

# Postcards to the Front International Newsletter August 2023

## Welcome

Welcome to the inaugural international Postcards to the Front Newsletter. This newsletter contains stories from Ukraine, Canada and Australia. We hope in the future many more postcard warriors will join us. That will inspire our current members to send even more cards. Perhaps some new member will consider setting up another branch in their country.

## A month in postcards

This month our postcard warriors from Canada sent xxx<sup>1</sup> card and from Australia 514 cards. Canada's total sent is now 285 and Australia's total sent is now 4,287 cards.

Please keep the cards coming the recipients will treasure them!

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<sup>1</sup> Figures not available at time of publication

## Postcards To the Front



## Feedback from the Lines





## Let's Learn some Ukrainian

We thought it would be nice to try and write some words in Ukrainian on your cards. Remember words are just lines on a page. Please try to write a phrase in Ukrainian on your card. We know ... it's not easy. Even if you don't quite get it right, your effort will be appreciated.

**Here are some samples to choose from –**

1. We are proud of you (plural) - Ми пишаємося вами
2. We read news about Ukraine every day - ми читаємо новини про Україну щодня

3. We wish you health and happiness (single form)- Ми бажаємо тобі здоров'я і щастя
4. Our country stays with Ukraine - наша країна ЗА Україну
5. What you do is incredible - те, що ви робите, неймовірно
6. Thank you - Дякую
7. Please, be careful (plural) - будь ласка, будьте обережні

**The phrase of the month for September is:**

**Greetings from over the ocean - вітання з-за океану**

## ***Did you know ...?***

Ukraine celebrates Independence Day on August 24th.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independence\\_Day\\_of\\_Ukraine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independence_Day_of_Ukraine).

Take some time to pause and reflect on the meaning of a struggle for independence.

Consider writing a few cards for Defenders of Ukraine who are doing just that: fighting against an aggressor that wishes to deny freedom and independence to Ukraine.

If you want to know more, click to open link – [UKRAINE INDEPENDENCE DAY - August 24, 2023 - National Today](#)

## **TIPS from the Front Lines**

These tips are from the founders– Tamara, Ira and Marichka.

Every single card is greatly appreciated. Each one makes a difference in a difficult day. Here are some tips to ensure that your messages of support easily reach the hearts of the Defenders.

- As English is not Ukrainians' first language, it is best to **keep messages simple and brief**. And to print. You can fill up space on your card with drawings; it doesn't matter how simple. Try hearts (with blue on the top, and yellow on the bottom, like the Ukrainian flag), a sunshine, a colourful doodle, simple flowers, or a sunflower.
- **Did you know** ... there are many Australians and Canadians standing shoulder to shoulder with Ukrainian Defenders? Consider adding something that your compatriots might appreciate, like a flag image or other icon that would be recognizable. Maybe add a line, *"Hello to any Canadian / Australian standing with you on the Front Lines!"*
- Ukraine is a multi-national, multi-religious country. Therefore, **please use supportive phrases that do not invoke any one particular faith or belief**.
- Cards that have notes or drawings from children are especially welcome. Defenders deeply miss their families, and all the young people in their lives. Maybe there's a child in your life who could sit with you to write some cards together with you, or draw some pictures on the cards you write? **Defenders are particularly moved when they receive cards from a child**.
- **PLEASE: do not add any contact information on your card**. No email address. No mailing address. Just your name and where you're from. For two reasons: the Defenders really don't have time to write back AND for safety purposes. Thank you for respecting this request from Postcards in Ukraine.

# Canada Branch News & Updates



Since we launched the [Canada branch](#) of *Postcards to the Front* at the end of April, 2023, we have sent 273 cards from Canadians *and* Americans to Ukraine.

**MANY THANKS** for so many beautiful cards and heartfelt messages of support!

Handmade cards, art cards, cards created from a sender's own photography, beautiful notes and lovely drawings. Every single one has made our hearts warm, and we can easily imagine big smiles on the faces of Defenders who are touched by the outpouring of love, care, and support from around the world.

From the day your card lands in our mailbox in Millbrook, Ontario, to the day it lands in the hands of a Defender on the front lines in Ukraine, it has traveled over 8,000km (5,000miles), and likely dodged a few bullets, passed low under a drone or two, been hauled over bomb-riddled roads, and, maybe, encountered some terrible weather. It has passed through many hands, before reaching the hands of a Defender. The journey lasts up to, or longer than, two-three months.

