

O.S.S.C.

# Owen Sound Stamp Club

Owen Sound

## Philatelic Owen Sound Times

Next Club Meeting: September 15<sup>th</sup>

September 2004

At the upcoming meeting on Sept. 15th. we will be having a slide show on “Perforations” by R.A. Johnson from the RPSC collection. I have had a quick look through the program and, as with previous shows, there is a great deal of very interesting material here.

These days, perforations are such a familiar part of a stamp’s description along with colour, watermark and (perhaps) tagging that it is easy to forget that this was not always the case. Mr. Johnson points out that it was the French who were first to pay attention to the matter of a stamp’s perforation and quotes from *The Stamp Collector Magazine* of August 1866 in which the French are mocked for their concern at the “number of holes made by a perforating machine”.

Even 50 years later, the nature of perforations was considered by some philatelists to be of very minor importance but, by then, many had found the perforation gauge to be an essential tool for distinguishing different printings of long-running definitives.

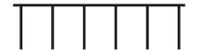
Most of Mr. Johnson’s show concentrates on showing how to identify the different types of machine used to perforate stamps. Just as a

reminder of the terminology used, there are three basic types of perforating machines:

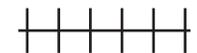
- **Line perforation** where all horizontal lines on a sheet are done in one pass, and the vertical ones in another. The perforating pins can be on a flat bed or rotating drum. The holes at or near the corners are unlikely to coincide.
- **Comb perforation** where three sides of a stamp are perforated at a time. The perforating pattern could be in the form of a series of T’s or H’s spanning the sheet. The combs were also made as doubles to do two rows at once.
- Thirdly, there were the **Harrow** or **platen** machines that did an entire sheet at a time.

How to tell which of these machines was used on any particular stamp? Come along to the meeting this Wednesday and all will be explained.

Bob Watson



‘T’ style



‘H’ style



‘double T’ style



‘double H’ style

### Curiosity #4 ...

A little while ago someone who claimed to know little about stamps asked on the Internet whether there was anything unusual about this stamp he said he had bought at his local post office.

While there can be no special value attached to a 45¢ commemorative made up to 46¢ by adding a 1¢ stamp, it does conjure up an interesting picture of a postal clerk somewhere in early 1999 wondering what to do with a load of surplus booklets of 45¢ stamps. A then just happening to notice that the also old 1¢ Blueberry stamp would just nicely fit on the selvage. And then, in between customers, sticking strips of 12



of the penny stamps into the booklets to make a stock of 46¢ booklets.

As I don’t have neither a booklet of the 1998 “Fishing Flies” nor a strip of twelve blueberries, I cannot test the fit myself – though the perforations fit according to Unitrade.

I am suspicious about his picture though. When asked about those lines through the denominations, the writer claimed he had put them in because people seemed to do that on the Internet. As far as I know, only postal authorities ever bother to do that and why put those lines in different directions? Hmmm!

## Have Postal Authorities No Shame???

Collectors have been accusing Postal Authorities of taking advantage of their habit for at least 100 years (remember the QV Jubilee set with a face value of about \$16 – equivalent to some \$400 today?).

Of course everyone knows about those unscrupulous “sand-dune” states that issue hundreds of new commemoratives each year of which few, if any, are ever to be seen in a post office.

More recently, Australia made a great hoopla about issuing stamps depicting Australian winners of Olympic gold medals simultaneously in all six states within hours of the results being published. Great work – except that collectors became nervous wrecks trying to collect FDCs from each state.

Now New Zealand has come under fire for some rather dubious practices including:

- the production of Limited Edition miniature sheets sold at significantly more than their face value
- the production of Special Edition miniature sheets which were given free to subscription holders who spent more than \$150 per year. (Note that the year collection was priced

at \$90-100 leaving \$50 for FDCs etc.)

- offering a package comprising a Unique Edition miniature sheet (face value of \$6.20) along with a \$40 phone card for a mere \$115.

