

## **Welcome to the C.N.A. E-Bulletin Vol. 3, No. 14 – March 9, 2007**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In last Friday's C.N.A. E-Bulletin, I asked you to tell us what you thought about the frequency and content of these bulletins. We received a number of responses. Typical of the contents are the following examples (others basically made similar comments):

Mike from Midland states: "I think these bulletins are great the way they are, so as far as I'm concerned, just keep pounding them out in your great ol' way. Thanks a lot."

Tom Palmer writes: "Good afternoon from south of the border. I enjoy reading your bulletins, but honestly feel that once a week is enough. I get inundated with emails, and find it's a problem sometimes to find the time to read rather than just scan the bulletins. I do like your style. Keep up the good work!"

Rom Thompson offers the following advice: "You could have 3 sections or more; 1-Humor Section - for those who enjoy spending time reading jokes. 2-Numismatic True Story Section - real true stories about numismatists. 3-Business section - technical information, major numismatic events & business news for the serious numismatist. If a reader doesn't have time to read every line at least they can quickly read what they feel is the most important part. You can write as much as you like since the reader can select the section most interesting to them. This is better than losing readers!"

Nick Cowan writes: "Regarding the e-bulletin, my only comment is that anyone who does not have 10 minutes early in the morning, to spend reading some humour about their hobby, really has a problem. No one in the world can be that busy, so to that end, I would suggest that this particular person spend or otherwise dispose of their collection, because at the rate they keep themselves busy, they unfortunately won't be with us much longer."

Then there is a portion of the e-mail from Darren Henn that makes it double worth my time and effort: "I do enjoy the C.N.A. E-Bulletins you send me!!! I want to thank you again, for all your hard work and long hours you put into making the C.N.A. E-Bulletins possible, for us to enjoy reading!"

The number of people that stated that I should continue just the way I have been doing far outweigh the others. Since I cannot please everybody, here is my game plan: I will continue to publish the regular bulletin every Friday. For the months of March and April, I will also include special Tuesday editions, somewhat shorter than usual, on specific topics: a Spy Coin issue this coming Tuesday, and future issues involving security, currency smuggling, credit card scams, bank robberies, online scams and lottery scams. And how can we ignore Nigerian scams and the world's number two scam country (do you know what it is? You will be surprised!). I expect to cut back to Friday's only starting in May since I will be heavily involved with the upcoming annual C.N.A. Convention in July (the only exception will be a special Convention issue or two).

### **WE HAVE MAIL**

From Nick Cowan: Is the Royal Canadian Mint running out of money? Are they issuing post-dated coins? I purchased a Vancouver 2010 set containing 12 quarters and two Loonies in the octagonal cardboard packaging. Four of the quarters are dated 2008, three quarters are dated

2009, one of the Loonies is dated 2008 and the other Loonie is dated 2010. None has the new Mint logo (circle M) except the 2008 Loonie. The other thing I should point out is that all the reverses have "Vancouver 2010" on all 14 coins, while the obverses (the Queen side on the quarters, the Loon on the Loonies) contain the different years (except the 2008 Loonie, which does not have a date on the obverse)." – Well, Nick, you must know by now that if we don't know the answer, we will find out from the right people. Alexandre Reeve from the Royal Canadian Mint tells us: "The Mint's intentions vis-à-vis the Vancouver 2010 collector cards was to offer collectors two distinct opportunities. 1) An empty card so that the collector could take the time and pleasure of finding the coins in their change and filling the card themselves over the next 3 years, and 2) A full collector card for those who wished to have a Vancouver 2010 memento right now, given that the first commemorative circulation (25-cent Curling) was issued on February 23, 2007. Also note that the coins in this "full" card are uncirculated and individually sealed in a protective plastic film. As well, note that the 2008 Lucky Loonie purposely does not bear the Vancouver 2010 logo, as it is being released in conjunction with the 2008 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing. Finally, the full collector cards are not being exclusively through Shopper's Drug Mart and can be acquired through normal sales channels. It just happens that many Canada Post retail outlets are located in Shopper's Drug Mart stores across the country. Keep in mind though, that mintage is limited to 30,000."

