

June 20, 98

STAMPS • CHARLES
VERGE

Association has come a long way

In an earlier column, I wrote about philatelic societies for collectors. Today, I'll discuss the national society for stamp dealers and two philatelic research foundations in Canada.

The Canadian Stamp Dealers Association (CSDA) was founded in October 1942. At that time, stamp dealers, in particular those in Toronto, were not at all friendly with one another. However, necessity is the mother of invention. With the Second World War at its peak, the Canadian government instituted numerous regulations affecting the import and export of postage stamps.

The major Customs regulation that mitigated some action by the stamp dealers was one that said every letter or package containing stamps coming into the country had to be cleared through Customs.

At Empire Stamp Co., for example, 2,000 Customs cards were received each week for approvals being returned from U.S. customers. Since the new law required that each packet be individually cleared by Customs, the amount of work would bog down Customs officers and would probably sound the death knell for out-of-country approvals and stamp exchanges.

In addition, stamp dealers were having difficulty keeping up with all the new directives.

As hobbies could hardly be classified as urgent when it came to wartime, and as there was a need to make representation to the government to modify, change or delete these regulations, the Toronto dealers buried the hatchet.

At the recommendation of the Customs supervisor, a Mr. Savage, they met at the offices of Marks Stamp Co. in Toronto to set the foundation for their association. Some of the great dealers of the time attended the meeting — Sissons, Davenport, Martin, Kelson — and agreed on the name, the Canadian Stamp Dealers Association, and the dues, \$5 per year. They also prepared briefs and managed, over the next few months, to ease the burden of importing and exporting stamps.

Fifty-six years later, CSDA has grown into a national organization with 168 members coast to coast, in the United States and in Europe.

In addition to being a lobbying organization, CSDA publishes a newsletter to inform members on industry developments, produces an annual directory, provides group insurance, facilitates entry into Canada for non-resident members by holding a Customs bond, and manages four major stamp shows — two each in Montreal and Toronto.

The association instituted a mechanism to review complaints received against its members for breaches of its ethics policy and keeps a central registry of unsatisfactory business transactions. It also offers a network for stamp theft information, which it coordinates with the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Last fall, the two organizations agreed to exchange information, support each other and work together for the betterment of the hobby in Canada.

For information about CSDA, write to P.O. Box 1123, Adelaide Street Post Office, Toronto, ON M5C 2K5 or call (416) 979-3335. The fax number is (416) 979-1144.

The other groups of interest to collectors are two philatelic research foundations that offer Canadian tax receipts for donations.

The longer established of the two is the Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation. Its main areas of interest are the publishing of books on Canadian philately, maintaining a research library and providing a world renowned service of Canadian material, particularly classic Canada.

The Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation can be reached by contacting Harry Sutherland, Secretary, P.O. Box 100, First Canadian Place, Toronto, ON M5X 1B2.

The RPSC Philatelic Research Foundation was founded in 1986 and, in contrast to the previous foundation, is member driven. It's an association of philatelists, individuals and associations that support the promotion of stamp collecting in Canada, especially among youth. It specializes in research and encourages the holding of meetings, seminars, lectures, philatelic exhibitions, competitions and displays. There are several levels of membership and donations of money, stamp collections, philatelic libraries or memorial bequests are invited.

The RPSC Philatelic Research Foundation can be reached by contacting Romana Mirza, Executive Director, P.O. Box 929, Station Q, Toronto, ON M4T 2P1.

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NEXT WEEK: Coins

STAMPS

CHARLES VERGE



WAYNE HIEBERT, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

John McQuarrie's photo is part of the RCMP anniversary stamp.

Honouring RCMP 125th

Canada Post has issued some rather beautiful stamps lately. If you're into embossing, you'll be pleased with the last three issues, one of which is the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

The Mountie is recognizable around the world and, in fact, a member of the force has accompanied Canada Post officials to international stamp shows. This is one reason why the RCMP 125th anniversary souvenir sheet containing two *se-tenant* 45 cent stamps will be overprinted with the logos of PORTUGAL (September) and ITALIA (October).

The RCMP Musical Ride photograph in the small gutter that joins the two RCMP stamps is based on a photo taken seven years ago by Ottawa photographer John McQuarrie. It features the Musical Ride in front of a nine metre Canadian flag and will be seen around the world on 20 million stamps and souvenir sheets.

The other two embossed Canada Post issues are Sumo Wrestling and Health Professionals.

Canada Post has announced a Stampin' the Future stamp design contest to celebrate the millennium. The Sept. 9 to Oct. 31 contest is open to Canadians aged eight to 12 who are asked to submit art illustrating their thoughts and visions. Four winners will be announced next July and their art turned into stamps to be launched in March 2000. Information will be sent to Canadian schools. It's part of a larger contest that includes 30 countries.

Where are all the canal stamps? One million, thirty thousand booklets of ten 45-cent stamps showing eight Canadian canals went on sale June 17. The booklet includes two stamps each of the Rideau Canal system and the Trent-Severn waterway. I'm unable to find this booklet at post offices in Ottawa that I have visited and callers also say they're having difficulty. Some postal staff tell me that although they ordered the booklets, they weren't delivered.

The highest honour you can attain in philately in Canada is being named a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Since 1962, there have been 83 Fellows named. Appointed this year is Cimon Morin, chief of the Canadian Postal Archives. In addition to more than 20 years of preserving Canada's postal history, stamps and documents for future generations, he's the author of a world-renowned two-volume bibliography of Canadian philately (a third volume will be out this fall). Congratulations, Cimon, from a fellow Fellow. Your honour is well deserved.

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Remembering a pioneer in philately

Clarence Hopkins, who died last month at age 94, was a link to the early history of Ottawa stamp collecting.

He was president of the Ottawa Philatelic Society in 1942-43, and a regular at Ian Kimmerly's auctions where last year he sold the remainder of his extensive Canada stamp collection.

Mr. Hopkins was one of two Ottawa residents made honorary life members this year by the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC), being recognized for more than 50 years as an active member. The other was André Ouellet, chairman of Canada Post Corporation and its stamp advisory committee; he was honoured for 25 years of active participation in the hobby.

An internationally renowned chemist, Mr. Hopkins worked at the National Research Council for more than 35 years, beginning in 1930.

American Bill (Wilmer) Rockett, who has died at the age of 91, was the recognized expert on Canadian revenues for many years. When the Department of Revenue donated its archival holdings to the Canadian Postal Museum, Mr. Rockett was called upon to catalogue the collection.

