A review of Canadian philately in 2003

CHARLES J.G. VERGE

Preview of the previous year in Canadian philately. As the format used in the past seems to work well I will follow it again this year.

This column is divided into four segments: stamps, organized philately (including activities of the Canadian Postal Museum and the Canadian Postal Archives), philatelic literature and the stamp trade (including stamp printers and Canada Post's non-stamp-related activities).

All prices and values mentioned in this article are in Canadian dollars, unless otherwise stated.

STAMPS

Canadian stamps were issued on 25 occasions in 2003. Twenty-two of these were announced in Canada Post's news release of Sept. 12, 2002.

Minor changes of launch dates were noted for a few issues. The Jean-Paul Riopelle art stamps and souvenir sheet (Scott 2002-2003) were rescheduled from spring to fall because of difficulties encountered during the process of obtaining permission from the family and estate to use images of the artist's paintings.

By the way, the Riopelle stamps are the largest first-class-rate stamps ever issued by Canada.

Three stamp issues were added during the year. The first, on July 11, was to commemorate the naming of Vancouver and Whistler as sites for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The then-current 48¢ definitive Flag stamp was issued with a "Vancouver 2010" overprint in red (Scott 1991).

I discussed this issue extensively in my September 2003 O Canada column. At the time I mentioned that as far as I knew, only four people had made about 100 first-day covers in total for this stamp; Canada Post did not provide official first-day covers. I still stand by the statement that all known FDCs originate from these people.

In the article I illustrated the one cover prepared in Ottawa. The other three are shown in Figure 1.

The second unannounced series was last summer's Canada-Alaska picture postage set of two stamps

(Scott 1991C-1991D), which was only available on cruise ships on the British Columbia-Alaska run, and from the National Philatelic Centre. Facilities on board the ship gave vacationers the opportunity to have a personal photograph printed in the center of each stamp.

Figure 2 shows the full pane of 10 of these stamps. The three other images on the sheet that look like stamps are actually souvenir labels that also would be printed with the photograph used on the stamps.

These stamps were illustrated and described in the December issue of *Scott Stamp Monthly*. I haven't seen any of these stamps properly used on cover or card, and I would appreciate it if any reader who has received one would write and let me know.

The third unannounced issue consisted of several rate-hike definitives issued Dec. 19, 2003. A write-up on the definitive stamps can also be found in the December 2003 issue of SSM and again in my O Canada column in the January/February 2004 issue.

In that single day, Canada Post issued a 49¢ Maple Leaf and Samara (winged seed) self-adhesive coil, a 49¢ Queen Elizabeth self-adhesive booklet, a 49¢ Flag Over Edmonton self-adhesive booklet, an 80¢ Red Maple Leaf self-adhesive coil and booklet, a \$1.40 Green Maple Leaf self-adhesive coil and booklet,

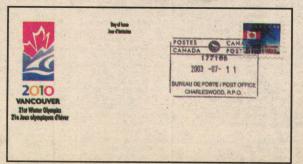






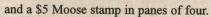
Figure 1. Three of the four known types of first-day covers privately made for the Vancouver 2010 overprinted definitive stamp issued July 11, 2003.

Figure 2. The full pane of 10 Picture Postage rius stamps (Tive each of two designs). These stamps were originally available only on the ships of the Royal Caribbean Cruise line and are a pilot project of Canada Post International. The blank area in the center of each stamp could be personalized with a photo. The left side of the pane bears three nonpostal labels.









Four series of stamps were issued during the year with final designs differing from those shown in pre-issue publicity material. The most striking were the Audubon Birds stamps (Scott 1979-1983) issued Feb. 21 and the Authors/National Library stamps (Scott 1994-1997) released Sept. 8.

The issued 48¢ Birds stamps have brighter colors than those shown in *Details*, Canada Post's quarterly magazine, and the 65¢ selfadhesive U.S.-rate Bird stamp doesn't even show the same bird (Figure 3).

