

# THE EDITOR'S PAGE

by MIKE STREET

## THE NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM - II

*In this issue of TOPICS we are attempting to keep members up-to-date on the Postal Museum situation. Elsewhere you will find the latest news and a sampling of opinions expressed by interested parties. While I was pleased with the response to my last editorial in TOPICS, I felt that the one which follows was as good or better. Because it presents new information and a different point of view, it is reprinted here.*

*We are aware of the risk that TOPICS could appear to be one-note on this matter, but feel that follow-up is necessary because the regular Canadian media have ignored the story and the only Canadian Stamp newspaper has printed information which was quite misleading. (The best coverage has been in Stamp Collector, which has followed the story very closely.)*

Mike Street

### PHILATELIE QUEBEC - MARCH 1985 EDITORIAL

by Denis Cottin

*... In a February 4 press release Mr. Villeneuve, Vice-President of Communications of Canada Post Corporation, announced to us the closing for an indefinite period of the National Postal Museum.*

First, allow us to congratulate you, Mr. Villeneuve. In an unusual occurrence, philatelists did not first learn the news through a leak to Linn's Stamp News knowingly orchestrated by Ottawa, as is so often the custom.

But returning to the point, you announce the closing due to lack of time on the one hand and resources on the other.

#### LET'S TALK ABOUT LACK OF TIME:

How is it, Mr. Villeneuve, that you have not been able to plan the move, when for the last five years the Museum was only renewing its lease one year at a time!

Just last year, in a conversation with Mrs. Beaulieu, we talked about a move forecast for March 1985. Were you not in the know? Are you the least well informed person in your corporation? The reason which you give appears to be an excuse, which does not hold up on inspection, except as proof of the incompetence of certain managers, which it is about time was made known.

#### EXAMINING YOUR SECOND REASON, LACK OF RESOURCES:

The most basic business ideas known by all of us say that to balance a budget, we have two solutions: lower expenses, or increase revenues.

In closing the Museum you cut out an expense of around \$1 million, but did you think about all the possibilities for additional revenue which philately alone can give you?

Let's look at some facts first. According to PS, your (Quebec regional) house newspaper, your corporation sold more than \$50 million in philatelic products, leaving you with a profit from this department of \$22.6 million for 1983. (An increase is forecast for this item in 1984.)

From the CANADA 84 National Stamp Exhibition, you realized an excess of revenues over expenditures of more than one-half million dollars thanks to the sale of the souvenir sheet, which WE pay for!

With such profits made from philatelists alone, you cannot deny your responsibility to give access to the national postal museum to researchers. The only place for preserving (this) part of our most precious heritage?

No, Mr. Villeneuve, the reason given, lack of resources, will not stand up to examination. The revenues obtained from philatelists exceed

by many millions the expenses. Moreover, even if this were not the case, in 1983 you financed the Commonwealth well with a \$2 stamp which generated millions of dollars in revenue. And if it was necessary to increase revenues, it would be easy for your corporation to:

1) Improve the quality of the printing of our stamps — a product of quality is much easier to export;

2) Choose subjects of more international interest — for it is neither John Macoun nor Cure Labelle who will be the top philatelic sellers in Canada or abroad.

How do you justify not having issued even one stamp for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, especially when we were counted as one of the strongest foreign delegations? How do you justify the refusal of your corporation to issue a stamp for the 1985 World Gymnastic Championships in Montreal? Do you really have too much

revenue? Or is it that our stamps are only issued as a reward for this or that political pressure group?

What are you waiting for to propose a committee which could better manage and recommend uses for a portion of the money generated by philately? After PHILEX-FRANCE the French Post Office turned over many tens of thousands of dollars to the Federation of Philatelic Societies of France, and the Swiss have a rich development fund of over \$400 (four hundred) million dollars...What would you think of offering us something similar? Are you really searching for positive alternatives?

There are many of us who are more than ready to help you in this course of action.

Translation: H. M. (Mike) Street

Note: The above editorial was reprinted in the Montreal newspaper 'Le devoir'.

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