

A PHILATELIC PHIDDLE

By ALF BROOKS

We all know why we collect stamps; each of us has a particular, perhaps a unique, reason, a particular way to enjoy our hobby. Why did the late George Inch accumulate thousands of postage stamps? Not to study them for varieties or to find distinctive postmarks, not to mount in albums or trade with others. Here is what he wrote in a 1960 article:

"Picture-making with used postage stamps is a most fascinating hobby. The possibilities in the unique art of stamp montage are almost as unlimited as the brushwork of an artist. Indeed, stamp pictures can have an almost three dimensional effect which is quite striking. With quite a small outlay for materials even a beginner (with patience) can obtain delightful results."

"There are 75 different shades of colour used in the printing of postage stamps, which provide all the variety of colour blending needed for landscape, floral and contemporary pictures; and for unlimited scope in the decoration of vases and trays."

He sorted stamps into groups of colours and shades. In the article he outlines how he made a picture of a country cottage. Some details:

- From green portrait stamps he cut out the hair and used it for foliage.
- "The cottage roof was made up of cuttings from 2½d. British red or 3½d. Australian stamps."
- For a thatched roof he used medium

brown stamps, for the walls light brown from faces.

- "For windows use the light blue from 5c. Canada Queens."
- Many stamps picture flowers, ready-made for the cottage garden.

Some pictures he covered with glass, but found that details showed better if he did not use glass but coated the picture with two layers of clear gum.

But what about the phiddle? A few months ago Axel sent me a clipping from the August 1990 "Philatelic Exporter" that told of a purchase at auction by Stanley Gibbons for £125 of a violin made from cardboard and approximately 12,000 twopenny blue Wildings. I contacted Ben Wildgoose, an account manager with Stanley Gibbons; he sent me the article written by George Inch and a picture of George, the phiddle and some pictures he had created.

Where is the phiddle now? If you are in London, being the keen philatelist that you are, you will be sure to visit Stanley Gibbons at 399 The Strand. And you will find the phiddle; as Ben wrote to me recently, "Yep this old fiddle sits on the shelves above the GB team's desks."

Say hello to Ben for me.

(My thanks to Axel Olsson for getting me started on this, and to Ben Wildgoose for his great help).



Above:
George Inch and some of
his creations
Below:
Ben Wildgoose and the
phiddle

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Western Canada's Oldest Stamp Club
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Lapsed memberships or late renewals (paid after September 30th of each year) are charged a \$1.00 reinstatement fee.

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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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COMING EVENTS

Doors Open 6:00 p.m. - Business Mtg. 8:00 p.m.
1st & 3rd Thursdays (except Jul. & Aug.).
Visitors always welcome.
Main Floor, Deaf Centre Manitoba, located
at the corner of 285 Pembina Hwy. & Nassau St.

2007

Jan. 04	- Business Meeting
	- Auction
Jan. 18	- Business Meeting
	- Presentation
Feb. 01	- Business Meeting
	- Auction
Feb. 15	- Business Meeting
	- Presentation
Mar. 01	- Business Meeting
	- Auction
Mar. 15	- Business Meeting
	- Presentation
April 05	- Business Meeting
	- Auction
April 19	- Business Meeting
	- Presentation

The first meetings of each month reserved for Auctions.

The second meetings of each month reserved for formal programs.

MEMBERS' ADLETS

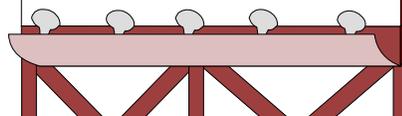
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-up to 30 words [counting an average of 5
characters per word]:

1 issue -	\$1.00
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TERMS OF PAYMENT

-payable to Winnipeg Philatelic Society
in one sum at time of agreement.

NEW DIE CUT ON 51¢ & 89¢ FLOWER COILS

BY ROBIN HARRIS

When initially released on December 19, 2005, the 51¢, 89¢, \$1.05, and \$1.49 Flower coils (Sc. 2128-2131) had a serpentine die cut of approximately 8. I say "approximately" because the serpentine die cutting is not consistent across the full printing press. In fact, even across a single stamp the peaks and valleys will vary both in depth and width. It is as if a piece of metal was made into an accordion and then stretched by hand with no apparent effort to precision.