But that little bit of paper with its message of love and hope makes someone's day!

And we can never get enough cards to send onward to Defenders.

That's why we're asking our readers to share our website – [postcardstothefrontcanada.com](http://postcardstothefrontcanada.com) – with as many people as possible. Ask family and friends to write cards. Involve your kids. We are especially hoping for Christmas greetings this month. We all know how difficult a lonely Christmas, away from the love and warmth of family and home, can be.

To this end, we have an August campaign to gather as many cards as possible. There are prizes! Check it out [here](#) on our website.

**It** takes up to three months for cards to get to the front lines. Here are a few very simple lines that you can write on your card:

*Sending Best Wishes for Christmas and for 2024!*  
З Різдвом Христовим! (Merry Christmas)

Or, Веселих свят! (Happy Holidays)

Recently, two of our supporters received prizes for sending cards by mid-August: borscht and halva sent directly to us from home base in Ukraine. Awesome!



We also hope to ramp up our card-writing workshops as summer holidays fade into autumn days. If you need ideas or even some cards for a card-writing session with friends or family,

## Postcards To the Front

be in touch. We're happy to help you get things rolling! – [postcardstothefront.Canada@gmail.com](mailto:postcardstothefront.Canada@gmail.com). And check out the section in this newsletter on *Writing in Ukrainian*. Just one short phrase helps a Defender feel even more connected with you.

Recapping our gratitudes:

- We are grateful for every single card that comes to our mailbox. Every one!
- We're grateful to a group of Canadian and American [Postcrossers](#) who got together in Windsor, Ontario, to write a lovely batch of cards, all of which have since arrived in Ukraine in nearly record time!
- We appreciate the group of artists in New Hamburg, Ontario, who spent an afternoon learning how to write some brief Cyrillic messages on their beautiful and joyful hand-made cards – which, we hope, will arrive in Ukraine soon. We included something special for Tamara in that mail packet, so we're super-keen for it to hurry up and

arrive in her mailbox. Sshhhh ... it's a surprise ...  

Please, check out our website – [postcardstothefrontcanada.com](http://postcardstothefrontcanada.com) – for the latest news and updates. Please [subscribe](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page), so we can keep in touch.

And PLEASE ... keep writing those cards. They do make a difference ...

Questions? Want to reach out to send us unused stamps (we could use some!) or blank cards? Be in touch: [postcardstothefront.Canada@gmail.com](mailto:postcardstothefront.Canada@gmail.com)

And if you have a batch of cards ready for us to send on to Ukraine, here's our address:

*Postcards to the Front (Canada / Канада)*

P. O. Box 184

Millbrook, ON L0A 1G0

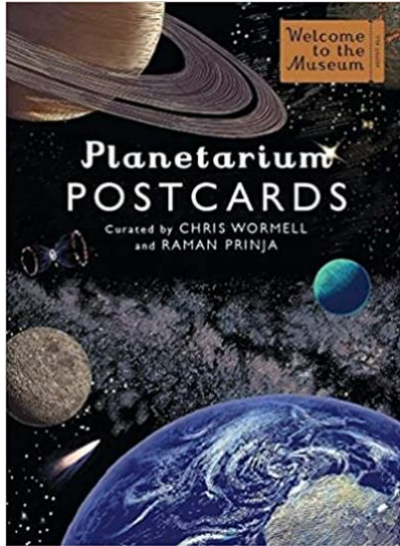
Canada



***Thank you for your continued support of Defenders in Ukraine!***

# Australia Branch Update and News

## *On Reaching 5,000 Cards*



The person who sends us the 5,000<sup>th</sup> card will win a boxset of Planetarium Postcards donated by Queen of the Hounds.

Cards will be processed in order of receipt. Don't forget to put your name and email address on the back of the envelope containing the cards so we can let you know if you have won.

If we can't identify the winner, we will allocate the prize to the next card received. Good luck & keep the cards coming!

