

A Recap of 1999

▼ CHARLES J.G. VERGE

The new year's series of "O Canada" columns begins with a review of the philatelic highlights of 1999. The column will concentrate on four aspects: stamps, organized philately, philatelic literature and the stamp trade.

STAMPS

Definitely the highlight of the year was the issue of *The Millennium Collection* and *The Millennium Keepsake*. The stamps in the Collection and the Keepsake were originally to be issued only in those formats. This created a controversy in the philatelic and nonphilatelic press resulting in Canada Post being forced to also issue the stamps in sheetlets of four.

The 68 different stamps in the Collection honor a variety of people, events, organizations and industries that have shaped Canada's history, contributed to its development and prosperity and made it well known internationally. Few of these stamps honor people or events outside the 20th century. One of these is the 1,000th anniversary (in 2000) of the Vikings' arrival at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, Newfoundland (Figure 1).

Figure 1: L'Anse-aux-Meadows: the Millennium of the Vikings' arrival in Newfoundland.



The 68 stamps are a boon to thematic collectors as they bring into the hobby many design elements seldom seen on stamps such as French fries, frozen fish and a baby eating cereal. It is a good thing that they are to be issued as separate stamps or they would not have been recognized as valid elements for an exhibit. The first four of the 17 sheetlets of four stamps each were issued Dec. 17, 1999, and four more will be issued on January and February 17 and five sheetlets will find their way to the post offices on March 17, 2000.

Many of the people portrayed on the Millennium stamps are generally unknown outside Canada – and in some cases even in the country; however, three should be

Figure 2 (below): Three very recognizable Canadian figures, Alexander Graham Bell, Guy Lombardo and James Bond, Agent 007.



instantly recognizable by philatelists all over the world: Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, Guy Lombardo ringing in the New Year and Sir William Stephenson, Ian Fleming's model for James Bond, Agent 007 (Figure 2).

In Canada, it was always believed that showing live people on stamps or honoring big business was a no-no. In the last few years, a number of live models have been used for design purposes on Canadian stamps and other individuals have been portrayed on stamps when the stamp being issued was honoring some event that they were incidental to.

"ORGANIZED PHILATELY IN CANADA IS ALIVE AND WELL."

Figure 3: The Millennium stamp honoring French-Canadian playwright, Roger Lemelin, shows the actors playing in his best



known novel, *The Plouffe Family*. The three actors at the top right who played the Plouffe children are still alive.

This is no longer a concern and has become only a curiosity as collectors and journalists scurry to find out who the people are. The Collection has identifiable living people on only one of the 68 stamps (Figure 3). Honoring big business has been a touchy issue in the past since it could be viewed as promoting one business over another. Virtually all stamps related to businesses previously issued by Canada were because either the individual concerned with the business and shown on the stamp had made other contributions to Canada or the invention portrayed was what was being commemorated.

This time, many businesses were incorporated in Canada Post's Millennium tribute (Figure 4) and not a peep was heard about the preferential treatment given. *The Millennium Collection* is labor intensive to produce and, as a result, production and distribution problems arose. Collectors who ordered the Collection from the National Philatelic Centre were still waiting for their copy in mid-November when this article was written, although the book had been available at post offices since September 15.

The Millennium Keepsake that included Canada's second hologram stamp was fully described in the October 1999 *Scott Stamp Monthly*. As far as I am concerned these three stamps are the most beautiful issued by Canada in many a year. The Keepsake was launched at Canada Post's Headquarters in Ottawa on Oct. 12, 1999. One of the highlights of the ceremony was the release of a dove by Anthony O'Malley, the 8-year-old model of the 55-cent (U.S. rate) stamp and souvenir sheet.

Once again Canada Post had production and distribution problems with these stamps. The Keepsakes themselves arrived on time at most post offices across the country but the sheetlets of four stamps did not make their appearance till later in the month. The 55-cent and 95-cent stamps were on sale in Ottawa on October 18 but the 46-cent hologram stamp was not available until October 26.

