



North York Coin Club

Founded 1960

MONTHLY MEETINGS 4TH Tuesday 7:30 P.M. AT
Edithvale Community Centre, 7 Edithvale Drive, North York

MAIL ADDRESS: NORTH YORK COIN CLUB, P.O.BOX 10005
R.P.O. Yonge & Finch, 5576 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, M2N 0B6

Contact the Club :

E-mail: The_Club@sympatico.ca
Phone: 416.945.9299

Member :

Canadian Numismatic Association
Ontario Numismatic Association

PresidentNick Cowan
1st Vice PresidentBill O'Brien
2nd Vice President.....Open
SecretaryPaul Petch
TreasurerLen Kuenzig
Past PresidentRobert Wilson

Executive Committee

DirectorTony Hine
DirectorRoger Fox
DirectorVince Chiappino
Junior DirectorOpen
AuctioneerBob Porter
Auction ManagerMark Argentino
Co-EditorsPaul Petch/Tony Hine

ReceptionistAlbert Kasman
Draw PrizesBill O'Brien
Social ConvenorBill O'Brien
LibrarianRobert Wilson
Program PlanningPaul Johnson,
Paul Petch, John Regitko

THE BULLETIN FOR MAY 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello again fellow Members;

Alas, we are coming to the end of another collecting season, only May and June left on our schedule.

I would like to bring up a matter that is causing some concern among our membership **and that is the amount and the duration of disruptions that are taking place during our meetings.**

We are constantly having members talk, even while another member is making a presentation and while we are having general discussions relative to Club business. Therefore, I am requesting that we have absolutely no interruptions during a Member / Guest presentation. If we are going to have a lengthy presentation, then I would suggest we take a 5-minute break in the middle, and then resume the presentation, with the Q & A's to come directly afterwards.

Members, this is not good for the Club, and certainly not good for our visitors, guests or potential members.

I am trying not to "rule" with a heavy hand, as I do not believe that is a good form of management. However, these disruptions must cease if we are to have any decorum at all in our meetings. To that end, I will ask you to please consider your fellow members and respect their time on the floor and to appreciate the fact that all of us want to have a fun, interesting and enjoyable evening.

Now the 50 / 50 draw that we held for the last couple of meetings, did raise our revenues, however, bad management of the draw caused us to give out more to the win-

NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY, MAY 22

We start gathering at 7:00 p.m. with meeting start scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

Our guest speaker will be Henry Nienhuis, a new club member. His talk on *Common Canadian Coin Errors and their Causes* will highlight the steps in the minting process and categorizing errors and varieties, with specific examples of errors and their cause, viewing of examples and time for questions and answers.

Please Don't Forget: *We need some donations to our supply of draw prize material, and please bring some numismatic material for the auction.*

ner than we should have. (Well, at least it stayed in the Club).

A 50 / 50 draw only works this way:

After the sale of draw tickets has ended, the Club takes 1/2 of these funds as general revenue. This is the money that has always been collected from draw ticket sales. Then the balance, which is the 50 / 50 fund, is again divided into two parts, 50% being available for the cash prize and the other 50% for the Club.

The FIRST ticket of our lucky draw is the 50 / 50 winner: That ticket goes back into the pot, so it is still eligible for the other draw prizes.

This is the way it is done at other clubs and social events, so there is no reason that it will not work well at our meetings. I apologize to you for my error in not keeping a better eye on this; it is my responsibility to make sure your money is handled correctly. The only good part about this is that no money was lost or spent incorrectly, the members who won were the ones who benefited, not the Club.

I think that this is enough ranting for now. See you at the May meeting.

Nick

COMING EVENTS

JUNE 10, Brantford 46th Annual Brantford Numismatic Society Coin Show, Woodman Community Centre, 491 Grey St. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. *Free admission, free parking. 35 dealers at 65 tables.*

Displays of Canadian coins, tokens, paper money, trade dollars, CTC coupons. Contact Brantford Numismatic Society, PO Box 28071 North Park Plaza, Brantford, ON N3R 7K5 or Ed Anstett, 519-759-3688, edanstett@rogers.com.

JUNE 16 - 17, Toronto UKRAINEPEX 2007, Ukrainian Canadian Art Foundation, 2118-A Bloor Street West. Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. both days. *There will be no admission fee, but donations to support the exhibition are always appreciated.*

Competitive and non-competitive exhibits in all areas of Ukraine collectibles, bourse, free appraisals. Sponsor/Affiliate: Ukrainian Collectibles Society (Toronto) in conjunction with the international Ukrainian Philatelic and Numismatic Society (UPNS). For more information, contact W. Sokoluk, ucs.to@hotmail.com.

Web site: <http://www.upns.org/ukrainepex.htm>.

