

January 6, 2007

The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

# Opera singers and actors shone in 2006

BY CHARLES VERGE

In mid-2005, Canada Post indicated it would issue in 2006 four stamps of opera singers. Maureen Forrester and John Vickers were to be portrayed on one stamp. In the end, each singer had their own stamp. Five opera singer stamps were issued Oct. 17.

A series of four stamps was issued on May 26 during WASHINGTON 2006, the World Philatelic Exhibition. Four Canadian actors who made good in Hollywood were portrayed on self-adhesive stamps: John Candy, Lorne Greene, Mary Pickford and Fay Wray. Canada Post announced its Fay Wray stamp in November 2005 to coincide with the launch of the new *King Kong* movie. The names of the other three were not released until the stamps were put on sale. Each actor's image was on a different cover of the four self-adhesive booklets of eight stamps containing two of each actor. A water-activated souvenir sheet was also produced. As well, there were four postage-paid cards, one for each actor, using the actor's stamp as the indicia. Although these cards were also issued on May 26, the Fay Wray card was used by Canada Post in April to mail out invitations to customers in the Washington area to visit Canada Post's booth at WASHINGTON 2006. Other 2006 postage-paid cards were issued for the Year of the Dog (2), the Canadian Forces Snowbirds (2), and the Duck Decoys (4). Each postage-paid card sells for \$1.69 and is good for mailing anywhere in the world.

## DISCOVERIES

Two important discoveries were made in 2006. One was a new copy of the London-to-London semi-official airmail label that I wrote about it in a previous column, and then there was a new copy of the red 'Riel Essay' on piece.

Explaining the intricacies of modern Canadian varieties and new printings that happen each year takes more space than is available in this column. If you are interested in more information, I would refer you to D. Robin Harris, the editor of *Corgi Times*. Every year, he and others discover all kinds of varieties and formats for stamps issued that year. They are all listed in one or the other of the six issues of *Corgi Times* edited by Mr. Harris and published every year. I also commend to your attention the Elizabethan Study Group's website, [www.adminware.ca/esg](http://www.adminware.ca/esg), managed by Mr. Harris. Again, if you are into modern Canadian varieties, you need to be a member of that group.

In 2006, there were three special envelopes issued by Canada Post for people or events deemed worthy, but not important enough for a stamp. The production run for each is indicated in brackets below. They sold for \$2.50. The first (May 28 — 10,000 envelopes) commemorated the 300th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, Deputy Postmaster General of British North America (1753-1774). The second (Oct. 12 — 10,000 envelopes) was issued to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Refugee movement of 1956 and for the first time, the stamp is created specially for and printed directly on the envelope. The third commemorates the 25th anniversary of Canada Post becoming a Crown corporation (Oct. 16 — 72,500 envelopes). The large print run for this envelope is due to the fact that each employee of Canada Post received a copy on the anniversary date.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca).



I travelled to Europe on several occasions in 2006 and was impressed by the fervour for and renewal of public transport in many of the Continent's cities. I am particularly fond of the light rail services I found in Germany, France and Austria. The ability to pop on a light rail service in the airport and ride it to downtown or to your hotel is a boon to tourists and business travellers. Most of the cars used are new, airy and provide excellent digital and verbal information services indicating the next stop or transfer points. The Europeans have found some very innovative ways of integrating light rail in their historical city centres and narrow streets.

Now word comes that France reintroduced the tramways to Paris after a forty year absence. As well France is introducing the tram-train. This method of transport of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is capable of winding through the streets like a tram and also to link towns using normal train tracks. The tram-train concept first appeared in Germany on the Karlsruhe network during the 1990s. It made its debut in France in the Aulnay-sous-Bois-Bondy line last year. This line was opened in 1875 and is also called the Gargan line after Louis-Xavier Gargan, the inventor of the rail tanker. The line was later nicknamed the "ligne des coquetiers" (the egg-cup line) because regional farmers used it to transport trainloads of eggs for sale in Paris. France issued two stamps to commemorate these two events. Both have a face value of 54 Euro cents. The stamp for the Tram-Train was issued on November 18, 2006 while the one for the reintroduction of the tramway in Paris was issued on December 16.

In December, Moya Greene, President and Chief Executive Officer of Canada Post sent a letter to all employees indicating that the Corporation's third-quarter business results were on track to meet most of Canada Post's performance targets including exceeding the on-time delivery targets for Lettermail, Xpresspost and Expedited Parcel.

On February 12, two stamps will be issued for International Polar Year. Canada will join seven other countries to issue identically sized souvenir sheets to inform people about the sensitivity of the northern environments. The stamps will also be issued in sheets of 16 stamps. This is only the second time that Canada Post has used its unique maple leaf perforation die between the stamps showing Canada's interest in this multi-national venture. The pair of stamps is joined by an ink colour bleed. This is a first for a Canadian domestic rate stamp as these are traditionally bordered on all sides to meet the requirements to print the invisible phosphor tagging used in the electronic sorting of mail. It is also the first issue where colour coding and crediting information is placed in the centre of the pane rather than on its outer margins. More information is available on the International Polar Year at [www.ipy-api.ca](http://www.ipy-api.ca) or [www.ipy.org](http://www.ipy.org).

My December 23 column mentioned that Richard Logan had been elected to the Board of The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and that he was the President of the Ottawa Philatelic Society. I was unaware at the time of writing that writer and dramatist, Jack Gray, had replaced him as head of Canada's oldest stamp club, six months previously.





In 1932, Newfoundland issued a special stamp for the return flight to New York of the Dornier DO-X.

# Philatelic anniversaries

BY CHARLES VERGE

Here's the 2007 column for philatelic anniversaries.

**1557:** We start off 450 years ago, when Richard Harrison is recorded as a free-man "of the mystery and art of printing" and from whom can be traced the firm of Harrison and Sons Ltd., one of the world's premier stamp printers and a producer of British stamps since 1934.

**1657:** Oliver Cromwell's Post Office Act emphasizes a centralized government-controlled post office to promote trade and to discover subversive elements.

**1707:** The British Post Office buys the postal service in the American colonies from private operators. John Hamilton is appointed deputy postmaster general. The same postal service is reorganized and codified in 1782 by the newly independent United States' Continental Congress.

**1807:** The mail coach between Montreal and Boston takes 4½ days under normal circumstances to cover the 500-kilometre trip.

**1832:** The U.S. security printing firm of Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Co. is formed 175 years ago. In 1847, they change their name to Rawdon, Wright Hatch & Edson and print the first U.S. postage stamps. Four years later in 1851, they print the first Canadian ones.

**1857:** On Jan. 1, Newfoundland issues its first postage stamps comprising nine different values: 1d, 2d, 3d, 4d, 5d, 6d, 6½d, 8d, and 1/. To save money, the stamps are of similar design with many the same shade of scarlet. In September, Pearson Hill, the son of the famous post office reformer, Sir Rowland Hill, takes on the problem of mechanized mail cancellation. His new machine, operated by steam or foot pedal, is unsuccessful. Two years later, he invents the "parallel motion" machine used in Great Britain until about 1900.

**1882:** The Belgian postal authority introduces the world's first letter cards.

**1907:** Christmas seals, introduced in 1904 in Denmark, are first sold in the U.S., and a year later in Canada.

**1932:** On Jan. 1, the U.S. issues a set of 12 stamps to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Washington. On March 19, the LZ-127 *Graf Zeppelin* begins the first of nine round-trip flights to South America from Germany. The flying boat Dornier DO-X leaves New York on its first visit since being overhauled. She flies to Newfoundland on May 19, and on to Europe on May 20 with mail bearing special stamps issued by Newfoundland. On July 12, an Imperial Economic Conference is convened in Ottawa for which three stamps are issued.

**1957:** Finally, 50 years ago on March 7, Canada issues its first set of ten stamps: four different recreation sports designs alternating in the same sheet of stamps. On April 28, the world's most famous forger, Jean de Sperati, dies. On Aug. 1, the 14th Congress of the Universal Postal Union opens in Ottawa. At that congress, air transport charges are reduced but other mail rates are increased. A single five-cent stamp showing HM Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh is issued on Oct. 10 to commemorate the first royal visit to Canada of the Queen as reigning monarch.

*Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: vergec@sympatico.ca.*

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February 17, 2007  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

# An evening of philately

BY CHARLES VERGE

MINI-EX was born more than 40 years ago, when leaders of different Ottawa stamp clubs brought area stamp collectors and club members together for a philatelic social event, including an exhibition, a table auction and a guest speaker. The next MINI-EX will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 19, in the west wing of the RA Centre, 24521 Riverside Dr., with free parking and admission.