Have Letter Will Travel is an exhibit in Quebec City of unusual ways to carry the mail such as microfilm, carrier pigeon, boat, dogsled and ponchon. In the winter of 1910, residents of the Magdalen Islands were cut off after the telegraph cable snapped. Sailors offered to carry the mail across the treacherous sea, but were advised against it. Alcide Gaudet, a seaman from Havre-Aubert, came up with the idea of loading mail onto a crewless craft and launching it in the direction of Nova Scotia. Made from a large molasses barrel called a ponchon, it was fitted with a sail and rudder and sent out to the mercy of the wind and waves. The barrel made it to Port Harding, N.S.; its contents sent to Halifax and distributed by regular post. The brainchild of Grégoire Teyssier, a director of the RPSC, the exhibition runs to Sept. 30 at 3 passage du Chien-d'Or, near Château Frontenac. It's open 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

The Canadian Postal Museum in the Museum of Civilization on Laurier Street in Hull has two new exhibits. The first is *Jean-Paul Lemieux: His Canada*. In 1982, Canada Post commissioned Mr. Lemieux to do 12 small paintings for reproduction on postage stamps commemorating Canada Day 1984. This exhibition runs to March 22.

The second, which opens Friday and runs to Sept. 2, brings together the works of the Automatistes. These French-Canadian artists and writers are depicted on stamps to be issued on the exhibit's opening day, Aug. 7.

On July 16, the U.S. issued a 32-cent stamp honouring Lila Acheson and DeWitt Wallace — founders of the Reader's Digest Association. In addition to their publishing responsibilities, the Wallaces gave millions to charitable causes. This is the newest in the Great Americans series that has honoured more than 75 prominent Americans since 1980.

Canada Post says its Canal series stamps were so popular that they're sold out. I reported that the booklets of 10 historic canal and waterway stamps were hard to find in Ottawa. Since then, I have found a few outlets with a small number of the Canal booklets for sale including the Rideau Centre, Station B and Canada Post headquarters on Riverside Drive. The sellout still doesn't explain why some post offices had their orders unfilled or reduced.

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STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

Engraving makes comeback in Canada

Engraved stamps, which were very popular with collectors and the major method of production of stamps until the 1940s, seem to be making a comeback in Canada.

Last year's \$8 Grizzly Bear was the precursor of this new trend. A \$1 Loon and a \$2 Polar Bear (to match the coins in our pockets) to be issued at the end of October will be using the steel engraving process.

The William Roué stamp (the naval architect who designed Canada's famous *Bluenose* schooner) uses a blue steel engraving along with five colour lithography.

The stamp, which was issued July 24, shows Roué and part of the famous 50 cent *Bluenose* stamp issued Aug. 1, 1929. The original stamp was printed in a quantity of 1.045 million and was for years voted to be the world's most beautiful stamp.

This is the second time this year that Canada Post has used previously issued stamps as central elements for its stamp design. On May 29, it was the 1898 Imperial Penny Postage stamp.

The United States has also re-issued 1898 stamps. Nine commemoratives issued for that year's Trans-Mississippi exhibition have been re-issued and went on sale June 18 during the Mega-Event stamp show in Anaheim, California.

The re-issued stamps are printed in two colours, as originally planned in 1898. However, resource issues during the Spanish-American War required the stamps be printed in a single colour.

The re-issued stamps are printed in two nine-stamp souvenir sheets. The first features all nine designs with denominations of one, two, four, five, eight, 10 and 50 cents, \$1 and \$2 in three rows of three.

The second sheet features only the \$1 Western Cattle in Storm design. This design, a most popular one with art and stamp collectors, was based on a painting purported to show a herd of cattle in a storm setting somewhere in the West. Several years after the stamp was printed, it was found that the painting on which the design had been copied was, in fact, showing a herd of Angus cattle somewhere in the Highlands of Scotland.

Scott Publishing has come out with a CD-ROM version of the portion of its catalogue covering the U.S. Scott is the publisher of the world's oldest stamp catalogue — the 1999 edition is its 155th.

It's also the most used catalogue in North America, if not the world.

The Scott U.S. Stamp Collector's Database CD-ROM is priced at \$69.95 U.S. Subscribers of *Scott Stamp Monthly* have a discounted price of \$55.96 U.S. There is an \$11.50 shipping and handling charge to Canada in addition to the price of the CD-ROM. At today's current rate of exchange (66 cents), the CD-ROM costs about \$122, \$101 if you're a subscriber.

The CD-ROM works on both Windows 95 or 98 and Macintosh 7.1 or better platforms and requires 15 megabytes (MB) of hard disk space and 16MB of available RAM. If you copy it to your hard disk for faster access, you will need 175MB of free space.

I was disappointed the CD-ROM didn't give me the full catalogue information found in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps*, but rather the more conventional information found in Vol. 1 of Scott's world catalogue. The information is current to June 1998. The listing of each stamp has the basic details and the catalogue value information is for stamps only. There is no value for the stamp on cover or for its first day of use.

The illustrations are quite good and the search engine powerful. Secondary screens allow you access to more illustrated information about some stamp varieties and special characteristics of the stamp. In addition, you can generate a personal inventory, build a want list and print both from the database.

As a first attempt by Scott into cyberspace catalogues, I recommend it if you collect the U.S. for its want list and inventory making capabilities. If, like me, you need it as a reference tool, then I suggest you wait for a second generation product and continue using Scott's paper catalogues.

It's available from Scott by mail at P.O. Box 828, Sidney, OH 45365-0828, U.S., by credit card toll free at 1-800-572-6885, or you can order it through your local stamp dealer.

Scott also has a web site you can browse: www.csmonline.com/scott/

You can also send e-mail to them at ScottPub@AmosPress.com.

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STAMPS

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Three clubs meet weekly

September is the beginning of the season for three local stamp clubs. I'm always amazed that, in addition to having so many clubs in the Ottawa-Hull area, these three meet weekly. Most other clubs that I know of meet only once or twice a month. The hobby is certainly flourishing in our area.

The RA Stamp Club, which has been around for 56 years, meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m. in the RA Centre's Rendez-Vous Room, 2451 Riverside Dr. Its first meeting is Sept. 15.

The Amicale des Philatélistes de l'Outaouais, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. starting Sept. 17 at Chalet Fontaine, 125 Charlevoix St., Hull.

The granddaddy of all Canadian stamp clubs, the 108-year-old Ottawa Philatelic Society, began its season Sept. 3. It meets every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in Hintonburg Community Centre, 1064 Wellington St.

Sept. 8 saw the issue of the latest stamp in the Masterpieces of Canadian Art. Bruno Bobek's The Farmer's Family, is a 90-cent international stamp — the eleventh in a series begun in 1988. The first five stamps had the art work framed in silver foil, the next five in gold foil and Bobek's painting starts the platinum series.

A nine-stamp set to be issued Sept. 23 traces the evolution of housing in Canada. It commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation and the 25th anniversary of the Heritage Canada Foundation. The preliminary photograph of the pane I saw showed a fairly wide sheetlet that included panels on both sides containing a fair amount of text. Hopefully, these sheetlets will be smaller than the album pages or collectors will have difficulty mounting them without folding one of the panels.

