

# let's talk EXHIBITING

David Piercey, FRPSC

## EXHIBITING PICTURE POSTCARDS


"Picture postcards" is a relatively new type of exhibit Class that is now included in most any competitive philatelic exhibition. It is its own Class, for example like Revenues or Thematics or Illustrated Mail, and is meant for exhibits that consist entirely of picture postcards. Whereas picture postcards are not supposed to

be shown in traditional stamp exhibits (except perhaps to augment the philatelic material in a Display Class exhibit) they can instead be shown in the Picture Postcard Class. Consequently, many of our shows now almost always include a few postcard exhibits too, and these exhibits are often quite popular among the viewers.



Picture postcards include the full gamut of commercially produced postcards that were intended to be carried through the mail, whether produced during the postcard craze of over a hundred years ago now, or still being produced into the present era. One shows the picture side of the postcard, and the exhibit is organized to tell a story just like any philatelic exhibit in any other Class or Division. In fact, the rules and guidelines for exhibiting picture postcards are the same as apply to all our various stamp exhibits. That is, in addition to requiring a well-organized Title Page, a Synopsis Page should also be submitted when making application, as this synopsis will be used to educate the jury about the challenges behind forming the exhibit. Then, the exhibit will be judged using the same criteria of Treatment and Importance, Knowledge Study and Research, Condition and Rarity, and Presentation as any other exhibit.

What differs, of course, is that philatelic knowledge is not of importance; instead, one's postcard knowledge comes to the forefront, and it is the "deltiology" of the postcards which must be described. The more the exhibitor can describe about the production of the cards (e.g., publisher, printer, quantities, varieties, etc.), the more the deltiology knowledge is demonstrated. This may make it somewhat more difficult than the typical philatelic exhibit, since often such information




**Through  
Postcards  
1905 - 1935**

A Warwick & Rutter Post Card postmarked Digby N. S. and dated Oct. 26, 1907.

**Purpose and scope**  
 This exhibit will take you for a visit to the town of Digby, Nova Scotia between the years 1905 and 1935 during tourist season. At one point in the 1920's there was at least 20 different hotels, inns or guest houses to accommodate tourists that usually doubled the town's population during the summer period. Most of the tourists came from the New England states.  
 This exhibit will show how visitors traveled to the community, where they stayed, points of interest they would have seen on their visit, the Gap, Point Prim, the streets and of course the water front. Some of the activities they could have participated in. Where they would have shopped and even where they would have worshipped on Sunday.  
 This will be done with postally used postcards where possible. Used postcards are sometimes harder to get, but dated postcards with pertinent messages add to the interest of the postcard.  
 Postcards that are harder to find (scarcer) are indicated with yellow dots beside them.

**Exhibit Plan**

- Pages 2-8 Ferries
- Pages 9-12 Point Prim
- Pages 13-16 Digby Gut
- Pages 17-20 Trains
- Pages 21-38 Accommodations
- Pages 39-40 Point Pleasant & Mi'kmaq
- Page 41-52 Jew Cove & Water St.
- Pages 52-64 Water Front
- Pages 64-68 Yachting
- Pages 69-77 Town Views
- Pages 78-80 Town Streets
- Page 81 - Scenic walks and drives
- Pages 82-88 Buildings of Interest
- Page 89-91 Battery Point
- Page 91-93 Fish Drying
- Page 94-95 The Racquette
- Page 96 Multiple Views



The text written in light print follows the story line of the exhibit as it discusses the views and the history behind the town including the ferries, train, streets, town views, water front, and buildings and points of interest.

The text written in the bolder print discusses the postcards themselves, the printer, the printing process and when and where it was posted.

may simply not be available the way such production details are available for philatelic material. That is, catalogues and handbooks are perhaps not as common and rarity and value of individual cards may not be as easily determined. So the exhibitor needs to fully inform the viewer of one's personal study and research, and determination in seeking out the material, that has been undertaken in developing the exhibit.

Postcard exhibits should be organized in some fashion – whether by publisher, by printing, by era, thematically, or on some other logical basis. It is this organization which expresses the exhibitor's knowledge of the topic – the "subject knowledge" which takes the material beyond a mere collection and into a coherent exhibit.