For the exhibition, each club enters a team in each of the competing categories, which vary from year to year. The entries must be eight-page exhibits never seen before. By asking for a small number of sheets, the original organizers hoped to bring new exhibitors to the hobby. They also indicated the philatelic material should be easily affordable to all club members. A panel of three judges includes one who is usually accredited at the national level and two who are either regional judges or people who are considering taking the apprenticeship program to become a regional or national judge. This year, I will be leading the team of judges. It is my first MINI-EX assignment in at least 10 years.

The evening's presentation will be by Yves Piché of Canada Post on the Canadian stamp issues of 2007. If you are interested in how stamp subjects are chosen, how stamps are designed or on any other aspect of Canada Post's endeavours in philately, I urge you to come and hear Mr. Piché speak.

One of the benefits of belonging to different stamp societies is the pleasure of receiving their publications. Sometimes, unusual information is acquired. The Royal Philatelic Society London (RPSL), the world's oldest stamp club, founded in 1869, publishes *The London Philatelist*. The Jan.-Feb. 2007 issue featured a bonus; a handbook on "The Life and Work of Charles Whiting and the Beaufort House Press" written by Michael Salmon. It includes a section on Mr. Whiting's work on the production of Prince Edward Island stamps with illustrations of some of Mr. Whiting's original artwork for these stamps. The article also illustrates the die for the two-pence P.E.I. stamp and the electrotype plate of the four-pence P.E.I. stamp found in the society's museum in London. If you are interested in joining The RPSL, contact me by e-mail and I will send you an application form. It is not cheap (about \$175 at the latest exchange rate).

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca).



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The Ottawa Citizen

# An honour to serve stamp advisory group

BY CHARLES VERGE

After seven years, my term with the Canada Post Stamp Advisory Committee comes to an end. It was an honour to be part of the selection process on the subjects and designs of Canadian stamps and to serve with the other volunteers. I had the pleasure to work with many qualified committee members over that period.

Along with suggestions from the public, various associations, the Governor General, government departments, foreign governments, the United Nations and its agencies, and Canada Post staff, committee members throw their own ideas into the mix. I am particularly proud of some which I had a hand in — and have had to apologize for one on a regular basis.

My successes include the 2001 World Figure Skating Championship block of four enlargements of skaters' feet portraying moves found in each of the four disciplines of the sport: pairs, men and women's singles and dance. Having taught figure skating to beginners many years ago, I believed it would be a benefit for young people to see these skating moves on stamps.

My other achievement, in my opinion, was convincing the committee to continue to issue flower stamps, building on the success of the earlier 1999 orchid and 2001 rose stamps. As a result, Canada Post has since issued the very popular and sought after tulips (2002), daffodils (2005) and this year's lilacs (issued March 1).

On the other side, I constantly proffer my apologies to fellow committee members on the issue of Canadian university stamps. In 2002, I proposed a series for four major Canadian universities celebrating important milestones: Manitoba, Laval, Trinity College of the University of Toronto and St. Mary's University. I didn't realize that was just the tip of the iceberg. Since then, nine more university stamps have been issued with two more scheduled for this year and probably others in the future. This extended series, although worthwhile, restricts the choice within each year's limited stamp program.

The committee is often avant-garde in its selections, and particularly so in its decision to honour living Canadians. Oscar Peterson was the first, followed by three opera singers. I am sure there will be others. In my view, it is better to honour a lifetime of achievement while a person is still around to enjoy it. It also allows the stamp buying public to celebrate this nation's outstanding current personalities.

The composition of the committee changes every year and I have enjoyed the exchange of ideas, the collegiality and the excellent working relationships. I am particularly impressed with the mature participation of the two teens who joined the committee in May 2000. Canada Post was in the world vanguard in appointing young people to a stamp advisory committee.

I thank my fellow committee members, the three committee chairs I have served under and the staff of Canada Post who support the committee for their help, understanding and support.

*Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: vergec@sympatico.ca*



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The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

# Printer marks 110 years in business

BY CHARLES VERGE

F. Warren Perkins of Ottawa wrote to me recently in response to my Feb. 3 column in which I listed anniversaries of philatelic and stamp events that occurred many years ago. He chided me for not mentioning that it was the 110th anniversary of the Canadian Bank Note Company (CBN). The reason I didn't was that I only reported on anniversaries that were in multiples of 25 years. To thank Mr. Perkins for taking the time to correspond I thought I would write a few lines on the company. Some of the information below was provided by Mr. Perkins.

In 1896, the Laurier government, with Sir William Mulock as the new Postmaster General, wanted a change in Canada's security printer. The British American Bank Note Co. (BABN) had printed Canadian stamps for the better part of 30 years since Confederation and, coincidentally, its contract ended in 1897. The government felt that the BABN was too close to the previous Conservative government. However, the law required that security printers be resident in Canada. At the time there was no other appropriate security printer available. The last, the Canada Bank Note Engraving & Printing Co., had been taken over by the BABN in 1894. So Sir William went to tender and awarded the contract to the American Bank Note Co. (ABN), headquartered in New York, in late 1896. The ABN had printed Canadian stamps before Confederation from 1856 to 1867.

The ABN not only had to meet the requirement of operating in Canada but also the additional requirement in the tender that they do so from Ottawa. Upon receiving the contract, it started constructing a plant at 224 Wellington Street. The company made additions to the plant in 1904, 1907 and 1914. This Ottawa branch of the ABN did not become known as the CBN until 1923. The CBN continued at 224 Wellington until 1950 when it moved to its present location at 145 Richmond Road following the sale of the Wellington Street property to the Bank of Canada.

The original contract won by the ABN was for 5¼ years. It was renewed until 1930 when the BABN secured the business of printing stamps for a five-year period under the Conservative government of Richard Bennett. As the CBN, it regained the contract in 1935 and maintained it exclusively until 1967. From that point on, several different security printers have been involved with the production of Canadian stamps. Today the CBN shares the Canada Post printing contracts with Lowe-Martin.

Who is A.C. Douglas? He was a stamp dealer operating out of Hawkesbury sometime in the 1930s. I recently purchased a letter, with contents from him to a client in Iowa. He was a member of the American Philatelic Society and specialized in British Commonwealth stamps and covers. If any of my readers have any additional information, philatelic or personal, on Mr. Douglas, I would greatly appreciate receiving it at either of the addresses below.

*Charles Verge is past 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.  
E-mail: vergec@sympatico.ca*



## STAMPS



The later printings of the 2¢ 1906 postage-due stamp have lathework.

# Lathework fascinates collector

BY CHARLES VERGE

Ottawa collector Jill Hare has done wonders in competition with a one-frame exhibit of early 19th-century Canadian lathework stamps titled Admirals and Old Lace.

The stamps in her collection bear a special band of lathe, or engine-turned, art work and were issued from late 1916 to 1924. The band is placed at the bottom of some printings of most stamps of the King George V Admiral issue, so-called because the King is featured wearing an Admiral's uniform. All stamps in the Admiral series can be found with lathework except for the 5¢ blue and the 8¢ blue. In addition, lathework is found on three values of the War Tax Admirals stamps. Only one other Canadian stamp has lathework and that is the later printings of the 2¢ 1906 postage-due stamp, illustrated above. In this case, the band is at the left of the sheet of stamps.

The value of Admiral lathework stamps can vary dramatically depending on the stamp's intrinsic value, its condition, whether it is mint or used, and what proportion of the lathework is visible. Multiples call for hefty premiums. Used lathework pieces are more difficult to find since the lathework is printed in the selvage of the sheet and most postal patrons remove it before using the stamp.

Although more than 90 years have passed since the first lathework stamp was issued, there still is no clear explanation for its use. Certainly, it was not to make a new collectible variety for collectors. Bank note companies are in the business of making money and the inclusion of lathework would have increased the costs of the production of the printing plates as they had to be re-entered to add the lathework design and the printing itself.

Over the years, many theories have been put forward to explain the use of lathework. The late Hans Reiche of Ottawa listed more than a dozen of them in a little, long out-of-print, 12-page pamphlet, *The Canadian Lathework Design*. He explains and comments on each of them and concludes that the lathework system contributed to the proper wiping of the plate. Canada's Post Office used high-end inks from the German firm IG Farben Industries for its stamp printing needs. The supply of that ink dried up during the First World War and it was replaced with inks from Canadian sources. By 1916-17, printed sheets of stamps showed extensive smudging that was caused by the wiping action not being adequate for the new inks. The introduction of lathework solved the problem. It absorbed the excess ink before the press started printing the stamps.

The Royal Philatelic Society's website, [www.rpsc.org](http://www.rpsc.org), has more information on the Admirals. Look for the article under Library in the blue bar.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)

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April 14, 2007  
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## STAMPS



This 1968 15-cent stamp was issued for the 50th anniversary of the end of the Great War.