Meanwhile, on a lighter note, just before the USPS was due to announce its 2005 stamp program, someone suggested the following probable candidates:

- Classic American Doorknobs: a special sheet of 20 doorknobs that just say “America!”
- Graffiti: special sheet with five different designs of urban graffiti
- Calvin R. Dinklemeyer: no one knows who he was and still won’t after this stamp.
- Centenary of 1905: It’s been 100 years!
- Snowglobe definitive stamp (Americana series).
- Pigeon (Wildlife series)
- Lewis & Clark: Special overpriced prestige booklet to commemorate their return home.

## And in Case you were Wondering ...

*At the past couple of meetings, there has been some discussion on the matter of re-using postage stamps that have escaped cancellation. The following notes (I hope) summarise the main points raised and include some “official” responses to enquiries made by OSSC member, Peter Broadfield.*

It seems to me that when considering this question, there are a number of aspects that need to be covered:

- The moral aspects of reusing stamps.
- The legal aspects of reusing stamps.
- Definition of a “used stamp”
- The possibilities of detection.

The morality of re-using postage stamps is a personal matter that can be justified or condemned according to one’s view of society and the universe. So, moving right along...

Legally, the matter of re-using postage stamps might be covered explicitly – as in the US where it is expressly forbidden in their postal act. Alternatively, it seems to me that it could be included under more general fraud legislation on the grounds that a service has been sought for which the customer has attempted to indicate payment has been made when, actually, no such payment was received by the service provider.

So then we come to the question of determining whether a stamp has been used or not.

From the philatelic point of view, “proof of use” of a stamp is generally considered to be a valid post-office cancellation while proof of non-use is the absence of such a mark along with original gum on the back. This leaves those stamps without cancellation or gum in the limbo of “mint-no gum” and those with an invalid cancellation (eg. pen or ballpoint) as something for the specialist to mull over.

From the Post Office’s point of view, “proof of use” would likely be any defacement of the stamp. But, if there is no such defacement, does it signify that the stamp has not been used and is thus valid for postage? Common sense and general

experience says that the absence of a postmark doesn’t mean that a stamp hasn’t been used but, if it is not marked, there is no way to differentiate it from one removed (quite legitimately) from an unmailed envelope. That’s what cancels are all about.

According to Lynn Fenton of Customer Service, Canada Post, stamps that have already been used are identified by scanning with a “Black Light” during the sorting process. She did not say what the “Black Light” is looking for and the letter sounded very much like a “Trust me... we can tell... so don’t do it!”. While, perhaps, not totally convincing, at least it was better than two other replies from CP’s Customer Service who suggested contacting a stamp dealer for their advice.

So, the next point is: Is It Worth It?

There are probably not many people in Canada who would go to the trouble of soaking a single skipped 49¢ stamp to stick onto a fresh letter. However, there are dealers that are able to acquire large quantities of skipped stamps and sell them at 25% face value. With cheap labour to stick them on, it could well be worthwhile.

According to Charles Verge of the RPSC, as far as Canada Post is concerned, selling uncanceled stamps in quantity might be viewed with some suspicion, but no action would likely be taken so long as there was no reference to “glue” or “save on postage” – that would be considered “incitement to fraud” by the seller and “intent to defraud” by the buyer.

Of course, this question would not arise if every letter going through the mail was properly cancelled. Perhaps the best solution would be a hidden cancellation that only the post offices could detect. Then the general public would never know if their used stamps had been skipped or not and would play safe by only using unused ones!

Precancels ...



An early style of precancel from late 1800s



"City" precancels were introduced in 1903



Inverted "City" precancel (printed in Montreal?)



Three bar generic precancel first used in 1922



Three numeral precancels



Red precancel

Precancels are an often misunderstood area of philately and seem to be considered somehow inferior to standard cancelled stamps. In fact, all a precancel signifies is that the stamp originated from a larger business or institution rather than a private individual in much the same way that a perfin did/does. Of course, it has to be admitted that the precancel does tend to dominate the stamp compared with a neat date circle or even wavy line but it certainly indicates legitimate postal use.

