

Press Release



Love Letters from the Past

Courtship, Companionship, and Family
in the Ukrainian Canadian Community

The Kule Folklore Centre, University of Alberta, is proud to make the Edmonton public debut of its latest exhibit at:

**Southgate Centre
5015 – 111 Street
Edmonton, Alberta**

February 8-14, 2019

The exhibit is located by the Royal Bank and Rexall Drug Store

Love, courtship and family are essential parts of every culture and every community.
Each love story, however, is unique.

For Ukrainians in Canada, the search for love manifested itself in many different ways. Some chose to leave their loved ones – wives and fiancées – in the Old Country, so that they could build a new life in Canada and earn enough money to later reunite with family. Others, including eligible bachelors from the Ukrainian Canadian community, wrote back home in search of prospective wives in Ukraine. And eligible young Ukrainian women, who dreamed of immigrating to Canada, often forwarded their photographs to family and friends, hoping to find a suitor in the New World. Through all these trials and tribulations, affection, courtship and companionship was most often communicated by mail. Private correspondence played an important role in the lives of Ukrainian Canadians, as well as the post office itself.

This exhibit explores love and courtship culture as it was shaping up in the Ukrainian Canadian community. Through actual letters, memoirs, family photographs, and various publications, we learn how personal relationships evolved, and how this new culture flourished in both urban and rural environments. We also explore this new cultural phenomenon by showcasing “how-to” Ukrainian publications, such as “How to Write Letters” that was published in Winnipeg, as well as real and satirical fictional letters that were published in newspapers. The story of the first Ukrainian post master and the first Ukrainian post office in Wostok, AB, brings it all together by touching upon the role of *Canada Post* as an institution which sparked the beginning of many romantic relationships while also shaping Ukrainian identity in Canada.

Especially around Valentine’s Day, *Love Letters from the Past* will appeal to multiple audiences from different cultures and generations who heard similar stories of people in search of love from their families.