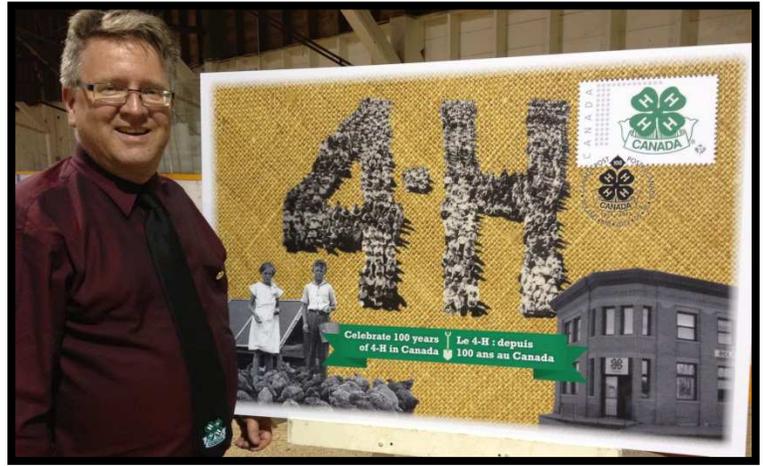




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Rob Black, Chair of the 100th Anniversary Celebrations, with Canada Post's 4-H Canada Commemorative Envelope.

Official Museum of 4-H in Canada Proclaimed in Roland, Manitoba

On May 31st, the skies over Roland, Manitoba, opened up with a torrential downpour, threatening to cancel the 4-H Canada 100th Anniversary celebrations. As the birthplace of the first 4-H club in Canada and the location of the recently proclaimed official museum of 4-H in Canada, Roland was prepared to receive almost 600 guests and participants for the outdoor event – until the floods came!

However, in traditional rural community style, a Roland posse of volunteers arrived to save the day and move everything into the covered Roland curling rink. The festivities were launched by Manitoba's Premier, The Honourable Greg Selinger, and included the unveiling of a Canada Post Commemorative Envelope by Frederick Pollard, Western Canada's General Manager of Operations at Canada Post. Mr. Pollard stated that the commemorative envelope was in celebration of the one of the largest and longest-running youth development organizations in Canada and honours the successes of 4-H in Canada. The envelope can be purchased for \$3.00 online or at any participating Canada Post office.

Known originally as a Boys' and Girls' Club for youth ages 10 to 16 years, 4-H started in the Roland School House in 1913 by co-founders Dr. W. J. Black, Director of Colonization and Agriculture, Manitoba's first Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and first Principal of the Manitoba Agricultural College; and Edgar Ward Jones, Director of Extension Services at the Manitoba Agricultural College.



The 4-H Canada Museum in Roland, Manitoba

On April 23rd, 1913, Jones set down the parameters for this new venture by indicating that "The [Manitoba] Department of Agriculture has authorized us to give one dozen pure bred eggs from bred to lay strain of poultry, free of charge to each boy or girl entering this club. In addition to this, we will give to each boy or girl entering this club a quantity of pure bred potatoes to be used for seed and about three hundred grains each of the best three varieties of fodder corn ... We [the College] will send a man up to organize this club and he will go out again to distribute the material ... We propose visiting the farms at which these boys and girls are located, once during the summer, and will give in circular letter form information from time to time ... If the Roland Municipality Agricultural Society and individuals of the district will guarantee the prize money for a fall school fair, we will do everything else, as long as we have the support of parents in your district."

From this modest start, 4-H in Canada has evolved into a respected organization of approximately 26,000 members across Canada taking part in more than 40,000 projects and mentored by 8,000 dedicated volunteer leaders. As reflected in the Jones accounting to supply the tools and knowledge to start raising chickens, potatoes and fodder corn, 4-H programs provide Canadian youth with the opportunity to "Learn to Do by Doing." Guided by volunteer leaders, 4-H members develop self-confidence, and learn a wide variety of skills through hands-on projects that help to cultivate leadership abilities.

In proclaiming Roland as home to the official museum of 4-H in Canada, each provincial 4-H organization in attendance donated one item to the special Centennial Display Case. The museum is housed in the former Roland Royal Bank Building, originally erected in 1902 for the Bank of Hamilton, a forerunner of the RBC. In 1990, the building was taken over to promote Roland as the birthplace of 4-H in Canada, housing a handful of artifacts and memorabilia.

Now that it has been proclaimed as the official museum of 4-H in Canada, the Canadian 4-H Council will add further historical collections and artifacts, currently held in Ottawa, to the Roland 4-H Museum. This expanded collection will make the museum in Roland a destination for anyone wanting to wade into the past of 4-H in Canada.

"We had wanted this to be a real 4-H family reunion to celebrate the centenary of this remarkable organization and to mark the beginning of the next chapter of our history," said Rob Black, Past-President of the Canadian 4-H Council and Chair of the 4-H Canada 100th Anniversary Committee. "It was that and much more. Thanks to the people of Roland and a night of fireworks, it was a blast!"

For more information on the 4-H Canada Museum in Roland, Manitoba, please visit www.4h.mb.ca/history.php or www.mts.net/~rol4hmus/