

Extraordinary Stamps of 2008: the Sequel
by Alf Brooks

(with much material compiled and edited from Web sources)

First here, in part, is what Austria Post had to say: “The Willendorf Venus is Austria’s most famous and valuable find from the later Paleolithic age. A very special stamp has been created [issued in 2008] for this outstanding object. A three-dimensional effect makes the Venus appear particularly vividly. There is no doubt that this innovative lenticular image stamp is a further milestone in contemporary stamp design”.



The Venus sculpture was created 25,000 years ago. It was found in Willendorf in the Wachau. The figure, 11 cm high, made of fine limestone, is preserved almost intact. Shown is a corpulent, naked woman. Strong hips, prominent breasts and a full abdomen determine the striking appearance. The arms are only hinted at, the feet are missing. On weak shoulders sits a great head without a face, almost entirely decorated with a complicated series of locks of hair. Traces show that the sculpture was originally covered with red ochre.”

I am sure, as most look at the image, that “Venus” is not what comes to mind; here there is little resemblance to other Venuses we know: the armless statue from Milos, the Botticelli painting of Venus arising from the waves, various others from Renaissance painters. We will admit that these are idealized images of female beauty, but will insist that the Venus of Willendorf is not in the same league. “The nickname, urging a comparison to the classical image of ‘Venus,’ causes resistance in some modern analyses. According to Christopher Witcombe [a professor of Art History], ‘the ironic

identification of these figurines as ‘Venus’ pleasantly satisfied certain assumptions at the time about the primitive, about women, and about taste.’” But this Venus from a more primitive time is also an ideal.

“The Venus is not a realistic portrait but rather an idealization of the female figure. Her vulva, breasts, and swollen belly, are heavily pronounced, suggesting a strong connection to fertility.” Some speculate “that the figurines may have been created as self-portraits. Other theorists believe that the head, seen from a profile view,

while having no distinct facial features, appears to be looking down. The common physical characteristics of the Venus figures [a number of other similar figures have been found at Paleolithic sites] are: a thin upper torso, greatly exaggerated breasts, large buttocks and thighs, a large belly (possibly due to pregnancy), and oddly bent, short legs, that end with disproportionately small feet. Yet when thought of as a woman looking down at her own body, the physical features, in perspective, seem correct. There are striking similarities between such figurines and a pregnant woman when perceived from above.” Experts admit that they know little about the statue’s origin, method of creation, or cultural significance. “The purpose of the carving is subject to much speculation. The statue’s feet do not allow it to stand on its own. Due to this it has been speculated that it was



meant to be held, rather than simply looked at.”

A replica statue stands today at the site where the original was found; the original is displayed in the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna.

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The Buffalo



PUBLICATION OF THE
WINNIPEG PHILATELIC
SOCIETY

Western Canada's
Oldest Stamp Club
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Website: www.wps.mb.ca

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**WINNIPEG
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LIFE MEMBERSHIPS \$350.00

RENEWALS

Lapsed memberships or late renewals (paid after November 30th of each year) are charged a \$1.00 reinstatement fee. All new applicants must undergo a 60-day orientation before receiving full membership privileges. The Buffalo is published monthly except in July and August. Deadline for article submissions and advertising copy is the 15th of each month preceding the month of issue.

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COMPREHENSIVE USED BERMUDA
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Calendar of Events	
Mar 5	Meeting and auction
Mar 19	Presentation "A Visit to the Færoe Islands"
Mar 21	Spring Auction 10am Viewing 9am
Apr 2	Meeting and Auction
Apr 16	Presentation
May 7	Meeting and Auction

NB: The first meetings of each month are normally reserved for auctions. The second meetings of each month are reserved for formal programs.