A new unannounced addition to this year's list of stamps will be issued Sept. 30. It is a self-adhesive 45-cent coil stamp that comes in a box containing a roll of 100 stamps. The design of a stylized maple leaf and the colours of the stamp are those of the automatic teller machine (ATM) stamp issued earlier this year as a pilot project in southwest Ontario. There are two major differences. The coil stamp shows printed simili perforations and the words postage/postes are missing beside the 45. The ATM stamp was printed by Avery and the coil stamp is printed by Ashton Potter on paper manufactured by Canadian Jac. With a one-cent increase in postal rates coming Jan. 1, this stamp will have a very short three-month life span.

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Oct 3/98

STAMPS

CHARLES VERGE

Postage rate hikes sought

Canada Post is seeking increases to the three principal postal rates: the domestic letter rate from 45 to 46 cents, the U.S. rate from 52 to 55 cents and the international rate to 95 from 90 cents.

The differential between a letter mailed within Canada and to the U.S. goes from seven to nine cents. It's slowly creeping up. From January 1982 to April 1987, it was five cents. The six-cent differential lasted until March 1994; it's been seven cents since.

Canada Post issued stamps for the five- and six-cent differentials, but not the seven-cent. Hopefully, they will issue a nine-cent stamp this time; it would be convenient for those who write regularly to the U.S. If so, it will be the first stamp with that denomination ever issued in Canada and fill the last spot in the one- to 10-cent range.

Another inconvenience problem arises with the international rate. Since 1982, it has been double the domestic letter rate. Now, at 95 cents, it will be three cents greater than the usual double rate. You will no longer be able to put two stamps at the domestic-letter rate to make up the international rate, but will have to keep some three-cent stamps around. Since the three new rates are to go into effect Jan. 1, you should expect a large number of new stamps to add to your collection in late December. My bet is that either Dec. 28 or 29 you will see five or six new definitives in sheet and booklet formats, self-stick 46-cent greeting stamps, a 46-cent self-stick coil box of 100 to replace the 45-cent issued just days ago, pre-stamped envelopes and an air letter.

Rate changes have been scheduled for this month as well. On Oct. 1, the new blended registration service came into effect. No longer are there two rates (\$3.15 for national, \$6.90 for international). A single \$4 registration service covers all. Hopefully, there will be a \$4 stamp issued shortly to cover this rate. But with new \$1 and \$2 stamps being issued later this month, Canada Post's answer to a \$4 stamp will likely be to recommend we use four \$1 or two \$2 stamps. So much for convenience, once again.

On Oct. 5, there will be changes to other rates and services from Xpresspost to mail boxes. Two are of interest to most of us. Xpresspost, the one- or two-day service, goes up anywhere between six and 12 per cent. Prices for Priority Courier, the overnight service, increase uniformly by 12 per cent. GST on these would also be increased by six to 12 per cent. Is a 12-per-cent rise in postal rates keeping up with the cost of living or is it exorbitant?

The 10-stamp and 30-stamp flag booklets, originally issued Feb. 2, appeared with new covers in September. Why? Because Canada Post has a new corporate logo and a new printing of booklets was required. However, these new booklets will be obsolete come January when the flag stamp is reissued as a 46-cent stamp.

L'Amicale des philatélistes de l'Outaouais celebrates its 20th anniversary at its 15th annual exhibition, Oct. 23-25, in Notre-Dame-de-la-Guadeloupe Church, 30 St-Onge St., Hull. The show opens at 10 a.m.

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STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

Exhibitors get together

The American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors (AAPE) held its annual convention Oct. 16-18 at the Greater Toronto Stamp Show (formerly the CSDA National).

The AAPE was formed in 1986 to share and discuss ideas and techniques geared to improving standards of exhibit preparation, judging and the management of exhibitions.

In addition to its award-winning magazine, *The Philatelic Exhibitor*, it sponsors the American Youth Championship of Champions, in which young winners of national level stamp shows in Canada and the U.S. compete for the North American championship title.

There were three Canadian and 14 American entries. The winner was Tim Jones of Baltimore, with his exhibit on the History of Man's Flight in the Earth's Atmosphere. His prizes include the Grand Award, a replica of a 1920s travelling clock courtesy of Canada Post.

Another AAPE program is its critique service. Members can avail themselves of a written exhibit critique where accredited judges annotate a photocopy of the exhibit and give suggestions for improvement.

If you're interested in becoming a member or want more information about AAPE, write to Dr. Paul E. Tyler, 1023 Rocky Point Court N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87123, U.S., or e-mail to petyl@juno.com.

Peter Martin, editor of *Scott Stamp Monthly*, visited Ottawa this month. In addition to providing monthly updates to yearly editions of *Scott* catalogues, the magazine has many interesting features from in-depth scholarly articles to others showing the weird and wacky side of the hobby. During his stay, he met with officials at Canada Post, the Canadian Postal Archives and the Canadian Postal Museum.

As Canadians are the second largest group of subscribers to *Scott Stamp Monthly* and as Canada is the second most popular collecting area with Americans, Mr. Martin is looking to enhance *Scott's* coverage of Canada. As a result of his visit, I'm sure readers of the magazine will see more articles on Canada in the months to come.

The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC) has announced that its award-winning publication, *The Canadian Philatelist*, will have a new look beginning with Volume 50 in January. It will be in a magazine format with easier-to-read print, contain new features (some with colour illustrations) and be more bilingual.

For information on becoming an RPSC member, contact Andrew Parr at RPSC, P.O. Box 929, Station Q, Toronto, ON M4T 2P1 or e-mail to rpsc@interlog.com.

Readers are invited to join me Friday, Oct. 30, at the 2516 Alta Vista Dr. branch of Ottawa Public Library when I'll be speaking on Murder, Mystery and Stamps at 2 p.m. For information or to register, call 598-4012.

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Nov 14, 98

STAMPS

CHARLES VERGE

Recognizing revenues

Stamp collecting comes in many varieties including thematics, stamps and postal history. One area you hear little about is revenue (duty or fiscal) stamps. Although a full class at international exhibitions, it's not the most popular of collecting areas in Canada.

This might be cyclical because, as John R. Hooper, founder of the Ottawa Philatelic Society (1891) wrote in *Hobbies* in 1937, "Canada revenues did better in my New York sale 47 years ago than did my pence issues."

European countries implemented early the idea of collecting duty and customs money with the aid of impressed stamps. There is an act of the French Parliament in 1655 for that purpose which was never enacted, but resulted in Colbert, Louis XIV's minister of finance, imposing stamp duties in 1673.

A few years later, British commissioners were sent to Holland to study the system. Based on their reports, the first stamp duties were imposed in Great Britain on June 29, 1694. Three quarters of a century later, some of these taxes were one of the reasons that the American Revolution started.

It wasn't until the 1850s that duty stamps appeared in adhesive form similar to our postage stamps.