Neither the images in *Details* nor the press photograph resemble the released Authors stamps issued to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Library. The press photograph shows weaker colors, while *Details* shows a different layout in the block arrangement, different colors and, on each stamp, different handwritten text over the background image of an open book (Figure 4).

Slight variations are found in the 48¢ Rangers stamp (Scott 1984) issued March 3 and the 48¢ Korean War Armistice 50th anniversary stamp (Scott 1993) released July

25. Details shows a noncentered design for the Rangers stamp (Figure 5, left) while the press release photograph shows a squarer stamp with a wider white border for the Armistice stamp than that issued (Figure 5, right).

A few additional anecdotes about the 2003 Canadian stamps might be of interest.

The firefighter and the victim on the Volunteer Firefighter stamp (Scott 1986) issued May 30 are living people. David Quilliam is a firefighter in real life, while the seemingly unconscious young boy is actually a model who lives in Quebec, but whose name cannot be divulged because he is under age 18.

Picture postage is not new, but Canada is one of the first to use the photograph-on-the-stamp approach; most of the other countries offering personalized stamps place the picture on an adjoining tab. John M. Hotchner reported in the Oct. 20, 2003, Linn's Stamp News that the Eastman and Edison Business Colleges of the 1880s used an exchange of photo stamps as part of their graduating activities. They look remarkably like older versions of stamps from Canada Post's photo-in-a-frame program.

The Riopelle Art stamps are the first Canadian stamps to have a hidden copyright date ("©2003") printed by the tagging plate. The date has been cut out of the top horizontal tagging bar and requires the use of ultraviolet light to see it.

Reprints of the \$1 Loon (Scott 1697) and \$2 Polar Bear (Scott 1698) stamps that were announced for Dec. 13, 2002, were released Feb. 4, 2003. Although they still show a Plate 1 inscription, the stamps were reprinted on TRC paper, while the original printing was on



Figure 3. Prerelease illustrations of the Audubon Birds stamps in Canada Post's Details magazine differed considerably from the issued stamps, shown at bottom.



Peterborough paper. In addition, there are barcodes in the right margin beside the third stamp from the top.

Canada Post has had some problems with its UPC barcodes since their introduction in 2002. The Jan. 3 souvenir sheet for the Year of the Ram (Scott 1970) bore the same barcode as its first-day cover (Scott 1970). If you didn't check, you might be charged \$2.25 for a \$1.25 souvenir sheet. All of the souvenir sheet barcodes were in error, but the sheets were not reprinted.

A second barcode error was discovered at the end of the year. The 48¢ Cycling Road World Cham-pionships (Scott 1998) first-day cover, which sells for \$1.48, has the same barcode as the \$1.25 Riopelle souvenir sheet, which sells for its face value. Once again, there were no reprints.

The 48¢ Flag over Canada Post Building philatelic booklet (Scott 1931a) was reprinted and became available in mid-January.

The difference between "philatelic" and "counter" booklets is twofold: they have different barcodes, and the counter stock booklet is sealed. The 48¢ (Scott 1927) and 65¢ (Scott

Continued on page 50







Figure 4. The September Authors issue shown in the prerelease illustration from *Details* (top), the press photo (center) and the released stamps (bottom).

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Figure 5. The Details magazine prerelease photo of the Canadian Rangers stamp (upper left) and the issued stamp (lower left), along with the press release photo for the Korean Armistice commemorative (upper right) and the issued stamp (lower right).

Continued from page 48

1928) coil rolls have been reprinted with a different backing paper trimming at the start and end of the roll. These became available in May.

Varieties identified this year included the Year of the Ram with missing gold (Scott 1969). This comes from the left two columns on the pane and is due to a shift in the gold foil sheet when it was applied.

The Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee stamp of 2002 (Scott 1932) has been found imperforate. A few sheets are known.

The 2000 Year of the Dragon souvenir sheet (Scott 1837) with missing orange and tagging was bought on eBay. The sheet received a Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation certificate declaring it "genuine in all respects."