From Nick Cowan: "After careful study of these 2008, 9 and 10 coins, I realized that this is yet another Government engineered plan to get us to save money. We cannot spend money that is future dated, it is like a promissory note, therefore, the Government gets our cash as well as the taxes on it. The Government forces us to keep unknown quantities of our money, not able to spend it, not earning interest, non-deductible on our taxes for loss of income or interest. Let's have a slogan..."Buy it now and spend it again later...Let us find the money you didn't know you had." Sound familiar?" – Are you suggesting that I will have to wait even longer in the lineups at Tim Hortons while they examine the change to make sure we don't slip post-dated coins by them? You are such a cynic!

From Nick Cowan: "After inspecting some Canadian 5c pieces, I have noticed that the "P" has changed in size, from large to small. Does anyone know why this change was effected? As a for an instance, I am looking at a 2001 with a large "P" vs. a 2005 with a small "P." - We contacted Alex Reeves, Manager of Communications at the Royal Canadian Mint for an answer: "There was a large 'P' on the 2001 five cents. By 2005, there was an effigy change, including in the 'Victory nickel' version, which has a smaller 'P' on the observe. This obverse has been used ever since the effigy was changed, until the Mint eliminated the 'P' and replaced it with the new Mint Mark. The 'P' was intentionally made smaller, so as to reduce the visual impact on the new effigy."

### **ONE FOR THE MONEY - PART TWO**

In last Friday's E-Bulletin, we published the following (we repeat it here so that you will be able to follow the answer): Three brothers rented an apartment for \$300 per month. They each gave their sister \$100 for a total of \$300 to pay the rent. When the sister went to pay the rent, the landlord reduced the rent to \$250 and gave her back \$50. Rather than trying to divide \$50 equally among 3 brothers, she gave each one \$10 and kept the balance of \$20 for herself. Now it cost each brother \$90 for a total of \$270, which added to the \$20 the sister retained would add up to \$290. So what became of the \$10 unaccounted for?

Bob Graham, the editor for the Canadian Paper Money Society, recipient of every Canadian numismatic award and a school teacher, writes: "There is, of course, no missing \$10. The writer bamboozles the reader into thinking that the sister's purloined \$20 should be added to, rather

than subtracted from, the \$270 net amount paid by the brothers. Of the \$270 they paid, net, the landlord has \$250 and the sister has \$20, so nothing is unaccounted for. If you want to account for the original \$300, it is easily done: the landlord has \$250, each of the three brothers has a \$10 refund, and the devious sister has \$20, so it's all there." – If any recipient has a similar quiz, let us know at [cnanews@look.ca](mailto:cnanews@look.ca).

Ken Grahame also has an answer: "The other \$10 was sent to a Nigerian address in hopes the windfall coming back would pay the rent forever." Oh, how I wish more of you would respond this way. It would certainly make for a livelier bulletin!

### **STRANGE CHARACTERS IN E-MAIL**

In last Friday's E-Bulletin, we addressed the problems some recipients were having with strange characters. Michel Houde advises that we should be able to find the character set we are using in our email software's options somewhere. "Even if you set yours to Western Latin, if that of the person mailing you isn't set to that, the problem persists," he advises. "The Notepad trick is a good one which I have been using ever since I started using email. It is also one I use when preparing text in MS Word or for my website to be certain that the text I am going to paste is clean of unwanted codes."

He did a Google search of "Strange characters email" and provides two quotes he discovered:

"If you are having trouble with strange characters appearing in the emails, change the character set used by your email reader to ISO 8859-1 (also known as Western Latin). This will ensure that you are able to correctly see accented characters (eg é) and some punctuation marks (eg apostrophes or the Spanish ¡)."

"I discovered that the problem comes from certain characters in Windows that do not display on certain computers or in certain Internet email programs like Yahoo. To get around this, create your text in a simple word processing program like Notepad or Wordpad. Do not use Word or Word Perfect. Then you can copy the plain ASCII text into the newsletter. All my problems disappeared after that."

### **THE WEIGHT OF THE \$1 COIN**

Ash Harrison sent us the following e-mail: I've seen a couple of references to the weight of this coin and some say "75 pounds." The last time I checked, a Kilo is 2.2 pounds AVDP. This would equate to 220 lbs., not 75."