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Meeting News of the April 2007 meeting

The 524th meeting of the North York Coin Club was held on April 24, 2007 at the Edithvale Community Centre, North York, Ontario. There are no details of this meeting available for publication at this time.

COMING EVENTS

Continued from page 1...

JUNE 23 - 24, 2007, Toronto TOREX, Radisson Admiral Hotel, 249 Queen's Quay West, Admiral's Ballroom. Hours: Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission \$6. For more information, contact Brian Smith, 416-861-9523. Web site: <http://www.torex.net>.

JULY 11 - 15, Niagara Falls Canadian Numismatic Association Annual Convention, Sheraton Fallsview Hotel. Hours: Fri. 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. *Educational symposium, CNA general meeting, hospitality suite, awards banquet, Royal Canadian Mint reception, tours, bourse, auction by C&P Numismatic Auctions, junior collectors' forum and auction, meetings of Coin Error Enthusiasts, Newfoundland Enthusiasts, Canadian Association of Token Collectors, Medallist Art Society of Canada, Canadian Tire Corporation Coupon Collectors Club, Canadian Association of Wooden Money Collectors, Canadian Paper Money Society of Canada and more.* Web site: <http://www.canadian-numismatic.org>.

AUG. 26, Woodstock Woodstock Coin Club Annual Show, South Gate Centre, 191 Old Wellington St. S. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free parking. \$1 admission includes draws for hourly door prizes; kids are free. *Buy, sell, evaluate coins and paper money. Celebrating our 50th anniversary.* For more information, contact Tom Rogers, 41 Masefield Cres., London, ON N5V 1M9, or 519-451-2316.

SEPT. 16, London 15th Annual Coin Show, The Ramada Inn, 817 Exeter Rd.. Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission \$1; children free. *Door prizes, displays.* For more information, contact Len Buth, 519-641-4353, lbuth@webmanager.on.ca.

A HISTORY OF WOODEN COINS IN CANADA

Perhaps it is a little late for an April Fools article, but here is a clever piece that was making the rounds when the time was right...

**Wood You Believe Canada Once Used
Wooden Coins?**

In early Canada, wooden coins like these were quite common, and much lighter for heavily-burdened fur traders.



UPPER CANADA — The world often makes fun of Canadian money, and why not, the colourful currency is reminiscent of the silly paper tender associated with a popular board game. But Canada's funny money wasn't always such. Interestingly enough, before Canada established a negotiable printed tender, they used wooden money to assist trade in their fledgling Northern nation.

Early Canadian traders, burdened with cumbersome animal pelts, horns, and ivories, were unable to trade efficiently because their sleds, canoes, and portage carts were always weighed down with their heavy trade items. They needed a monetary solution that would make their trekking slightly less harsh.

The first wooden coins were bulky and awkward, up to 12-inches thick and seven feet in diameter, made from the sawed cross-sections of maple trees, and etched with rough caricatures of the King of England on one side and a beaver on the other. These crude national symbols of money were bulky, but still much lighter than a rack of damp bearskins.

Unfortunately, the first generation of wooden coins was easy to counterfeit. Bandits, thieves, and crooked lumberjacks could reproduce the money using common saws, crude wood burning irons, and simple chiseling tools. In fact, several counterfeit rings were broken up when several illicit moneymaking sawmills were discovered outside Fort Langley in 1849. The term "counterfeit ring" referred to the altering of rings in the layers of the wood.

Next came the hand-carved tokens, which were used until the mid 1800's. These were often made of cedar, lighter than the maple slabs, and more manageable for busy fur traders on the go. Denominations were made in five and ten

cent amounts, which was, like now, a lot of money back then.

These coins were discontinued as they had a tendency to wear out, or they would be used inappropriately in salmon smoking processes. For two years, Members of The First Nations Bank refused to accept the cedar money, and tried to persuade government that strands of beads would be a more efficient form of legal tender.

Later on came the "hard" currency, wooden coins made of ash, oak, and petrified fir. These were the first coins to be embossed, using iron presses and coated with a basic lacquer, the same finish French Canadians often used as a maple syrup substitute. When traders purchased items at dry goods stores, the clerk would always ask "ash or check?". (The word "cash" actually comes from the Algonquin term "ka'ash" meaning chips of wood.)

Canada didn't introduce metal coins until 1867, after the Canadian Coin Treasury burned down to the ground. The story goes that a Canadian treasury employee accidentally started the blaze by rubbing two nickels together, destroying the entire wooden reserve. The treasury was later nicknamed "The Mint" because of the sweet menthol smoke that permeated the air during the fire.

After that incident, government officials decided it would be more prudent to develop metal coins, and chose copper, nickel, and silver, because they feared if the coins were made of aluminum, they could still melt in catastrophic Mint fires.

Nowadays, the Canadian Mint will still produce commemorative wooden coins, but more often than not, they are mistaken for drink coasters and carpet protectors.

