THE MAKING OF Reflections of Canada: The National Stamp Collection

CHARLES J.G. VERGE

The postage stamps of any nation represent the history and heritage of its people. Canada recently made it possible for everyone to view and admire that history by creating "Reflections of Canada: The National Stamp Collection" (Figure 1), a public display of all Canada and British North America stamps, now open at the Canadian Postal Museum. The museum is situated near Ottawa, in Gatineau, Quebec.

The realization of this remarkable permanent exhibit, which is one that many American philatelists can only dream of, was made possible through the cooperation of Canada Post, the National Archives, the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada.

Being president or a board member of the RPSC means you lobby for philately and philatelists on a regular basis. Some of those efforts take years to show results; however, they are worth waiting for when they do.

Ralph Mitchener, a director of the society and its historian for many years, had taken up the cudgel when the Canadian Postal Museum was closed in 1988. He constantly wrote, pushing for its reopening, and was adamant that any recreated postal museum should emphasize stamps.

Other members of past boards and the current board took every opportunity to support this request. The Canadian Postal Museum reopened in 1997 at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, but there were few stamps displayed, since they were housed at the Canadian Postal Archives. Many of the more than 250,000 visitors who



Figure 1. The new "Reflections of Canada" national stamp exhibition opened July 1, 2002, in Quebec. A colorful bookmark given visitors includes additional details on the reverse, such as a list of important web site addresses where visitors can get more information.

passed through the doors of the Canadian Postal Museum every year asked why they could not see all the stamps of Canada on

In 1998, Sheila Copps, the minister of Canadian Heritage, set up the English Commission to look into possible integration of the National Archives and the National Library. The RPSC took the opportunity to present a brief on the Canadian Postal Archives to the Commission.

In addition, past president Jim Kraemer and I (as current RPSC president) were asked to make a verbal presentation. We did not harbor much hope, but to our surprise the commission's president, John English, took a personal interest in our brief and made recommendations to the minister that were beyond our wildest dreams. This, coupled with the appointment of André Ouellet as chairman of the board of Canada Post (Figure 2), was the catalyst to bring down the roadblocks.

As chairman, and later as president and chief executive officer of Canada Post, Ouellet was instrumental in ensuring these recommendations were acted upon.

From that point on things began to improve, and enhanced cooperation was evident between Canada Post, the National Archives and the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

One of the projects resulting from this newfound cooperation was the display of all Canada and BNA stamps at the Canadian Postal Museum. As part of the 150th anniversary celebrations of the independent Canadian Post Office in 2001, Canada Post decided that arranging for the display of Canada's national collection of postage stamps was a priority. The completion of this national heritage treasure project was felt by Canada Post to be a fitting gift to the people of Canada at the close of the 150th anniversary celebrations.

On July 1 of this year Canadian prime minister Jean Chrétien unveiled "Reflections of Canada: The National Stamp Collection at the Canadian Postal Museum" (Figure 3). For the first time in many a year, Canadians can view and enjoy all the stamps of Canada and the provinces set up in a special room. It is a spectacular display of our postage stamp heritage.

I had the honor of facilitating the work of the team that put the exhibition together. Here is how the project came about.

WHAT IS 'REFLECTIONS OF CANADA'?

"Reflections of Canada" is a project initiated produced and led by Canada Post to provide Canada's philatelists, the general public and museum patrons with the opportunity to view Canada's national postage stamp her-



Ouellet, president and chief executive officer of **Canada Post** Corporation, insisted that a national exhibit of Canada's stamps should be created for public display.



Figure 3. The author, Charles J.G. Verge (left), gives the prime minister of Canada, Jean Chrétien (right) a tour of Canada's national stamp collection on display. Chrétien officially opened the "Reflections of Canada" stamp exhibition on July 1, 2002.

itage. Although the exhibition is a cooperative project, credit must be given to André Ouellet for his determination to get this project done and his insistence that, this time, there were to be no barriers to its completion.