In our March 6 E-Bulletin, the Globe and Mail is quoted as stating that "at 100 kilograms, the metal in the new Maple Leaf coin will be worth more than twice its face value, based on gold's current price of \$684 (U.S.) an ounce." That is equal to 220 lbs.

NDP MP Dennis Bevington is quoted: "Even if the once-bustling gold mines near Yellowknife were still at peak production, it would take a week for them to produce enough gold to make just one of the coins. Bevington joked at the estimated 1,200 ounces (34 kilograms) of gold it would take to produce the coin if the mint establishes the same level of purity it has for the Gold Maple Leaf." That would be 75 lbs.

Codydude815 is quoted on the Coinforum website: "Would I want a 75 pound coin in my pocket?" while BigRod says: "75 pounds, I believe. \$804,000 by weight currently."

Well, if the coin is going to sell for well over \$2 million, at the current price of gold, it should contain over 3,000 ounces of gold or I am cancelling my order for a dozen.

### **TORONTO GETS INTO THE PENNY ACT**

Not only are a lot of people weighing in on both the pro and con side on the discussion about the lowly cent, but the Mayor of the City of Toronto, David Miller, has stated that he wants the cents from the Federal Government. Well, sort of.

While we are debating whether to discontinue those little devils for which they claim there is no demand and it is costing us a lot of money, while the truth is that over 800 million are made each year because of the demand and are costing less than one cent to manufacture, the City of Toronto is getting into the fray. You see, they want a penny for every 6 cents we pay in GST. The City even went as far as having their telephone operators answer "Access Toronto, one cent now" when you called them, to publicize the Mayor's penny plan.

Janet Auty-Carlisle of Mississauga wrote the following letter to The Toronto Star: "It strikes me as a little odd that, on the one hand, we hear that the government's debating whether or not to keep minting the penny due to the cost factor, while, on the other hand, Mayor David Miller is asking for a penny from the GST. Is there a way this could be a win-win for both parties here? Lose a penny...find a penny."

Well, your C.N.A. E-Bulletin Editor suggests that the federal government should simply ship all 800 million pennies produced each year to Toronto. Look at all the money the Mint would save in national distribution costs alone. And Toronto would get, literally as well as figuratively, the penny that they were asking for. What a brilliant idea to make everyone happy. And you thought I was just another pretty face!

And still on the subject of the Canadian Cent, Darren Henn writes: "Have you heard from the Canadian Mint whether they are going to stop producing pennies for circulation?" – I doubt very much that the Mint wants to phase out of the cent, for various reasons. It would take a submission to Canadian Parliament and their approval, which means that hopefully I will find out from Hansard's publishing of the government proceedings what they are up to. The Bank of Canada requisitions over 800 million cents from the Mint each year, and the cost is less than a cent, meaning it is a money-maker. A lot of Canadian produced metal is used up. The only reason I can see the Mint actually wanting to discontinue the cent is if they can use the production capacity for something else. Like for the \$1 million coin.

### **EVEN FISH DON'T WANT YOUR PENNIES**

Taking my wife to Mandarin Chinese Buffet Restaurant the other day, I noticed a sign over the indoor fish pond in the reception area: "Please...I hate coppers!"

More proof that the cent is becoming useless!

### **THE \$5 DESIGN CONTEST**

In last Friday's E-Bulletin, we proposed a contest involving a Canadian \$5 scratch and sniff/taste coin. We received a number of suggestions, every one of which agreed with the Royal Canadian Mint's Alex Reeves' thought of incorporating Pamela Anderson.

Your editor is wondering what silicone tastes like?

### **GUILTY PLEA IN TOKEN SCAM**

In previous E-Bulletins, we made you aware of the \$11.5 million worth of fake Toronto transit tokens. A middleman in the counterfeit token ring that smuggled the counterfeit subway tokens from the United States into Canada pleaded guilty earlier this month in Buffalo, NY for his role in the operation.

Robbie Johnson, 31, admitted accepting multiple shipments of boxes from the American token manufacturer at his Niagara Falls apartment in late 2004 and early 2005. He handed the boxes off to Canadian couriers who smuggled them into Toronto, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Buffalo said.

