

March 20, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

# Collectors, check out the sites

I haven't written about Web sites and computers for a while, so here's another batch of addresses of interest to stamp collectors.

The father and son duo of Brian and Robert Cannon have a site dedicated exclusively to Canadian definitives. <http://web.radiant.net/brc/main.htm> will get you a professionally-put-together site. Hopefully, others will emulate them for commemoratives or other aspects of Canadian philately.

At <http://www.stampfinder.com> you'll find a market place that allows you to enter a catalogue number to receive a listing of as many dealers as there are on the server, who have listed that stamp for sale. The listing shows the stamps by grade and price.

Frequently asked questions about stamp collecting are answered on the web at <http://members.global2000.net/~tracy/rcs-faq/title.html>

Our nearest U.S. national show is in Rochester, New York. Information about ROPEX and other activities of the Rochester Philatelic Association are available at <http://www.frontier-net.net/~stamptmf/rpa/rpa.html>

If you want to donate stamps for children via the web, there are two sites. <http://www.ctlions.org/stamps.htm> gets you the Lion International Stamp Collecting Project and <http://www.bald-com.net/users/ips/give.htm> lands you the Give Stamps to Kids site.

If you collect Ireland, you might want to try the new Eire Philatelic Association's newsletter. You need to register to receive it by e-mail: send an e-mail to Michael Connolly at [aranman@worldnet.att.net](mailto:aranman@worldnet.att.net)

Linn's Stamp News has released a book of interest to those who use electronic means in collecting. William F. Sharpe's *Guide to Stamp Collecting Software and Collecting on the Internet* (ISBN 0-940403-76-5) was published in 1997 and is basically a primer on how to use software, CD-ROMs and the Internet to enhance your collection and to make the hobby more enjoyable. It is available in softcover at \$14.95 U.S. from Amos Press, 911 Vandermark Rd., Sydney, Ohio, 45365.

March and April are going to be busy months at Canada Post. Many stamps will be issued and some have quite spectacular designs that should prove to be very popular.

The Marco Polo stamp and souvenir sheet appeared yesterday. The last four stamps in the Scenic Highways series will be issued March 31. April will see a single stamp commemorating the April 1 creation of the new territory of Nunavut, a single stamp for the Year of Older Persons (April 12 issue) and four stamps on Canadian orchids (April 27). These beautiful stamps are printed in a format reflecting the layout of Chinese masterpieces and will be available in sheet and booklet formats.

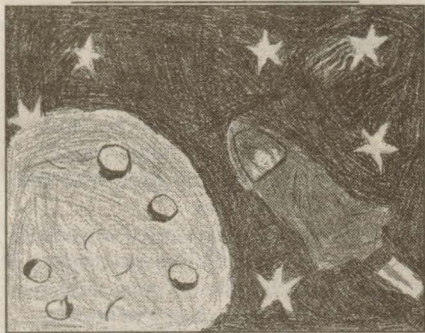
April 29 will see a new series of lower value definitives; more about these next time.

Charles Verge is vice-president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. For questions and comments, write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. He can also be reached on Internet at: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)

**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



## STAMPS CHARLES VERGE



MADLINE HALL

**Madeline Hall featured space travel in her design for the Stampin' the Future competition.**

## Ottawa finalist in millennium stamp contest

Canada Post, in conjunction with 30 other countries, has held a stamp design contest called Stampin' the Future, which asked young people to draw their vision of the new millennium. Thirty designs were selected in the first round, including that of Madeline Hall of Ottawa.

Four grand prize winners will be announced in early August. The four designs will be converted into stamps and issued in 2000 to celebrate the millennium. The four winners will each get a trip to Anaheim, California, as well as an IBM personal computer and a CD-ROM encyclopedia from McGraw-Hill.

In a previous article I wrote about the orchids stamps. Issued April 27 in booklets of 12 (\$5.52 or \$5.91 with GST), the stamps are very lovely. Hopefully, people will use all 12 in each booklet and not consider six of them labels. The six in question are of orchids painted on a dark background; only at a certain angle can you see the word Canada and the number 46. I am all for artistic licence but when I cannot clearly see the name of my country or the denomination on a stamp, I think Canada Post needs to take a firmer hand with the artist.

My second beef is with brush strokes in the background in what appears to be a grey wash. It looks like somebody dropped dirty water on the sheets before the stamps were printed. I don't know what artistic merit this has, but it ensures that all three dragon's mouth and all three great yellow lady's slipper orchid stamps are different, since the grey wash creates a different background for each. Will the catalogues give these status as separate stamps?

The Ottawa Citizen

The one-year pilot project started in April 1998 with Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, to sell stamps in automated teller machines, will not be extended. For this purpose Canada Post issued special 18-stamp sheets the thickness of a banknote. These pressure sensitive or self-stick stamps were first printed as 45-cent stamps, then reprinted as 46-cent stamps when the rate went up. No longer available at ATMs, the sheets of 46-cent stamps will be available at the National Philatelic Centre, 75 St.-Ninian St., Antigonish, Nova Scotia, B2G 2R8. Most elusive will be covers bearing either stamp, and mailed from the few Ontario centres where the pilot was held.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



## STAMPS

CHARLES VERGE

# Send forth a peace dove

Canada Post has brought forth another millennium surprise: the official Millennium Keepsake. It joins the Millennium Collection that I described in my last column, but for which I forgot to mention the price: \$59.95.

What is the Millennium Keepsake? First, there are three stamps printed in individual souvenir sheets using different printing techniques.