# Remembering Vimy Ridge

BY CHARLES VERGE

The 90th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the rededication of the Vimy Memorial are in the news. Canada issued two stamps in 1968 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the Great War. The five-cent stamp honoured Col. John McCrae from Guelph, Ont., who is remembered for the famous poem *In Flanders Fields*. The Vimy Memorial was shown on the 15-cent, seen above.

There were no Canadian postal commemoration when King Edward VIII dedicated the Memorial in 1936. However, France, which declared the grounds on which the monument sits as Canadian soil in perpetuity, did. They issued two stamps and two pre-paid postal cards showing the same vignettes as the stamps. The reverse of the cards show sepia photographs of different portions of the Memorial.

People who begin collecting frequently ask me what to collect. If I think their interest is more theme-oriented, I try to suggest collecting areas related to some element of their lives or experience. Two of my non-collector friends are celebrating birthdays. Here's what they might collect should they get the urge to do so. Today's birthday boy has achieved much success in the area of weightlifting and powerlifting. He could certainly put together an impressive collection of stamps from around the world showing weightlifters and weightlifting. Some of the sport's personalities, such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, can be found on stamps. In 2004, Governor Schwarzenegger was honoured by his birth country, Austria.

Sometimes a collection starts with a tiny link, such as a common name, and progresses into a much larger theme. The collecting area I propose for birthday boy II is stamps related to the transport of the mail. Many stamps show mail trains, air mail planes and ships that carried mail and had a post office or sorting office aboard.

Many of these ships bore the prefix letters R.M.S. before their name. The letters stand for Royal Mail Ship, as in the ill-fated *RMS Titanic*.

On land, preceding railway mailcars, were mail coaches. One of the promoters of these conveyances was an Italian, Carlo Bianconi, known as Charles Bianconi in his adopted country, Ireland. Bianconi was born in Tregolo, Italy, in 1786 and died in Tipperary, Ireland, in 1875. At the age of 16 he moved to the Emerald Isle and became a wandering pedlar of prints and frames. During his journeys on foot he saw the need for some form of public transport. In 1815, he set up a coach business, known as Bianconi cars, between Clonmel and Limerick.

In the next 20 years the service expanded to cover all the south of Ireland and made Bianconi a millionaire. The Irish Post Office saw the benefits in improved delivery times for mail carried by Bianconi's cars and gave him lucrative contracts. Ireland issued a stamp in 1986 to celebrate Bianconi's achievements.

E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)



# Ottawa finalist in millennium stamp contest

Sat May 22 1999

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.

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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?

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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.

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. He can also be reached on the Internet at:

vergec@sympatico.ca



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The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS



This postal cover is interesting for its markings and its recipient.

# Another boon for philately

BY CHARLES VERGE

Once again, William H. Gross, manager of the bond company Pimco, has stunned the philatelic world. He is selling his Great Britain collection, estimated at between \$4 million and \$5 million U.S., and donating all proceeds to the Médecins sans frontières/Doctors without Borders charity. According to a story in *The New York Times*, Gross felt the market for stamps of Great Britain had reached a high point, and he and his wife Sue wanted to make a significant contribution to a "humanitarian cause."

In October 2005, Gross swapped his recently acquired plate block of the "Inverted Jenny" airmail stamp (for which he had paid around \$3 million U.S.) with the only known copy of the rarest U.S. stamp, the 1¢ 'Z' grill owned by Mystic Stamp Co. Stamp swapping was largely how the hobby's transactions worked in the mid-1800s when stamp collecting started. It continued for more than a century and still exists at local club meetings, but since the 1970s, it is no longer featured in the philatelic press or practised at higher levels. The Gross swap was one of the hobby's greatest publicity boons, making the news on the venerable BBC and on the second page of the *London Times*.

Congratulations, Mr. Gross, your selfless donation is fantastic and its impact on the hobby spectacular. Readers can view the Great Britain collection at the Shreves philatelic galleries website, [www.shreves.com](http://www.shreves.com).

I purchased a postcard at the recent Canadian Stamp Dealers' Association bourse in Toronto. Philatelically, it is unremarkable. Posted in Hamilton on July 8, 1908, and addressed to Kensington, London, England, it bears a 1¢ Edward VII stamp and was underpaid by 1¢ (the postcard rate abroad was 2¢). It has appropriate postage-due markings: a Canadian "T 10 in circle" indicating 10 centimes is due. For accounting purposes, gold centimes were used as common currency among member countries of the Universal Postal Union. The British added a "1d. F.B." handstamp indicating one penny (two cents) was due from the recipient. The British added a one-cent penalty fee to the one-cent deficient postage due. The "F.B." in the British handstamp stands for Foreign Branch.

What makes this innocuous cover interesting is its recipient, Mr. R. Kerr, Member of the Canadian Olympic Team. The 1908 London Olympics were the first Olympics at which Canada fielded a distinctive team. Robert Bewes Kerr (1882-1963), better known as Bobby Kerr, was one of Hamilton and Canada's greatest athletes of the early 20th century. During his career, he won more than 400 first places, claimed Canadian records in seven sprinting disciplines and participated in the 1904 Olympic Games in St. Louis. In 1908, at the London Olympics, he won the 200-metre race and placed third in the 100 metres. For 15 years, he held the "world's greatest sprinter" title and some of his records went unbroken for 50 years.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [verge@sympatico.ca](mailto:verge@sympatico.ca)



May 5, 2007

The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

# ORAPEX 2007 highlights Ottawa's 150th

BY CHARLES VERGE

Ottawa and its 150-year history will be celebrated today and tomorrow at ORAPEX 2007, Ottawa's national stamp show, being held at the RA Centre and hosted by the RA Stamp Club and the Ottawa Philatelic Society.

Visitors to the weekend show, that also includes a Dealers' Bourse, will be able to purchase newly released stamps and special souvenir envelopes marking the anniversary of Queen Victoria's selection of Ottawa as the capital of Canada. The new stamps, issued on May 3, show Ottawa in the mid-19th century in the foreground and a view of modern Ottawa in the background.

The 19th-century image is based on an old copy of an engraving that was made from a drawing by G. H. Andrews of the Lumberers' Regatta that was held as part of an 1860 reception for the visit of Queen Victoria's eldest son, Albert, Prince of Wales.

The 52¢ stamp is available in booklets of eight self-adhesive stamps with kiss-cut perforations. The \$1.55 stamp for international rate is only available in a souvenir sheet of two stamps, the other being a 52¢ denomination. The two stamps are water activated and perforated 13 and are superimposed upon a picture of the Rideau Canal in summer. The \$1.55 stamp is embossed and enhanced with gold foil to further symbolize Ottawa's royal beginnings. Cana-

da Post produced 375,000 booklets and 300,000 souvenir sheets for this issue.

The souvenir envelopes, bear the likeness of James Kraemer, dean of Ottawa's philatelists and a former president of The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. The envelopes continue the series of Great Canadian Philatelists started in 1992.

ORAPEX 2007 is also welcoming two visitors from the St. Pierre-et-Miquelon stamp club. Jean-Jacques Tillard, president, and Loic Detcheverry, treasurer, will be showing four exhibits of the philately of that small French enclave south of Newfoundland.

In addition, they are here to discuss St. Pierre-et-Miquelon's joining the

Inter-American Philatelic Federation. Tillard is a member of St. Pierre-et-Miquelon's Philatelic Commission and a recognized expert of the philately of the archipelago. He is the author of two books on St. Pierre-et-Miquelon philately.

St. Pierre-et-Miquelon's Philatelic Commission is quite similar in function to Canada Post's Stamp Advisory Committee. It selects the themes and designs of the stamps St. Pierre-et-Miquelon issues. Detcheverry's interests are in the stamps of St. Pierre-et-Miquelon since 1909 and its early postcards. For more information about the philately and stamps of St. Pierre-et-Miquelon go to [www.spm-philatelie.com](http://www.spm-philatelie.com).

ORAPEX 2007 is held this weekend at the RA Centre, 2701 Riverside Dr. Admission and parking are free. The show is open not only to collectors but also to the general public. Please feel free to visit and see what our hobby is all about. Forty-two dealers will be in attendance and there will be some 140 frames of competitive exhibits.

Today the show is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and tomorrow from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A youth booth will be run for young collectors featuring free stamps for each young collector. Guests are welcome to attend the lectures and society meetings that will be held each day.

*Charles Verge is past 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. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)*



May 12, 2007

The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

# Vote for your favourite stamp

BY CHARLES VERGE

ORAPEX 2007, Ottawa's national stamp show and dealers' bourse held last weekend, was a huge success. Attendance was at an all-time high, particularly on Saturday. Seminars were well attended and the wine-and-cheese party, at which awards were given out for the competitive exhibits, was oversold.