The 2006/1 Quarterly Pack issued by Canada Post in April 2006 includes single copies of each of these four Flower coil stamps. Each is die cut to shape (i.e. the stamp and backing paper are one complete die cut unit - no multiples are possible) with a gauge of approximately 7. The Quarterly Pack and the 2006 Annual Collection are the only places that these four stamps are available (Unitrade 2128iii - 2131iii) with this gauge. It is highly unlikely that used copies exist - if they do they would have been philatelically inspired.

Lets jump forward to about late August. In Eastern Canada examples of the 51¢ Flower coil began appearing with a new gauge of approximately 8 ½ to 9. The 89¢ Flower coil appeared with this new gauge in early November, again, only in Eastern Canada. As of this writing (December 26), this new gauge has still only been seen from Eastern Canada. With the 51¢ value already replaced by the new Permanent stamp, and the 89¢ value to be obsolete in less than a month, both of these new varieties may not ever appear in Western Canada post offices. As such, they could be the "sleeper" in this series of stamps.

How can you tell if you are seeing the new die cut? A bit of a background. All Lowe-Martin printed coils are distributed to post offices in boxes, each containing 10 rolls. On the end of the box is a white label that includes the Canada Post product number, a barcode, and a date when the box was assembled (or the stamps were printed?). The die cut, although not seen until late August, appeared with boxes dated after July 1st. So, if you find a box with a July (or later) date, then you are most likely looking at the new variety. I (and others) have been to many, many post offices in Western Canada in search of this new die cut variety - but none have been found. If you find any, please contact me ASAP (204-268-9395 or rharris@adminware.ca).

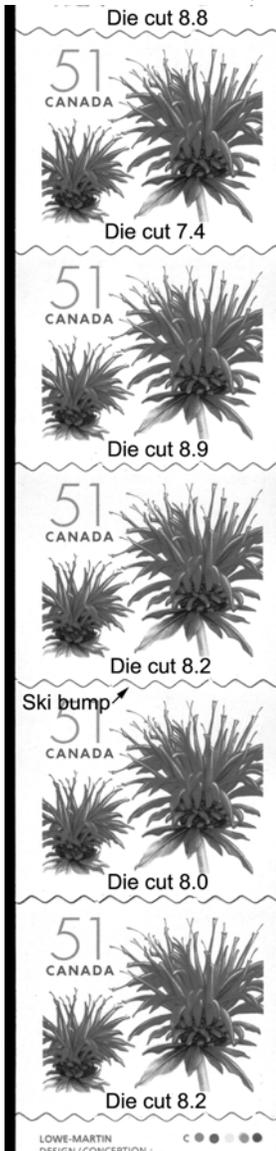
Will this new die cut appear on the \$1.05 and \$1.49 Flower coils? It is possible, but only if the current supply is running low. Remember, new stamps were released December 19 that will replace these values effective January 16, 2007, so it is unlikely that these two values will be found with the new die cut.

Another item of note is on these new 51¢ and 89¢ die cut stamps. In a roll of stamps there are 11 die cutting strips between each gutter (that gives us 10 stamps) that repeat themselves for the length of the roll. The evidence tells us that 10 of these die cut strips were replaced with the new gauge of 8 ½ to 9 (9 ½ to 10 ½ peaks) while one of the die cut strips was not replaced! That is, this one strip is still the gauge of 7.4 (9 peaks). A strip of four stamps, with this anomaly in the middle, is a nice addition to one's collection.

The Unitrade catalogue lists a constant die cut variety - the "ski slope" - on the previous set of Flower coils (50¢, 85¢, \$1.45) (this was found between the third and fourth stamps above the gutter from the first column of stamps). A similar type of variety appears on the new die cutting on the 51¢ and 89¢ stamps. The "slope" is not as steep and deep as on the previous variety so it has been dubbed the "ski bump". It is found between the second and third stamps above the gutter from the first column of stamps on the 51¢ value. Surprisingly, and more study is required, on the 89¢ value the die cutting is inverted compared to the 51¢ value. We know this because the "ski bump" flaw is found between the eighth and ninth stamps above the gutter from the tenth column of stamps!