The letter rate stamp (46 cents) represents the future of printing techniques with a holographic dove in flight over the figures 1999 and 2000; the U.S. rate (55 cents), representing the present, is printed in five-colour lithography and depicts a child holding a dove close to its face; and the international rate (95 cents), the past, is intaglio printed from a steel engraving by Jorge Peral (who designed the \$8 grizzly bear stamp) and features a dove with an olive branch in its mouth surrounded by an ornamental Victorian-type frame.

These souvenir sheets will be housed in an embossed metal collector's box, the size of a CD container, and will also include a Millennium Medallion produced by the Royal Canadian Mint; a pre-stamped postcard for mailing anywhere in the world; and a special folder to note the details of your millennium celebration.

In addition to all of that, there will be an entry form for a Wonders of the World contest in which participants can win one of seven trips for two to any of seven destinations (Grand Canyon, Leaning Tower of Pisa, Eiffel Tower, Pyramids, Great Barrier Reef, Taj Mahal or Great Wall of China). The keepsake is available at most post offices or through the National Philatelic Centre (1-800-565-4362) for \$8.99.

Canada Post will also make these stamps available in souvenir sheets of four stamps at participating post offices across the country on Oct. 12.

This year's Christmas stamps will feature Victorian angels (out on Nov. 3). I would suggest also using the millennium peace dove stamps for your posted season's greetings.

How many opportunities do we have at this juncture of the world's history to tell the rest of the planet about our peace-loving nation? What is more appropriate for the holiday season than such exquisite representations of peace?

I recommend strongly that you buy the peace stamps as soon as possible on or after Oct. 12 because they will be in short supply. Only 2.4 million of the 46-cent stamps and 600,000 of the 55- and 95-cent stamps will be available at local post offices.

Since my last column, Canada Post has announced the dates for the 2000 launch of the 17 souvenir sheets of four stamps, reprinting the 68 stamps found in the Millennium Collection book issued Sept. 15. Four sets of sheets will be issued on Jan. 17, Feb. 17 and March 17 and five sheets on April 17.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



January 16, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

# Looking at auction firms

I thought I'd spend a little time writing about auction firms which specialize in Canadian material. The oldest auction firm still operating in Canada is Maresch & Son, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary. It was founded in 1924 by the current owner's father, William Maresch. A third generation now works there. Lately, the Maresch auctions have contained some spectacular British North America (BNA) and Canadian proofs, stamps and postal history, as well as new finds.

You can find Maresch on the Web at [www.maresch.com](http://www.maresch.com) or write to 330 Bay St., suite 703, Toronto, ON M5H 2S8.

Jim A Hennok Ltd., which is located at 185 Queen St. E., Toronto, ON M5A 1S2, has been selling some fine Canadian postal history for some 40 years.

The venerable Sissons Auction Firm, founded after the Second World War by Jim Sissons, the premier stamp dealer at the time, closed its doors in September. Mr. Sissons sold the firm in 1974.

The new kid on the block in Toronto is Brigham Auctions Ltd. The firm was put together by Ron Brigham, who is the foremost collector of Canadian stamps. He plans it to be an auction firm for collectors run by collectors. Brigham Auctions can be reached at [lroberts@interlog.com](mailto:lroberts@interlog.com) or 1120 Brevik Place, Mississauga, ON L4W 3Y5. Its first auction is expected in early spring.

Ottawa has Ian Kimmerly Auctions Ltd. Mr. Kimmerly also runs a retail stamp store on Sparks Street Mall. He has four or five auctions a year and can be reached at [www.cyberus.ca/~kimmerly](http://www.cyberus.ca/~kimmerly) and [kimmerly@compuserve.com](mailto:kimmerly@compuserve.com) or write to 112 Sparks St., Ottawa, ON K1P 5B6.

In the Maritimes, there's Eastern Auctions Ltd. Gary Lyon can be reached at [glstamps@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:glstamps@nbnet.nb.ca) or P.O. Box 250, Bathurst, NB E2A 3Z2. In Western Canada, there's Robert A. Lee Philatelist at 203-1139 Sutherland Ave., Kelowna, BC V1Y 5Y2. His auctions are different as he breaks down his lots in a specialist fashion, such as flag cancels or squared circles. Another western firm is Ron Leith Philatelic Auctions at Box 430, Abbotsford, BC V2S 5Z5.

At least two firms outside Canada specialize in BNA material. Charles G. Firby Auctions at 6695 Highland Rd. No. 107, Waterford, MI 48327, U.S., has many BNA auctions as well as an annual rarities of philatelic literature auction. The other is Cavendish Auction, 153-157 London Rd., Derby DE1 2SY, England. Owner James Grimwood-Taylor usually puts together an annual BNA sale with excellent material.

I'd like to recommend Volume 3 of Cimon Morin's *Canadian Philately — Bibliography and Index* (published in December). It's a spectacular compilation of virtually all books, monographs and articles written on Canadian philately between 1981 and 1993. It also updates and corrects volumes one and two. Researchers owe a debt to Mr. Morin, who is the chief of the Canadian Postal Archives and a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, for this outstanding opus. Copies are available, post-paid, at \$44.95 for Volume 3 and \$96.95 for all three volumes from Saskatoon Stamp Centre, Box 1700, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3S2.

Charles Verge is vice-president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4.

**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



February 6, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

CHARLES VERGE

# Australia, Canada issue souvenir sheet

**A**ustralia Post is issuing a joint souvenir sheet with Canada featuring the *Marco Polo*, a clipper ship built in New Brunswick.