ARTIST NEVER MADE A MINT ON HIS BANKNOTE DESIGNS

by Alan Hustak, The Montreal Gazette

British-born graphic artist retired to Canada, whose currency he illustrated in the 1970s

Sunday, April 29, 2007

Leslie Sawyer had designs on a lot of money. But he never became rich.

The British-born graphic artist responsible for the Scenes of Canada series of Canadian banknotes that were issued in the 1970s, died April 15 of congestive heart failure in the Lakeshore General Hospital.

He was 86.

He also designed postage stamps for the United Nations and for several countries, including New Zealand, Jamaica and Gibraltar.

“There wasn’t anything he couldn’t draw, but he was one of the least materialistic people,” his daughter Barbara said.

“Money didn’t mean anything to him. When he didn’t have anything to do he would sit around and doodle a design or paint a miniature. But selling his artwork commercially didn’t really interest him.”

Leslie Clarence Sawyer, a gardener’s son, was born Jan. 6, 1921, in Epsom, England, and grew up in Sutton, Surrey.

As a child, he displayed a natural talent for drawing and at 14 dropped out of school to apprentice as a commercial artist.

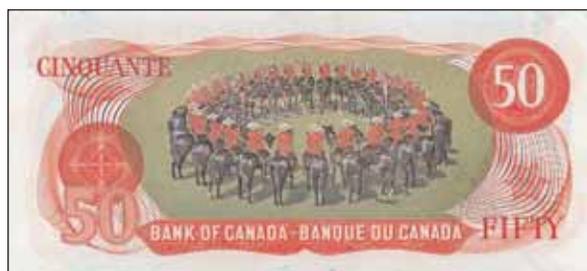
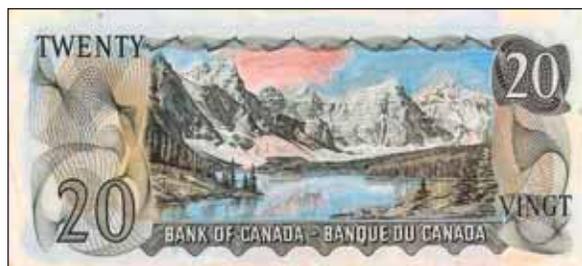
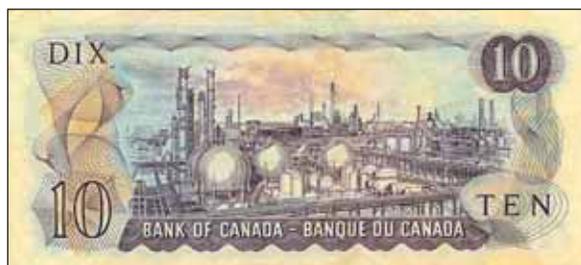
At 19, he joined the Royal Air Force and during the Second World War served with 112 Squadron as ground crew in the North African Campaign painting the shark’s faces on Tomahawk aircraft.

When the war ended, he went to work in London as a designer for the De La Rue Company Ltd., described as the world’s largest security printer, which began printing currency for the British Treasury in 1914.

As a house artist, he was responsible for the design on the back of the \$5 bill in the 1954 series of Canadian currency that

introduced the queen’s portrait on Canadian money for the first time.

In the 1970s, he designed the series of Canadian banknotes that featured multi-coloured security tints to the basic hues of the bank notes.



They featured oil refineries in Sarnia, Ont., on the back of the \$10 bill, a view of Moraine Lake in Alberta on the \$20 and the RCMP musical ride on the \$50.

Because he was employed as a staff artist, he wasn’t given credit for any of the money or stamps he designed. His name doesn’t appear on any of the bills.

Sawyer also excelled at painting miniature portraits on ivory.

In 1976, a portrait of Prince Charles done on a piano key was accepted by the queen for her collection. In 1981, he became a member of the Royal Society of Miniature Painters Sculptors & Gravers.

After he retired, Sawyer and his wife emigrated to Canada in 1984 to be with their eldest daughter.

Here, he did one of his few commercial works, a sketch of the Baie d’Urfe city hall that was sold as a print in 1988.

“He didn’t often sell his art or his miniatures,” his other daughter, Valerie, observed.

“He figured that he was getting paid a salary for doing his hobby, and that was it.

“He didn’t recognize that he was especially gifted. Once he finished a design, he took no further interest in it. He was such an unassuming man. He’d finish one thing, then go on to the next project.”

Sawyer returned to England in 1996, but came back to Canada for good four years ago.

He enjoyed woodworking and snooker.

The funeral was April 20 in the Lakeside Heights Baptist Church in Pointe Claire.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Rose Mary Bye, whom he met before the war when they worked together at an advertising agency, and their two daughters, Valerie and Barbara.