By the way, the new Permanent coil stamp is using the identical die cutting as that used on the 89¢ value (i.e. the "inverted" die cutting compared to the 51¢ value). Again, we know this because the "ski bump" variety exists on the Permanent coil stamp as well! If you go to your local post office looking for this variety, be aware that the Permanent coil has already been released with a completely new set of die cutting (the new die cutting is about 8.2 on nearly all stamps).

[As an aside, there are many other paper and inscription varieties on the 51¢, 89¢, \$1.05 and \$1.49 Flower coil stamps - but that is another story.]





EDITOR NOTES

BY ALF BROOKS

Not mine this time, but from the "Zeds."

Exhibition Workshop

There will be an exhibiting workshop on Sunday, January 21, from 1:00-4:00 PM It will be held in the Norwegian Room at the Scandinavian Cultural Centre, 764 Erin Street. If you are interested in exhibiting, and would like some help in putting an exhibit together, you are welcome to attend. Please bring along your material, tongs, and some blank Vario pages or stock sheets.

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Stamp Sale

The next Winnipeg Art Gallery stamp sale will only be three days long this year. It will take place on April 12 (including the evening), 13 and 14.

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Auction

The next semi-annual auction will be held at the Deaf Centre on Saturday, March 17. Viewing will start at 9:00 AM, and the auction will start at 10:00 AM. Lots are now being accepted. The limit is ten lots per person. Each lot must have a minimum bid of \$2.00.

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Charity Auction

The charity auction went quite well; we didn't beat last year's total but nonetheless were quite successful. We received just under \$735 so it was topped of to that amount. The money was divided evenly between three charities: Union Gospel Mission, Siloam Mission, and Osborne House shelter for battered women all received \$245 each. The baking always sells very well and bargains can definitely be found. Thank you to all who participated by either bringing down some goods to auction off as well as those who bid and purchased items. (Last years total was \$825).

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ANSWER TO SPOT THE VARIETIES 29





BUFFALO CHIPS

BY ALF BROOKS



The "Austrian Stamp and Coin Dealers Association" (Österreichischer Briefmarken- und Münzenhändler-Verband - Ö.B.M.H.V.) celebrated its 100th anniversary last year. For decades the Austrian Stamp Dealers Association's emblems have been various versions of the Austrian Merkur newspaper stamps. Austria Post issued a stamp in 2006 to honour the Association, picturing the "Zinnoberroten Merkur" (Vermilion Merkur), the rarest of Austrian stamps.



- 50p Thomas Clarkson
- 72p Hannah More
- 72p Ignatius Sancho



Royal Mail will be commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Slave Trade Act 1807 with six stamps due to be issued on 22 March. The passing of the act meant the abolition of the slave trade, an issue which has recently been in the news following Prime Minister Tony Blair's apology for Britain's involvement in slavery. The six stamps feature the following individuals:

- 1st William Wilberforce
- 1st Olaudah Equiano
- 50p Granville Sharp



2007 PREVIEW





Dear Phil,
 Once again an article in the philatelic press touts Unitrade numbers 85 and 86 as the first Christmas stamps. When will they learn? Sure, it's nice to think that our country,

Canada, had this "first", but those who believe this ignore some facts:

1. The stamps were issued "to mark the advent of penny postage throughout the British Empire" (two cents in Canada, given the exchange rate, Canadian dollar to pound sterling). That was their purpose.



2. Yes, as an after thought, "Xmas 1898" was engraved on each stamp; they were issued on December 7. Xmas? I have heard many Christians take exception to that, saying it should be "Christmas." The argument that the "X" is a cross and is thus no problem is a crock. I am sure that the Canadian post office would have agreed with that point.

What was the first Christmas stamp?

- Tired of this

Dear Tired,
 This is one in which I refuse to become involved. However, why not check out the two stamps issued by Austria on December 12, 1937; they picture a bouquet of roses and signs of the Zodiac.
 Phil



Winnipeg Philatelic Society Stamp Auction

Saturday, March 17, 2007

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Viewing of Lots: 9:00 a.m.

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