Canada Post still insists that October 12 was the official day of issue. The advertising flyer for these products to individuals on



Figure 4 (above and right): Canadian business achievements: Pablum baby cereal; IMAX; McCain's frozen foods; the George Weston Ltd. conglomerate; Rogers

broadcasting; Bell Canada Enterprises (BCE); the Caisse Populaire Desjardins cooperative movement; Bombardier; Softimage (a software company creator of visual effects for movies such as *Jurassic Park*, *Babe* and *Titanic*); J.A. Vachon, Ltd.

the National Philatelic Centre's mailing list did not arrive until October 12.

There was little controversy for the remaining stamps issued by Canada Post in 1999. What little there was had to do with events not commemorated by the Post Office; namely the 50th anniversary of Newfoundland joining Canada and the 250th anniversary of the founding of the city of Halifax.

ORGANIZED PHILATELY

Organized philately in Canada is alive and well. The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada celebrated the 50th anniversary of its journal, *The Canadian Philatelist*, by revamping its format, adding color and changing editors. The RPSC's Website, <www.interlog.com/~rpsc>, continues to add new original articles to its philatelic library. It's well worth a visit.

RPSC President Keith Spencer and board members have made substantial efforts in stabilizing finances of the society and adding new service for members, including contracting out the circuit books and introducing a new liability insurance for chapters and affiliates.

A new judging process for local and regional exhibitions was developed and tested in Southwestern Ontario through the Grand River Valley Philatelic Association and accepted by The RPSC for national use.

December saw the issue of the 100th *PHSC Journal*. The Postal History Society of Canada is a society exclusively dedicated to the promotion and study of the postal history of British North America.

Ottawa, the headquarters of Canada Post, has been given the right to hold BNAPEX 2001, the annual convention of the British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS). The choice of Ottawa was made keeping in mind that 2001 is the 150th anniversary of the independent Post Office in Canada as well as the 150th anniversary of Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia's first stamps (Figure 5).

Canada's national stamp shows are active and vibrant: Ottawa and Edmonton, the two regular ones and the convention of the RPSC held in Fredericton this year. As well, Canada hosted PIPEX in 1999.

Exhibitors are doing well both nationally and internationally. Edward (Ted) Nixon became the first Canadian to garner an international Gold medal for an exhibit of Small Queens. This was due mainly to Ted's excellent and original research and personal study of the issue.

Canada's most successful exhibitor ever, Ron Brigham, continued to garner Large Gold medals for his Pence and Cents and Large Queens exhibits that are part of *The Brigham Collection*. He also became the first Canadian ever to win a Grand Prix International for the *Province of Canada: The Pence and Cents Issues, 1851-1868*. Brigham's exhibit won the Grand Prix at Australia '99 held in Melbourne in March 1999 (Figure 6). The same collection was a candidate for the Grand Prix International at IBRA '99 a month later.

Figure 5: A perforated label prepared to promote BNAPEX 2001 to be held in Ottawa.





Figure 6: Canada's first Grand Prix International winner Ron Bringham and his wife Lynn Roberts.

PHILATELIC LITERATURE

Canada's philatelic literature is growing by leaps and bounds. The advent of new researchers, desktop publishing and availability of research material has made it much easier to write new monographs and handbooks. The quality and quantity of the books published and available in 1999 belies the fact our hobby is dying.

The most important item was Volume 3 of Cimon Morin's *Canadian Philately, Bibliography and Index*. The book contains more than 4,500 new references of articles about BNA philately published from 1983 to 1993.

A series that is developing quite well is the BNAPS's Exhibitors series. BNAPS is reproducing some of the premier exhibits of its members to provide them as research tools. There are now 17 in the series, eight of which were published in 1999. The new research in Small Queens done primarily by Ted Nixon and John Hillson has forced the latter to update his book (*The Small Queens of Canada*, 1989) by publishing the 44-page *Canada Small Queens Re-Appraised*.

Other researchers of the Small Queens, Richard Morris and Ronald Ribler, have put together some very useful and accurate color guides to identify the shades from the many of these long running stamps (1870-1897).