<https://post-spots.blogspot.com/2023/06/engraving-known-universe-conversation.html>

*We are indebted to Clarisse Hart for giving permission to publish this link to her blog where she interviews the Artist of the Planetarium Postcards.*

## *Volunteers Needed*

*We are still looking for someone to set up and run a Facebook page, a Twitter account and an Instagram account. If you have any skills in these areas please contact us [postcardstothefrontau@gmail.com](mailto:postcardstothefrontau@gmail.com)*

*We are rather desperately seeking An Ambassador for New Zealand. If you know anyone see if you can get them to talk to me and we can probably tap into this market.*

## *Christmas at the Front*

So far, we have sent cards 1288 Christmas Cards.

Our initial aim was to have a contingency of 1,000 cards in case the war went beyond Christmas.



**We are still accepting Christmas cards that arrive up to 30 September 2023.** This gives us enough time to send them to Ukraine so that the team can organize the delivery process. I can think of nothing worse than having Christmas in the Trenches.

We have plenty of blank Christmas cards so if you need any contact us.

## *Darwin – Fun and work at the same time.*

While in Darwin for a Holiday Peter had the opportunity to set up a Postcards to the Front stand at the Sunday Market in Nightcliff, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August. We didn't get a big haul of postcards, but every postcard is precious as we all know, so it was well worth the effort.



Two local cafes were also willing to put up Postcards to the Front information on their local Notice Boards.

We need to spread the message of who we are and why we exist wherever and whenever we can.

## *Handmade cards*

Some pretty examples from Singapore. SC is a really skilled Postcard writer and maker.



## *World Postcard Day 01 October 2023*

The first of October is world Postcard Day. Join us in clogging up the World Postal System by sending even more cards on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October.

## *Having problems finding Postcards*

Are you having problems finding Postcards or Christmas cards for our Christmas Card Project? Some generous supporters have provided us a lot of cards. Let me know via [ramadgep@gmail.com](mailto:ramadgep@gmail.com) and we can send you some.



## Postcards To the Front

We have some from our friends at Port O'Call Motel in Port Macquarie (<https://www.portocallmotel.com.au>) & some mighty fine ones of Williamstown from our friend Carmel Riordan. Carmel is a writer and photographer, living in Melbourne's inner west & A lot of random cards.



# Get to know the Team ...An Interview with Helen from Postcards to the Front Canada

*What is your favourite book?*

Such an impossible question for me to answer. Soooo many great books have come into my life, starting with the very first book that I owned, *Alice in Wonderland*. It was a gift from my faraway grandparents when I was a child, and I read it *many* times. I still have it and I cherish it, no matter how tattered it now is. Another favourite book was also a childhood gift, given to me by my aunt. A dictionary. That is where I plunged into words and meanings and the rhythm of the English language. I read it every night when a child! LOL! Many books along the way have influenced my thinking and actions; books about the environment, about social issues, and about history.

*What is your favourite quote?*

I have a few favourite quotes. The one that I'd like to share here is one that carried me through the pandemic years, and one that I still cherish daily: "Adopt the pace of nature, her secret is patience." –Ralph Waldo Emerson

*What is your favourite song?*

I like most genres, and I listen to music every day; different music for different purposes. When I write, I listen to classical music that relaxes. When doing household chores, bring on the rock music! In the car, a range of music. Then there's all the music that I sing with my grandchildren, from lullabies to play music. And since the invasion of Ukraine in February, 2022 I have made a point to become acquainted with Ukrainian music [and poetry]; classical to contemporary. I had never watched Eurovision, but was blown away by *Kalush* singing "Stefania"; such a powerful song that has since taken on so much meaning in Ukraine. I was introduced to the bandura on my first visit to Ukraine, more than 20 years ago, so I started to look for music that features the bandura and came across *B&B Project*, which feature the bandura and an accordion – the instrument I learned to play when young. *B&B Project* perform Bach and Beethoven and Vivaldi and great covers of AC/DC, the Eagles and Michael Jackson and more. Worth getting to know the traditional bandura through classical Ukrainian music and through a contemporary

interpretation of a range of music genres! Finally, I was very moved when *Terva Ukraina* was posted on YouTube a few days after the invasion. Here's the description that tells us why this song is important: "In 1917 Eino Leino, Finnish poet, wrote a poem for Ukraine. At this time Ukraine served as the ultimate icon of freedom and rebellion against oppression- a role model for nations striving for independence. To this day Ukraine keeps inspiring its neighbors. This should not be forgotten."

*What city/town do you live in?*

I live in Millbrook, Ontario, which is home base for *Postcards to the Front* (*Canada/Канада*).