Graham Locke of the Lakeshore Stamp Club in Dorval, Que., won the show's Grand Award with a detailed study of The Penny Black, the world's first adhesive postage stamp. The Reserve Grand Award was presented to Jean-Jacques Tillard of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon for a one-frame study on the SPM surcharges on the general colonial stamps of France issued in 1885. They

are considered to be the first postage stamps issued in Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon. For the first time in my 20 years of involvement with ORAPEX, there were no youth exhibits. Hopefully, just a one-year aberration.

Some post offices carry *Details*, a Canada Post quarterly that highlights forthcoming stamps and other philatelic information. The April-June 2007 issue contains a ballot for favourite/least favourite and most relevant/least relevant stamp of 2006. The ballot and accompanying questionnaire can be mailed postage-free. It's your chance to let Canada Post and its stamp advisory committee know how you feel about the subjects and designs of Canada's stamps.

On May 9, Canada Post issued a block of four stamps honouring the 100th anniversary of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. Founded in 1907, the architectural institute promoted closer professional ties between provincial groups of architects. Since then, its mandate has expanded to include recognition and promotion of excellence in Canadian architecture. The four domestic rate stamps (52¢) feature (with architect's name and opening date in brackets): the University of Lethbridge (Arthur Erickson, 1971), St. Mary's Church (Douglas Cardinal, 1969), the Ontario Science Centre (Raymond Moriyama, 1969) and the National Gallery of Canada (Moshe Safdie, 1988). The stamps were issued in panes

of eight. Tabs attached to the left show segments of the buildings' original architectural designs. Tabs on the right feature photographs of the four architects, each attached to his respective stamp. Top and bottom selvages feature the institute's seal and its centennial logo. Alain Leduc, manager of stamp design and production at Canada Post, said, "The integration of (tabs) and stamps seem borderless, making for one unique piece of art that offers the collector the opportunity to build his own ... combinations." The architects are members of the Order of Canada and have received the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada's gold medal. The institute's website is [www.raic.org](http://www.raic.org). For more information on the architects, search for personal websites or read biographies at <http://en.wikipedia.org>.

*Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)*



MAY

26, 2007

The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS



The later printings of the 2¢ 1906 postage-due stamp have lathework.

# Lathework fascinates collector

BY CHARLES VERGE

Ottawa collector Jill Hare has done wonders in competition with a one-frame exhibit of early 19th-century Canadian lathework stamps titled Admirals and Old Lace.

The stamps in her collection bear a special band of lathe, or engine-turned, art work and were issued from late 1916 to 1924. The band is placed at the bottom of some printings of most stamps of the King George V Admiral issue, so-called because the King is featured wearing an Admiral's uniform. All stamps in the Admiral series can be found with lathework except for the 5¢ blue and the 8¢ blue. In addition, lathework is found on three values of the War Tax Admirals stamps. Only one other Canadian stamp has lathework and that is the later printings of the 2¢ 1906 postage-due stamp, illustrated above. In this case, the band is at the left of the sheet of stamps.

The value of Admiral lathework stamps can vary dramatically depending on the stamp's intrinsic value, its condition, whether it is mint or used, and what proportion of the lathework is visible. Multiples call for hefty premiums. Used lathework pieces are more difficult to find since the lathework is printed in the selvage of the sheet and most postal patrons remove it before using the stamp.

Although more than 90 years have passed since the first lathework stamp was issued, there still is no clear explanation for its use. Certainly, it was not to make a new collectible variety for collectors. Bank note companies are in the business of making money and the inclusion of lathework would have increased the costs of the production of the printing plates as they had to be re-entered to add the lathework design and the printing itself.

Over the years, many theories have been put forward to explain the use of lathework. The late Hans Reiche of Ottawa listed more than a dozen of them in a little, long out-of-print, 12-page pamphlet, *The Canadian Lathework Design*. He explains and comments on each of them and concludes that the lathework system contributed to the proper wiping of the plate. Canada's Post Office used high-end inks from the German firm IG Farben Industries for its stamp printing needs. The supply of that ink dried up during the First World War and it was replaced with inks from Canadian sources. By 1916-17, printed sheets of stamps showed extensive smudging that was caused by the wiping action not being adequate for the new inks. The introduction of lathework solved the problem. It absorbed the excess ink before the press started printing the stamps.

The Royal Philatelic Society's website, [www.rpsc.org](http://www.rpsc.org), has more information on the Admirals. Look for the article under Library in the blue bar.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)



# Braille stamp a highlight of 2008 program

BY CHARLES VERGE

The first Braille postage stamp to be issued in North America is part of Canada Post's 2008 stamp program, released May 24, the earliest release in recent memory. The stamp, scheduled for April, will honour the work done by guide dogs in Canada. At the same time, a commemorative envelope will be issued for the 100th anniversary of the Montreal Institute for the Blind.

The year's stamp program starts in January with the traditional issue of new definitives. Although "permanent" stamps were issued in 2006 bearing the letter 'P' making them valid for postage at any time, Canada Post feels a need to issue new 'P' stamps regularly for security purposes.

The two-stamp Year of the Rat issue will close the 12-year cycle of Lunar New Year stamps begun by Canada Post in 1997 with the Year of the Ox. January will also see a new "Celebrations" stamp for those special occasions such as birthdays and weddings. Canadians in general have given a warm reception to all previous stamp issues featuring flowers. I am sure the two peony stamps to be issued in March will also be well received.

April will see a stamp to celebrate the World Hockey Championships being held in Quebec City and Halifax. Two other stamps with a Quebec City link will be issued in May and October respectively. First will come the fifth stamp in the series, begun in 2004, commemorating the founding of New France. This year's offering will be a joint stamp issue with France to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City. The other will note the holding of the Francophonie Summit. This is the third time the summit will be commemorated on Canadian stamps.

In May, the Art Canada series will be continued with three stamps honouring Yousuf Karsh, Canada's world-famous photographer, on the occasion of his 100th birthday. The stamps will feature three of Karsh's most famous works.

Seven anniversaries will be commemorated on stamps in 2008. They are: the 50th of the TransCanada Pipeline (May); the 150th of the first commercial oil well in Oil Springs, Ont. (May); the 100th of the publication of Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (June); the 100th of the Canadian Nurses Association (June); the 100th of the Royal Mint (June); the 100th of the Lifesaving Society (July); and the 150th of British Columbia and the Fraser River Gold Rush (August).

September will see two stamps in the long Universities series. These will honour the 100th anniversaries of the Universities of British Columbia and Alberta. Another September stamp will feature Sam McLaughlin, the founder of the McLaughlin Carriage Company, which later became General Motors of Canada. The third and final instalment of the Endangered species will be issued for October's Stamp Collecting Month. The series will focus on creatures of the air and sky: the Prothonotary Warbler, Taylor's Checkerspot, the Roseate tern and the Burrowing Owl. Three of the stamps show birds while the Taylor's Checkerspot is a subspecies of a butterfly commonly called Edith's Checkerspot.

The year's program closes with three Christmas stamps featuring snow activities (snow angels, skating and skiing) and another showing a spiritual theme. The 100th anniversary of the first Canadian Christmas Seals will be remembered with a commemorative envelope.

Charles Verge is past 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. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)

June 9, 2007

The Ottawa Citizen



June 23, 2007  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

# Pop stars have popular postal appeal

BY CHARLES VERGE

As reported recently in the *Citizen*, Canada Post is set to issue four stamps on June 29 for four well-known Canadian recording artists. The stamps are to be issued in self-adhesive booklets of eight with four different cover designs, one each for Paul Anka (born 1941), Gordon Lightfoot (born 1938), Joni Mitchell (born 1943) and Anne Murray (born 1945). As a bonus, Canada Post provides little known, but very interesting, facts about each of the artists.

By decision of the Canada Post Stamp Advisory Committee, living Canadians featured on Canadian stamps must be members of the Order of Canada. The snowflake design of the Order is shown on all four stamps for these recording artists. The placement of the snowflake on Mr. Lightfoot's stamp is interesting. It looks like he is wearing a tattoo on his left shoulder.

The stamps will also be available as a set in a souvenir sheet of four, cut into the shape of a platinum long-playing record similar to those that artists receive for reaching a 100,000 record sales level. Also available are four postcards, one for each artist, that can be mailed anywhere in the world.

The stamps are 52¢ each, the booklets \$4.16, the souvenir sheet \$2.08 and the cards \$1.69. If the sale of last year's "Canadians in Hollywood" stamps of last year is any indication and if you are interested in getting one or more of the recording artists stamps, I encourage you to buy them early as they are going to be very popular. You can pre-order the stamps at [www.canadapost.ca/](http://www.canadapost.ca/) collecting or by calling toll-free 1-800-565-4362.