Canada now has its first catalogue of the unusual, Darnell's *Canadian EFO's: Errors, Freaks and Oddities* and David F. Sessions, the editor of *Maple Leaves*, the journal of the Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain, came out with the fascinating *Philatelic Fantasies of British North America (1860-1910)*. It is an erudite book about BNA locals, labels, cinderellas, phantoms and. It's publishing information is as fascinating as the book. It was written in Great Britain, published in the United States, depicts British North America, introduced by a Canadian and focuses on an international theme.

These are just some of the many new titles about BNA philately. Most of these are available from Saskatoon Stamp Centre, which publishes an 128-page informative catalogue about BNA philatelic literature. For a copy call (800) 205-8814 in North America.

This same firm was responsible for making available to collectors the unissued 1994 Christmas stamps that were discussed in this column in the December issue. Since the article was published, additional illustrations have been obtained from the material in the Canadian Postal Archives and some are shown here (Figure 7-9).

THE STAMP TRADE

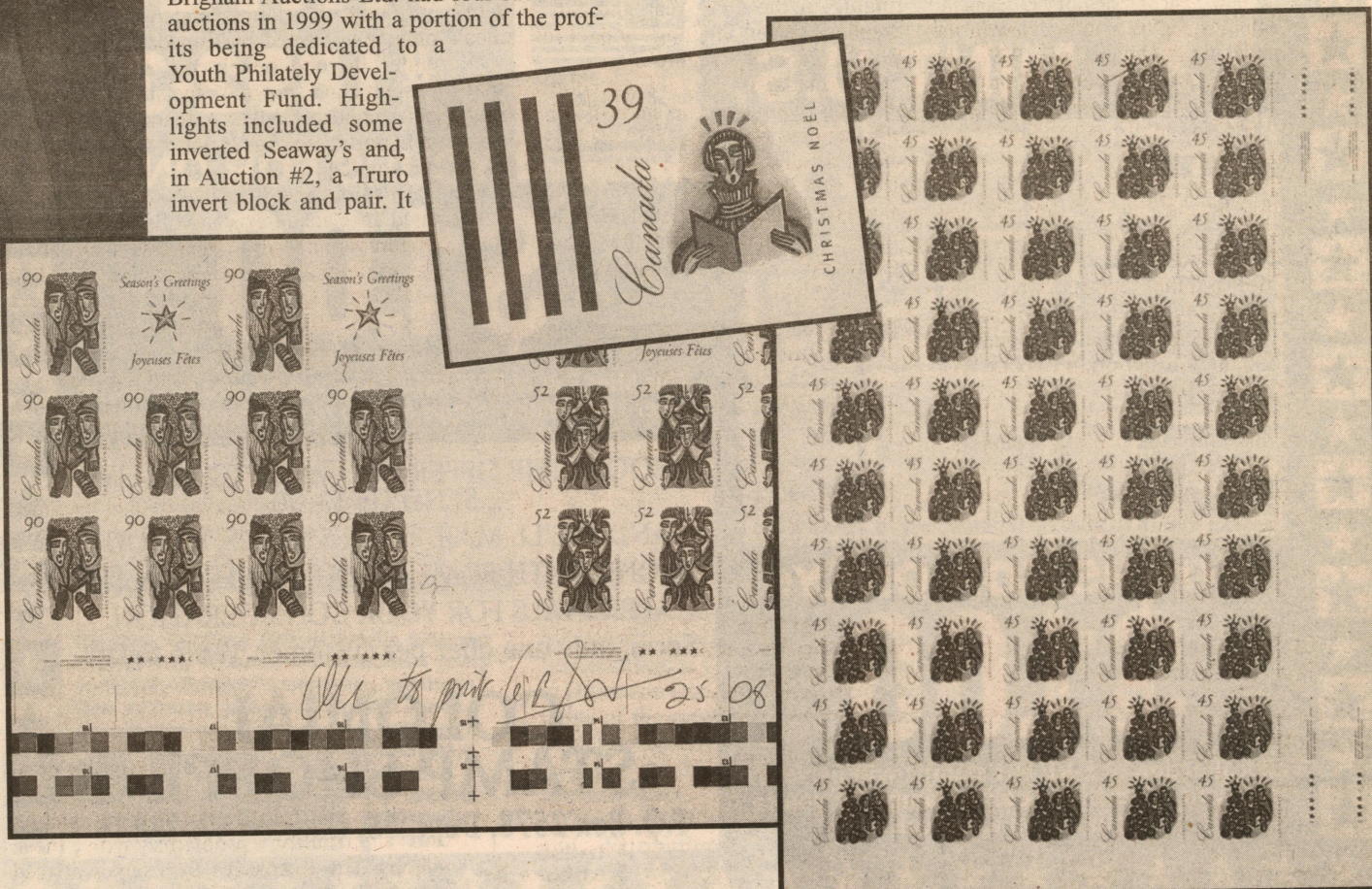
The market for excellent grade and quality stamps and covers has never been higher. The same goes for the unusual material.