The ship's claim to fame was to establish record passenger runs between the British Isles and Australia in the middle part of the last century.

This is the first time Canada has issued a souvenir sheet with the stamp of another country. The souvenir sheet will bear an 85-cent Australian stamp issued in 1998 and a Canadian 46-cent stamp to be issued March 19.

The Canadian-designed souvenir sheet was selected and, after public tender in both countries, printed by Ashton-Potter Canada.

The Australian stamp was provided in a digital image and is an exact replica of its 1998 stamp. However, the Canadian printing process will result in many differences and, therefore, the Australian stamp in the souvenir sheet should be considered as a different stamp in Australia. The paper, four-sided tagging and 13 plus perforations account for the main differences.

In addition, because Ashton-Potter Canada's printing is clearer, the flags and artifacts on the Australian *Marco Polo* are defined and more easily identified.

Although it will sell for about \$1.25, the souvenir sheet will only have a 46-cent postal value in Canada; the 85-cent Australian stamp only being valid in Australia.

Half-a-million sheets of the souvenir stamp were printed, of which 285,000 were retained by Canada with the remainder sent to Australia.

Canada's philatelic program has been increased by a new set of commemoratives. Eight stamps will be issued in April to honour artisans. The design will focus on the artisans' hands as they work on their craft.

A stamp auction will be held Feb. 11 at 8 p.m. in the Fontaine Centre, 120 Charlevoix St., Hull. Viewing is at 7 p.m. and a table auction will precede the main auction. The auction is sponsored by the Amicale des philatélistes de l'Outaouais.

*Canada's Stamp Details*, the six-times-a-year informative publication from Canada Post, now comes in a magazine format.

The January-February 1999 issue is available and its size matches that of its sister publication, *Collections*. The new format, with a third more space, allows for new features including a profile of the Maison de la Poste in Montreal, an ongoing Collector's Tips column and sidebars on thematic bird collecting and the Chinese calendar.

The revised publication concludes with a column where you can find philatelic Web site addresses.

If you want to get on the mailing list for *Canada's Stamp Details*, write to the National Philatelic Centre, 75 St. Ninian St., Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2R8.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



February 27, 1999

The Ottawa Citizen

STAMPS  
CHARLES VERGE

## Remembering Royal William

**T**he centennial of the *Royal William's* record transatlantic crossing was commemorated in 1933 with the issue of a five-cent stamp showing the ship in mid-Atlantic. However, the initial engraving used to prepare the models for the printing plates was made from a print showing the wrong ship.

On June 17, 1933, C.G. Cowan of the British American Bank Note Co. (BABN) was instructed by post office officials to begin the engraving process. On June 21, a memorandum was written noting that a problem existed with the design. Three days later the chief of the post office's philatelic section, A. Stanley Deaville, informed his superiors of the error.

Mr. Deaville wrote, "The engraving of the stamp was started, and the design authorized by the Postmaster General, bearing a photographic reproduction of the painting of the *S.S. Royal William* as contained in the old Parliament building, burned in the fire in 1917." (A reproduction of the painting had been given to the engraver to prepare the die.)

He continued, "On going to the archives to obtain further information on the picture, an official of the BABN found that the picture ... was that of a steam ship of the same name built in 1838 after the *Royal William* had been struck off the British registry (of ships)."

The mistake was caught in time and the image of the ship that finally appeared on the stamp was the correct one. But the new design was a composite of a contemporary artist's painting by S. Skillett of the *Royal William* sailing up the Thames in 1833 and the incorrect picture of the latter *Royal William*.

The *Royal William*, the first sea-going steamship built in Canada, was launched in Quebec City on March 27, 1831. She was built at the instigation of the government of Lower Canada to foster trade between it and the other provinces of British North America. She was a three-masted schooner-rigged paddlewheel steam ship, 50 metres in length and displaced 365 tons. Her engines, almost entirely of Canadian manufacture, were designed by John Lowe at the Bennet Henderson engine works in Montreal.

Between her launch in August 1831 and that winter she made three successful round trips to Halifax carrying passengers and cargo. In 1832 her voyages were curtailed when a cholera epidemic hit North America, preventing her from sailing to the Maritimes. As a result, her owners suffered financial losses and she changed hands several times. In June 1833, she sailed for Halifax and then Boston, becoming the first ocean-going steamship bearing the British ensign to land at a U.S. port.

It is also the first voyage where there is recorded proof that the *Royal William* carried mail. The public archives of Nova Scotia has a cover which travelled aboard her from Boston. By the time she returned to Quebec, the decision had been made to sail her to London for disposal. She sailed for Europe on Aug. 18 never to see North America again. She steamed up the Thames on Sept. 12 becoming the first ship to have steamed all the way across the Atlantic.

Charles Verge is vice-president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins

## 40 dealers at show

Sat May 1 1999

Last weekend's ORAPEX, Ottawa's annual National Stamp Exhibition, appeared to be another success with some 40 dealers in attendance. Although other commitments kept me from spending much time in helping organize this year's show, I was able to spend some time at the event in the RA Centre.

Robert A. Lee travelled from Kelowna, B.C., so prospective buyers could examine lots in the Harry W. Lussey Collection of Canadian Registered Letter Stamps and Mail that Mr. Lee is offering at auction May 8 in Kelowna. This is one of the two best collections of Canadian registered mail ever assembled.

Although the number of frames was lower than normal, the judges had excellent exhibits to evaluate.