A similar display, mounted with a philatelic approach, was available prior to 1988 when



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Figure 4. Computer desks housing the Historica's "Heritage Minutes" and a CD-ROM version of the Canadian Postal Archives web site. The taller desk was eventually reduced in size to match its partner, and they were placed side by side. At left is a computer screen showing the Sports stamps that have "Heritage Minutes" attached to them. For example, with a click on the basketball stamp at left the visitor sees a one-minute film on the invention of the sport by Canadian James Naismith.

there existed a postal museum owned and operated by Canada Post. In 1988 the museum was closed and the stamps and paper items were sent to the National Archives of Canada for safekeeping. The three-dimensional



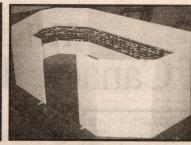


Figure 5. From left to right: Charles Verge, Rachel Touchette and Father Jacques Monet, looking at their first thematic iteration of all the stamps of Canada, with a second one in the background. The design of the working model at right was based on data taken from the preliminary layouts, which was then entered into a database and used to form the computerized model.

objects were sent to the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

A new Canadian Postal Museum was opened in 1997 on the premises of the Museum of Civilization. It could only display the artifacts it had, but from time to time stamps were borrowed from the National Archives of Canada. This was not an ideal situation, as the borrowing process is arduous and borrowed stamps cannot be displayed for more than six months in any five-year period.

THE CONTENTS OF THE DISPLAY

All stamps of Canada and the provinces that issued stamps prior to Confederation are on display. The provinces and the approximate number of stamps they issued are as follows.

British Columbia and Vancouver Island, 18 (joined Confederation in 1871);

Province of Canada, 20 (joined in 1867); New Brunswick, 11 (joined in 1867); Nova Scotia, 13 (joined in 1867); Prince Edward Island, 16 (joined in 1873);

WYOMING

2001 Artist: Brent Todd

\$10 White-tailed deer, 2001

19.00 5.00

40.00

COMMEMORATIVE PANELS

Greetings from America, #3610a Longleaf Pine Forest, #3611

30.00 Nos. CP648 and CP649 each consist of 2 pages. One has text and engraved illustra-tions. The other contains the pane of stamps.

UNITED NATIONS



World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg — A337

Printed by The House of Questa, UK. lesigned by Peter Max, US. Designs: No. 828, Sun, Earth, planets, lars. No. 829, Three women. No. 830, Sail-

boat. No. 831, Three faceless people.				
2002, June 27 Litho. Perf.	141/2	x14		
(1,350,000)+ First day cover	.75	.35		
829 A337 37c multicolored (1,350,000)+ First day cover	.75	.35		
830 A337 60c multicolored (1,350,000)+	1.25	.60		
First day cover First day cover, #828, 830 831 A337 60c multicolored		2.00		
(1,350,000)+ a. Vert. strip or block of four.	1.25	.60		
#828-831 First day cover	4.00	1.90		
First day cover, #829, 831 First day cover, #828-831 Pane of 12, 3 each #828-831	12.00	4.50		
See Offices in Geneva Nos. Vienna Nos. 318-321.	396-	399;		

OFFICES IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

World Summit on Sustainable **Development (Peter Max) Type**

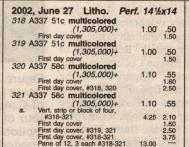
Designs: No. 396, Sun, birds, flowers, heart. No. 397, Three faceless people, diff. No. 398, Three women, diff. No. 399, Sailboat,

2002, June 27 Litho. Perf.	141/2	x14
396 A337 90c multicolored		
(1,215,000)+	1.25	.60
First day cover	400	1.90
397 A337 90c multicolored		
(1,215,000)+	1.25	.60
First day cover		1.90
398 A337 1.80fr multicolored		
(1,215,000)+	2.40	1 25
First day cover		3.50
First day cover, #396, 398		4.00
399 A337 1.80fr multicolored		
(1,215,000)+	2.40	1.25
a. Vert. strip or block of four,		
#396-399	7.50	3.75
First day cover		3.50
First day cover, #397, 399		4.00
First day cover, #396-399	00 50	8.00
Pane of 12, 3 each #396-399	22.50	
The second secon		

OFFICES IN VIENNA, **AUSTRIA**

World Summit on Sustainable Development (Peter Max) Type

Designs: No. 318, Rainbow. No. 319, Three women, diff. No. 320, Three faceless people. No. 321, Birds, wave.



ANDORRA

(French Administration)



World Day for Water - A315

2002, Mar. 22 Litho.

13.00

Perf. 13 1.25 1.25

ANGUILLA



Social Security Board, 20th Anniv. — A160

Social Security: 30c, Community service vert. 75c, Benefits all ages, vert. \$2.50, Benefits ample 1999

2002 Litho. Perf. 131/4 Set of 3

ANTIGUA



Christmas — A434

Paintings: 25c, Madonna and Child with Angels, by Filippo Lippi. 45c, Madonna of Corneto Tarquinia, by Lippi. 50c, Madonna and Child, by Domenico Ghirlandaio. 75c, Madonna and Child, by Lippi. \$4, Madonna Delceppo, by Lippi. \$6, Madonna Enthroned with Angels and Saints, by Lippi.