Check out our WPS WEBSITE:
WWW.WPS.MB.CA
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LOT DESCRIPTION SHEETS
TALLY SHEETS
Meetings are held at
Scandinavian Cultural Center
764 Erin Street
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**Scandinavian Collectors Club
Of Manitoba
Meets 2nd & 4th Wednesdays
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Buffalo Advertising Rates
-1/10 page
(Approximately 2 1/4" x 2 3/4") @ \$30 pa

Members' Adlets

- up to 30 words
- (average of 5 characters per word)
- 1 issue—\$1.00
- 5 issues—\$2.00
- 10 issues—\$3.00

Members may place two adlets a year at no charge

Terms of Payment

- payable to Winnipeg Philatelic Society in a single payment at the time of the agreement.

**NOTICE
YOUTH CLUB MEETING**

The WPS Youth Club will be meeting on Saturdays at the usual place
St Luke's Anglican Church,
130 Nassau St N at Stradbrook
Winnipeg, MB
free parking available on
the north side.
Enter via North Side Entrance
Meeting from 1pm to 2:30pm
Meeting Dates Feb 7, Feb 21, Mar 7, Mar
21, Apr 4, Apr 18, May 9
For more information contact
Gerry Babij @ 736-4276 or
John Salmi @ 895-2781

**Winnipeg Art Gallery
Stamp Sale**
Thurs. April 2nd 11AM-8PM
Friday 3rd 11AM-5PM
Saturday 4th 11M-4PM

Editor Notes

Our annual Show is on May 1-3, and once again the call goes out for volunteers to take shifts (of two hours usually) to perform various duties to make the Show work. Compared to the many hours some devote (you know who they are) two hours of one's time is a pittance.

Stop calling for volunteers! At meetings we usually have 40-50 'active members' in attendance. If each of those signed on for a two hour shift the slots would be filled. Being a member of WPS means giving some of your time; it means that is your duty. But some reading this will continue to let others do the work while they actively watch. **Stop calling for volunteers!**

On February 2, 2009 the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications and the Danish Ministry of Transport announced their signing of the final agreement in the merger of Posten AB and Post Danmark A/S. "The new company provides us with increased competitiveness to meet increasing challenges on the messaging and logistics markets. It also ensures conditions favorable to maintaining first-class and competitive messaging and parcel services in both countries.... The prevailing economic situation brings with it reduced demand and less income. At the same time, wage trends mean increased costs.... Profitability was also squeezed by the high share of fixed costs.... Actions already planned and underway will produce more rapid results, and new actions have been identified, mainly on the cost side. It is estimated that the action program will have an overall positive impact on operating earnings of approximately SEK 1 billion during 2009. Our objective is to meet a changeable market with increased speed and flexibility. We are also prepared to take additional steps if the recession deepens.... This is an historic merger between two national postal companies." (President and CEO, Lars G Nordström, Posten AB)

A two-page article in Maclean's for January 26 is required reading for all WPS members interested in Canada Post and its service to Canadians (your local branch of the Library will have a copy). Here are some of the points it makes:

- Canada Post workers earn 16.9% more annually than comparable private sector employees.
- Canada Post will make up to \$100 million from this year's basic letter increase.
- Parcel mail and direct marketing have grown, contributing more than \$7.4 billion in annual revenue.
- Since 1981 Canada Post has operated under the Canada Post Corporation Act, which requires it to be financially "self-sustaining."
- For the past 13 years Canada Post has turned a profit.
- Catherine Swift, president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses: "Canada Post doesn't need to be

making big piles of money. It should be breaking even....I find it disgraceful that in the post office you can buy stationery and greeting cards. Either be a monopoly and provide narrow services...or compete with private companies. But you can't have it both ways."

- Distance-related pricing: Canada Post has changed the way it charges publishers to ship magazines and other periodicals. "The reality is, the farther an item has to move across Canada the more we have to handle it," says Steve Johnson, director of pricing strategy. "This is a much fairer representation of how customers consume resources."
- Mark Jamieson, CEO of Magazines Canada: "This is a unique nation with respect to its postal requirements. We have to view our postal delivery system as part of the cultural and social mechanism that helps keep us together....The geography of our country [is unique];...We must accommodate our people wherever they are."
- Deborah Morrison, publisher of *The Beaver*: "You're saying to the person in Brandon, Man., 'You're going to pay more than I'm charging someone in Toronto'.... Are you going to charge someone a different price to mail a letter based on where they live?...For Canada Post to suggest it has no cultural mandate is something Canadians need to pay attention to....[Mail delivery] is an essential service."
- Don Kummerfeld, president of the International Federation of the Periodical Press: Postal subsidies for magazines were introduced in Canada "to encourage literacy and help bind the nation so that everybody can read the same literature no matter where they are."