The nine gold medal winners were: Herb McNaught (Toronto), Canada Half-Cent Small Queen Issue, 1882-1897; John Cooper (Montreal), A Study of the Admiral Booklet Panes; R. K. Malott (Nepean), Canadian Interrupted (Crash) Covers, 1915-1998; Brian Murphy (Ottawa), Canada's International Mail, 1876-1898; Daniel Davis (Ottawa), Canadian Parliamentary Use of the Postal System, 1849-1959; Geoffrey R. Newman (Perth), The Fourth Decade of Confederation; David Handelman (Ottawa), AR (Avis de Reception) to and from Canada; Michael Peach (Halifax), Postal Union Letter and Postcard Rates in Victorian Britain; and Fred Fawn (Toronto), Canada's Large Queens (1868-1896).

Mr. Fawn's Large Queens exhibit received the show's Grand Award (donated by Canada Post). Mr. Murphy's Canada's International Mail exhibit won the Reserve Grand Award.

The Youth Grand Award, sponsored by the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors, was won by Danny Handelman for his Canadian Town Cancells with Animal Names. He'll be invited to represent ORAPEX at the North American Youth Champion of Champions competition in Georgia in October.

ORAPEX's Colin Bayley Award for Best Postal History exhibit by a member of the RA Stamp Club or the Ottawa Philatelic Society went to Mr. Malott for his Canadian Crash Covers. The Ralph D. Mitchener Award for the Most Innovative and Interesting Topical went to Wally Guzman of Montreal for his exhibit Christmas in Canada.

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On April 29, Canada Post issued eight new low-value definitives that are quite spectacular and based on photographs by Jean-Pierre Beaudoin. Each stamp features the hands of a craftsperson developing their work of art with examples of the raw material used for the trade. Photographs were taken in the studios of Quebec and Maritimes craftspeople. The crafts are bookbinding (one cent), ironwork (two cents), glass-blowing (three cents), oyster farming (four cents), weaving (five cents), quilting (nine cents), artistic woodworking (10 cents) and leather work (25 cents). These stamps are usually combined with others to make up different rates. When added to a 46-cent stamp, the nine-cent makes up the 55-cent rate for a letter to the U.S. I have been lobbying for this much-needed stamp for five years. Thank you, Canada Post, for listening.

Write to Charles **Verge**, vice-president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4.



April 10, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

**STAMPS**  
**CHARLES VERGE**

## Maritime theme in Melbourne

**T**he year's first World Philatelic Exhibition — Australia '99 — was held in Melbourne in March. Its maritime theme linked decor, stamps and events.

The show floor had Australia Post's sales booth and post offices set in an ocean liner shell, while other postal administrations and stamp dealers shared space in the prefabricated hulls of sailing ships.

Many countries, including Canada, issued stamps showing sailing ships and ocean liners linking the history of the issuing country with Australia.

The hit of the show was the world's first personalized stamp.

For \$10 Australian, you could have your picture added to a sheet of 10 45-cent stamps showing the *Polly Woodside*, a preserved immigrant sailing ship sitting outside the Melbourne Convention Centre where the exhibition was held.

The stamps, which are valid postage with a very personal touch, are the result of co-operation between Australia Post and Excel Digital. Australia Post hopes to have these personalized stamps available for Christmas.

Canadians attending the show included Gilles Champagne and Bob McClelland, who are on the board of directors of Canada Post, and other Canada Post personnel who staffed the very busy booth.

Customers were often served by Michel Tremblay, Canada Post's vice-president of retail, and greeted by an RCMP corporal. RCMP officers have been a popular presence at Canadian delegations at most World Philatelic Exhibitions since Pacific '97 in San Francisco.

Exhibitors at the Australian exhibition included Dave Nixon of Beaconsfield, Que., Owen White and Herb McNaught of Toronto and Ron Brigham of Mississauga.

At the show, Mr. Brigham won a Large Gold medal with a Special Prize and became the first Canadian to win an International Grand Prix at a World Philatelic Exhibition.

Three Large Gold Medals or Grand Prix in three different years entitle you to participate in the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie's Championship to choose the world champion. Mr. Brigham has two of the three having won a large Gold in Tel Aviv during Israel '98.

Once he accomplishes this task, he will be the second Canadian to enter the championship class. Richard Malott of Nepean was the first when his Pioneer Airmails of Canada qualified in the mid-1980s.

The next World Philatelic Exhibitions will be in Nuremberg later this month, in France in July and in Beijing in August.

Just a reminder to set aside April 24-25 for the annual Ottawa National Stamp Exhibition, ORAPEX '99, at the RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Dr., starting at 10 a.m. both days and closing at 6 p.m. on the Saturday and 4 p.m. on the Sunday.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



June 12, 1999

The Ottawa Citizen

June 12  
99

## STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

# Philately services online

Internet philately is growing by leaps and bounds. There is great interest in three relatively new services offered to collectors by the philatelic weekly *Linn's Stamp News* and in the net auction firm eBay.

Their popularity stems from the ability to pinpoint information or material and philatelic products that collectors may have looked for over the years and have had difficulty finding.

StampSites.com is the third online product offered in the Linns.com family. The first, Linns.com, at [www.linns.com](http://www.linns.com) offers up-to-date stamp news.

The second, Zillions of Stamps, is an online stamp shopping centre where you can find stamps, covers and collector supplies. It's found at [www.zillionsofstamps.com](http://www.zillionsofstamps.com). This site is akin to going on a shopping spree with a cart in which you place items you are interested in, until you wish to buy them. (This site and eBay are protected by encryption technology that makes online credit card shopping secure.)

