

A review of Canadian philately in 2007

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It is that time of year again: the annual review of philatelic activity in Canada in 2007. As usual, the review will be divided into four segments: organized philately, philatelic literature, the stamp trade and stamps. All dollar amounts quoted in this article are in Canadian dollars unless otherwise stated.

ORGANIZED PHILATELY

Not much happened of earth-shattering consequences in the way Cana-

dian philately is run, but there were interesting events nonetheless.

For the first time in a very long time, members of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada exhibited at the exhibition that accompanied the annual General Assembly of the Inter-American Federation of Philately in Bogotá, Colombia. Two of the five competitive exhibits claimed best in class in the traditional class and the one-frame class.

J. Edward Nixon, showing his Small Queen collection for the first time since

Philexfrance 1999, won first place in the traditional class and received a large gold with a special prize.

Fred Fawn showed an exquisite one-frame exhibit of the only Hungarian Council Republic stamp issued. The exhibit garnered a gold medal and a special prize to win the one-frame class.

For the fourth year in a row, *Canadian Stamp News*, Canada Post, the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and *Philatélie Québec* organized a stamp poll to determine collectors' favorite



Figure 1. The top winners of the annual poll conducted by *Canadian Stamp News*, Canada Post, the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and *Philatélie Québec* are: Ontario Horticultural Association Centennial stamps, most favorite; McClelland & Stewart Publishing Centennial stamp, least favorite; Atlas of Canada stamp, most relevant; and Year of the Dog stamps, least relevant.





Figure 2. The only recorded pence-era soldier's letter sold in 2007 for U.S. \$34,500.

and least favorite stamps for 2006.

The three top choices in each category included: favorite stamp issues, Ontario Horticultural Association Centennial booklet (Scott 2145a-2145d), the Duck Decoys stamps (Scott 2163-2166) and the Wines and Cheeses stamps (Scott 2168-2171); least favorite, McClelland & Stewart Publishing Centennial stamp (Scott 2151), Society of Graphic Designers stamp (Scott 2167) and the Birthday/Celebration stamp (Scott 2146); most relevant, Atlas of Canada Centennial stamp (Scott 2160), Canadian Forces Snowbirds stamps (Scott 2158-2159) and Samuel de Champlain's Exploration of the Atlantic Coast stamps (Scott 2155-2156); and least relevant, Year of the Dog stamps (Scott 2140-2141), Birthday/Celebration stamp, and Wines and Cheeses stamps.

The first-place winners in each category are shown in Figure 1.

Participants in the poll were asked an additional question: Would you like Canada Post to issue Permanent stamps for the United States and international postal rates? Of the questionnaires returned, 59.1 percent indicated that the answer is yes. Canada Post is likely to give serious consideration to this response.

Canada's Permanent stamps, first issued in late 2006, are similar to the Forever stamps issued by the United States Postal Service in 2007. The stamps are sold at the current domestic letter rate and continue to be valid for postage ad infinitum, whatever the domestic rate may be.

PHILATELIC LITERATURE

Many books were published in 2007 on the subject of British North America (BNA). The list is too long to March 2008

mention here, but a few titles published in 2007 are appropriate for the general collector.

Editor D. Robin Harris continues to improve the *Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps*. The 2008 edition was issued in October 2007 and, once again, was an instant best seller. This edition's new features include a separate listing of all uncut press sheets, a listing of the Canada Post event/commemorative covers from 1976 on, a broad-stroke thematic/topical listing, and consistent numbering of single stamps from booklets.

The catalog includes many new images, particularly in the postal stationery section.

The catalog is available from Unitrade Press, 99 Floral Parkway, Toronto, ON, Canada, M6L 2C4; or by phone at 416-242-5900. It is priced at \$42.95.

The long-awaited Volume 2 of the *Postal Rates and Fees of the Elizabethan Era from Canada, 1952-2005* was published in 2007. Volume 2 contains all the rates for Canadian Forces mail to 2002, rates to the United States and international rates.

The book is available, with Volume 1 or alone, from Ian Kimmerly at www.kimmerly.com or from the Elizabethan Study Group at its web site at www.adminware.ca/esp.

