

# Brampton School's Philatelic YOUTH PROJECT AT WORLD STAMP SHOW

By Kathy Hartley

This is a story about what can happen when people are inspired to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for a project and decide to take it to the next level.

Earlier this year, two teachers from Mount Royal Public School in Brampton, Ontario shared the book *The Stamp Collector* by Jennifer Lanthier, with their Grade 8 students. The teachers, Eva Dillenbeck and Andrew Kinal, decided to incorporate a unit on postage stamps into their curriculum because they saw it as "a cross-curricular, experiential learning experience covering language (both French and English), geography, history, and visual art." They contacted the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and president George Pepall suggested they ask members of neighbouring Bramalea Stamp Club for advice.

The teachers were invited to the club's Annual February Show and Bourse, and provided with basic philatelic materials to spark their class's interest. Club members Ingo Nessel, Jerry Piotrowski and Bob Thorne put their heads together and created a slide show that, while focusing on the interests of grade school children, also described in real philatelic language what the hobby of stamp collecting is all about. This slide presentation, which will be available on The RPSC website, was made at the school on March 8, 2016.

The children were attentive and all agreed the presentation was a great success. The teachers followed up by

having each student design a postage stamp. Each stamp was accompanied by a statement describing what the student intended their stamp to represent. Their work was incredible.

Enter the Librarian.

It was a week before all philatelic eyes would be focusing on the World Stamp Show in New York City, and just over a month before the students would be released to enjoy their summer vacations. Meanwhile, both teachers knew they'd be heading off to postings in new schools in September. Having worked with school-age children in my pre-Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation (VGGPRF) life, I saw an opportunity for something wonderful to happen.

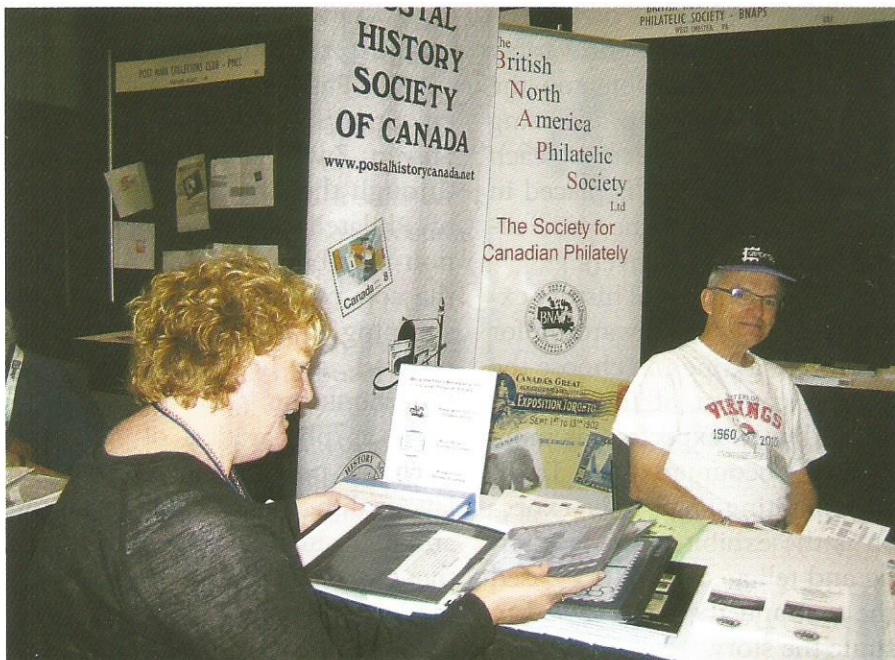
What eventually took place was beyond my wildest dreams.

Over my time here at the VGGPRF, I had built a solid relationship with the good people at Canadian Stamp News, in particular, their reporter Jesse Robitaille, who always had an open ear for story ideas. The work of the teachers, students and the Bramalea philatelists certainly was worth a story in their paper.

As well, if the kids could get a hard copy of the story in their hands as take away before they left for their summer holidays, not only would they have an answer to the "What did you do at school today" question, every one of those 80 families would have a launching pad into a

discussion of their own history of stamp collecting. While these conversations could be started and shared at home, every stamp club event publicized in that issue of CSN would be exposed to anyone looking to revisit or begin a philatelic adventure.

Robitaille was keen to write something up. He and Jerry Piotrowski agreed to meet here at the library to do an interview. For 'colour' Jerry had picked up the stamps designed by the kids, to bring in. Meanwhile I was assembling promotional material for the Canadian table at the New York show hosted by the British



**Karen Walsh looking through the binder of work done by the students with George Pepall, president of The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, looking on.**