The newest site, introduced April 9, is [www.stampsites.com](http://www.stampsites.com). A powerful search engine, it works much like others on the Web (Yahoo, Excite, InfoSeek, etc.). You type in a keyword or phrase related to a stamp or to any other philatelic information you require and StampSites finds all the Web sites in the world that have references to your request. The advantage of using this Web site for philatelic purposes is that it only searches stamp sites. You won't be given unwanted pages for rubber stamps or metal stamping.

At [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com) is eBay, an Internet auction house that is always in motion. It works 24 hours a day, seven days a week and sells everything including cars, antiques and, naturally, stamps and covers. Its appeal is that virtually all lots are illustrated and are relatively inexpensive. The seller and buyer deal with each other directly and eBay takes a small commission. Competition can be fierce or sometimes not there. The seller sets the day and time for the closing of the bids. Depending on the item, and the interest for it, the seller can choose a time that suits him/her, but it might be 3 a.m. in your time zone. So, if you are interested in an item, you might have a short night because you might have to sit at your computer to raise your bid at the last minute.

To give you an idea on how big eBay is, here are some statistics. For all of 1996, there were 250,000 items on eBay. By the first quarter of 1999, there were more than 415,000 stamp lots. Registered eBay users went from 680,000 in early 1998 to 3.8 million in early 1999.

There are two philatelic exhibitions this summer. *Celebrating Newfoundland*, an exhibition for the 50th anniversary of Newfoundland joining Confederation, is at the Canadian Postal Museum until Jan. 2 (the museum is in the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull). *Wish You Were Here: The Centenary of the Canadian Picture Postcard* exhibition, previously at the postal museum, is in Quebec City at the Old Main Post Office, 3, passage du Chien d'Or, June 16 to Sept. 6.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



STAMPS  
CHARLES VERGE

# New stamps for Wales, Scotland

The advent of the new Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly is the subject of four new definitives issued for Scotland and Wales.

Although sold only at post offices in both countries, the stamps are valid for postage throughout the United Kingdom. Royal Mail (the British post office) held extensive consultations with residents of both countries to determine their stamps' themes and subjects. The new stamps were issued in June.

This is not a new venture for the British post office, since it has been issuing regional stamps since 1958. The previous stamps showed the Machin head picture of the Queen with a small symbol of the region.

As the first country to have issued stamps, the United Kingdom doesn't have to indicate its name on its stamps. It has carried this tradition to regional stamps. Perhaps it should have taken this opportunity, with the new legislative autonomy, to inscribe the names of Scotland and Cymru (Wales) on the new definitives.

The stamps bear type-denomination in three cases and 64 pence in the fourth. The use of "2nd" represents the second class rate, which is 19 pence; "1st" represents the first-class rate (26 pence); and "E" represents the rate to European countries (30 pence). The 64-pence stamps prepay the air-mail rate for 11 to 20 grams.

Scotland's stamps show the national flag, the saltire or St. Andrew's cross, (2nd); the lion rampant from the Scottish coat of arms (1st); the thistle (E); and a tartan design (64 pence).

The Welsh stamps show a leek fashioned in the style of a Welsh love spoon (2nd); a dragon, an element of the Welsh flag (1st); a daffodil (E); and the crest of the Prince of Wales, three ostrich feathers (64 pence).

New stamps for the third region of the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, are under consideration. Its current stamps have been re-issued to show a recent change in the rates.

July 24, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

About a year ago, at the request of a reader, I wrote about how to remove self-stick or pressure sensitive stamps from envelopes. While in Chicago recently, I picked up a report written by Ken Lawrence, an expert on such stamps, for the Collectors Club of Chicago's Arthur Salm Foundation.

This 12-page report (No. 5 in the Salm Foundation report series) was published in May, 1999 and, although it talks specifically about the history of pressure sensitive stamps in the United States, the techniques proposed for their removal from envelopes apply to all stamps. To obtain a copy, please send a large self-addressed pre-stamped No. 10 envelope (48 cents in U.S. postage or an international reply coupon) to the Collectors Club of Chicago, 1029 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago Illinois 60610, U.S.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



August 14, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

**STAMPS**  
**CHARLES VERGE**

## World meet of rowers celebrated

Stamps are being issued this month for the 23rd World Rowing Championships in St. Catharines and for the 125th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). The 46-cent Canadian stamp for the Aug. 22-29 championships features a female rower in a shell. The image is blurry at the right, clearer at the left, to simulate movement. St. Catharines last hosted the rowing championships in 1970. A stamp for the '70 event was issued by the French islands of St-Pierre-Miquelon, which are off the coast of Newfoundland. The other new 46-cent Canadian stamp celebrates the Universal Postal Union, which is the organization that manages and simplifies the movement of mail between member countries. Featuring the UPU logo over a map of the world, the stamp will be issued simultaneously in Ottawa and Beijing, China, where the 22nd UPU Congress takes place Aug. 23 to Sept. 15.

I'm often asked for tips on how to preserve a stamp collection. Here are a few important ones:

Food and drink don't mix with stamps. Keep your hands dry and clean when handling stamps. Stamps can pick up the odour from smoking and a spark could put a hole in a stamp or cover. Keep stamps in a cool, dry area. Even if your basement fits this description, make sure albums aren't below a possible flood line.

Small children and pets can be inquisitive, so keep them away from your collection. Don't write anything on the back of stamps; if you must, use the softest pencil possible. Don't use cellulose tape to mount stamps or covers. Don't use black photographic corners for covers; use clear plastic ones.