Perf. 14 4.50 4.50 2001. Dec. 4 Litho. 2526-2530 A434 Set of 5 Souvenir Sheet 2531 A434 \$6 multi 4.50 4.50



Championships, Japan and Korea — A435

No. 2532, \$1.50: a, Scene from final game, 1950. b, Ferenc Puskas, 1954. c, Raymond Kopa, 1958. d, Mauro, 1962. e, Gordon Banks, 1966. f, Pelé, 1970.
No. 2533, \$1.50: a, Daniel Passarella, 1978. b, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, 1982. c, World Cup trophy, 1986. d, Diego Maradona, 1990. e, Roger Milla, 1994. f, Zinedine Zidane, 1998. No. 2534, \$6, Head from Jules Rimet Cup, 1930. No. 2535, \$6, Head and globe from World Cup trophy, 2002.

2001, Dec. 17 Perf. 133/x141/4 Sheets of 6, #a-f 2532-2533 A435 Set of 2 13.50 13.50

Souvenir Sheets Perf. 141/4 2534-2535 A435 Set of 2 9.00 9.00

Queen Mother Type of 2000 Redrawn

No. 2536: a, As child. b, In 1940. c, With Princess Anne, 1951. d, In Canada, 1989. \$6, Inspecting the troops.

Perf. 14 **Yellow Orange Frames** 2536 A404 \$2 Sheet of 4, #a-d, + label 6.00 6.00

Souvenir Sheet Perf. 133/4

2537 A404 \$6 multi 4.50 4.50

Queen Mother's 101st birthday. No. 2537 contains one 38x51mm stamp with a darker appearance than that found on No. 2374. Sheet margins of Nos. 2536-2537 lack embossing and gold arms found on Nos. 2373-2974.



US Civil War - A436

No. 2538: a, Battle of Nashville. b, Battle of Atlanta. c, Battle of Spotsylvania. d, Battle of the Wilderness. e, Battle of Chickamauga Creek. f, Battle of Gettysburg. g, Battle of Chancellorsville. h, Battle of Fredericksburg. i, Battle of Antietam. j, Second Battle of Bull Run. k, Battle of Five Forks. l, Seven Days' Battle. m, Battle of Bull Run. n, Battle of Shiloh. o, Battle of Seven Pines. p. Battle of Forks.

hoh. o, Battle of Bull rull. 1, Battle of Sni-loh. o, Battle of Seven Pines. p, Battle of Fort Sumter. q, Battle of Chattanooga. r, Surrender at Appomattox. No. 2539, vert.: a, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. b, Pres. Abraham Lincoln. c, Confederate Pres. Jefferson Davis. d, Gen. Robert E. Lee. e, Gen. George A. Custer. f, Adm. Andrew Hull Foote. g, General Thomas "Stonewall" Jack-son. h, Gen. J.E.B. Stuart. i, Gen. George G. Meade. j, Gen. Philip H. Sheridan. k, Gen. James Longstreet. I, Gen. John S. Mosby. No. 2540, \$6, Monitor. No. 2541, \$6, Merrimack.

2002, Jan. 28 2538 A436 45c Sheet of 18, #a-r 6.00 6.00 2539 A436 50c Sheet of 12, #a-l 4.50 4.50 Souvenir Sheets

Perf. 141/2x141/4 (#2540), 131/4 2540-2541 A436 Set of 2 9.00 9.00 No. 2541 contains one 50x38mm stamp.



No. 2542: a, Striped dress. b, Green pat-terned dress. c, Orange patterned dress. d, White jacket. \$6, Queen with Princess Margaret.

2002, Feb. 6 2542 A437 \$2 Sheet of 4, #a-d 6.00 6.00

Souvenir Sheet 2543 A437 \$6 multi 4.50 4.50



United We Stand — A438

2002, Feb. 11 2544 A438 \$2 multi Perf. 131/2x131/4

Printed in sheets of 4.



Cricket Player Sir Vivian Richards, 50th Birthday — A439

Designs: 25c, Raising bat. 30c, Receiving gift. 50c, With arms raised. 75c, At bat. \$1.50, Wearing sash, with woman. \$1.80, Standing next to photograph of himself.
No. 2551, \$6, Holding sword. No. 2552, \$6, With Antigua color guard.

