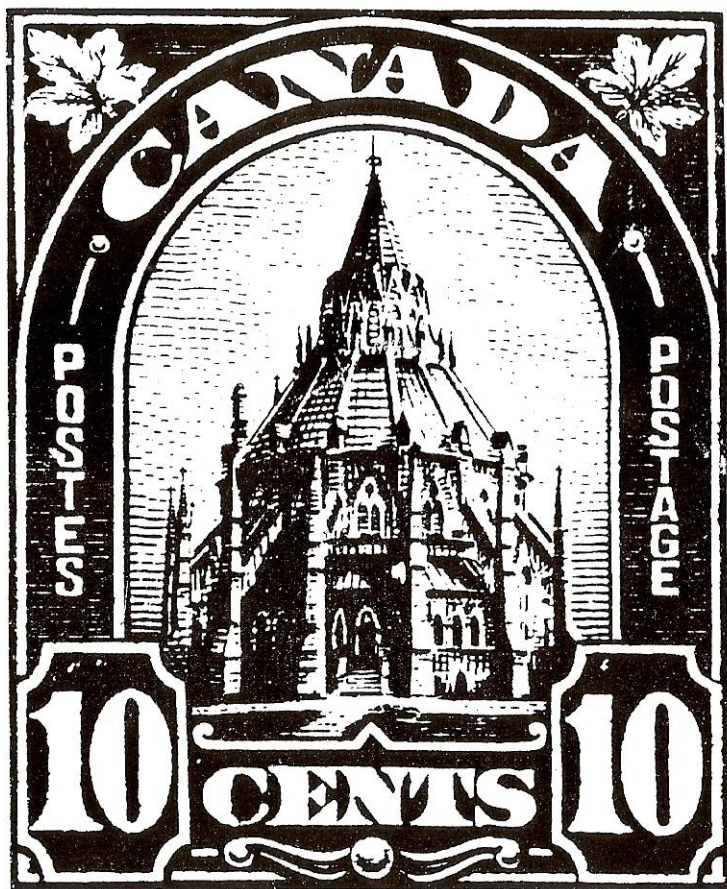


CALGARY PHILATELIST

October 1996

Issue #20





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The CPS was founded in 1922 by Dr. Edward George Mason. It is Chapter 66 of the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, and Chapter 1360 of the American Philatelic Society. The CPS address is Box 1478, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2L6.

Membership dues for the 1996-97 season are \$12, plus a \$5 initiation fee for new members. Mail to Membership Chairman, Box 1478, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2L6.

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CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS WITH STAMPS by Phyllis Weston

At first the issuing of stamps was strictly utilitarian. Changes came gradually. Metered mail and now e-mail have forced stamps to take a back seat. However, at the same time other changes came. These have resulted in the issuing of more stamps and in greater attention being paid to variety in design. Although from the beginning people collected stamps, today philately is a hobby of vast proportions. It is not surprising that postal authorities now vie with each other in wooing the stamp collector.

No occasion for issuing stamps has been more affected by the desire to attract customers than has Christmas. Stamps at Christmas used to be of religious subjects, very often the Virgin and the Christ Child. Gradually other themes appeared.

Some of the most marked changes appeared in the stamps of Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean. Over the years several countries have featured Yuletide songs, often on souvenir sheets. This tiny island, illustrating "The Twelve Days of Christmas", produced a very attractive sheet in 1978. On this sheet we find a delightful touch of humour in the stamps depicting ten lords a-leaping. One lord is playing leapfrog, turning with a smile to see the effect he is having on his audience.

We can hardly criticize Christmas Island for combining its 1986 issue with some tourist propaganda. On a set of five stamps, we see Santa Claus succumbing to the warmth of the tropics, beginning with a speedboat ride accompanied by two of his reindeer and, in the last stamp, lying spread-eagled in a hammock, enjoying a well-earned rest.

In 1990, the Gibraltar set for Christmas has a very nice touch of humour on the 22p value. Santa stands beside a signpost bearing the name Gibraltar. However, he is scratching his head and wearing a puzzled half-smile as if to say, "Now where on Earth is Gibraltar?".

Australia issued a souvenir sheet in 1987 of children enacting various scenes of the Christmas story. By this time, several countries were including children and children's drawings in their Christmas stamps. One such, issued by Great Britain in 1987, is a favourite of mine as each stamp shows a small boy as he anticipates the joys of Christmas. The artist has captured the look of wonder, a child's awe at the mystery which is part of the festive season. This is summed up in the 26p value, the little boy smiling in his sleep, a bulging stocking at the foot of the bed, and Santa in his sleigh speeding across the sky.

Guernsey issued a number of souvenir sheets using traditional Christmas ideas. In 1985 the sheet depicted gift bearers of the season. I was pleased to see the three Wise Men bearing their names: Balthazar, Caspar, and Melchior. There were the Christ Kind and St. Wenceslaus, famous in song. Some defeated me such as Lussibruden with her cheery smile and her goat. Perhaps you know where she and at least three others belong.

The 1992 sheet featured 'seasonal fayre' with stamps showing mouth-watering goodies such as turkey, ham, a plum pudding, mince pies, other sweets, and a cheese, a morsel of which will make you forget how well you have dined.

In 1970, Dominica had used Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" on its stamps for Christmas. Great Britain had used this theme in 1993, the drawings being informal sketches. The difference between these two sets of stamps illustrates vividly how stamp designs continue to change. Consequently, the philatelist watches eagerly for each new issue and is often pleased with the results. Thus does stamp collecting thrive. May it continue to do so!

TOPICAL COLLECTORS TAKE NOTE

The above article on Christmas topicals is a good excuse to mention that the Calgary Philatelic Society has recently become Chapter #91 of the American Topical Association, with Penny Borrowman as the liaison.