Finally, buy the best supplies you can afford. Archival quality pages for albums and mounts will go a long way to protect your collection and make it enjoyable for years. They will also protect your investment.

For years, I have been reading the weekly U.S. Stamp Facts column in *Linn's Stamp News*. It showcases information about individual U.S. stamps available in no other reference that I know of. It pools data from the most knowledgeable collectors and dealers, including unpublished stamp and cover censuses. The information listed for each stamp includes the names of the designer and engraver, the quantity issued, the plate arrangement, the plate numbers, the surviving blocks and largest surviving multiples, the earliest known usage and the number of surviving covers.

The publishers at Linn's have issued the 19th century columns in a book format, *Linn's U.S. Stamp Facts 19th Century*. It's well worth adding to your library, especially if you have a specialized U.S. collection. The book is available in two formats from stamp dealers or directly from Linn's, Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365. The price is \$35 U.S. for the hardcover version, \$14.95 for soft-bound, plus \$3 for postage and handling.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



September 4, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

STAMPS  
CHARLES VERGE

## Millennium collectibles

Canada Post has joined the rush to issue millennium stamps. They will be available in book form on Sept. 15, and then in stamp form in post offices starting in January.

Many countries announced their issues in 1998; some, like the United States and Great Britain, began issuing them earlier this year. Even the small Pacific kingdom of Tonga is trying to move time zones to be the first nation in the world to welcome the millennium.

Canada's millennium offer is a handsome book, *The Millennium Collection*, containing 68 stamps covering individuals, culture, arts, history and industry.

Canada Post tantalized its philatelic public as early as last spring with ads that read, "2000 — Celebrate the Year 2000 with the Ultimate Stamp Collectible. Watch for it Sept. 15, 1999."

On June 16, it started issuing press releases announcing some of the 68 designs. The first 12 topics chosen were the Calgary Stampede, Cirque du Soleil, two stamps for *Hockey Night in Canada* (one for the popular French radio and television show, *La Soirée du Hockey*), the Stratford Festival, the Neptune Theatre, the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, the Canada Council, Pontiac, Tom Longboat, L'Anse aux Meadows and Halifax's Pier 21.

The topics are paired with each appearing on a sheet of the book. Since the original announcement, five more designs have been announced. The pairs are musicians Guy Lombardo and Glen Gould and singers Félix Leclerc and Portia White. The fifth, honouring Lester Pearson, has been announced without its twin. One can only speculate that it will be accompanied by a stamp with a topic related to our international role.

The stamps will be sold in a loose-leaf book with bilingual text and original black-and-white photographs never before published. The pages on which the stamps will be printed will be gum-backed with the two stamps perforated directly into each page.

In its June release, Canada Post indicated the "68 stamps will only be available within the pages of *The Millennium Collection*." A hue and cry followed, particularly in the American philatelic press, and it seems Canada Post was persuaded to change its sales approach.

The president of the American Philatelic Association wrote to the Canada Post chairman stating that limited-edition stamps have no place in the hobby and requesting that they be sold in post offices. *Scott Catalogues*, the bible of stamp collectors, quickly announced that the stamps would not be catalogued and, therefore, would be considered as non-stamps by collectors. Even the *Washington Post* got into the act by roundly condemning Canada Post.

On July 28, Canada Post issued a release saying that, because "many requests for the book as well as the stamps have been received," it had decided to issue the 68 stamps in 17 souvenir sheets of four stamps (one million each) at post offices beginning Jan. 17 and until sometime in late March or early April. The book can be bought at the National Philatelic Centre, 75 St. Ninian St., Antigonish, N.S. B2G 2R8.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



The Ottawa Citizen

September 25, 1999

## STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

# Send forth a peace dove

Canada Post has brought forth another millennium surprise: the official Millennium Keepsake. It joins the Millennium Collection that I described in my last column, but for which I forgot to mention the price: \$59.95.

What is the Millennium Keepsake? First, there are three stamps printed in individual souvenir sheets using different printing techniques.

The letter rate stamp (46 cents) represents the future of printing techniques with a holographic dove in flight over the figures 1999 and 2000; the U.S. rate (55 cents), representing the present, is printed in five-colour lithography and depicts a child holding a dove close to its face; and the international rate (95 cents), the past, is intaglio printed from a steel engraving by Jorge Peral (who designed the \$8 grizzly bear stamp) and features a dove with an olive branch in its mouth surrounded by an ornamental Victorian-type frame.

These souvenir sheets will be housed in an embossed metal collector's box, the size of a CD container, and will also include a Millennium Medallion produced by the Royal Canadian Mint; a pre-stamped postcard for mailing anywhere in the world; and a special folder to note the details of your millennium celebration.

In addition to all of that, there will be an entry form for a Wonders of the World contest in which participants can win one of seven trips for two to any of seven destinations (Grand Canyon, Leaning Tower of Pisa, Eiffel Tower, Pyramids, Great Barrier Reef, Taj Mahal or Great Wall of China). The keepsake is available at most post offices or through the National Philatelic Centre (1-800-565-4362) for \$8.99.

Canada Post will also make these stamps available in souvenir sheets of four stamps at participating post offices across the country on Oct. 12.

This year's Christmas stamps will feature Victorian angels (out on Nov. 3). I would suggest also using the millennium peace dove stamps for your posted season's greetings.

How many opportunities do we have at this juncture of the world's history to tell the rest of the planet about our peace-loving nation? What is more appropriate for the holiday season than such exquisite representations of peace?