Andrew Chung and Hank Narbonne, who both were heavily involved with the previous book, are also editors of the third edition of *The New Specialized Catalogue of Canada Post Official First Day Covers*. The catalog covers the period from 1971, when Canada Post started producing official FDCs, to July 2007. It is available through Unitrade and the Kimmerly web site.

The Kimmerly web site includes a list of new publications on BNA subjects.

THE STAMP TRADE

A new major auction house, Sparks Auctions, appeared on the Canadian



Figure 3. This Canadian Recording Artists souvenir sheet and a booklet containing stamps with similar designs were an unannounced addition to the 2007 program.

scene last year. The company held its first auction November 8-10, 2007. The sale was well attended and attracted many online bidders. Information on future auctions can be found online at www.sparks-auctions.com.

Two important Canadian specialized auctions took place in 2007. The Warren S. Wilkinson Gold Medal Collection of Canadian Postal Rates, 1851-1859, was auctioned June 14 by Charles G. Firby Auctions of Waterford, Michigan. The collection contained some of the most prized covers of pre-Confederation Canadian philately, including the only cover in private hands with the 12-penny black canceled in blue, and the only-known pence-era soldier's letter (Figure 2). The soldier's letter realized U.S. \$32,500 (including a 15-percent buyer's premium).

The gold-level collection of Canada's 1898 Imperial Penny Postage formed by Fred G. Fawn was sold November 1-3 in New York at the newly formed Spinks Shreves Galleries. This is arguably the greatest collection ever formed of Canada's Map stamp (Scott 85-86), also known as the "world's first Christmas stamp" because of its inscription, "XMAS 1898." It took Fawn more than 25 years of research and collecting to bring the collection to this level of completeness.

The collection includes two copies (one on cover) of the earliest known use (December 2, 1898) of Scott 85 and many examples of official first day of use (December 7).

The most important piece from this collection, replete with historical documents and preproduction material, is the full top left quarter sheet of 25 from the unissued plate 4. The piece sold for U.S. \$40,250 (including a 15-percent buyer's premium), more than double its low presale estimate of U.S. \$15,000.

STAMPS

Although some of the issue dates mentioned in my review of Canada's 34 | Scott Stamp Monthly



Figure 4. Gutter strips of the Terra Nova stamp (Scott 2223) and Jasper National Parks (Scott 2224) were sold by Canada Post. The stamps were printed on the same sheet.

2007 stamp program (O Canada column, SSM February 2007) were changed, the program itself was only increased by four stamps. The set honors four living Canadian recording artists, including Gordon Lightfoot (1938-), Joni Mitchell (1943-), Anne Murray (1945-) and Paul Anka (1941-), were announced by Canada Post June 11 and issued June 29.

The stamps were issued in a souvenir sheet of four (Scott 2221, Figure 3) and in booklets of eight (Scott 2222). Four different booklet covers were issued, one for each of the artists.

For the first time on Canadian stamps, Lowe Martin, the printer of the Canadian Recording Artists stamps, used the MetalFX metallic color system. MetalFX is a universal process that uses a spot metallic color system that allows millions of metallic colors to be printed simply by adding silver ink to the four base printing colors: cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

In 2007, Canada Post also began issuing prefabricated gutter-pair strips. A total of 5,000 gutter pairs of the International Polar Year pair (Scott 2204-2205) were offered for sale

with Scott 2205 on the left. There was a hue and cry at the small quantity available until it was found that anybody could produce the gutter pair strip by simply cutting it out of the full pane of 16.

The second gutter strip was only available from Canada Post. The strip was made up of two stamps that were issued on different dates. The Terra Nova stamp (Scott 2223) and Jasper National Parks stamp (Scott 2224) were issued July 6 and July 20, respectively, but were printed on the same sheet. This allowed Canada Post to offer gutter strips of five of each stamp (Figure 4). The gutter strip looks more like a pane of stamps than a gutter strip.

Postage-paid postal cards were produced in 2007 for the Year of the Pig (two cards), the Lilacs (two cards) and the Canadian Recording Artists (four cards). Each nondenominated postal card sells for \$1.69 and is valid for mailing to any location around the world.