The British Royal Family's website now includes a quiz on stamps with many of the questions relating to the Royal Philatelic Collection. You can find it at [www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page1732.asp](http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page1732.asp). The quiz is found in the June 2007 Insight section and, in later months, can be found in that magazine's archives. My thanks to Andrew Davies for letting me know about this. Find complete information on the Royal Philatelic Collection at [www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4979.asp](http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4979.asp).

Charles Vergé is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)



July 7, 2007  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS



A stamp for the centenary of Jasper National Park will be issued on July 20.

# Putting a stamp on World Heritage

BY CHARLES VERGE

The Rideau Canal is now on UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites. Along with the benefits of being preserved and promoted as a World Heritage site, a side benefit is that many of these sites appear on postage stamps of their respective countries, frequently on United Nations stamps, and sometimes on stamps of other countries.

Canada has 14 World Heritage sites and 10 have appeared on Canadian stamps, some more than once.

Nahanni National Park Reserve (Northwest Territories) became the first site in the world to be granted World Heritage status. A stamp showing a segment of the South Nahanni River was issued in 1991 as part of a series of stamps celebrating historic waterways. Also in 1978, the only authenticated Viking settlement in North America was named to the list. L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site (Newfoundland) was honoured on a millennium stamp issued in 2000, the only Canadian World Heritage Site specifically identified as such on the stamp's selvedge.

Three separate national parks, two American and one Canadian (Kluane in the Yukon and Wrangell-St Elias and Glacier Bay both in Alaska) were linked together as one World Heritage Site between 1979 and 1994 by the addition of the Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park in British Columbia. Kluane was shown on a \$2 definitive stamp in 1979. The tourist attraction series of 2002 included a stamp for Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (Alberta). It was added to the UNESCO list in 1981. The Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks (Alberta) site was designated in 1984 and enlarged in 1990 to include the Burgess Shale. Two stamps have been issued for these parks. One in 1985 for the centennial of Banff National Park and the other in 2000 showing Peyto Lake in the same park as part of the Fresh Waters series of stamps. Another stamp for the centenary of Jasper National Park will be issued in a few weeks on July 20.

Old town Quebec City became the first Canadian World Heritage Site to encompass areas of a living breathing city. Canada has issued over a dozen stamps celebrating Quebec City and its surrounds. However, only the \$2 definitive stamp issued in 1973 shows some of Quebec City's old town.

Gros Morne National Park (Newfoundland) was designated in 1987 and in 2000 another of the Fresh Water series depicted Western Brook Pond from that park.

My next column will conclude with the remaining three World Heritage sites, including the Rideau Canal, and name the four which have yet to be honoured by stamps.

*Charles Verge is past 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. E-mail: vergec@sympatico.ca*



# STAMPS



Summer or winter, the Rideau Canal makes for an attractive stamp.

## World Heritage sites and other magical stamps

BY CHARLES VERGE

I previously wrote about seven of UNESCO's 14 World Heritage Sites in Canada. Of the remaining seven, three have been shown on Canadian stamps.

Two sites were designated in 1995. Waterton Glacier International Peace Park, situated between Alberta and the United States, was depicted in 1982 on a \$1 definitive stamp; in 2000, Cameron Lake was shown in the Fresh Water series and, in 2005, the park was part of the Biosphere Reserves joint issue with Ireland.

Old Town Lunenburg in Nova Scotia was the second Canadian city to be designated a World Heritage Site. In 1995, Canada issued a single domestic rate for the centennial of the Lunenburg Academy.

This year, the Rideau Canal achieved its recognition as a World Heritage Site. Two canal stamps were issued previously in the Historic Canals series of 1998, showing winter and summer scenes with a domestic rate.

Four Canadian World Heritage sites have yet to appear on Canadian stamps. They are, with their year of designation: Dinosaur Provincial Park, Alberta (1979); SGang Gwaay, British Columbia (1981); Wood Buffalo National Park, Northwest Territories (1983) and Miquasha Park, Quebec (1999). Perhaps they, and another already honoured site, can be shown on definitive domestic rate stamps in the "Flag over sites" series, ongoing since 1989.

The Ottawa Citizen  
July 21, 2007

Unlike lucky Hogwarts students, most of us muggles haven't got an owl to deliver our mail for us. However, the Royal Mail's Harry Potter stamps are the next best thing. The British Post Office issued seven stamps on July 17 showing the covers of the seven Harry Potter books, including the latest, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, released today. The stamps are first-class United Kingdom domestic rate with the denomination shown as the alpha-numerical 1st designation.

The Royal Mail also has a miniature sheet of five stamps showing the crests of Hogwarts. The crests are also found on 20-stamp "generic" sheets alongside labels featuring magic spells printed with special thermochromatic ink that reveals the spell's secret when warmed. British purchasers can also get the same sheet, without the spell labels, and add their own picture in the label. The Smilers sheets are akin to Canada Post's Picture Postage.

For more information on the stamps and other Harry Potter Philatelic products contact the British Post Office at [www.royalmail.com/shop](http://www.royalmail.com/shop). They are also available at the Canada Post Headquarters retail post office at 2791 Riverside Dr. (corner of Heron) or through the National Philatelic Centre at 1-800-565-4362.

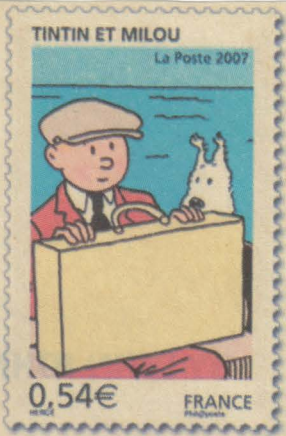
**CHARLES VERGE** is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com).



August 4, 2007

The Ottawa Citizen

The French post office, La Poste, issued six Tintin stamps in May.



## La Poste travels with Tintin

BY CHARLES VERGE

When I attended school in Montreal in the 1950s and '60s, the popular reading material was the Tintin series by Belgian Georges Prosper Remi (1909-1983) who wrote under the name Hergé. This pseudonym is the French pronunciation of "R. G." — his initials in reverse. At the time of his death, he was working on his 24th Tintin adventure. The series began in 1929 and Tintin is among the greatest heroes of the cartooning world. He is not the toughest or handsomest of cartoon characters, but his humanity, his courage, his faithfulness to his friends and his loyalty make him unique. The French Post Office, La Poste, issued six stamps on May 14 to commemorate the fictional intrepid reporter and his friends. All six stamps in "The Travels of Tintin" series bear the 0,54-euro denomination.

Tintin, an orphan, is particularly fortunate in his choice of friends. These characters are good examples of human nature and, therefore, fallible in their actions. With their endearing qualities, they are heroes and reader favourites in their own right. None more so than Tintin's faithful fox-terrier, Milou, known in English as Snowy. The first stamp in the series shows Tintin and Milou with a suitcase at the start of one of their adventures. The second shows Captain Haddock, Archibald to his friends, with a sextant on one of his sea voyages. The Captain, a bearded pipe smoker with a penchant for Scotch whisky, scoops all prizes for dramatic interpretation. A complex mixture of coarseness and tenderness, he combines a fiery character with a soft heart.

The next stamp portrays Professeur Tournesol (Professor Cuthbert Calculus in English translation). With him, Hergé created the deafest and most muddled-headed scientist whose discoveries result in his being courted by some of the world's greatest powers. The duo of Dupond and Dupont (Thomson and Thompson in English), who appear on the next stamp, both mirror and reap their own stupidity. These highly qualified detectives take ridicule to the level of national sport and are always a delight when they make their appearance in 17 episodes of Tintin's adventures.

Bianca Castafiore or "La Castafiore," a barely disguised caricature of Maria Callas, is shown on the fifth stamp. She is a truly amazing woman. Outrageousness and excess are her watchwords, whether we are talking of an excess of decibels, tremolos, emotions, pomposity, tantrums or extravagance, the "Milanese Nightingale" perfectly typifies the stereotypical musical diva, famous for her loudness and immoderation.

The last stamp shows a special character, Tchang (Chang in English versions). In 1934, Hergé developed a long friendship with a Chinese artist, Chang, when they were working on the Tintin book *The Blue Lotus*. Thanks to Chang, Hergé developed a liking and admiration for the Chinese people and he insisted upon giving Chang's name to a character he was creating as an alter ego for Tintin. The friendship between Tintin and Chang takes Tintin to the Himalayas in his quest to find Chang, just as in real life Hergé sought out his friend in China to bring him back to Belgium in 1981.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com)



## STAMPS

# Ivory Coast is No. 1 issuer

BY CHARLES VERGE

The April edition of the German magazine *Michel-Rundschau*, published by the producers of the *Michel* stamp catalogues, have reported on their annual survey of new stamp issues. The 2005 survey compiled by the editors covers 270 postal entities and reports that the entities issued 10,941 stamps and souvenir sheets, in total 415 fewer than in 2004. The number is significantly lower than the 17,544 recorded for 2000, the peak stamp producing year, and it has been decreasing every year since. The catalogue value of all these stamps is quite similar being \$8,889.98 U.S. in 2005 vs \$8,876.78 U.S. in 2000. However, if you bought all the stamps issued in 2004 you would have had to pay almost \$1,000 more than in 2005. Benin and the Congo each had a catalogue value for their stamp issues of more than \$1,000. The Gambia was third (\$406) and Mexico fourth (\$402).