I recommend strongly that you buy the peace stamps as soon as possible on or after Oct. 12 because they will be in short supply. Only 2.4 million of the 46-cent stamps and 600,000 of the 55- and 95-cent stamps will be available at local post offices.

Since my last column, Canada Post has announced the dates for the 2000 launch of the 17 souvenir sheets of four stamps, reprinting the 68 stamps found in the Millennium Collection book issued Sept. 15. Four sets of sheets will be issued on Jan. 17, Feb. 17 and March 17 and five sheets on April 17.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



October 16, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

**STAMPS**  
**CHARLES VERGE**

## Outaouais club marks anniversary

**T**he Amicale des Philatélistes de l'Outaouais is celebrating its 21st anniversary at an exhibition Oct. 29-31.

The show in Fontaine Community Centre, 120 Charlevoix St., Hull, is 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Oct. 29, until 6 p.m. Oct. 30, and until 4 p.m. Oct. 31. Its open to the public and there's no admission charge.

A group of Hull philatelists first met on Oct. 25, 1978 following a suggestion by Georges Saint-Cyr. They created an executive with Édouard Schingh as the club's first president.

Four of the club's six founding members, Mr. Saint-Cyr, Eugène Dalpé, Paul Sarault and Ed Beaubien, will be at this month's show to celebrate the anniversary.

The club's goals are to promote and encourage the use of philately as an educational and recreational hobby by creating programs, seminars and conferences in the community.

The club has 30 members. They meet Thursdays at 7 p.m. in Fontaine Community Centre. For information on the show or club, call 830-4744.

I have two updates on Canada Post's millennium offers.

"Due to production and distribution problems," Canada Post says the sheets of Millennium Keepsake stamps weren't released to participating retail post offices on Oct. 12 as planned; they should be available by Oct. 18.

The other update is on the Millennium Collection book and the delay in receiving it, if you ordered it from the National Philatelic Centre in Antigoinish, N.S.

I did, and when I hadn't received it three weeks after its date of publication (Sept. 15), I enquired. I thought Antigonish orders were prepared and available for mailing the day the product is issued. However, Canada Post says this isn't the case.

They started mailing the Millennium Collection in early October and processing is by alphabetic order.

If your surname is Andrews, you should get your book within the next few days. If your surname begins with one of the last letters of the alphabet, such as mine, you could see your Millennium Collection book by mid-November.

It might be useful to keep this information in mind when purchasing Canada Post items which are available at retail outlets as well as from the philatelic centre in Nova Scotia.

With the announcement that 21-year-old French actress Laetitia Casta has been chosen by French mayors as the new embodiment of Marianne, those who collect the Marianne issues of France might be interested in visiting <http://members.unlimited.net/~dmills/marianne/> to look at information on these philatelic items. Ms. Casta is the latest French citizen to lend her features to Marianne — the country's symbol of the Republic after the French Revolution.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



November 6, 1999  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

# Milestones in 1999

**T**his year, Newfoundland marked 50 years in Confederation, the city of Halifax, N.S., celebrated its 250th anniversary, and Nunavut became Canada's third territory.

Only one of these events was commemorated by a stamp — Nunavut's creation on April 1.

No reason was given by Canada Post officials as to why a stamp wasn't issued for the Halifax celebration. However, the corporation suggests its Scenic Highways stamps issued March 31 includes one for Newfoundland and that this serves a commemorative purpose.

But the problem for most Newfoundlanders and philatelists is that scenic highways stamps have been issued for all provinces and territories and not just for Newfoundland and, therefore, should not do double duty.

Perhaps, another stamp should have been issued for the anniversary. Canada Post did issue 50th stamps for Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1955.

Commemorating provinces joining Confederation has been a time-honoured philatelic tradition in Canada. All provinces and territories were given a philatelic tribute between 1964 and 1966 in advance of the centennial of Confederation in 1967. Manitoba's 100th anniversary of joining Confederation in 1870 was commemorated by a single stamp, as was British Columbia in 1971 and Prince Edward Island in 1973. In 1980, two stamps were issued marking the 75th anniversary of the creations of Saskatchewan and Alberta.

When it came time to celebrate 125th anniversaries, the parade was led by a stamp for Manitoba in 1995 followed by British Columbia in 1996. These commemorations abruptly stopped and no stamp was issued for Prince Edward Island's 125th in 1998 or Newfoundland's 50th this year.

The story was not the same in 1949 when Newfoundland joined Canada. A postal tribute was the order of the day and the stamp chosen depicted Cabot's ship *The Matthew*. The four-cent green stamp was issued April 1, 1949, and, with it, came the end of Newfoundland's 92-year history as a stamp issuing entity. It's interesting to note that all cent-denominated stamps issued in Newfoundland from 1865 to 1949 have never been demonetized and are still valid for postage in Canada.

Canadian postal authorities received help from the Newfoundland post office to ensure a proper representation of *The Matthew*. They were informed that a scale model of the ship had been made by Herbert Ernest Maunder for the Historical Society of St. John's, Nfld. Mr. Maunder, a master boat modeller, agreed to add sails to the original model he had made so it would be more representative of the design that the Canadian post office wanted for its stamp. Photographs of the model were taken, sent to Ottawa and given to Herman H. Schwartz, a designer at the Canadian Bank Note Company. He rendered them into a usable essay that was reduced to stamp size and approved by Walter J. Turnbull, then deputy postmaster general of Canada. The stamp was engraved by Silas R. Allen. Die proofs were prepared and the stamps printed in sheets of 200; a total of 50,850,000 stamps were issued.