With the demise of the Sissons Auction firm in late 1998, Ron Bringham, Canada's premier collector, decided that there was room for an additional auction firm in Canada. He specifically felt that an auction firm with a vision of "Specializing in the fine art of philately" should be put together and should be run "by the collector for the collector." Bringham Auctions Ltd. had four successful auctions in 1999 with a portion of the profits being dedicated to a Youth Philately Development Fund. Highlights included some inverted Seaway's and, in Auction #2, a Truro invert block and pair. It

Figure 7 (below left): A cut from the proof pane of the unissued 55- and 90-cent booklets showing that they were printed at the same time.

Figure 8 (below center): An overlay reproduction of the unissued 39-cent Greet More booklet stamp.

Figure 9 (below right): One of the sheets of the unissued 45 cent from the proof sheet.



CANADA • BNA

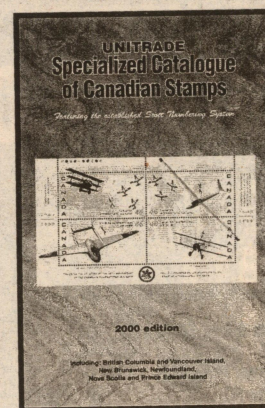
Choice Early Classics to Modern Varieties



936a \$2 Banff Missing Colour (inscriptions) Error. A well centred example of this rare error. Less than 100 copies known. This is one of the best centred examples.
VF NH CS \$1,500.00

Our price ... US\$ 945.00

Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps — 2000 Edition



- new 2000 edition
- 624 pages
- colour illustrations
- issues through August 1999
- current Canadian retail pricing by grade
- features the established Scott Numbering System
- Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia and Vancouver Island
- varieties and errors

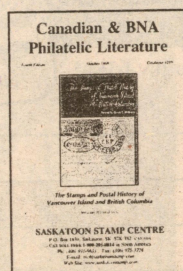
	C\$ Retail	Canada	USA	Other
Spiral	28.95	C\$31.95	US\$23.95	US\$26.95
Perfect	26.95	C\$29.95	US\$22.50	US\$25.50

(prices are postpaid to the respective country)

Internationally Recognized as a Leading Buyer of Canadian Errors and Varieties

PHILATELIC LITERATURE

Fourth Edition now available!



- We are the world's largest retail dealer in Canadian and BNA literature.
- Visit our web site for recently received titles and other book specials.
- Our 128-page Canadian/BNA Literature price list FREE on REQUEST.

WANTED: CANADIAN ERRORS

- ♦ IMPERFORATES ♦ MISSING COLOURS ♦ INVERTED COLOURS ♦
- ♦ MISPERFS ♦ COLOUR SHIFTS ♦ PRINTED ON GUM ♦
- ♦ TAGGING ♦ BETTER VARIETIES ♦

SASKATOON STAMP CENTRE

P.O. Box 1870, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3S2 CANADA
Call TOLL FREE 1-800-205-8814 in North America
Ph: (306) 931-6633 Fax: (306) 975-3728



E-mail: ssc@saskatoonstamp.com
Web site: www.saskatoonstamp.com



10 DIFFERENT AIRMAILS

MINT U.S.