*How did you get involved with Postcards to the Front?*

On the day of the invasion of Ukraine, Jean-Michel and I decided we would do what we could to support Ukraine.

Both of us feel strong connections to Ukraine. I traveled to Ukraine over several years on invitation to teach and lecture in a democracy education project, and Jean-Michel is Ukrainian-Canadian. Of course, we found legitimate Canadian organizations to donate money for Ukraine, we write letters, etc., but we wanted to do something more personal. As a *Postcrosser*, I reached out to several Ukrainians with whom I had exchanged postcards in the past, as well as a few others asking if they'd like to receive cheerful, supportive postcards. No strings attached. Just a friendly hello from far away. Each month, I send postcards to Ukrainians either still living in Ukraine or sheltering across Europe. They are all resilient; yet, their lives are altered in so many difficult ways, no matter where they are. Those little bits of paper cheer make a difference.

Then, I saw a message Peter wrote on Postcrossing about sending postcards from Australia to front line Defenders in Ukraine, so followed up with a personal message to him. I was on vacation at the time, and by the time I returned home, I decided I was going to follow his lead, and launch a Canadian branch. My efforts greatly benefited from guidance from Tamara in Ukraine and Peter and Anne in Australia.

😊

*How do you recruit new postcard warriors?*

I ask everyone I know! Family. Friends. Postcrossers. People I meet. Jean-Michel and I offer postcard-writing workshops whenever we see an opportunity. For instance, we were visiting friends in Eastern Ontario recently, and the next thing we knew we were introduced to the work of a local artist who raises money for Ukraine through

her art, as well as a small print shop that supports fundraising efforts. In less than 24 hours, we were booked to attend the *Eastern Ontario Postcard Exhibition* in late September where we will ask postcard collectors to write cards, as well as to conduct a postcard-writing workshop at a local Legion where we will share up-to-date information about Ukraine and provide cards for participants to write messages of support. I reach out to various organizations and news media. Some efforts more successful than others. I need to up my promotion game!

*What is your biggest joy from your work with Postcards to the Front?*

There is a complex mix of emotions with this work, all loaded on two sides of a coin. On the one side: joy, a gratitude for the care shown by so many who support Ukraine, and I am awe-struck by the beauty and kindness that each writer offers on their cards. We also feel productive, useful and even glad that we, and all the writers who send on postcards for the front, can make a small difference in a hard and tragic day of a Defender.

After all, *Postcards to the Front* is all about sending messages of support and good cheer to the front lines. Nice, right?

But, there's the other side of the coin. Sadness, heartbreak, fear, anger. The Defenders who receive these beautiful cards with their touching heartfelt messages of support, are fighting for their lives, for the lives of their family, their friends and their neighbours. They are defending their freedom, their independence, and their sovereignty. For now and forever.

So, every card fills my heart with joy.

And every card is a reminder that these cards are needed simply because of terror and tragedy.

We all wish there was no need for Postcards to the Front.

But, while there is a need to buoy up Ukraine's front line Defenders, we will do so.

*What has been the biggest surprise?*

One should never be surprised at how kind and caring humans are, because we see acts of care and kindness in our everyday lives. But, I am surprised at how quickly people respond to a plea for cards. Without hesitation. And with care and generosity.

*What would you say to someone thinking of starting a branch in their country?*

First, it's easy because there are experienced groups available to help get set up. I am not a technical person, but in just over a week I got it all figured out and rolling. Because I had help from Ukraine and Australia. And because technology offers

simple tools and step-by-step guides. If you can read, you can create. The most difficult obstacle for me was fear of technology. But I motivated myself by reminding me that nobody was dropping bombs on my house, so the least I could do was launch a Canadian branch for *Postcards to the Front*.

*What would you like our readers to know?*

Every card makes a difference in the day of a Defender of Ukraine. They love to receive them. They treasure them. They tell their families about those little bits of paper ambassadors that travel across oceans and across Ukraine, dodging bullets and drones along the way, thus the smiles spread wide and far. The cards have become such popular aspects of joy on the front lines, that whole units are asking for them. And did you know ... there are some Canadians and Australians standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Ukraine, on the front lines? Bottom line – there can never be enough cards! And there can never be too much joy shared in a kind and caring message of support. Please write. And keep it simple. From the heart. Please. Write. Thank you!