Revenue stamps have two firsts to their credit. First, they were collected before postage stamps. In fact, the first stamp collection on record is a stamp duty one that was started by John Burke in Ireland in 1772. It can be viewed in the archives at Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.

Second, a collector of revenue stamps became the first philatelic medalist. A Senor Provenza was awarded a silver medal at the Madrid Exhibition in 1873 for his collection of Spanish fiscals that were issued annually from 1637.

In the 1920s, Senator James A. Calder was a strong proponent of revenue collecting, particularly those of Saskatchewan, his home province.

Fine exhibits of revenue stamps were shown at Canadian National Philatelic Exhibitions in 1924 (Winnipeg) and 1925 (Montreal).

In Canada, two major catalogues on these stamps are available. The *Van Dam* catalogue is a general catalogue that is updated every three or four years. The seven-volume *Zaluski* catalogue is extensive in its coverage of both federal and provincial issues, as well as many other stamps on dutiable materials. Both catalogues should be available from stamp dealers.

The new-rate stamps are scheduled to be released Dec. 28. You'll find the following new issues at post offices: a 46-cent Flag design stamp in sheets of 120 and booklets of 10 and 30 for the domestic letter rate; 55-cent (U.S. rate) and 95-cent (international rate) Maple Leaf design in sheets of 50 and booklets of five; a 73-cent Maple Leaf (second weight step for letter rate); a 46-cent coil; and four different bird 46-cent pre-stamped envelopes.

Queen Elizabeth II will again grace a domestic letter-rate 46-cent Canadian stamp, although it will be available only in sheets of 120 and not in booklets.

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Dec 5/98

STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

Gift stamp of approval

It's the time of year to think about gifts for your favourite philatelists and for non-collectors, as well. This year's gift bag includes the perennial *Canada Post: The Collection of Canada Stamps, 1998*.

Once again, it's a winner. Although four pages less than last year, it has far more stamps (80) and is well worth the \$46.95 plus tax since it contains almost \$40 worth of stamps. Its production is high-quality and filled with interesting facts and photographs.

Other Canada Post products include some very interesting coin and stamp sets. Canada Post has teamed up with the Royal Canadian Mint to issue a box of matching coin and stamps.

The "Loonie" gift box contains an uncirculated \$1 loon coin with a pair of \$1 loon stamps (\$15.95). In some boxes, the left stamp of the pair is overprinted with the first day of issue cancellation; in other boxes, it's the right stamp. A similar box is available for the \$2 polar bear (\$17.95). Unfortunately, you need to buy two boxes of each to get the left and right overprints.

For children, there's the Circus Juggling Kit (\$9.95) with balls, stamps and a souvenir folder.

For the collector specializing in coins and stamps, Canada Post offers a RCMP 125th anniversary collector's set (\$47.95). In addition to the souvenir sheet, there's a 16-page booklet and a \$5 coin with a special Mint privy mark. I understand this coin is only available through this offer.

Old favourites are still available: the Stampville CD-ROM (\$14.95), the Series of the Century hockey coin and stamp set (\$22.50), and the Horror Collection (reduced to \$9.95), which includes spooky stories, games, cut-out masks and stamps. Don't forget Stamp Quest, the complete starter kit for a young beginning collector. This is a bargain as it keeps on giving year after year as Canada Post updates the kit (\$19.95).

You can buy most of segit ideas at local post offices. Some are only available at the National Philatelic Centre, 75 St Ninian St., Antigonish, N.S. B2G 2R8 or 1-800-565-4362.

A new book by expatriate Canadian Kenneth Kutz has hit the market. Mr. Kutz, who now lives in the U.S., has written and published six books on gold and philately with the most important being *Gold Fever*, a written version of his award-winning exhibit. His new book, *Untold Wealth — Canada's Mineral Heritage*, traces the history of mining in Canada and is heavily illustrated with philatelic material and picture postcards. The book is available in soft- (\$30 U.S. post paid) and hard-bound (\$50) editions. You can buy it from Gold Fever Publishing, 7 Whaling Road, Darien, CT 06820, U.S.

I reported earlier that a new blended registration rate had come into effect Oct. 1. However, the rate hike was postponed to Jan. 1 when security registration, registration and money packets will be discontinued. The simplified registration service fee will be \$4 plus applicable postage for domestic mail, \$8.20 plus postage for anywhere else in the world. Additional insurance will be available for an extra fee.

My best wishes to all for a pleasant, happy and safe holidays.

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12-penny proof a '97 highlight

Excitement reigned throughout the North American collecting world in June 1997 when the Ivy Mader catalogue for the official PACIFIC '97 auction was unveiled in San Francisco offering as the first lot (Lot 1001): "The American Bank Note Company/New York/Specimens of Postage Stamps enormously valuable archival proof book."

The appearance, in the book, of a full trial colour proof sheet in orange-brown of the U.S.'s first stamp, the Benjamin Franklin 5¢, was hailed as a momentous discovery. No full proof sheet of this stamp had ever been found before and, therefore, no plating of the stamp was ever made.

Coincidentally, the same lack of plating capability applied to Canada's 1851 12-penny black but not quite for the same reason. The proof book on sale also had one full proof sheet of the 12-penny black, Canada's most famous stamp.

The sheet of 100 proofs in black (the issued colour), with SPECIMEN vertically overprinted in carmine, was the highlight of a complete set of proof-sheets of all Canadian Pence (1851-1859) and Cents (1859-1868) stamps in colour of issue. At 1997 *Canadian Specialized Catalogue* (CS) prices this group catalogued \$396,000 Cdn.

It is not known why this is only the second full proof sheet of the 12-penny black to have surfaced. The famed Dale-Lichtenstein collection had the only previously recorded full sheet. That full sheet and other large multiples were auctioned in the Dale-Lichtenstein sales — a block of 60 (Sale 2, Lot 54) and two blocks of 25 (Sale 2, Lots 52 & 53) which fit together to form the upper half of one sheet.

The block of 60 was sold for \$7,250 and cut up into smaller blocks by Sam Nickle of Calgary. The blocks of 25 were sold for \$2,500 and \$2,300 each. The full sheet (Sale 7, Lot 832) was reportedly sold to Toronto dealer J. N. Sissons for \$8,000. He is also believed to have split it up. Neither Mr. Lichtenstein, his daughter Louise Boyd Dale nor Mr. Sissons are recorded to have plated the proof sheet.

John Jamieson, resident of Saskatoon Stamp Centre, said he purchased the proof sheets with the intention to plate the 12-penny black and to have some of Canada's most respected students of

this issue help him out. He suggested he was in no hurry to part with the material and a complete study would be made before any decision was taken on how to dispose of the proofs. Many proof owners, and the few lucky stamp owners, will be able to find out what position their stamp/proof occupied in the sheet. And the students of Canada's early issues will now be able to complete research on one of the few remaining uncharted areas of classic Canadian philately.

