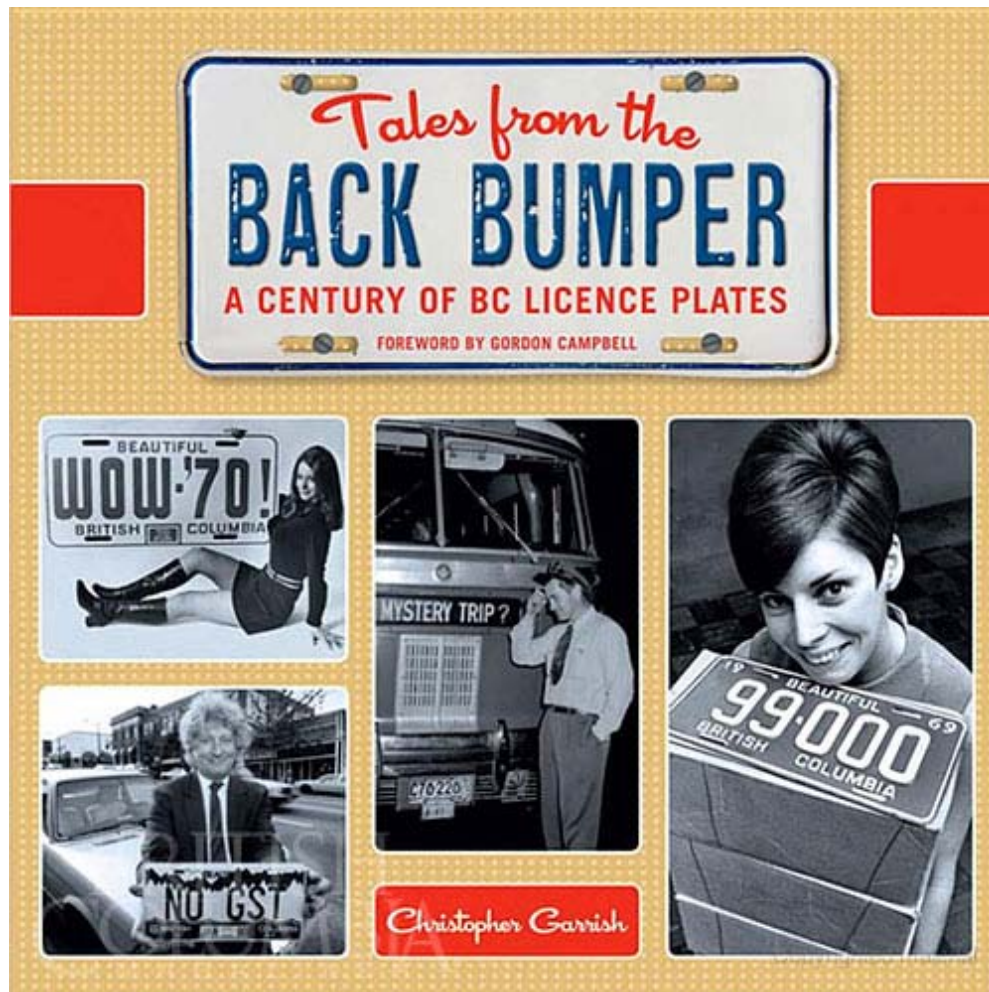


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March 05, 2014

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Highlights from *Tales from the Back Bumper*.



Book cover from *Tales from the Back Bumper: A Century of B.C. Licence Plates*.

Christopher Garrish has a driving passion for British Columbia's licence plates that began in childhood. The Penticton resident even wrote a book on the subject: *Tales from the Back Bumper: A Century of B.C. Licence Plates*. Some speedy facts from his work:

6 Number on the porcelain licence plate, issued in Victoria, deemed in 2010 to be the world's oldest by the *Guinness Book of World Records*. The plate was thought to belong to a hackney carriage driver. The plate's owner purported that it dated back to the late 1800s. A "bun fight" ensued, according to Garrish, with international collectors challenging the record. The *Guinness Book* ultimately withdrew the category.

32 Maximum number of vehicles on the road in B.C. in 1904, the year the first provincial legislation to regulate motor vehicles was passed.

1,500 Number of questionable licence plate combinations B.C. adopted from a California database after allowing personalized plates in 1979. Requests that were refused in B.C. included: DOPE, MAFIA, and HOOKER. The driver requesting the latter threatened to sue since it was a surname.

35 Amount, in dollars, to purchase the 2010 Winter Games licence plate, introduced by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. The plates proved wildly popular, and the supply of 250,000 sets nearly sold out.

7 Number of requests denied for iterations of the slogan WEXLR8, since ICBC did not want to encourage speeding or street racing.

Info: *Tales from the Back Bumper: A Century of B.C. Licence Plates* by Christopher Garrish, Heritage House Publishing, 2013 (bcpl8s.ca).

—Jenny Manzer

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