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**NEXT WEEK: Coins**



November 27, 1999

The Ottawa Citizen

Nov 27 '99

L10 THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

## STAMPS CHARLES VERGE

# Philatelic gift guide

**M**y annual gift column for your favourite philatelist is expanded this year to include the non-philatelist as many items have a Millennium theme.

Canada Post has Millennium offerings that serve well as Christmas gifts. I suggest its Millennium Keepsake metal box (contents include three souvenir stamps and a medallion) as a stocking stuffer for all ages. It's well worth the \$8.99 price tag.

The *Millennium Collection* (\$59.99) and *Collection Canada 1999* (\$41.95 including over \$34 in stamps) make great coffee table books. However, don't look for the Millennium stamps in *Collection Canada* as Canada Post considers them special stamps and not part of the annual offering. Canada Post also offers 1999 annual collection books of the United States (\$62), Australia (\$57.95), Ireland (\$70.50) and the 1998 versions of the United Kingdom (\$63.50) and the Netherlands (\$57.50).

For the younger person, you might wish to enroll them in Stamp Quest, Canada Post's youth stamp club. A starter kit includes a zippered portfolio, tongs, album pages, mounts, stamps and a quarterly newsletter for \$19.95. For the younger set, there is also a savings bank in the shape of a mail box. Most of these products can be obtained at larger post offices or through the National Philatelic Centre, 75 St. Ninian St., Antigonish, N.S., B2G 2R8 (call toll free at 1-800-565-4362).

A large number of new books have been published on Canadian stamps and postal history in the last year. Saskatoon Stamp Centre has become the foremost retailer in Canadian philatelic literature and is the official supplier to the British North America Philatelic Society. The centre publishes an extensive list of current and out-of-print items in a 126 page catalogue. Call 1-800-205-8814, write to P.O. Box 1870, Saskatoon, Sask., S7K 3S2, or e-mail [ssc@saskatoonstamp.com](mailto:ssc@saskatoonstamp.com) to get a copy of the catalogue.

Canada's two main annual stamp catalogues are now available in English and French. Unitrade's 2000 *Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps* sells for \$28.95; order from Unitrade, 99 Floral Parkway, Toronto, Ont., M6L 2C4. Darnell's *Millennium Stamps of Canada Catalogue* at \$29.95 can be bought by writing to Darnell, B.P. 1104, Succ. B, Montreal, Que., H3B 3K9. Both catalogues are also available through Canada Post and your favourite stamp shop.

Finally, what about a tax-deductible donation in the name of your favourite philatelist to the RPSC Philatelic Research Foundation. In addition to supporting philatelic research, the foundation promotes stamp collecting as an education tool for young people. The foundation can be reached at P.O. Box 929, Station Q, Toronto, Ont., M4T 2P1.

Canada Post has brought forward by one month the issue dates of souvenir sheets containing stamps from the Millennium Collection. The first four sheets will be issued Dec. 17 and contain the 16 stamps honouring media technologies, Canadian talent, Canadian entertainment and Canadian entertainers.

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**NEXT WEEK:** Coins



December 18, 1999

The Ottawa Citizen

THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

**STAMPS**  
**CHARLES VERGE**

# Philately must adapt

**A**t the dawn of the 20th century, Victoria was in her 62nd year as Queen of Canada. Now, at the dawn of the 21st century, her descendant, Elizabeth II, has been Queen of Canada for 48 years.

Many changes have occurred to Canadian stamps over the last century. In 1900, Victoria's image was found on all Canadian stamps. On the eve of 2000, Elizabeth II is found on only one definitive stamp — the 46-cent domestic letter rate. If political trends continue to evolve in Canada, even that small token of our constitutional monarchy could eventually disappear.

Canada Post will continue to produce stamps for the foreseeable future and in a more innovative and creative fashion. Canadian postal consumers are interested in small and "beautiful" stamps, and that is what they are getting more and more from the post office. Stamps commemorating politicians, historical events and anniversaries of clubs and associations are not what is wanted. People want bright, colourful and entertaining stamps such as birds, flowers, kites, ships, planes, animals and fish, and Canada Post is responding.

For every stamp of a popular issue that is used to mail a letter, many more are kept as souvenirs. This is good for Canada Post's bottom line. One of the benefits of this has been the return of engraving to stamp production and new innovative printing techniques.

A "new" area of emphasis in the next few years will be stamps bearing the likeness of living people, with an emphasis on commemorating current events, sports and commercial ventures. These changes will certainly not please the "classic philatelist" who feels there are too many stamps already, that their cost is prohibitive; and that the post office should only issue stamps that meet criteria set by stamp collectors. Most of these people live in a stamp-collecting world that dates from the 1950s and earlier and are no longer representative of the stamp-collecting world, although are still its most vocal segment.

Living in the past could be one of the reasons membership in stamp clubs and in philatelic societies is declining. They are not responding to the needs of the new collectors and have not adapted. The hobby itself is not declining. Post office departments around the world are selling more stamp products and making more profits than ever before. People are buying and keeping the stamps. There are many people who collect stamps on a solitary basis. Many of us are surprised when, after many years of buying and collecting on their own, they appear on the philatelic exhibiting scenes. They don't want to or need not be in an organized milieu to enjoy their hobby. Organized philately in Canada must recognize this and adapt. But how do we do this?

The first steps in the next few years will be to put a major emphasis on electronic stamp collecting. We must get the hobby to the people and not expect the people to come to the hobby. I will continue to look at the future of stamp collecting in January.

Best wishes for the holidays and a happy and stamp-filled New Year.

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**NEXT WEEK: Coins**