To start with some definitions:

A **Precancelled** stamp is one that has been cancelled by the Postal Authority before being stuck on an envelope and put into the mail stream. Precancelled stamps were only available to corporate customers and were intended to speed up the mail by eliminating the need to cancel in the post office as part of the sorting process. Typically used for newspapers and bulk mailings.

A **Cancelled-To-Order** (CTO) stamp is one that has been cancelled by the issuing Postal Authority eliminating its postal validity. CTOs are designed for collectors and are typically applied to official first day covers and/or souvenir sheets at a significant post office.

A **Favour** cancelled stamp is one where the customer asks a post office to cancel a stamp (eliminating postal validity) and then takes it back. Like CTOs, favour cancels are primarily for collectors and typically used on self designed covers marking a date or location not available with a CTO.

The first Canadian precancels were introduced in 1889 and consisted of straight or wavy lines printed across the stamp using a rubber roller.

In 1903 the style was modified to include the name of the originating city above two or more horizontal bars with the province below.

A standardised bar type was introduced in 1922 comprising three pairs of horizontal lines.

In 1931 larger Post Offices began to identify their precancels with a four digit number corresponding with the accounting number assigned to the originating Post Office.

Precancels continued to be used until 1980 by which time the increased use of meters and mechanised sorting machinery had obviated their need.

All Canadian precancels were printed in black except one example which was in red.

Many countries have issued precancels including the US, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, France, Tunisia, Algeria, and Monaco. Outside Canada and the US, most precancels were used for newspapers.

Unitrade have published three books on Canadian precancels:

*The Standard Canada Precancel Catalogue – 5th Ed.*, H.G. Walburn (Ed.), 2004; \$12.95.

*The Canada Precancel Book* by H.G. Walburn, 184pp., \$16.95

*Canada Constant Precancel Varieties* by Hans Reiche, 106 pp., \$10.95

Some of the more common numeral cancels:

**Quebec**

- 0592 - Lennoxville
- 0700 - Montreal
- 1050 - Quebec
- 1142 - Rock Island
- 1470 - Saint Hyacinthe
- 1810 - Sherbrooke

**Ontario**

- 2186 - Beamsville
- 2310 - Brantford
- 2342 - Brockville
- 2450 - Carleton Place
- 2575 - Cobourg
- 2980 - Galt
- 3080 - Guelph
- 3100 - Hamilton
- 3340 - Kingston
- 3366 - Kitchener
- 3445 - Lindsay
- 3470 - London
- 3800 - Niagara Falls
- 3893 - Oshawa
- 3900 - Ottawa
- 3975 - Owen Sound
- 4004 - Paris
- 4035 - Peterborough
- 4260 - Saint Thomas
- 4530 - Toronto
- 4900 - Weston
- 4940 - Windsor
- 4970 - Woodstock

**Manitoba**

- 5099 - Brandon
- 5850 - Winnipeg

**Saskatchewan**

- 7120 - Moose Jaw
- 7420 - Regina
- 7550 - Saskatoon
- 7977 - Yorktown

**Alberta**

- 8160 - Calgary
- 8360 - Edmonton
- 8605 - Lethbridge
- 8802 - Red Deer

**British Columbia**

- 9500 - New Westminster
- 9780 - Vancouver
- 9890 - Victoria

**Next Meeting ... Wed. Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm**

We will be having an RPSC slide show on "Perforations".  
Bring along your trading books too.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Sept. 18 (Sat.):** North Toronto Stamp Club Show at Civic Garden Centre, Edwards Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. East at Leslie St., **Toronto**. 18 dealers, free admission. Hours: 10.00-4.00.

**Sept. 18 (Sat.):** The Burloak Stamp Fair will be held at the Burlington Seniors Centre, 2285 New St. (near Guelph Line), **Burlington**. 6-9 dealers, free admission. Hours: 9.00-3.00.