The Ivory Coast tops the list of 2005 stamp issuing entities. It is followed far behind in second place by the United States with 184. Japan (175), Grenada (167) and France (161) round out the top five countries issuing the most stamps. Canada ranks 30th in a tie with Dominica, issuing 83 stamps and souvenir sheets. *Michel-Rundschau* also records 35 postal entities with no stamps issues in 2005 and 17 others with five stamps or less. These two lists are suspect since a few of the postal entities issuing are managed by private companies and the publishers record no issues if they cannot get independent verified numbers. For example, this is the second year in a row that the magazine did not calculate the stamp totals of St. Vincent and St. Vincent Grenadines because of the discrepancies in the information received from St. Vincent.

The task facing *Michel-Rundschau* in compiling such a list is daunting and easily open to question. For example, they report 417 stamps (203) and souvenir sheets (214) issued by the front-runner Ivory Coast. *Michel Catalogues'* North America competitor, *Scott Catalogues*, only lists 25 stamps for 2005 while the Universal Postal Union's World Numbering System ([www.wnsstamps.ch/en/](http://www.wnsstamps.ch/en/)) shows the Ivory Coast with 37 stamps and souvenir sheets. *Michel-Rundschau* reports 184 issues for the United States while the authoritative *Linn's U.S. Stamp Yearbook 2005* lists 161 collectible varieties and postal stationery items. Postal stationery is not counted by *Michel-Rundschau*. Their count criteria include all stamps and souvenir sheets including definitives, commemoratives, officials, postage dues, semi-postal and overprinted stamps, with each souvenir sheet being counted as one unit notwithstanding the number of stamps in the souvenir sheets. Intentional variations caused by such things as watermarks and perforations are counted.

In 2005, Canada only issued definitive and commemorative stamps so the number cited by *Michel-Rundschau* is easy to match closely. Based on their criteria, I can count Canadian issues two ways. By counting one way, I match their total with 77 stamps and six souvenir sheets; however, in another way of counting, I come up with 71 stamps and eight souvenir sheets. If you are a collector of one of every stamp issued by Canada Post, including perforation change, paper changes, etc., then you would have needed to buy 82 different stamps for a total face value of \$38.92 Cdn.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com)



## STAMPS

# Where to meet at stamp clubs and online

BY CHARLES VERGE

Ottawa area stamp clubs have started weekly meetings. The RA Stamp Club and the Ottawa Philatelic Society have full and well-structured programs covering the next few months.

The RA Stamp Club meets Mondays at 8 p.m. starting Sept. 10 with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. at the RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Dr., (near the Billings Bridge Shopping Centre). Use the west entrance and go to the second floor. For more information, contact the president, Brian Watson, at [brian150@sympatico.ca](mailto:brian150@sympatico.ca) or at 613-523-0546.

The OPS meets Thursdays at the Hintonburg Community Centre, 1064 Wellington St. (about three blocks east of Parkdale Avenue), starting Sept. 6. The room is reserved from 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. For more information, contact OPS vice-president Todd Sturgeon at 819-685-3242 or check out their site at [www.ottawaphilatelicsociety.org](http://www.ottawaphilatelicsociety.org).

A little farther afield but still close enough to visit is the Lakeshore Stamp Club in Dorval, Que. One of the largest stamp clubs in Canada, they have an extensive program of seminars and help sessions for members and exhibitors. Their season begins on Sept. 13 at 7:30 p.m. at the Church of St. John the Baptist, 233 Ste-Claire, Pointe-Claire, Que. Visit them online at [www.geocities.com/lakeshorestampclub/](http://www.geocities.com/lakeshorestampclub/).

For those who enjoy websites, [www.stampcollectingroundup.blogspot.com/](http://www.stampcollectingroundup.blogspot.com/) provides interesting news, resources and links about stamps, stamp collecting and postal operations. The blog is operated by Don Schilling of Glendale, California. A public relations and marketing consultant and retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, his collecting interests include U.S. mint and used stamps, the Washington-Franklin issues, stamps-on-stamps and military on stamps. However, his blog is not limited to his interests and is worth visiting regularly.

The Ottawa Citizen  
September 1, 2007

The American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors (AAPE) has completely revamped its website, [www.aaape.org](http://www.aaape.org), under a new and energetic webmaster, Larry Fillion. If you are interested in exhibiting, judging or collecting in general, this is the site for you. Not only does it give tips and advice but also houses scans of a number of first-class exhibits. If you are interested in picture postcards, there is a whole section on the subject including the rules of exhibiting postcards. This collecting area has now been approved as a full exhibiting class in North American stamp shows.

If you're keen on stamp auctions, Israel-based [www.StampCircuit.com](http://www.StampCircuit.com) is a virtual meeting place for stamp collectors, dealers, auctioneers and anybody who shares our great hobby. You can receive an e-mail newsletter upon request.

A Canadian version can be found at [www.canadianstampauctions.com](http://www.canadianstampauctions.com). This site does far more than just providing information on auctions and where to buy stamps. Run by Tom Burpee, a dedicated philatelist who believes market observation must be accompanied by helpful hints, the site provides stories behind the stamps and new discoveries. There are some 180 articles and a section, started in 2000, giving information on new varieties.

*Charles Verge is past 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. E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com)*



The Ottawa Citizen  
September 15, 2007

## STAMPS



A war artist and heraldist created the art for this July 1, 1947, stamp.

# Citizenship recognized

BY CHARLES VERGE

Up to 1947, there was legally no such thing as Canadian citizenship. Both native-born and naturalized citizens were British subjects. On Jan. 1, 1947, Canada became the first Commonwealth country to implement its own Citizenship Act.

The post office was called upon to participate in this event and felt that the proposed citizenship stamp could be multi-purpose. The stamp was issued July 1, 1947, on the 80th anniversary of Confederation, relieving the Post Office from having to issue another stamp. War artist and heraldist Lt.-Cmdr. Alan Brookman Beddoe (1893-1975) was retained to prepare the art work for the citizenship stamp. Beddoe was to become famous for supervising the illumination and hand lettering of the Canadian Book of Remembrance listing the names of all Canadians who lost their lives serving in Canada's armed forces.

The citizenship stamp is the only one Beddoe designed. His drawings for the stamp show the figure of a youth representing citizenship with an upraised right arm standing on the northern part of the Western Hemisphere. If you are interested in the First Day Covers of this issue and its cachets, I recommend highly the study prepared by Gary Dickinson that can be found at the British North America Philatelic Society's King George VI Study Group website [www.kgvi.ca/docs/SP002\\_200612.pdf](http://www.kgvi.ca/docs/SP002_200612.pdf).

### POSTCARD SHOW TODAY

The 12th annual Eastern Ontario Postcard Show is being held today from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Merrickville at the Community Centre.

Collectors of postcards, postal history and other paper ephemera won't want to miss this well established show. Approximately 20 dealers, bringing close to 1-million cards to choose from, will be available to buy and sell material.

Readers with postcards to sell have an opportunity to speak with experts as to their value. The value of the postcard is not necessarily only based on the picture side; frequently, the postmark or destination raises the value.

The show's theme this year is 'Rideau Canal 175' and although the canal predates the advent of postcards, there is some wonderful history of the canal shown on cards from the late 1800s and the 20th century. Parking and admission are free. Additional information can be had by calling Jim Skelding at 613-269-2085 or by e-mail at [jim.skelding2@sympatico.ca](mailto:jim.skelding2@sympatico.ca).

*Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada.  
E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com).*



September 29, 2007  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS

# Canadian connections

BY CHARLES VERGE

It is interesting how far postal authorities will go to issue stamps connecting them to another country or allowing them to depict subjects that they would not otherwise have the right to show, according to the Universal Postal Union. The Isle of Man, off the coast of Great Britain, has done just that. Lowe Martin of Ottawa, a firm that prints Canadian stamps, is printing the issue of four Manx stamps in a miniature sheet marking International Polar Year and celebrating the island's connection to northern Canada. One 50-pence stamp shows a cabin on the Ben-My-Chree settlement in B.C. built by Otto and Kate Partridge,

and another shows Graham Oates, the first person to reach Hudson Bay (in 1932) using a vehicle with rubber tires, a motorcycle called the "Miss Manx-land." Two other stamps are 75 pence with one depicting the Kermode bear or Spirit bear. Francis Kermode, the curator of the Provincial Museum in Victoria, B.C., is credited with discovering in 1928 that this white bear is really a black bear with a genetic variation. The other shows a dog sled team and commemorates the centenary of the Hudson Bay post office in operation from 1931 to 1961 by Dick and Elizabeth Jervis.