On May 2, 2003, No. 8 and No. 10 (size) envelopes were issued bearing images of two of the tulips shown on the 2002 Tulip issue. The Bishop tulip graces the No. 8 and the Ottawa tulip the No. 10 (Figure 6).

Thirteen prepaid postal cards were made available. Ten were issued showing the 10 Tourist Attraction stamps issued June 12 (Scott 1989-90); one replicated the Cycling stamp of Sept. 10 (Scott 1998, at top in Figure 7) and another, issued June 24, showed the 1975 Anne of Green Gables stamp (Scott 658).

On this last card, it is interesting to note that the French description on both the front and back of the card reads the now more acceptable "Anne ... la maison aux pignons verts" while the imprinted stamp retains the original 1975 wording, "Anne de Green Gables" (at bottom in Figure 7).

These 12 nondenominated cards all sold for \$1.49 each. The final card is the most expensive, as it is only available in the "Canada Can," a special gift set canister offered by Canada Post.

This card in the "Can" was issued in June 2003, and since it is only available in the gift set, the cost is \$19.95 to purchase, the price of the "Can." In addition to the card you

receive a cotton T-shirt, a Canadian flag and the canister it all comes in (Figure 8, left).

The picture side of the postal card shows a modified version of Canada's 1965 5¢ Flag stamp, Scott 439, as well as a picture of the real stamp. The reverse shows the

same stamp without a denomination (Figure 8, right). The Cycling postcard, by the way, is also available in a different "Can" set.

Nineteen more prepaid postal cards from the Postcard Factory were issued on May 1. This now brings to almost 350 the number of different Postcard Factory cards. which are franked with nondenominated imprinted stamps and sell for \$1.49.

A detailed checklist of these cards can be found online at http://members.shaw.ca/candef.

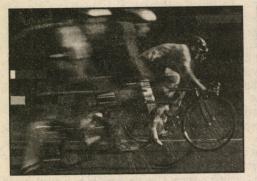
Canada Post had a bumper crop of seven special cacheted envelopes in 2003. These are envelopes issued for people or events deemed worthy but not important enough for commemoration on a postage stamp. Six of these envelopes are shown in Figure 9. They sold for \$2 each, and 12,000 envelopes were produced in each case.

The first of these, issued Feb. 17, commemorated the 75th anniversary of the magazine Les Affaires. The magazine was founded in Quebec City in 1928 and concentrates on financial and economic issues in Quebec and Canada.

The second (April 26) celebrates a century of service by the Canadian Military Engineers. Formed in 1903, its task is to



Figure 6. The Ottawa Tulip No. 10 size postal stationery envelope. A No. 8 size was also issued showing the Bishop tulip.



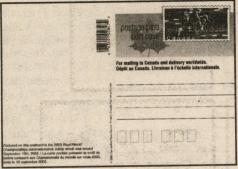






Figure 7. Canada's stamped postal card issued Sept. 10, the same day as the Cycling Road World Championships stamp (top). The Anne of Green Gables postal card (bottom) was issued June 24.

ensure the survival, mobility and combat effectiveness of the Canadian Forces. To celebrate their centennial, Canada's military engineers have volunteered to help communities build "Bridges for Canada" along the Trans-Canada Trail, the world's longest recreational trail. The photo on the cover shows a naval construction troop building the "Ready Aye Ready" Bridge at Cole Harbour, NS.

I am particularly proud of the third envelope, as it commemorates the 75th convention of The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC), of which I am president. Although the Society traces its roots to 1887, it didn't have formal conventions as we know them today until 1929. The stamp used to frank the envelope is quite appropriate since it commemorates, in 2002, the 50th anniversary of

the Canadian governors general (Scott 1940). The names of each governor general are listed on the left side of the stamp design and all, with the exception of the first (the Right Honourable Vincent Massey) have been patrons of the RPSC, as a result of the Society receiving Royal designation in 1959.