YOURS FOR ONLY:

\$1.00

This collection of F-VF NH stamps will be sent to you with other high quality stamps for you to examine on approval.



UNITED STATES

#1892-3

YOURS FOR ONLY:

\$1.00

This Mint Pair of F-VF NH stamps will be sent to you with other high quality stamps for you to examine on approval.

CHOOSE THE OFFER YOU WISH TO RECEIVE
...SEND US \$1.00

AND WE'LL MAIL YOUR STAMPS TO YOU
ALONG WITH SOME OF OUR HIGH-QUALITY
APPROVALS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.
Sorry, only one offer per customer. Write today!

COLONIAL STAMP SHOPPE

P.O. Box 2578, Dept. 58, Chester, VA 23831

O CANADA continued from page 41

is believed that it was the first time that Truro inverts have come to auction.

The auction firm of R. Maresch and Son of Toronto celebrated its 75th anniversary. It always amazes me what that firm can come up with, particularly in Canadian classic material. Some of it is new discoveries, and others are material that has not been seen for 40 years.

Charles G. Firby Auctions out of Waterford, Mich., produces some of the best catalogues of Canadian material I have seen. In addition to full color in most of the firm's catalogues, they frequently contain unpublished research information important to collectors. A case in point was their sale this year of the "Loch Collection" of Canadian pence issues (April 28, 1999). The first four pages of the catalogue were devoted to a detailed study of the papers used for the pence stamps between March 1851 and May 1859.

Name sales of BNA material were, in addition to the "Loch Collection," the Grand Prix Collection of the *Postage Stamps and Postal History of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia* formed by Koh Seow Chuan of Singapore and offered at Spink America on April 13, 1999, and *The Postage Stamps and Postal History of the Canadian Maritime Provinces* held on Feb. 20, 1999 by Charles G. Firby Auctions. This auction was a combination of Maritimes collections owned by a number of prominent collectors of the area. Auction realizations for the Maritime material was generally on or below estimates. In the Koh sale many of the key items were not sold at the auction but were purchased the day after by an agent for an anonymous collector.

These are the highlights of what happened to make our hobby alive, controversial and interesting in Canada during 1999.

SANDAFAYRE ON-LINE - THE BIGGEST STAMP AUCTION ON THE INTERNET

www.sandafayre.com/ssm.htm

BOOKMARK NOW...

View

New Auction Every Week
Over \$2m worth Of Lots -
from \$50 to \$5000
10,000+++ Lots On-Line
Singles, Sets, Collections,
Cartons, Estates
Fully Detailed Descriptions

Bid

Fun & Easy 24hrs A Day
Direct From Your
Own PC
Only 1 Weekly Close Date -
Every Tuesday
All Bidding Confidential

Buy

Pay By Credit Card
Secure Encrypted
Information Transfer
Prompt Worldwide
Despatch
Full Packing Service
All Lots Insured In Transit

SANDAFAYRE GUARANTEE

- Friendly Personal Service
- Honest & Detailed Lot Descriptions
- Accurate Valuations
- No Quibble Money Back Guarantee

Help

Fully Indexed Catalogues
Philatelic Experts
On-Line
Prompt & Real Time
Answers To Queries
Advice On Using Our Site
E-Mail Bid Confirmation
Guide To Successful
Bidding

NOT ON THE NET?

REQUEST A FREE
HARD COPY OF OUR
CATALOGUE BY POST

SANDAFAYRE
The World's Largest Postal Auction Company

Sandafayre, ISM048, Knutsford, Cheshire, UK, WA16 8XN.

Telephone: +44 1565 653214

Fax: +44 1565 651637

E-mail: stamp@sandafayre.com



Complete this coupon for your own **FREE** catalogue

Name

Address

Country

Area of special interest

Also please send a **FREE** catalogue to my friend

Name

Address

Country

Area of special interest

ISM048