The stamps definitely have Canadian connections, but what have they to do with the Isle of Man? The answer is simple: All the people men-



**Isle of Man stamps mark International Polar Year and have lots of Canadian content.**

tioned in this paragraph were born on that island.

On Monday, Canada Post issues its second set of four in a three-year series of stamps raising awareness for endangered species. Timed, once again, for Stamp Collecting Month, this year's quartet celebrates water wildlife: the leatherback turtle, the white sturgeon, the North Atlantic right whale and the northern cricket frog. Last year it was land wildlife;

next year, it will be those in the air.

The booklet stamps of eight are smaller in size and die cut than the stamps on the tabbed souvenir sheets, which are wider with 13 perforations. For more information on endangered species go to [www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca](http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca) or [www.naturecanada.ca/endangered.asp](http://www.naturecanada.ca/endangered.asp).

The latest issue (Oct./Dec. 2007) of Canada Post's *Details* magazine highlights the Stamp Advisory Committee, which selects stamp subjects and designs. Ask for it at Canada Post post offices or order it through the National Philatelic Centre, 75 St. Ninian St., Antigonish, NS B2G 2R8 or by phone at 1-800-565-4362.

*Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [cjverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjverge@rogers.com)*



# Canadian philatelist invited to sign the roll

Sat Oct 7 2000

The invitation to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists is the highest honour any philatelist can receive. Recently, in London, I represented the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada when a Canadian was one of five new signatories.

This ceremony is an integral part of the annual Philatelic Congress of Great Britain's three-day meeting, which includes seminars, displays, banquets and tours. But the highlight is the signing ceremony. This year's congress was well organized by the Revenue Society of Great Britain.

As a recipient of the invitation to sign the roll, Michael Madesker, of Toronto, has the right to add the letters RDP after his name.

He is the seventh Canadian to have been so honoured since the roll was instituted in 1921. The others: Fred Jarrett, J. A. Calder, Gerald Wellburn, Vincent G. Greene, Harry Sutherland and Kenneth Rowe.

An eighth, J. C. Cartwright, was born and died in Great Britain, but spent most of his adult and philatelic life in Canada and is considered by some, including me, as a Canadian RDP.

King George V was the first philatelist to sign the roll. Only seven of the 39 people invited to sign were in attendance at the first public signing ceremony May 6, 1921. One other, Sir Edward Bacon, Keeper of the King's Collection, had signed in advance at the same time as the King.

Since then, more than 250 of our hobby's eminent men and women have been invited to follow the King. Many years ago the selection of RDPs was mainly a British preserve but, in the last two decades, it can truly be said to be international in scope.

Election to the roll by a board of elections composed of RDPs is solely by merit. Criteria for a candidate to be invited to sign include promotion and organization of philately at the national and international levels, forming innovative collections, and writing and research on the hobby. Candidates need not meet all the criteria.

There are two ways a name can be put forward for consideration as an RDP. First, a national society or federation (for example, the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada) can propose a name, or a distinguished philatelist who has already signed the roll may do so.

Mr. Madesker's contributions to philately fall within all the above criteria. He was a director of the Royal Philatelic Society for 20 years (1980-2000) and its president for three terms (1990-1993). He is now in his third four-year term as president of the Commission for Youth Philately of the Federation Internationale de Philatelie.

He was the first individual to exhibit Canadian booklets at the international level, and his current collection on the Postal History of Venice is well regarded.

Over the years, Mr. Madesker has written many articles on Canadian and international philately. In the last few years, he has concentrated his writing on a series of handbooks on youth philately. These have been well received and several have been translated into five or six other languages. Many of these editions are now out of print.

Congratulations, Michael, on a well-deserved honour.

Charles **Verge** is president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [vergec@sympatico.ca](mailto:vergec@sympatico.ca)



October 13, 2007  
The Ottawa Citizen

## STAMPS



Canada Post honours beneficial insects in a new definitive series.

# Bugs we love

BY CHARLES VERGE

Yesterday, Canada Post issued its first low-value definitive series since 1959, replacing the Traditional Trades or "working hands" series. Although the general postal user was not overwhelmed by the series, largely because of the black background of the design and the difficulty in reading the numbers, the stamps went on to win the prestigious Asiago International Philatelic Art Prize for the best stamps issued in 1999.

The eight "working hands" stamps are being replaced by five new stamps. Canada Post feels they can do with fewer low-value definitives because the ones they will be issuing can be used in combination to make any number required. The new colourful stamps will feature beneficial insects. The 1¢ features the convergent lady beetle better known as the ladybug, the 3¢ the lacewing (golden-eyed lacewing), the 5¢ the northern bumblebee, the 10¢ the dragonfly (Canada darner) and the 25¢ the cecropia moth.

Canada Post tell us that farmers and gardeners are turning to beneficial insects rather than using pesticides. A single ladybug can devour 60 aphids in a day and goes a long way to protecting your roses.

The stamps are printed in five-colour lithography by the Canadian Bank Note Company on Tullis Russell Coatings paper and are perforated 13+. Contrary to most Canadian stamps, these will not have fluorescent tagging as no individual stamp meets the 52¢ basic domestic rate needed to trigger the cancelling machines. The stamps are available in panes of 50 and 350,000 souvenir sheets containing one of each stamps have been printed. Also available will be 2,500 uncut press sheets comprising one pane of each of the five stamps, two additional panes of 1¢ and one of 10¢ (\$28). As definitives, they will be reprinted when the needs occur. Reprints should be watched for and collected as definitive stamps are sometimes noticeably different from one printing to another.

Ottawa stamp dealer Ian Kimmerly (62 Sparks St.) resumes holding regular stamp auctions after a hiatus of almost five years. The first sale will take place Nov. 8-10 under the new name of Sparks Auctions with 2,400 lots worth an estimated \$1.5 million. The auction catalogues will be primarily available electronically either through CD-ROMS or on the website [www.Sparks-Auctions.com](http://www.Sparks-Auctions.com). A small number of catalogues have been printed and will be available for those who prefer their catalogues in a hard copy format. Mr. Kimmerly tells me the stamps of some 200 different postal issuing entities are available in the first sale.

The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada's 79th annual convention takes place in Toronto this weekend at Exhibition Place.

*Charles Verge is past 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. E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com)*



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## STAMPS

# There's more for Tintin fans

BY CHARLES VERGE

In August, I wrote about France issuing six stamps on May 14, 2007, to celebrate the centennial of the birth of Belgium's Georges Prosper Rémi (1907-1983) who wrote the *Tintin* book series under the name of Hergé. That column brought more responses than any other in the last five years. Faithful *Tintin* readers were interested in finding out where to purchase the French stamps.

In light of the interest in *Tintin*, here is more information on stamps issued for the young cartoon journalist.

First, Belgium issued its own commemoration to its favourite son eight days after France did its tribute. The Belgium issue consists of a sheet of 25 stamps with the centre stamp showing a picture of Hergé. The other 24 stamps show the covers of all 24 *Tintin* books with the added feature that each is in a different language. This shows the worldwide appeal of Hergé's books.

The Hergé centennial stamps are not Belgium's first showing *Tintin*. Two stamps showing *Tintin* and his dog Milou were issued in 1979 for the 50th anniversary of the publication of the first *Tintin* story. A stamp celebrating Hergé as one of the 20 most influential 20th-century personalities was issued in 1999. Another 1999 stamp shows the rocket used in two of *Tintin's* adventures: *Destination Moon* and *We Walked on the Moon*. The rocket is superimposed on a picture of the first floor of the Belgian Comic Strip Museum. The stamp was one of nine issued for the 10th anniversary of the museum. In 2004, these two books were commemorated on their 50th anniversary by Belgium. Five stamps were issued, four showing drawings from the books and the fifth showing Hergé with the model of the rocket he made to use for his drawings.

In 1999, the Netherlands commemorated the same subjects on a single sheet stamp and a souvenir sheet of two stamps, one of which is the single sheet stamp. In 2000, France issued two stamps in a seven-stamp booklet. Both stamps had the same design with four of the seven being sold for three francs while the three others were sold for 3.60 francs, with the extra 60 centimes going to support Stamp Day. The French semi-postal stamp was also available in a souvenir sheet of one stamp. Finally, to celebrate the end of the franc, the advent of the euro and the 70th anniversary of *Tintin in the Congo*, a two-stamp joint issue was launched by the Congo and Belgium on Dec. 31, 2001.