Thanks, Axel, for the heads up on this one.

Minutes of the Winnipeg Philatelic Society Feb. 19, 2009

Bill Pooley called the meeting to order at 7.45.

Judy Lipsey let it be known that we will again have a program for our show. It will be \$10.00 for a business card size ad.

Bill P. has volunteer sign up sheets and he will circulate them. Please be generous with your time when it comes around to you. We will need a lot of help to make the show a success.

Robert Zacharias announced that the big auction is on March 21 at 10.00 a.m. Viewing will begin at 9.00. This will be a members only auction. Please wear your name tags. Russ Thompson will take bids for absentee members. Not advertising the auction does have a negative effect in that non-members don't hear about the club.

In addition, Robert reminded us that there will be an exhibitors workshop on Sunday, Feb. 8 in the Finnish room of the SCC. Bring the material you were thinking of using in an exhibit.

Robert also told us about a new addition to the library, a donation from Rick Penko, the 2007 Scott classic.

Stamp Look-Alikes

Do you limit your stamp studies to just postage stamps or do you also include postal stationery, such as pre-stamped envelopes and postal cards? If you are preparing an exhibit on a single stamp or a certain series, having stationery “look-alikes” will add a bit of assortment to the exhibit.

Until the mid 1970's, postal stationery shared designs similar to the corresponding definitive series of the time. A quick look at the stationery section in the Unitrade catalogue shows that over the last decade or so, more and more envelopes and “postage paid” postal cards are being issued by Canada Post that use a design first issued as a postage stamp (either definitive or commemorative in nature).

In terms of pre-stamped envelopes, which are now valued at the current domestic letter rate, various postage stamp designs have appeared, sometimes many years after the postage stamp was last seen. As an example, Canada Post recently announced in the *Spring 2009 Collections* magazine that 18 new envelopes will be released March 9th that show several “old” stamp designs: Orchids (first seen in 1999), Gardens (2006), and Fishing Flies (1998 and 2005). I didn't realize how popular these pre-stamped envelopes were with the general public.

Pre-paid postal cards, that are good “for mailing in Canada and delivery worldwide”, are common sights in most post office outlets. As indicated on the cards, they are intended for international destinations, but could be found used domestically. With a \$1.69 ‘face value’, it certainly would be an expensive way of sending a card within Canada. They must be popular with tourists as several stamp issues each year now include postal cards that share the same design as their stamp counterpart. If you want to “go crazy”, take a look at the “Flag over Building” design (Unitrade UX120) and Maple Leaf design (UX142). Hundreds of different views can be found on each of these designs.

In just the past few months, Canada Post has issued two stamps *after* a corresponding piece of stationery was first issued! I can't recall that ever happening before. On October 6, 2008 a semi-postal stamp was issued for Mental Health. To the surprise of collectors, a non-denominated, pre-stamped window size 10 business envelope was used by the Canada Post Foundation for Mental Health *before* the stamp was issued.



Just a couple of weeks ago (February 12, 2009), a new \$1.18 ‘Sumi’ Olympic mascot definitive was released in coil and booklet format as well as part of a souvenir sheet (three different stamps). However, a pre-paid postal card with the same design was released a month earlier, on January 12.

I would encourage you to include these “stamp look-alikes” as part your collection, particularly if you can find them *properly* used.





UK Mail recently launched a program to attempt combat the trend away from letter mail with the increased use of email. The new service, imail, allows the user to send email to the sort center nearest to the letter's destination. There it will be printed, placed in an envelope, addressed and sorted. UK Mail promises that imail received by 6 PM will be delivered in the UK the next day. The service promises to reduce the cost of producing and posting first class mail by 60%

Louis Braille was born in 1809. This year France commemorates the 200th anniversary of his birth with a stamp issue. Another striking stamp, issued by An Post (Ireland) features an eye in black ink on a white background with the 55-cent denomination in



Braille. The sharp black and white contrast is intended to maximize vision for those with sight impairment.