The town of Lunenburg celebrated its 250th anniversary in 2003 (June 7). "Old Town" Lunenburg is an outstanding example of British colonial settlement in North America. Laid out in its original 1753 grid plan, the city has hundreds of beautifully maintained buildings and is both a National Historic site and a UNESCO World heritage site. Canada's most famous ship, the *Bluenose*, was built in Lunenburg's shipyards.

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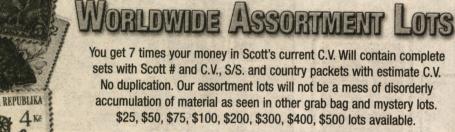
Figure 8. The most expensive of the new prepaid postal cards was only available in the "Canada Can" gift pack, which sold for \$19.95.

was marked with an envelope franked with the more-than-appropriate 2002 48¢ Marconi stamp (July 1, Scott 1964). Since the creation of the Canadian Signalling Corps on Oct. 24, 1903, military communications have participated in many wars, multinational operations and humanitar-

ian and disaster relief. The cover shows the crest and motto of the Communications and Electronics Branch of the Canadian Forces. The motto reads "Velox Versutus Vigilans": Swift, Accurate and Watchful.

The sixth envelope commemorates the 50th anniversary of Granby Zoo (July 14). Not the largest zoo in Canada, it nonetheless enjoys the respect of the national and international zoological community for its superior, innovative programs as well as for its many achievements in the fields of conservation and research.

Figure 10 shows a special envelope released Nov. 21 at the official opening of the Canadian Postal Museum's exhibition, "Mail, Rail, Retail:



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Figure 9. Six of the seven special envelopes produced by Canada Post in 2003.



Figure 10. The "Mail, Rail, Retail" special envelope distributed to those who attended the official opening of the exhibition of the same name.

Connecting Canadians," at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The exhibition is the result of a multiyear partnership between three important and historic institutions: Canada Post, Canadian Pacific Railway and the Hudson's Bay Co.

Seven hundred envelopes were produced for the occasion. They were distributed to guests attending the opening and, as far as I know, none were available for sale through the National Philatelic Centre.

All the special envelopes are franked at the domestic rate, except the Granby Zoo envelope, which bears the 65¢ Audubon Bird U.S.-rate self-adhesive (Scott 1983).

For the first time since their inception, all the envelopes in 2003 look exactly like their pre-publicity pictures found in *Details* magazine.

Bernard N.J. Reilander, shown in Figure 11, designed all the envelopes in this series since the start of the program in 1997. Reilander, a graphic designer, was born at Camp Shilo, Manitoba, in February 1948. His father was in the Canadian Air Force and the family lived abroad in England, France and Germany; and in Canada in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Kingston, Ontario. Reilander went to Toronto in 1971 to study at the Ontario College of Art and Design. He received two scholarships at college and graduated with a degree in Communications and Design.

Reilander has worked in various departments of the federal government, including the National Museums of Canada, where he designed for the Paleontology Hall at the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa. He joined the Post Office Department in 1974, designing the bulk of official first-day covers and pictorial cancellations, as well as 13 stamps. Two of these are illustrated in Figure 11: Scott 691, the 10¢ stamp showing Benjamin Franklin from the joint issue with the United States to commemorate the U.S. bicentennial, and Scott 859, showing Canadian Prime Minister John George Diefenbaker.

Reilander's other stamps are Scott 667, 674-679, 697-699 and 968. He also created publications and worked on business iden-

tity programs for Canada Post. When he retired in 2003, Reilander was the graphics supervisor of the Postage Design and Development Division of Canada Post. As a philatelist, he is a recognized expert and collector of Pitcairn Islands postal history.

A further envelope (Figure 12) was brought to my attention recently. It is a regular first-day cover of the Pedro da Silva stamp (Scott 1988) issued June 6, and it bears one of the stamps issued by Portugal to celebrate the 150th anniversary of its postage stamps.