A stamp that has a portion of its denomination directed to charity or non-postal service is called a semi-postal stamp. Since Confederation, Canada has issued 13 such stamps. Twelve were issued between 1974 and 1976 to help finance the 1976 Montreal Olympics. The 13th was put on the market in 1996 to raise funds for Canada Post's charity of choice: literacy. Debbie Adams designed the stamp with a die-cut hole in the middle in the shape of a puzzle piece, representing the missing piece of the literacy puzzle. The stamps were issued in booklets of 10 and a five-cent surcharge on each stamp supported ABC Canada's family literacy programs.

Semi-postal stamps were not popular in North America until 1997 when the U.S. Congress ordered the United States Postal Service to issue a semi-postal stamp in support of eradicating breast cancer. As of May 2006, over \$50 million U.S. has been raised through the sale of that stamp. Perhaps if Canada looked at issuing semi-postal stamps for medical research, these stamps might gain favour with the public.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada. Write to him c/o The Citizen, 1101 Baxter Rd., Box 5020, Ottawa K2C 3M4. E-mail: [cjverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjverge@rogers.com)



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## STAMPS



This 1948 stamp was issued to mark the marriage of Princess Elizabeth to Lieut. Philip Mountbatten.

# A royal anniversary

BY CHARLES VERGE

The Queen and Prince Philip celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary Nov. 20. She is reportedly the first monarch in history to achieve 60 years of marriage.

On Oct. 16, Royal Mail issued 10 stamps commemorating the event. Six of these are printed in black and white in three sheet formats of 60 stamps with each sheet bearing 30 pairs of stamps of the same denomination. All six stamps show photographs of the royal couple over those 60 years.

The first-class stamps are photos from 1997 and 2006; the 54 pence are from 1969 and 1980 and the 78 pence ones date from 1947 and 1961. In addition, a souvenir sheet of four stamps was issued on the same day showing one photograph of the royal couple and three showing them with their children. The coloured souvenir sheet is a first for Royal Mail in two respects: it contains self-adhesive stamps and it has images on the back of the sheet.

Canada Post will not issue a stamp on the occasion of the Diamond Wedding anniversary as it did for the wedding. The four-cent stamp, showing Princess Elizabeth, was scheduled for release on Nov. 20, 1947, but production problems delayed its issue to Feb. 16, 1948.

Revenues or fiscal stamps are a collecting class to which I have not paid much attention. It is, however, the oldest collecting area in philately with the first revenue collection being assembled in Ireland in the 18th century.

These stamps or revenues are issued by a government body for three purposes: to show that a tax has been paid, that a fee for governmental service has been paid or that a monetary credit has been established with a government authority. The first can be illustrated by tobacco revenue stamps found on all packages of cigarettes and tobacco cans. The second group include legal stamps found on many older legal documents such as wills, indentures and incorporations. The last can best be represented by stamps or revenue paper issued for the payment of COD packages, postal scripts for post office bank receipts and unemployment insurance stamps.

Most collectors consider that revenue or fiscal stamps originated in 1624 with the documentary taxes of The Netherlands but, according to current research, the ancient Babylonians' domestic animals had to carry a tag that showed payment of a tax. In the Sung Dynasty in China (12th-13th centuries), strips of paper with an indication of value showed payment of a tax. There is also some evidence of fiscal stamps in 15th-century Abyssinia. Taxes and the evidence of their payments may be as old as civilization.

E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com)



What are revenues or fiscals stamps? This is a collecting class to which I have not paid much attention. It is, however, the oldest collecting area in philately with the first ever revenue collection being assembled in Ireland in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. They are stamps or revenue paper issued by or under the authority of a national, provincial/state, municipal or other government body. They are issued for three purposes: to show that a tax has been paid, that a fee for governmental service has been paid or that a monetary credit has been established with a government authority. Tax stamps show the payment or exemption from payment of a tax, levy or imposition of duty. A fee stamp also records the payment or exemption thereof of a fee, this time for some type of government service. A credit stamp shows that there is a monetary credit in favour of an individual, organization, purchaser or agent. The first can be illustrated by tobacco revenue stamps found on all packages of cigarettes and tobacco cans. The second group include legal stamps found on many older legal documents such as wills, indentures and incorporations.. The last can best be represented by stamps or revenue paper issued for the payment of COD packages, postal scripts for Post Office bank receipts and Unemployment Insurance stamps. Most collectors consider that revenue or fiscal stamps originated in 1624 with the documentary taxes of The Netherlands but, according to current research, the ancient Babylonians' domesticated animals had to carry a tag that was the evidence of the payment of a tax. In the Sung Dynasty in China (12-13th Centuries), strips of paper with an indication of value were used as the payment of a tax. There is also some evidence of fiscal stamps in 15<sup>th</sup> Century Abyssinia. Taxes and the evidence of their payments may be as old as civilisation itself.

The Queen and The Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on November 20. She is reported to be the first monarch in history to achieve 60 years of marriage. On October 16, Royal Mail issued ten stamps commemorating the event. Six of these are printed in black and white in three sheet formats of sixty stamps with each sheet bearing thirty pairs of stamps of the same denomination. All six stamps show photographs of the Royal couple over those sixty years. The first class stamps are photos from 1997 and 2006; the 54 pence are from 1969 and 1980 and the 78 pence ones date from 1947 and 1961. In addition, a souvenir sheet of four stamps was issued on the same day bearing four stamps showing one photograph of the Royal couple and three showing them with their children. The coloured souvenir sheet is a first for Royal mail in two respects: it contains self-adhesive stamps and it has images on the back of the sheet.

Canada Post will not issue a stamp on the occasion of the Diamond Wedding anniversary as it did for the wedding. The four-cent stamp, showing Princess Elizabeth, was scheduled for release on November 20, 1947 but production problems delayed its issue to February 16, 1948. Canada has issued two stamps with Prince Phillip's image. In both cases he is seen with the Queen. The stamps were issued on October 26, 1951 and October 10, 1957 on the occasion of Royal visits to Canada by the couple. The 1957 stamp is based on a photograph taken by Yousuf Karsh.



The Ottawa Citizen  
November 24, 2007

## STAMPS

# Parting words from columnist

BY CHARLES VERGE

This will be my last Stamps column after exactly 12 years of writing them. The editors at the *Citizen* have decided to revitalize and remake the weekend Hobbies & Puzzles page and it does not include a stamps column. Needless to say, I am disappointed but not surprised. The *Citizen* has been one of the last daily newspapers in Canada to continue to have a stamps column. It likely also holds somewhat of a Canadian record for continuous publication of this column. My records indicate that William Gladish was the "stamp editor" from the late 1940s to July 1976 when Ottawa stamp dealer Ian Kimmerly took over. He was replaced in 1983 by my predecessor, Ralph Mitchener. I took over the column after Ralph's death in 1995.

To all my faithful and occasional readers over the years: Thank You. I appreciated your support, comments and suggestions. My parting words are "continue to support the hobby, join a stamp club and enjoy stamp collecting."

In the June 9 column, I mentioned that next May, the Art Canada series will continue with three stamps honouring Yousuf Karsh, Canada's world-famous photographer, on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

In mid-October, Canada Post announced the domestic rate stamp would feature a Karsh self-portrait, while the U.S. and International rates would feature Audrey Hepburn and Sir Winston Churchill respectively.

Germany attempted to issue a semi-postal stamp for the famous actress in 2001 but the Hepburn estate voiced objections over the photo from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and the stamp was never released. However, some copies went into general circulation. As of March 2007, four of these rarities have been found, all used. One of these reportedly sold in 2005 for \$209,000 U.S.

The same mid-October announcement also revealed that Canada Post would continue its popular "Canadians in Hollywood" stamp series launched in 2006. The actors honoured next June will be Raymond Burr (1917-1993), Marie Dressler (1868-1934, born Leila Marie Koerber), Chief Dan George (1899-1981, born Tes-wah-no and a.k.a. Dan Shaholt) and Norma Shearer (1902-1983).

Another batch of websites that might be of interest to readers has come to my attention.

- If you are into precancelled stamps, you might wish to visit [www.precancels.org](http://www.precancels.org) to have a look at how to collect US precancels. The site also has some information on the precancels of Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg and The Netherlands.

- <http://home.comcast.net/~fbheiser/ethiopia5.htm> is the site for The Ethiopian Philatelic Society. There is much interesting information on the site even if it is in need of updating.

- The website for one of the largest society of collectors of Israel and Palestine, The Society of Israel Philatelists, can be found at [www.israel-stamps.com](http://www.israel-stamps.com).

- If you are simply interested in stamps in general or are a world-wide collector, then [www.iswsc.org](http://www.iswsc.org) is for you.

Charles Verge is past president of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada.  
E-mail: [cjgverge@rogers.com](mailto:cjgverge@rogers.com)