The second major Canadian-related philatelic find in 1997 was the discovery of a second ballon monté letter from the 1870 Siege of Paris addressed to Canada. This new find became known through the March 1997 auction of Stamp Centre Dutch Country of Wilmington, Delaware. A California dealer had consigned two ballon monté covers, another was addressed to Italy, after years of trying to sell both of them for \$200 U.S., or \$300 for both, on the California show circuit.

The ballon monté was posted at Paris on October 31, 1870, and sent through London on November 5, 1870. It was addressed to Galt, Ont., and was franked with a 80-centimes stamp which was the rate to Canada at the time. Gérard Lhéritier, in *Les ballons montés, Boules de moulins, Pigeon-grammes, Papillon de Metz: Historique, Evaluation, Classification, Cotation*, 1994, gives us more details. It was carried on the 22nd ballon to leave Paris during the siege, *Le Fulton*, which left the Gare d'Orléans, Wednesday, Nov. 2 at 8:45 a.m. and at 2 p.m. at Chanzéaux. The ballon had covered 290 kilometres south-west from Paris. The pilot, who died eight days later of pneumonia, was a Mr. Le Gloarnec and he had one passenger, Ernest Cézanne.

It is too bad that no knowledgeable Canadian purchased the ballon monté because, after the dust settled, it was hammered to a European collector for \$7,400 U.S. plus commission. The cover to Italy, which even the auction house felt more desirable than the one to Canada, was sold for \$475 U.S.

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Canada Post's 1998 program contains recurring themes, new subjects and new definitives. It also as a glaring absence.

Back this year are the Lunar New Year, the Birds, the Scenic Highways, the Masterpiece of Canadian Art and the Christmas stamps. The Year of the Tiger is this year's lunar new year theme. The 45¢ stamp, diamond-shaped souvenir sheet and uncut press sheet already made their appearance January 8. They are as popular as last year's issue and almost as difficult to acquire. The Birds stamps will depict the Great Crested Flycatcher, the Eastern Screech-Owl, the Rosy Finch and the Hairy Woodpecker. The scenic highways will be from New Brunswick, PEI, Alberta and the Yukon. The art stamp will feature a painting by New Brunswick artist Bruno Bobak. Baroque and neo-classical images of Angels will grace the Christmas stamps.

Other issues include the February 19 booklet featuring ten provincial premiers which were originally scheduled for last year. Amongst the premiers chosen are Newfoundland's Joey Smallwood, Ontario's John Robarts, Quebec's Jean Lesage and Alberta's Ernest Manning, father of the Reform Party's leader, Preston Manning. Fishing flies will adorn six stamps on April 16. The 100th anniversary of the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum will be commemorated on May 4. In June, ten stamps will feature canals including the Rideau, Lachine and Trent-Severn waterways. June will also see two stamps for the 125th anniversary of The RCMP. On July 3, the Bluenose will be featured on a Canadian stamp for the fourth time since 1929. This time to honour its designer, William Rou  .

The second part of the year will start with a series of seven stamps in In August seven stamps will to honour Les Automatistes, the Quebec equivalent of The Group of Seven. Sports stamps will pay tribute to Napol  on-Alexandre Comeau, "Red" Foster, Bill Mason and Phyllis Munday. The 50th anniversary of Heritage Canada will be featured through a nine-stamp series on the history of housing in Canada. To mark the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a stamp featuring its drafter, John Humphrey, will be issued in September. September 25 will see a stamp for the 150th Anniversary of the University of Ottawa. Remembrance day and the 75th Anniversary of the Canadian Naval Reserve will find two ship stamps added to our collections: the HMCS Sackville and the HMCS Shawinigan.

Stamp Collecting Month in October will have the Circus as a theme and will feature clowns, elephants and acrobats. Philately will also be honoured this year: a stamp commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Imperial Penny Postage movement. The stamp will feature then Postmaster General William Mulock and a replica of what is commonly known in the stamp collecting world as the 1898 Map Stamp. For many it is also known as the world's first Christmas stamp as it bears the phrase 'Xmas 1898'. That was the day Imperial Penny Postage came into effect.

Definitives announced include a \$1 Loon and a \$2 Polar Bear which mirror the subjects found on current Canadian coinage. Not in the December 10, 1997 press release is a smaller version of the Canadian Flag 45¢ current definitive to be issued February 2. The new size affects the sheet layout as well as the booklets. To save money and the environment, the smaller size will allow the stamps to be printed in sheets of 120 rather than the current 100. In fact they could have been printed in sheets of 130 since there will be an empty stamp-size row (known in philately as a gutter) separating the sheet in panes of 60 stamps. The booklet of 10 stamps will be continued but in a smaller format and the booklet of 25 will now be one of 30 stamps configured as two panes of 15 separated by a gutter.

The glaring absence is the lack of a stamp to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the entry of PEI into Confederation. It is the first time ever that a significant anniversary of a Province has been forgotten since Canada Post began honouring the provinces and territories in 1970 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. The list of these stamps is too long for today's column. In the meantime, . If you feel strongly that such a stamp should be issued I would recommend that you write to the Chairman of Canada Post, the Honourable Andr   Ouellet, who is also the Chairman of the Stamp Advisory Committee to support a PEI stamp. It is not too late. If Great Britain can design and print stamps for the late Princess Diana in two weeks, I believe Canada can put out a stamp for PEI in a few months.

STAMPS • CHARLES VERGE

Valentine-love theme found in stamp world

Today is St. Valentine's Day and valentine cards date to the 19th century — the love theme is also found in the world of stamps.

Valentine was a Roman doctor, who became a priest, and was ordered decapitated for his faith by the emperor around the year 270. Because his feast day corresponds to the beginning of the Roman spring, he is considered to be the patron saint of engaged couples.

We express this day by sending valentines to our loved ones, and children exchange them in school.

During the 1850s, some very ornate valentine cards went through the Canadian mail system.

The valentine that Miss Mary McCrea, of Guelph, received was mailed several days after the feast, on Feb. 17, 1859. The card didn't survive, but the very fine embossed large envelope in which it was enclosed did. It was mailed for a ½ penny at the drop letter rate by her admirer in Guelph.

A drop letter was one that was mailed and received at the same post office. The stamp used to frank the letter was a fine ½ deep rose of the perforated pence issue, which was for sale for only six months (Jan. 1 to June 30, 1859). The stamp is catalogued in the 1998 *Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps* (CS) at \$900.

If you wish to start an antique valentine card collection, Miss McCrea's envelope is for sale by a British dealer. The asking price: approximately \$14,000.

A small, neat embossed valentine envelope addressed to Miss Carolin Manning in Manningville, Quebec — received from her admirer in Trois Rivières — was sold in 1982 for \$3,500 U.S. Mailed Feb. 20, 1859, it bore a three penny perforated beaver, which had the same six-month period of sale as the ½ penny above. The CS catalogue values the stamp at \$500.