Perf. 131/2x131/4 2545-2550 A439 Set of 6 4.00 4.00 Souvenir Sheets

439 Set of 2



Flora and

Designs: 50c, Thick-billed parrot. 75c, Lesser long-nosed bat. \$1.50, Montserrat oriole. \$1.80, Miss Perkin's blue butterfly. No. 2557, 90c: a, Quetzals. b, Two-toed sloth. c, Lovely cotinga. d, Glant hairstrak butterfly. e, Magenta-throated woodstar. f, Bull'seye silk moth. g, Golden toads. h, Collared peccaries. i, Tamandua anteater. No. 2558, \$1: a, \$1. Lucia parrot. b, Cuban kite. c, West Indian whistling duck. d, Poey's sulphur butterfly. e, Scarlet ibis. f, Black-capped petrel. g, St. Lucia whiptail. h, Cuban

Newfoundland, 297 (joined in 1949); Canada since Confederation, circa 2,050.

Of these 2,425 stamps issued since 1851, more than 2,300 are on display in "Reflections of Canada.'

The remaining 125 are not displayed because they bear the same vignette or have the same color or denomination as those on display, except that they have been issued in a different format, such as in a booklet format where the stamp may have three perforated edges and one straight edge, while its sheet stamp equivalent has four perforated edges. In such cases, where the difference is so minimal, it was decided not to display both.

Canada Post, the Canadian Postal Museum, the Canadian Postal Archives of Canada and the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada provided the stamps required to complete the dis-

THE LAYOUT OF THE DISPLAY

The stamps are displayed in two segments. The first, on a charcoal gray background, are shown the stamps of the provinces prior to Confederation, in a chronological fashion. The second, on a black background, shows all post-Confederation Canadian stamps in chronological order, but through a thematic approach.

The thematic approach was chosen to make the display more interesting for the visitor. The eight themes chosen to display the stamps follow, with a brief list of the subthemes within each. They are listed as they appear on the panels. From top to bottom they are,

Philately: The postal service and stamps with no definable themes.

History: Canadian history, Canadian participation in the world and historical personalities (incl. Prime Ministers).

Culture: Arts, culture, literature, architecture, etc.

Symbols: Royalty, the beaver, the maple leaf, the Canadian flag, Parliament, the Office of governor-general, etc.

Society: Education, medicine, social affairs, justice, feasts and festivals, Christmas,

Economy: Natural resources, industry, trade, commerce and communications.

Environment: Flora, fauna, landscapes and tourist attractions.

Sports: Sports and leisure.

It should be noted that if one starts at the bottom of the display, the order of themes presented is designed to appeal to the interests of children and young people, and are therefore placed more at the level of a young person's physical height as they would view the stamp exhibit. For the benefit of the philatelist, the stamps are differentiated between definitive and commemorative stamps by the means of a small triangle identifying the definitive stamps.

Definitive stamps are those that have continuous printing and are available for extended periods. Commemorative stamps are those that have a defined print run and are on sale for a limited time.

A small square that looks like a television screen identifies some 80 stamps: these stamps all relate in some way to a "Heritage Minute." Sixty of Historica's 66 "Heritage Minutes" have themes that can be illustrated by Canadian stamps.

Historica is a nonprofit heritage organization that promotes Canadian history. Its 66 "Heritage Minutes" can be viewed on the Internet at www.histori.ca. In addition, its site is home to the Canadian Encyclopedia, where you can find almost anything you wish to know about Canada, its people, government, industry, history and more.

COMPUTER STATIONS

There are two computer stations in the display hall (Figure 4). One allows people to view the 60 Heritage Minutes related to the identified stamps. The other gives access to the Canadian Postal Archives database of information on Canadian stamps. It is a CD-ROM version of the web site found online at www.archives.ca.

Visitors are able to find out, for any given stamp on display, information about the designer, the printer, the number of stamps printed or issued, a short description of the

purpose of the stamp and the history behind the person or event being commemorated.

EDUCATIONAL TOOL

In addition to displaying Canada's postage stamp heritage, "Reflections of Canada" is an excellent educational tool for all visitors. Father Jacques Monet, Rachel Touchette and I were the three members of Canada's Stamp Advisory Committee charged with conceiving the display's approach (Figure 5). We insisted upon making the experience educational and accessible by using a thematic plan in addition to a chronological outline; displaying the stamps thematically in an appropriate order to interest the visitor notwithstanding his or her height; adding a historical dimension to the display by having 24 brief historical vignettes at the bottom of each panel; and ensuring that visitors (including school groups) could access the Canadian Postal Archives database and the Heritage Minutes.