The Portuguese stamp is cancelled by a Portuguese post office handstamp only applied on these covers in Toronto. I am led to believe that they were originally prepared for distribution at an event to be attended by the prime minister of Portugal, Jose Manuel Durão Barroso, but they have now been put on sale at the National Philatelic Centre for \$2.50 each.

Stamp sellouts this year included the Astronauts self-adhesive miniature sheet (Scott 1999) and the Riopelle stamps and sou-







Figure 11. Bernie Reilander, recently retired Canada Post graphic artist responsible for many stamps, first-day covers, special envelopes and commemorative cancels. Scott 691 and 879 are two stamps designed by Reilander.

venir sheet (Figure 13). Another sellout was the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Stamp & Coin set (Figure 14), a joint issue with the Royal Canadian Mint. The 15,000 sets sold for \$22.95 each and contained two stamps each of the Accession (Scott 1932) and Coronation (Scott 1987) Jubilee issues, a 1953 1¢ coin, a 50¢ Golden Jubilee coin and 1¢ and 50¢ 2003 coins showing the new effigy of Queen Elizabeth on Canadian coins. If this set is any indication, I expect the \$5 Moose Dec. 19 joint issue with the Royal Mint (Figure 15) to be a sellout as well. I described this \$39.95 set in the January/February O Canada column.

ORGANIZED PHILATELY

The Canadian Postal Museum continued to attract large crowds and its new temporary exhibition, "Mail, Rail and

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Figure 12. A joint Portugal-Canada envelope honoring Pedro da Silva, Canada's first mailman.

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Retail: Connecting Canadians," has proven to be a crowd pleaser since it opened Nov. 21, 2003. This is the first exhibition to explore in depth the roles that communications, transportation and commerce played in the development of modern Canada, and the far-reaching impact that mail, rail and retail services have had on the lives of Canadians. The exhibition will remain open until Nov. 29, 2004.

In September, the museum added an optical character reader to its collection. The machine is impressive in size as well as in historical significance. The reader was introduced in the early 1970s when Canada adopted postal

codes, and was the first instrument of its kind used in Canada to automatically sort mail.

Many honors have been given to Canada Post and to others in 2003. In May 2003, it was announced that the 2001 "Canadian White Star" rose stamp (Scott 1914) had been awarded the Continental Cup as the most beautiful stamp in America at the 7th Stamp World Cup. The stamp was also given third place as the World's Most Beautiful Stamp.

In October it was announced that the World



Youth Day stamp (Scott 1957) was selected as the best religious stamp of 2002 and received the St. Gabriel award as a result.

The October-December issue of *Details* informs us that Canada Post's freestyle skiing stamp (Scott 1938), issued to coincide with the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, was awarded the Prix Olympia silver medal by the International Federation for Olympic Philately.

In addition, the Year of the Ram Lunar Pack received a Graphic Design Award of Merit from the International Association of Business Communicators.

Although there was no World Web Site competition for philately this year, two Canadian sites won prestigious awards from Stamp2.com. Robin Harris received the Grand Prix d'Honneur for his Machins website (www.adminware.ca/machins.htm) and the Canadian Postal Archives (www.archives.ca)

won a large gold.

The Canadian Postal Archives site gets more and more impressive each year. In the fall there was a major addition to the site, with the inclusion of a library of biographies of more than 100 stamp designers, with links to all the stamps they designed.

Stampex, the Toronto stamp exhibition founded in 1973, lay dormant since 1996. The show, owned by the Toronto Association for Philatelic Exhibitions (TAPE), now a wholly owned subsidiary of the RPSC, was revived this year. TAPE authorized the Greater Toronto Area Philatelic Alliance (GTAPA) to use the name and to try and restore an annual stamp exhibition to Toronto.

The show was held Oct. 17-19 in conjunction with the Canadian Stamp Dealers' Association's semi-annual bourse. The show was a suc-



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Figure 13. Canada's Astronaut stamps issued for Stamp Collecting Month, and the largest first-class and international-rate stamps ever issued by Canada, showing Jean-Paul Riopelle paintings. Canada Post sold out of these popular issues in 2003.