‘POPPY QUARTER’ BEHIND SPY COIN ALERT

by Ted Bridis, Associated Press

An odd-looking Canadian coin with a bright red flower was the culprit behind a U.S. Defense Department false espionage warning earlier this year about mysterious coin-like objects with radio frequency transmitters, The Associated Press has learned.

The harmless “poppy coin” was so unfamiliar to suspicious U.S. Army contractors traveling in Canada that they filed confidential espionage accounts about them. The worried contractors described the coins as “anomalous” and “filled with something man-made that looked like nano-technology,” according to once-classified U.S. government reports and e-mails obtained by the AP.

The silver-colored 25-cent piece features the red image of a poppy—Canada’s flower of remembrance—inlaid over a maple leaf. The unorthodox quarter is identical to the coins pictured and described as suspicious in the contractors’ accounts.

The supposed nano-technology actually was a conventional protective coating the Royal Canadian Mint applied to prevent the poppy’s red color from rubbing off. The mint produced nearly 30 million such quarters in 2004 commemorating Canada’s 117,000 war dead.

“It did not appear to be electronic (analog) in nature or have a power source,” wrote one U.S. contractor, who discovered the coin in the cup holder of a rental car. “Under high power microscope, it appeared to be complex consisting of several layers of clear, but different material, with a wire like mesh suspended on top.”

The confidential accounts led to a sensational warning from the Defense Security Service, an agency of the Defense Department, that mysterious coins with radio frequency transmitters were found planted on U.S. contractors with classified security clearances on at least three separate occasions between October 2005 and January 2006 as the contractors traveled through Canada.

One contractor believed someone had placed two of the quarters in an outer coat pocket after the contractor had emptied the pocket hours earlier. “Coat pockets were empty that morning and I was keeping all of my coins in a plastic bag in my inner coat pocket,” the contractor wrote.

But the Defense Department subsequently acknowledged that it could never substan-

tiate the espionage alarm that it had put out and launched the internal review that turned up the true nature of the mysterious coin.

Meanwhile, in Canada, senior intelligence officials expressed annoyance with the American spy-coin warnings as they tried to learn more about the oddball claims.

“That story about Canadians planting coins in the pockets of defense contractors will not go away,” Luc Portelance, now deputy director for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, wrote in a January e-mail to a subordinate. “Could someone tell me more? Where do we stand and what’s the story on this?”

Others in Canada’s spy service also were searching for answers. “We would be very interested in any more detail you may have on the validity of the comment related to the use of Canadian coins in this manner,” another intelligence official wrote in an e-mail. “If it is accurate, are they talking industrial or state espionage? If the latter, who?” The identity of the e-mail’s recipient was censored.

Intelligence and technology experts were flabbergasted over the warning when it was first publicized earlier this year. The warning suggested that such transmitters could be used surreptitiously to track the movements of people carrying the coins.

“I thought the whole thing was preposterous, to think you could tag an individual with a coin and think they wouldn’t give it away or spend it,” said H. Keith Melton, a leading intelligence historian.

But Melton said the Army contractors properly reported their suspicions. “You want contractors or any government personnel to report anything suspicious,” he said. “You can’t have the potential target evaluating whether this was an organized attack or a fluke.”

The Defense Security Service disavowed its warning about spy coins after an international furor, but until now it has never disclosed the details behind the embarrassing episode. The U.S. said it never substantiated

the contractors’ claims and performed an internal review to determine how the false information was included in a 29-page published report about espionage concerns.

The Defense Security Service never examined the suspicious coins, spokeswoman Cindy McGovern said. “We know where we made the mistake,” she said. “The information wasn’t properly vetted. While these coins aroused suspicion, there ultimately was nothing there.”

A numismatist consulted by the AP, Dennis Pike of Canadian Coin & Currency near Toronto, quickly matched a grainy image and physical descriptions of the suspect coins in the contractors’ confidential accounts to the 25-cent poppy piece.

“It’s not uncommon at all,” Pike said. He added that the coin’s protective coating glows peculiarly under ultraviolet light. “That may have been a little bit suspicious,” he said.

Some of the U.S. documents the AP obtained were classified “Secret/NoFORN,” meaning they were never supposed to be viewed by foreigners, even America’s closest allies. The government censored parts of the files, citing national security reasons, before turning over copies under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act.

Nothing in the documents—except the reference to nanotechnology—explained how the contractors’ accounts evolved into a full-blown warning about spy coins with radio frequency transmitters. Many passages were censored, including the names of contractors and details about where they worked and their projects.

But there were indications the accounts should have been taken lightly. Next to one blacked-out sentence was this warning: “This has not been confirmed as of yet.”

The Canadian intelligence documents, which also were censored, were turned over to the AP for \$5 under that country’s Access to Information Act. Canada cited rules for protecting against subversive or hostile activities to explain why it censored the papers.

Associated Press writer Beth Duff-Brown contributed to this story from Toronto.