(Manningville was in Huntingdon County, Quebec. Huntingdon's post office opened on Oct. 6, 1831 and closed Jan. 20, 1868.)

A large (200 x 133 mm) and beautifully coloured decorative lace and embossed valentine was sent to Miss Emily Leeds of Stamford, Connecticut. It was mailed from Montreal on Feb. 14, 1856 and bore two slate six pennies stamps printed on medium wove paper. The stamps, issued in March 1855, are catalogued by CS at \$2,000 each.

At the time, six pennies paid the rate

to the U.S. (except the Pacific Coast) for a letter not weighing more than ½ oz. Because this valentine card weighed between ½ and 1 oz., the rate was 12 pennies. The envelope and card were last sold by Christie's at the 1993 sale of the collection of the late Sam C. Nickle, of Calgary. They were purchased at a bargain price of \$6,600 U.S. against a Christie's estimate of \$8,000 to \$10,000.

If these prices are out of your range, you can collect "love" stamps; the United States and Ireland have issued stamps on this theme.

The U.S. began the love stamps rolling in 1982 with a single stamp issued Feb. 1, illustrating the word love spelt out with flowers. It comes with two perforation varieties. Since then the U.S. has issued love stamps most years, frequently around Valentine's Day but also at other times. In 1988, two stamps showing roses were issued in July and August.

Ireland started with two stamps on the love theme in 1985. The 22p. stamp, paying the unsealed card rate, showed clouds and a balloon spelling the word love. The 26p., paying the sealed domestic letter rate, displayed a bouquet made out of flowers and heart-shaped balloons. Ireland has issued love stamps every year since.

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NEXT WEEK: Coins

February 28
1998

STAMPS

U.S. 1920s stamps include flappers, financial crash

WASHINGTON — Good manners and great football, the drought of Prohibition and the flappers who flouted it, financial disaster and political inclusion will be among the subjects on new postage stamps commemorating the 1920s.

The United States Postal Service is issuing a series of collections, 15 stamps each, commemorating the events of each decade in this century.

Stamps for the 1900s and 1910s were released in January, and subjects for the 1920s stamps were announced last week. Their release dates and locations were not announced.

The flowering of sports in the 1920s is recalled on two stamps, one for New York Yankee baseball star Babe Ruth and the other of the Four Horsemen of Notre Dame football fame.

The Fighting Irish backfield got its nickname from sports writer Grantland Rice after a 13-7 victory over Army on Oct. 18, 1924.

Wrote Mr. Rice:

"Outlined against a blue, gray October sky the Four Horsemen rode again.

"In dramatic lore they are known as famine, pestilence, destruction and death. These are only aliases. Their real names are: Stuhldreher, Miller, Crowley and Layden. They formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another fighting Army team was swept over the precipice at the Polo Grounds this afternoon as 55,000 spectators peered down upon the bewildering panorama spread out upon the green plain below."

The four were quarterback Harry Stuhldreher, halfbacks Jim Crowley and Don Miller and fullback Elmer Layden.

In the arts and letters there will be stamps commemorating F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*, American Realism in art and the Art Deco style of design.

On the political front, stamps will recall the attempted enforcement of Prohibition and, more successful, the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote.

Lifestyles of the era will be recalled with stamps showing flappers doing the Charleston, commemorating the flourishing of jazz music, recalling the popularity of electric toy trains, and remembering the arrival of radio as family entertainment.

Famous personalities included will be Charles Lindbergh, the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic; anthropologist Margaret Mead; and the maven of manners, Emily Post.

The 1929 stock market crash also will be recalled on a stamp.

Postal officials selected the subjects for the stamps covering the first half of the century and the public is being asked to vote on those for the second 50 years.

Voting covering the 1950s ends today.

The Associated Press

Remembering the Maine

WASHINGTON — For the Feb. 15 release of the stamp marking the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Cuba, the U.S. Postal Service went as far south as it could.

The stamp, which was requested by former president Jimmy Carter, among others, was released at Key West, the small Florida island about 140 kilometres north of Cuba.

The red and black stamp features a line drawing of the *Maine* under way under the famous slogan "Remember the *Maine*" which helped fuel American enthusiasm for the Spanish-American War.

Created by veteran designer Richard Sheaff of Scottsdale, Arizona, it is one of the few recent commemoratives produced by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing on its offset-intaglio presses.

The bureau printed 30 million of the stamps, which are being sold in sheets of 20.

Officially called the "Spanish-American War Commemorative Stamp," the commemorative is the one of the few U.S. observances of that war.

Cuba is issuing three commemorative coins to mark the war, according to *Coin World*, the numismatic publication. One of those, a 10-peso coin, depicts the mysterious explosion which sank the battleship on Feb. 15, 1898.

The Washington Post

NEXT WEEK: Charles Verge's Stamps column.

March 7, 98

STAMPS • CHARLES VERGE

New '98 issues include sumo wrestling event

New stamp issues have been added to Canada Post's 1998 stamp program. Not found in Canada Post's December news release listing this year's program, some new stamps are to be issued between February and June. It's likely that other unplanned issues will be added later.

I reported on the first of these in an earlier column: A smaller version of the Canadian Flag 45-cent flag definitive was issued Feb. 2 in sheets of 120.

Other new stamps this year include two 45-cent stamps and a 90-cent souvenir sheet featuring the two stamps to be issued June 5 to honour Sumo Canada Basho. Vancouver will host this sumo wrestling exhibition June 6-7 at the Pacific National Exhibition's Pacific Coliseum — the first time such an event has been held in Canada.

This event has some very powerful backing. The 21 members of the honorary advisory committee include Prince Takamado of Japan, who studied at Queen's University in Kingston for three years, as honorary patron. The honorary chairman is Donald W. Campbell, deputy minister of foreign affairs and a former Canadian ambassador to Japan.

Members include Raymond Chan, secretary of state (Asia-Pacific), Judd Buchanan, chairman of the Canadian Tourism Commission, and André Quellet, chairman of Canada Post Corporation.

The last unannounced issue will be available June 25 and consist of one 45-cent stamp to commemorate health professionals.

I haven't been able to find out why the stamp is being issued or if it commemorates some historical or social event. Over the years, Canada Post has received many requests to honour medical and other health fields including congresses and conventions

held in Canada. This stamp may be an attempt to cover them all at the same time by honouring the profession and not an event.

In a column last February I wrote about Owney, the mascot of the United States Railway Postal Service, who elected himself personal guardian of the mailbags. He travelled more than 229,000 kilometres on mail trains and steamships between 1888 and 1897.

Now there's a sequel to the story. To mark the 100th anniversary of the dog's death, June 11, 1897, a life-sized statue of Owney has been unveiled in the entrance of the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum. The statue is the work of sculptor Daniel C. Brown, who donated it to the museum.

