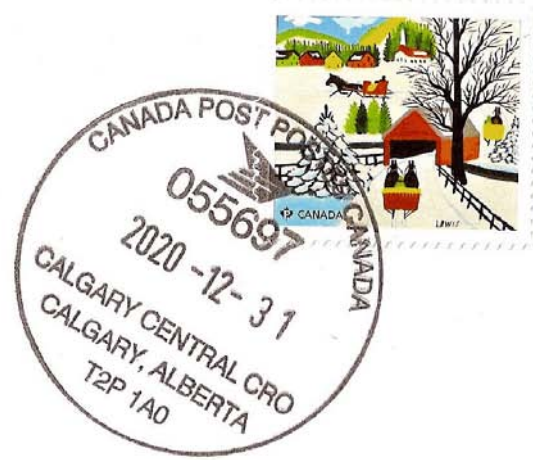
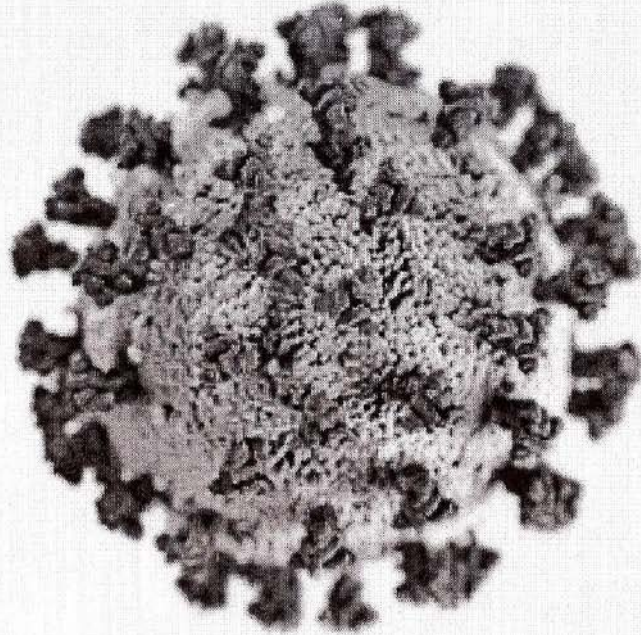
The Calgary Stampede is the world's largest rodeo, with 1.4 million paid admissions in 2019. Like many Calgary philatelists, I collect Stampede postal history dating back to the first rodeo in 1912. I was determined not to have a gap for the year 2020, so I created the cover shown on the next page. The Stampede Station postmark refers to a retail postal outlet next to the Stampede LRT station, not the actual grounds themselves.

Additional covers are shown on subsequent pages and are self-explanatory.

Calgary Stampede 2020, July 3 to 12,
cancelled due to COVID-19 coronavirus.pandemic.

No horses, no cowboy hats, no yeehawing.





2020: The Year Everything Was Cancelled

WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 11 March 2020

11 March 2020



中文

Français

Русский

עברית

Good afternoon.

In the past two weeks, the number of cases of COVID-19 outside China has increased 13-fold, and the number of affected countries has tripled.

There are now more than 118,000 cases in 114 countries, and 4,291 people have lost their lives.

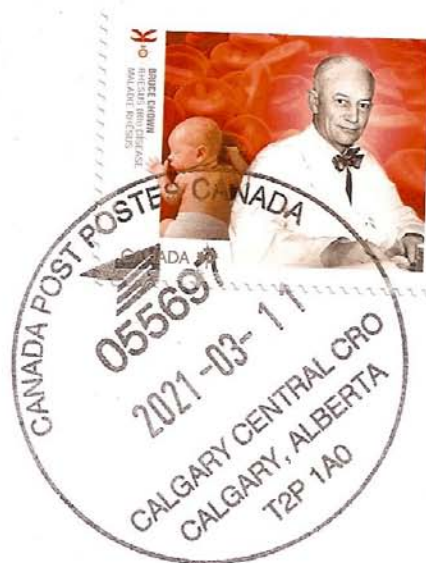
Thousands more are fighting for their lives in hospitals.

In the days and weeks ahead, we expect to see the number of cases, the number of deaths, and the number of affected countries climb even higher.

WHO has been assessing this outbreak around the clock and we are deeply concerned both by the alarming levels of spread and severity, and by the alarming levels of inaction.

We have therefore made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic.

ONE YEAR AGO ...





2020 March 11 - Pandemic declared
 2020 March 12 - The Great Toilet
 Paper Panic began.



CALGARY STAMPEDE

July 9 to 18, 2021

Masks, limited admissions, social distancing,
limited events, but still better than nothing.



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