There are numerous topical collectors within the CPS. The club library has a set of ATA handbooks and catalogues which cover numerous topical categories, so if you collect plants on stamps or royalty on stamps, why not check the library at the next meeting?

The ATA also publishes a fine bimonthly digest, illustrated throughout and on coated paper; an excellent publication. If you would like to subscribe to TOPICAL TIME, send US\$25 for a year's subscription to the ATA, Box 65749, Tucson, Arizona 85728.

As an example, the September-October 1996 TOPICAL TIME features articles on exhibits such as the Volkswagen Beetle on stamps, an unsolved mystery about the first stamp to show musical notes, and articles on the quetzal bird, Evita Peron, cicada insects, measuring time, clipper ships, the Pap smear, and numerous reviews and help columns. Truly something for everyone!

DUES ARE DUE

See Al Gibbs at meetings or mail your renewal to him at Box 1478. \$12 for the new season.



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BNAPSERS START OFF SEASON

There is a Calgary specialist group for those interested in Canadian and pre-Confederation philately. The Calgary Regional Group of the British North America Philatelic Society meets second Wednesdays at 730 pm at the Museum of the Regiments. This building is on the east side of Crowchild Trail off Flanders Avenue; enter at the south end of the building. Details about the group can be obtained from Eldon Godfrey at 288-5693.

At the September 11 meeting, there was a brief business session followed by accounts of CAPEX 96 from people who had attended (not to mention the Atlanta Olympics). Notice was given of the recent and sudden death of the prominent dealer Allan Steinhart and some anecdotes about him were shared by way of a memorial.

The main part of the evening was a show-and-tell session of items brought by members, combined with an explanation about how they got started collecting stamps. It is interesting the many ways in which the interest was ignited, whether as a farm boy clipping stamps off parcels received from Eaton's mail order service or the random purchase of a 25¢ packet of stamps in a drug store.

It should be noted that the BNAPSers are not some esoteric group who collect high-priced rarities from the 1900s. As one example, a show-and-tell item was a September City of Calgary utility bill paid at the 38¢ rate. How many Calgary philatelists are collecting this instant postal history, the result of a dispute between the City and Canada Post? This feud has produced a new postal rate that few collectors elsewhere know about. Many of the BNAPSers collect the affordable modern postal history, even as it is in the making. So you don't need a fat wallet to join!

ROYAL 97 ROYALE

For the first time since 1980, Calgary is hosting a national show of the Royal Philatelic Society. The event will take place at the Coast Plaza Hotel (what used to be the Marlborough Inn) from September 19 to 21, 1997. Volunteers will be needed even more so than a regular CALTAPEX. Every little bit of help is wanted; contact Show Chairman Hugh Delaney at 255-0422.

SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

These ads are free to paidup CPS members. Mail your ads to Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7, or hand them to me at meetings. Next deadline is November 6 for the January bulletin.

FOR SALE: British Oceania mint sets LH. Also new circuit books of country collections via our circuit book manager. Call Bob Perry at 282-4520.

FOR SALE: Fine used Australian stamps 1980-1996, fine postally used Canadian stamps, miniature sheets, and booklets from ±1992. Contact Michael at 286-7927.

WANTED: Booklet singles or multiples used on cover - any era. Price individually, as a batch, or ask for my offer. Will give generous trade of MNH Canada for items I need. Call Ed Harris at 274-0021 or see me at any meeting.

WANTED: Postmarks of western Canada on cover, piece, or stamp. Phone Al at 282-1030.

FOR SALE: "History of the Calgary Philatelic Society" book for \$2 each from Dale Speirs at meetings. Mail orders add an extra \$2 for postage and remit to CPS, c/o Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7.

FOR SALE: Calgary Olympic cover (not sold by Canada Post) with OLYMPLEX 88 show catalogue. Articles on sports philately, Olympic, and Calgary postal history. Price is \$5 at meetings from Dale Speirs or \$6 by mail from CPS, c/o Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7.

CALTAPEX 96

Our annual show will be held at the Chinese Cultural Centre, 197 First Street SW, from October 18 to 20. Exhibits, dealer bourse. Details from Hugh Delaney at 255-0422 or see him at meetings.

JANUARY MEETING DATE CHANGE

Due to the New Year's Day holiday, the CPS meeting will not be on the usual first Wednesday of the month but will move to January 15.

MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

1996

October	2	.....	General meeting
	6		Sunday bourse
	16		Auction
	18 to 20		CALTAPEX 96
November	3	.....	Sunday bourse
	6		General meeting
	6		Deadline for January bulletin
	20		Auction
December	1	.....	Sunday bourse
	4		Christmas social

1997

January	5	.....	Sunday bourse
	15		General meeting
	15		Deadline for February bulletin
February	2	.....	Sunday bourse
	5		General meeting
	19		Auction
March	2	.....	Sunday bourse
	5		General meeting
	5		Deadline for April bulletin
	19		Auction
April	2	.....	General meeting
	6		Sunday bourse
	16		Auction
	26		BNAPS Spring Regional Meeting
	27		Stamp Day
May	4	.....	Sunday bourse
	7		General meeting
	7		Deadline for June bulletin
	21		Auction
June	4	.....	Election meeting
September	19 to 21	.....	ROYAL 97 ROYALE

MEETINGS and AUCTIONS are at Kerby Centre, 2nd floor, 1133 - 7 Ave SW at 730 pm. Auction lots should be in before 730 pm to allow viewing.

SUNDAY BOURSE is at Rosscarrock Community Hall, 4411 - 10 Ave SW, from 10 am to 4 pm. Details from Mirko Zatka at 547-1435.

CALTAPEX 96 is at Chinese Cultural Centre, 197 First Street SW.