Mail is arriving in Canada from the United Kingdom franked with stamps bearing the likeness of Princess Diana. These five 26-pence stamps show different photographs of Diana as Princess of Wales and are all framed in violet and bear the dates 1961-1997.

What is remarkable about them is it has now been proven, by sheet margin data, that the first of these were printed on Sept. 4, 1997 — five days after her death. A remarkable achievement when you think that photograph copyrights have to be vetted; royal, family and government approvals have to be obtained; and designs made before printing can be done. For all their hastiness, the stamps are quite attractive.

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NEXT WEEK: Coins

STAMPS • CHARLES VERGE

Stamps from ATMs important advance

As reported in *The Citizen* on March 5, Canada Post and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) are co-operating in a one-year pilot project to provide the bank's customers with stamps through automated teller machines (ATMs).

This is a very important development in Canadian stamp collecting.

Come the week of April 20, CIBC customers in Barrie, Burlington, Oakville and Whitby will be able to purchase the stamps night or day without cash. Twenty-five to 30 of the bank's ATMs located in off-bank premises will be equipped to dispense sheets of 18 45-cent stamps.

The stamps will be self-adhesive and printed on a peelable backing, eliminating the need to lick or tear stamps before using them.

The \$8.99 cost of the stamp sheets will be debited directly from the customer's CIBC accounts. In addition to the \$8.10 face value of the stamps, the bank is adding a 30-cent service charge and GST.

The 18-stamp sheet will be the size and thickness of a Canadian banknote and, once dispensed from the ATM, can be neatly folded over into a small booklet and conveniently carried in a purse or wallet.

Banknote thickness means the stamps will be printed on very thin paper (since they are peelable, they are printed on an additional backing). Postal patrons and stamp collectors should be aware of the delicate nature of the paper when peeling them off the backing or soaking them to remove them from envelopes before putting the stamps in their collections. They are easily damaged.

The die-cut pressure-sensitive stamp was designed by Gottschalk & Ash International of Toronto and features a stylized red maple leaf outlined in yellow-gold on an apple green background.

Micro lettering, a recent feature in stamp production, is used in the design of this stamp as a security measure. The word Canada is repeated in a continuous fashion in tiny letters to form the design of the leaf.

Avery, the well-known label manufacturer, is printing the 4.5 million, steel engraved, four-colour stamps. It's the first time Avery has printed Canadian stamps. Normally Canadian

stamps have been printed by banknote and security printers in Canada, the United States and Australia.

"Avery was the only firm able to print these specialized stamps. As well, they have experience in printing American ATM stamps," said Jim Phillips, Canada Post's stamp marketing manager.

Self-adhesive ATM stamps were first introduced by the United States Postal Service (USPS) in 1990 when it sold panes of 12 25-cent stamps of the U.S. flag for a six-month period at 22 First National Bank ATMs in Seattle.

Mary-Ann Owens, a recently retired, 20-year veteran of the United States Stamp Advisory Committee, said the 1990 U.S. pilot project was successful enough to proceed to an expansion of the distribution of ATM stamps.

She said that "expansion out of Seattle eastward has been a slow process since not all ATMs work the same way and the sheet format would have to be changed depending on the machine. So far the USPS is not willing to do that."

Mrs. Owens indicated that ATM stamps are still very much a west-of-the-Mississippi phenomenon, but are popular and financially viable enough for the USPS to continue producing them. A flag-type stamp is issued every year for use throughout the year and a seasonal greetings stamp for the winter season.

The CIBC pilot project is available only to CIBC clients with a convenience card. If you are not a customer of the CIBC in south-central Ontario and are interested in purchasing the stamps, they will be available as of April 14 from Canada Post's National Philatelic Centre, 75 St. Ninian St., Antigonish NS B2G 2R8 or by phoning 1-800-565-4362.

I also recommend you look for used examples on envelopes originating from a town where the stamps are available. I believe they will be scarcer than the mint versions.

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STAMPS • CHARLES VERGE

These stamp groups specialize in Canada

This column will inform you about national organizations that group stamp collectors in Canada or those who collect Canada.

The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC) is the national bilingual society and represents Canadian collectors around the world. It offers many services to its members including insurance, exchange packets and *The Canadian Philatelist*, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2000.

Membership is composed of individual members, affiliates and some 100 chapters in Canada and the United States, including the RA Stamp Club and the Ottawa Philatelic Society.

It holds an annual convention. This year's convention in Hamilton from May 29-31 is its 75th.

The RPSC has a national office that can be reached by mail at P.O. Box 929, Station D, Toronto, M4T 2P1; by phone at 416-979-7474 and by fax at 416-979-1144.

You can send e-mail at rpsc@interlog.com or reach its web site at <http://www.interlog.com/~rpsc>, which, in addition to offering much information on Canadian philately and the RPSC in general, has an innovative on-line library where original articles are published. Membership is \$25 for residents of Canada.

Another general Canadian society is the Fédération québécoise de philatélie. It was created in 1965 to serve as a co-ordinating body for the many active stamp clubs in Quebec. Its magazine, *Philatélie-Québec*, has been published in French since March 1976.

The federation is an active group with a high youth participation. It offers expertizing services for Canadian stamps and postal history. Membership is \$25 for residents of Canada.

The federation can be reached at C.P. 1000, Succ. M, Montreal, Québec, H1V 3R2.

For those who wish to belong to a society that specializes only in Canadian philately, there is the British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS), founded Oct. 28, 1943 by U.S. citizen Jack Levine. BNAPS covers all aspects of the philately of Canada, British North America and Newfoundland.

It has annual conventions that alternate between Canada and the

United States. This year's convention is scheduled for the weekend of Oct. 8-10 in Orlando, Florida.

Its journal, *BNA Topics*, has been issued since 1944. In 1993, BNAPS launched *BNAPortraits*, to remove the administrative information from *BNA Topics* and ensure more frequent contact with its members. Membership in BNAPS is \$24 Cdn. Contact the Secretary, 108 Duncan Drive, Troy, Michigan 48098.

If your interest turns towards postal history, there are societies for you. The Postal History Society of Canada has been around since 1972 and concentrates on the study of the postal history of Canada during the French regime and of British North America. It publishes the *PHSC Journal*. Membership is \$15 for Canadian residents. Contact the Secretary, 216 Mailey Dr., Carleton Place, Ontario, K7C 3X9.

La Société d'histoire postale du Québec was established in 1980 to serve people interested in Quebec postal history, to promote the study of this area of philately and to publish the results of such studies.

This society also owns and preserves documentary archives and postal artifacts including a full 19th-century working post office. Membership is \$18 and with that comes the society's quarterly journal *Le Bulletin d'histoire postale et de marcopophilie*.

Write to the Secretary, 265 rue du Chalutier (#306), Quebec City, Québec G1K 8R3.

All these societies have, or still are, publishing books, research papers and indices.