Ten new number 10 postal stationery envelopes were issued in January. Their stamp designs feature 10 previously issued Tourist Attractions

stamps (Scott 1903c-1903d, 1904a, 1904c-1904e, 1952b-1952c, 1953a, 1953e).

Two printings of the new Flower stamped envelopes exist. The Flower envelopes include three number 8 envelopes and one number 10 envelope. Although both printings were issued in January 2007, the envelopes were printed January 12, 2006, and January 26, 2007. All postal stationery bears the new PERMANENT™ logo, indicating that the envelopes can be used for domestic mail for the foreseeable future without requiring additional postage when the rates increase.

Five special stamped envelopes were issued by Canada Post in 2007. The envelopes honor people or events deemed worthy but not important enough for a stamp or who, like Glen Gould, already have had a stamp issued in their honor.

Each stamped envelope sold for \$2.50, the same price as the cost of the stamped envelopes issued in 2006.

On February 7, a stamped envelope was issued to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of Purdy's Chocolates of Vancouver, British Columbia. The envelope's attractive design and thematic content, combined with the fact that the company purchased a large number of the 10,000 print run, made this envelope a sought-after item, reaching up to U.S. \$50 in some online auctions.

On April 28, a stamped envelope was issued to commemorate the opening of the 1,000th store in the Shoppers Drug Mart chain. This private-to-order envelope was not available through Canada Post's National Philatelic Centre. Only about 1,000 were produced.

The third stamped envelope, issued August 1, honors the 100th anniversary of the Scouting movement and commemorates the Association des Scouts du Canada. The print run was 15,000.

Since a stamp was issued in 2007 for the 100th anniversary of Scouting,

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Figure 5. A page from the *Globe and Mail* postage book, one of the most important finds in BNA philately in 2007. The book contains many usages of Canada's 1897 Jubilee stamps. Courtesy of the Postal History Society of Canada.

it is unusual that an envelope would be offered as well. Politics as they are, it's likely that the association, founded in 1918, felt that the stamp was issued more for Scouts Canada, founded in 1908, and did not include them, so they lobbied for the envelope. Both associations are members of the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

The fourth stamped envelope, issued September 10 with a print run of 10,000 envelopes, marks the opening of a special Glenn Gould (1932-1982) exhibition at the Canadian Museum of Civilization and commemorates the 25th anniversary of the death of the pianist.

The final stamped envelope of the year was issued November 2 (print run 10,000) and celebrates the 25th anniversary of Canada Post's Santa Letter-writing Program.

The first four envelopes issued in 2007 bear preprinted picture postage stamps. The Santa Letter-writing Program envelope bears the 2007 Christmas stamp featuring a reindeer.

From October 26, 2007, through January 11, 2008, Canada Post offered a free parcel service from family and friends to Canadian troops deployed in Afghanistan and elsewhere throughout the world. Letters will continue to be sent postage-free throughout 2008.

Details on the service is available in the October 23, 2007, press release, which can be found at www.canada.post.ca/personal/corporate/newsroom/pr.

BNA FIND

The year's greatest British North American philatelic discovery was a complete postage payment mailing book used by the *Globe and Mail* (Toronto) to mail the newspaper (Figure 5). The book and many covers found with it were given the name the Drewry Find, after three brothers who collected the items in the 19th century.

A 40-page write-up of the find is published in the September 2007 issue of the *PHSC Journal*. Scans of the complete booklet can be seen at the Postal History Society of Canada's web site at www.postalhistorycanada.org.

The book shows a plethora of stamps that were available in 1897-98, with many usages of Canada's 1897 high-value Jubilee stamps. The stamps are particularly fine examples because they are not canceled by the usual rollers but rather by Toronto circular datestamps.

Stories on interesting new Canadian discoveries and varieties can be found at the Elizabethan II Study Group's web site at www.adminware.ca/esg. These varieties and discoveries also can be found in the group's *Corgi Times*, published six times a year.

This review of 2007 just scrapes the surface, and I am sure that stamp collectors will find there are many other areas of interest in Canadian philately that I have not touched upon. If you have a subject you would like me to write about, send requests to me in care of SSM.