Finland The winner of the popular vote for the Most Beautiful Stamp of the Year 2008 was Frosty Night, a stamp designed by Nina Rintala. The stamp depicts a snowflake, a star and the northern lights. It is believed to be the world's first translucent stamp.



Post Europ has awarded Magyar Posta (Hungary Post) the best design award for a 2008 Europa stamp. The winning 100f. stamp was part of a miniature sheet; it depicts the theme of letter writing in the



background in the form of a mailed letter as well as in the foreground with a script letter.

Dathlu Cymru (Celebrating Wales), issued in February, is Royal Mail's fourth and final miniature sheet in the series, The Four Countries of the UK. The sheet contains four stamps: Saint David, the floodlit National Assembly for Wales building and two Welsh dragons.



Last month we noted stamps issued to celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Darwin. Shown here are four stamps issued by US Post to commemorate the same anniversary of Abraham Lincoln. The two men were born on the same day, February 9, 1809.

USA The 42 cent stamps depict Lincoln as a rail-splitter, lawyer, politician and a president.



(Continued from page 3)

Sid Kroker reminded us of the Red River Bourse at the Best Western Charterhouse Hotel, Sun. Feb. 8, 10.00 to 5.00 p.m.

Thank you to Marjorie Hughes for the coffee and cookies. Bev Barr announced that there will be an exchange meeting for the WAG Volunteer Stamp Group on Sat. Feb. 21. It will be the last exchange meeting before the sale, and we will have the signup sheets for giving time at the sale. The sale will take place Thurs. April 2 from 11.00 to 8.00 p.m., Fri. 11-5.00 and Sat. 11.00 to 4.00.

Next meeting we will have a presentation from Peter Banman, Something completely different.

Adj. 8.08.

Draw: Jeanette Roytenberg, Bob Elias, Mike Bland, Jim Yurkowski.

Minutes of the Winnipeg Philatelic Society Feb. 19, 2009

Russ Thompson called the meeting to order at 7.45.

Russ thanked Bill Pooley for chairing our last meeting. And he also thanked Debbie Birch for filling in for Bev Barr tonight and selling tickets for the draw.

Russ let us know that Don Fraser will be retiring as membership secretary at the end of the year.

Robert Zacharias reminded us that the big auction is on March 21 at 10.00 a.m. Viewing will begin at 9.00. This will be a members only auction. Please wear your name tags. Russ Thompson will take bids for absentee members. Tonight is the last night for submitting material for the sale.

Al Wingate talked about the Winnipeg Business Act, which is to be amended, but not for some months yet. A number of members of the WPS met with some city officials to present our side as to why the new act was deficient. Hopefully by the fall auction the changes will be in effect and we can have non-members participate in the big auctions once again.

Al also gave us some unfortunate news about the show. Due to the economic situation, Safe of Thunderbay will not be coming. A double table has now become available.

Michael Zacharias will make badges for anyone who needs one. Please let him know. Also he will be collecting the fees for anyone wishing to buy space in the show program. It is \$10.00 for a business card size ad.

Adj. 7.53

Draw: Fred Ostapchuk, Stefan Lahowy, Al Wingate, Eugene Lahowy.

And our presentation tonight: Peter Banman, Something completely different.

Judy Lipsey

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(ADD A ONE-TIME \$2.00 ADMISSION FEE)
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MEMBER WHO WOULD LIKE TO JOIN OUR CLUB, PLEASE
PASS THIS APPLICATION FORM ON TO THEM. WE WILL
SUPPLY YOU WITH A REPLACEMENT BUFFALO.

THANK YOU!
WELLCOME!!



Member Reminders

**MANITOBA ANTIQUES AND
COLLECTIBLES SHOW**

Sunday March 22. 10:00am to 4:00pm
Admission is \$4.00

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