THE HISTORICAL VIGNETTES

The 24 vignettes taken together tell the story of the growth of Canada's political independence since Responsible Government an elected assembly accountable only to elec-- was first established in 1848. Each vignette is a bilingual short story of an event that promoted the development of Canada's independence over the years and is illustrated with two stamps related to that event.

Some of these events are Confederation, the Great War, the League of Nations, World War II, NATO, the St. Lawrence Seaway, NAFTA

The educational value of this approach is selfevident; however, the two stamps shown with the vignette contribute an additional dimension. The "Responsible Government" vignette is the first that the visitor encounters, situated below the panel showing the stamps of the pre-Confederation provinces. One of the stamps illustrating this vignette is Canada Scott 148, the 20¢ stamp issued in 1927 for Robert Baldwin and Sir Louis Hypolyte Lafontaine (Figure 6).

This layout allows the teacher or the group leader to send young people on a search for



Canada Scott 148, the 20¢ Baldwin-Lafontaine commemorative of 1927, is one of

the stamps illustrating "Responsible Government" in the new display.

this stamp in the display, or a regular visitor could even undertake the same type of search.

As an aside, the installation of "Responsible Government" is what allowed an independent Canadian Post office, the first postmaster general and the issuance of Canada's first stamps.

TECHNICAL MATTER

"Reflections of Canada" is displayed in 24 panels and is modeled on a similar display, "Le panorama des timbres-poste de France," prepared by the Musée de La Poste in Paris for the World Philatelic Exhibition, PhilexFrance 99, from a concept by Michel Coste (Figure 7). After the exhibition, the French panorama was transferred to the Musée de La Poste at 34 Vaugirard Blvd., 75015 Paris (www.laposte.fr/musee).

In Canada 19½ panels are being used at the moment to house the provincial and Canadian stamps issued up to June 30, 2002. That means there is room to show all Canadian stamps until the end of 2010 before something needs to be done to expand the display.

The panels were made at Exposition TGC in Montreal. Georges de Passilé and Pierre-Yves Pelletier conceived the technology and designed the display (Figure 8).



Figure 7. Le Panorama des timbresposte de France, the model on which Canada's "Reflections of Canada" is based, was created in 1999 by the Musée de La Poste in Paris.

The stamps are mounted in archival protectors that are then affixed to magnets and installed on a lightly quadrilled steel backing plate, simplifying the process when new material is added or changes are made to the layout.

The 50-lux low lighting in the room is activated in sections, and only when there are visitors in the exhibition area. This is to protect the stamps on display, as the printed images are susceptible to fading from exposure to light.

The whole project from conception to com-



Figure 8. In the Exposition TGC warehouse in Montreal where the panels for the display were made. Pointing to them are company president Andre Choquet at left, and Georges de Passilé who, with Pierre-Yves Pelletier, conceived technology and designed the display.

pletion took less than seven months, compared with the more-than-two-years it took Coste and the curators in Paris to set up their version. In our case, the time savings was realized because of a complete reliance on computer design, graphics and production; and a determination to complete the project by July 1, Canada's 135th birthday.

If you are ever in Canada's national capital region, I suggest you stop and visit "Reflections of Canada" at the Canadian Postal Museum in the Canadian Museum of Civilization, 100 Laurier Street, Gatineau, Quebec. For museum hours and other details check online at www.civilization.ca. SSM

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US Scrap 8¢ to 19¢80%
US Scrap 20¢ & up83%
US Stationery50%
US Scrap, no gum, 30¢ to \$2.0050%
US Scrap, no gum, \$2.00 to \$14.00 60%

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ı	Bklts/sealed coil rolls 20¢ to \$10.7585%
1	US Precancelled/Bulkrate67%
	Special Delivery Scrap65%
)	Postage Dues Scrap30%
)	Officials30%
,	Bugs Bunny(no die cut or perf seps)\$80.00
,	UN NY Sheets 1¢ to 9¢35%
,	UN NY Sheets 10¢ & up40%
,	UN NY Scrap 1¢ to 9¢ (sorted)30%
0	UN NY Scrap 10¢ & up (sorted)35%
0	UN Geneva below 2.00 F.S10 Cts/Fr
0	UN Geneva 2.00 F.S. & up12 Cts/Fi
0	UN Vienna 50G-7 sh 2 Cts/Sh
0	UN Vienna 7.5 sh & up 2 Cts/Sh
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