**Sept.25 (Sat.):** The Milton Stamp Club will be holding a Stamp Fair at the Milton Seniors Activity Centre, 500 Childs Dr., **Milton**. Free admission. Hours: 10.00-5.00.

**Sept.25 (Sat.):** The Sarnia Stamp Club will be sponsoring LAMPEX 2004 at Point Edward Arena, 210 Monk St., **Sarnia**. Free admission, free parking. 10 Dealers, displays.. Hours: 9:30-4:30.

**Sept.25 (Sat.):** Roy's Stamps is sponsoring a Stamp Show at Holiday Inn, Niagara Room (Lake Street at QEW). Free admission and free parking. Hours: 10.00-4.00.

**Oct. 3 (Sun.):** The GRVPA & GTAPA are sponsoring their 10th Annual Club Fair at Archdekin Recreation Centre, 292 Conestoga Dr., **Bramalea**. Club circuit books, youth tables etc. No dealers. Hours: 10.00-4.30.

**Oct. 15-17 (Fri-Sun):** The Canadian Stamp Dealers' Association and the Greater Toronto Area Philatelic Alliance are sponsoring FALL STAMPEX 04 at Queen Elizabeth Building, Exhibition Place, **Toronto**. Exhibits, seminars, and a large dealer bourse with dealers from Canada and the United States. Free admission and free door prize draws for both kids and adults. Hours: Fri. 11.00-6.00; Sat 10.00-6.00; Sun. 11.00-4.00.

**Oct. 16 (Sat.):** The Guelph Stamp Club is sponsoring GUELPHPEX 2004 at Evergreen Senior Ctr., 683 Woolwich St., **Guelph**. Hours: 10.00-4.00.

**Stamp on the Envelope ...**

Marking the centenary of the Canadian Open golf tournament, Canada Post has issued a pair of stamps based on photos then (1930's, anyway) and now. The stamps are the same diameter as a standard golf ball (42.67mm). The FDC cancel is an outline of a driver and putter.

<i>Title:</i>	"1930's Tournament" & "Modern Tournament"	<i>Print.:</i>	Lowe-Martin & Choquet Engraving Inc.
<i>Issue date:</i>	12 August, 2004	<i>Process:</i>	8 colour lithography, + foil, + embossing
<i>Denom:</i>	49¢ (both)	<i>Paper:</i>	Fasson
<i>Layout:</i>	Panc of 8 stamps (2x4) in folder	<i>Gum:</i>	Pressure Sensitive
<i>Des.:</i>	q30 Design Inc.	<i>Size:</i>	43mm dia.
<i>Artwork:</i>		<i>Perf.:</i>	Kiss cut - simulated perf.
<i>Phot.:</i>	[Various]	<i>No.</i>	6,000,000

**OWEN SOUND STAMP CLUB**

**Chapter 191**

**Royal Philatelic Society of Canada**

[www3.sympatico.ca/rhwatson/stampclub](http://www3.sympatico.ca/rhwatson/stampclub)

The Owen Sound Stamp Club meets at 7:00pm on the third Wednesday of each month in the basement of St. George's Anglican Church (on the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> St. E. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. E.). The main business of the evening is typically to trade, buy, and sell stamps and philatelic material. An auction is held at 8:00pm.

There are presently about 30 active members whose interests cover just about everything at all levels from beginner to expert. New members are always most welcome.

Annual Membership fees: Full: \$10; Family: \$15; Junior: Free. In addition, all members and visitors are asked to contribute \$1 each meeting which is passed directly to St. Georges's Church in appreciation for allowing us to use their room.

The OSSC Newsletter is distributed monthly to members of the Owen Sound Stamp Club. Opinions expressed by contributors to this newsletter are those of the named author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Owen Sound Stamp Club (nor of the editor).

Contributions are always most welcome. If any reader has news, information, opinions, or announcements that might be of interest to the OSSC membership, please contact the editor.

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