When writing, ask for their list of available publications.

Next weekend is the 37th annual RA Stamp Club's Exhibition and Bourse, ORAPEX 1998.

It is being held in the Curling Rink of the RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Drive and is open Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Sunday, April 26, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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STAMPS • CHARLES VERGE

Rare Canadian issues at 70th convention

The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada is holding its 70th annual convention May 29-31 at the Hamilton Convention Centre. It's being touted as the best society convention in many a year.

The Hamilton organizing committee, under the chairmanship of John Miller, has been busy for years planning this show. There are more than 50 dealers and 150 frames of exhibits, including two spectacular exhibits of classic Canadian material.

These two exhibits, part of The Brigham Collection, will show some of the most unique stamps and covers of the Pence and Cents era (1851-1868). That period included Canada's most famous stamp — the black 12 pence featuring the young Queen Victoria. The exhibit has three pairs of this rare stamp and two examples on cover.

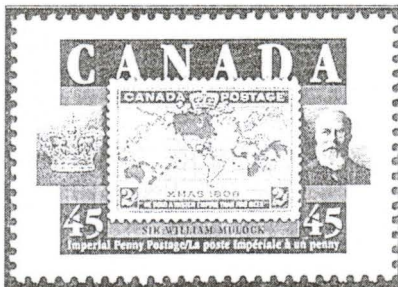
The other classic exhibit is the Large Queens (1868-1897). The exhibit will show all of the unique pieces of this issue including Canada's rarest stamp — the 20-cent Large Queen on laid paper — and the unique strip of 18 stamps showing the full paper maker's watermark (E. & G. Bothwell / Clutha Mills).

At the show's opening May 29, Canada Post will issue a single 45-cent stamp (see illustration above) celebrating the 100th anniversary of Imperial Penny Postage and its promoter, Sir William Mulock (1844-1944), who was postmaster-general of Canada from 1896 to 1905. It will be issued in sheets of 14 stamps with a blank centre panel (stamp size) showing the Imperial Crown.

In addition to Sir William and the Imperial Crown, the stamps will replicate Canada's Imperial Penny Postage stamp of 1898, commonly called the Map Stamp by collectors for its representation of the world's map. Most philatelists will agree that it is a beautiful commemoration of Canada's first multicolour stamp. I will have more about Imperial Penny Postage and Sir William in a column nearer to the date of the anniversary (Dec. 25, 1898).

Fred Fawn, a noted collector of this stamp, will give a seminar in Hamilton on May 30. He will talk about the stamp and Imperial Penny Postage in general.

Canada Post chairman André Ouellet and members of the Stamp Advisory Committee will attend the stamp's



New stamp will honour the 100th anniversary of Imperial Penny Postage and its promoter, Sir William Mulock.

launch and discuss stamp programs for 1999 and beyond.

Canada Post's two major printers, Ashton-Potter Ltd. and the Canadian Bank Note Co., will be represented. Philatelic societies at the show include the British North America Philatelic Society, Postal History Society of Canada, Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain, Canadian Aerophilatelic Society, American Philatelic Society, American Topical Association and the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors.

May 30 will be devoted to Girl Guides and Boy Scouts with many activities planned. The Scouts on Stamps International Society will also meet that day, and the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada will hold its annual meeting to elect directors. Many seminars will be held May 30; May 31 seminars are Varieties on Canadian Elizabethan Stamps, the Postage Stamps of the Vatican, and Canada — The Classics with Attention to Varieties.

There are many other philatelic and social events planned, so I encourage you to attend if you can. It will be the stamp show of the year, so far. Hours are May 29, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., May 30, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and May 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call Mr. Miller at (905) 561-9648, e-mail the organizing committee at royal98@interlynx.net or check web site <http://home.interlynx.net/~royal98>.

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NEXT WEEK: Coins

ORAPEX '98 events portend well for hobby

Two major events happened at ORAPEX '98 — the RA Stamp Club's 37th annual stamp exhibition in late April — that portend well for the hobby.

The first was that four new exhibitors displayed their collections for the first time and were well rewarded. This development is very encouraging for those of us who are responsible for developing this area of the hobby. The second was that for the first time in more than 10 years, the bourse of dealers was oversubscribed.

Alain Racicot, the RA Stamp Club's dealer co-ordinator, made every effort to accommodate everyone, but there is a limit to the floor space available. This also is a good omen for stamp shows in the Ottawa-Hull area. Dealers that I talk to feel that the National Capital Region is a hotbed of serious collecting. The turnout of visitors was steady. Organizers, led by show chairman Paul Burega, were happy with the results.

The Grand Award winner was Ray Ireson, of the Lakeshore Stamp Club in Montreal. His *The Panama Canal Story* is a seven-frame thematic look at the history behind the development and operation of the canal since the mid-1800s. Mr. Ireson's exhibit had previously won the Grand Award at the 67th convention of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada held in Vernon, B.C., in June 1995.

The Reserve Grand Award was given to Dan Davis' *Canadian Parliamentary Use of the Postal System*. Mr. Davis, one of the first time exhibitors, displayed the history of the use of the post office made by the Governor General, the House of Commons and the Senate from Confederation on. His exhibit was also awarded the Best Postal History Plaque presented annually by the Ottawa Philatelic Society, and the Colin Bayley award which is given to the best postal history display by a member of the RA Stamp Club or the Society. Mr. Bayley, a noted Ottawa collector, was president of both clubs in the 1940s.

The Ralph Mitchener Award, named in honour of the previous writer of this column, is given to an exhibit that proved to be innovative and interesting. This year's winner was Dr. William Cochrane for an exhibit entitled, *Sweet Dreams, A Cure for Diabetes*.

The other first timers also did well.



France issues new stamp June 7 to honour Mont-Saint-Michel.

In addition to his gold medal, Roger Boisclair was awarded the American Philatelic Society's pre-1900 medal for his *Canada, two cents — 1898 Noel*. The two others received Vermeil medals with special prizes: Dr. J. P. Woods was given the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors Best Presentation award for his *The Irish Overprints*, and Harry Machum's *The Definitive Issues of the Wilding Time Period, 1954-1963*, received the American Society's 1940-1980 medal.

I don't often write about new foreign stamps because of lack of space. However, I have received information from the French post office on a new stamp honouring Mont-Saint-Michel, which I believe warrants a place in many an album. Construction of a perfectly-square abbey sitting on top of the island-rock off the coast of Normandy began in 708. Over the years it has been a fortress, sanctuary, monastery, dungeon, pilgrimage site and tourist mecca. The island faces being landlocked because of silt accumulation.

The picture of the Mont-Saint-Michel is taken at high tide with the final stamp design showing a mixture of luminosity and modernity that enhances the UNESCO World Heritage site. The stamp will be issued June 7 and is available at new issue dealers.

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NEXT WEEK: Coins

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