Suppose, for example, one wanted to show an exhibit of "Niagara Falls," arguably one of the most iconic, and most photographed, of Canadian landmarks. The choice of postcards on this topic would be so extensive as perhaps to appear quite daunting.

The challenges here in creating a good exhibit on "Niagara Falls" would thus be several. Treatment and Importance would be demonstrated by the choice of material presented and how the story line was developed, so the exhibit would have to be more than just a collection of pictures of the Falls. Research and Knowledge thus becomes a determinant in the evaluation of the exhibit, and the exhibitor needs to show both a strong subject knowledge of the Falls as well

as a strong knowledge of the deltiological aspects of each card. Condition and Rarity also comes into play, as the challenge would be to find well-preserved, scarcer, and uncommon material to use in the exhibit's development, and to highlight it accordingly in the exhibit.

Shown with this column are two pages from the gold medal exhibit, shown both at Royal/Royale and BNAPEX, "Greetings from Dig-

Digby (whether by steamer or by train) would then have occasion to see and do around the town and its waterfront. She also includes an indication of how she will indicate rarity (with yellow dots) and, at the bottom of the page, how she is using either light print or bold print to show her subject knowledge and her postcard knowledge, respectively, throughout the 96 pages (six frames) of her exhibit.

The second page shown, illustrative of the rest of the exhibit, is from her "Buildings of Interest" chapter. Interestingly, she shows a postcard of a church produced by a local printer, McBride's News Stand, and then even shows a postcard depicting McBride's News Stand, and provides an indication of its apparent scarcity. Note also she has arranged the two postcards diagonally from each other, allowing the text to be placed more beside each card than underneath each card, thus helping to vary the layout from page to page and maintain visual interest.

\*\*\*

The interested reader may wish to consult an article by Ania Michas on the George Eastman House website that covers in detail many different

aspects of the history of picture post card production, including the variety of photographic paper stocks used in cameras for the production of "real photo picture post cards" (RPPC's). I find the article is extremely useful for understanding the fundamentals of deltiology. It is found at: [http://notesonphotographs.org/index.php?title=Michas,\\_Ania.\\_%22An\\_Introduction\\_to\\_the\\_History,\\_Identification\\_and\\_Collectability\\_of\\_Early\\_Postcard\\_Prints.%22](http://notesonphotographs.org/index.php?title=Michas,_Ania._%22An_Introduction_to_the_History,_Identification_and_Collectability_of_Early_Postcard_Prints.%22), ✉

**Buildings of Interest – St. Patrick's Church – McBride's News Stand**



*St. Patrick's R.C. Church, Digby, N.S.*

**A Private Post Card from McBride's News Stand, Digby, N. S. is postmarked Digby, N. S. and is dated July 9, 1907.**

This Roman Catholic Church was built by Irish immigrants in 1834 on the corner of King and Prince William Streets on top of the hill. It remained the Catholic Church for a hundred years until a new and larger church was started in 1934. The Church in this postcard was demolished.

No exhibit on Digby postcards would be complete without this postcard. The building in the fore front on the right is the **McBride's News Stand** that published this postcard as well as a great number in the exhibit.

This is not a common postcard. This exhibitor has only seen this postcard once and that is when it was acquired.



*Sydney Street and the Shop where Post Cards were first introduced in Digby, N.S.*

It was located on Sydney Street just behind the Bank of Nova Scotia building shown on the third page of this exhibit. The caption on the postcard says it all "**Sydney Street and the Shop Where Post Cards were first introduced in Digby, N. S.**" If one looks closely at the front of the building there are many signs on the building advertising Souvenir Post Cards.

by..." by Doreen Fitzgerald of Nova Scotia. Her Title Page incorporates a novel way to present her title – a postcard reading "Greetings from Digby N.S." becomes much of her title. Then, she introduces what she intends to show – postcards from the period 1905-1935, and from the tourist season. Her Plan, prominently visible, provides the organization for what she will then be showing, and the chapters then focus on aspects of what a tourist, arriving in