He received about nine deliveries and was paid \$5,000 (U.S.) by the couriers, according to an affidavit supporting a criminal complaint against Johnson. Johnson pleaded guilty to a felony charge of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and faces up to five years in prison when he is sentenced June 1.

### **CASH, STAMPS AMONG LOOT IN BURGLARY**

Some people don't know when to quite while they're ahead.

Two men have been charged after a seven-month spree of burglaries at businesses in Oshawa, Whitby, Ajax and Bowmanville last year. Thomas Harrison, 32, of Toronto and Marc David, 29, of Lindsay face over 100 charges.

### **POLICE USE WEB TO TRY TO NET THIEF**

Associated Press advises that police are using the website MySpace to help identify a bank robber. Even though MySpace is popular with teens, Fort Smith police Sgt. Jarrard Copeland created the profile of a suspected thief hoping someone will recognize the man, believed to be about 60 and suspected in four bank heists in Arkansas.

A brazen bank robber with nothing but a baseball cap and dark sunglasses hiding his face is shown on MySpace and a comic caption, created by the police, states that he wants to meet more bank tellers "so I that I can continue my crime spree!" The profile displays several photos from a Feb. 22 robbery at a U.S. Bank branch in Alma in which the suspect wore a blue jacket with "FBI" lettering on the left front and a blue ball cap. "The pictures are definitely clear enough and there's enough of his face and facial features exposed that someone who knows him will definitely recognize him and hopefully they'll call police," Copeland said.

### **TRADING CARDS ARE TOPPS**

In my former life, I used to collect trading cards. Although the market dropped out of most hockey and baseball cards a number of years ago, I had no idea that any company that manufactured them was still in business, never mind worth investing in.

Topps Co., the maker of baseball trading cards, agreed to be acquired for \$385.4 million (U.S.) by investors including former Walt Disney Co. chief executive officer Michael Eisner. This is 9.4% above the value of the stock market price, and some of the board members are arguing for even more.

It might not be the cards that represent shareholder value, though. It might be the Bazooka bubble gum which was included in the acquisition and which I removed from the baseball card packages.

## **TWO HEADED COINS**

We received an e-mail from Myles Leshyshyn: "On March 03, I converted several bills to quarters at a Car Wash at South Padre Island, Texas. Amongst the quarters dispensed was a 1984 Double Headed George Washington Quarter. It appears that it was minted in Denver. Talk about calling "heads" on a coin flip. I am a Canadian coin collector and winter in the U.S.

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but as an "error" collector for the past 40 years or so, let me say this: Although the coins used to create it are genuine, it was not made at the Mint that way.

You can buy them for \$7.95 from <http://www.prankplace.com/quarter.htm>, who has this to say: "Someone who isn't familiar with how coins are made finds a two-headed half dollar, nickel, or quarter, (or other denomination) and wants to know how much their "rare coin" is worth. Sometimes the coin has two tails rather than the two heads. Two-headed coins are novelty items, created for magicians and jokesters from genuine coins. People find these coins in circulation and hope that they've found some fantastically rare mint error that will allow them to pay off their credit card debt or buy a new car. Two-headed coins that you find in circulation or buy at swap meets are not produced by the U.S. Mint, even in error; they have been made as a novelty device, or for use in magician's tricks. Any two-headed U.S. coin you find in pocket change is a novelty item."

Ken Potter's website at <http://koinpro.tripod.com/Articles/TwoHeadedCoins.htm> tells us about the only two genuine two-headed coins ever certified: "We tackled this subject several years ago and published it on the Collectors Universe web site which is now owned by PCGS. When that article was published, there were no Mint-made two-headed or two-tailed coins known and the information we provided stating such was 100% accurate. However, since that time a couple of Mint-made specimens have been reported. They were allegedly found in a safe-deposit-box that was rented by a former Mint employee whose estate was sold by the State of California. I personally examined one of the pieces prior to it being sealed in a certification "slab" and found it to be genuine. So far, both pieces have been declared genuine by the two top authentication services in the country. However, they should know that a "genuine" piece has never been proven found in circulation, and more importantly, they should know that tens of thousands of faked double-headed and double-tailed (and other similar mismatched concoctions) have been made from genuine coins altered by machine shops after the coins left the Mint. These have been offered for sale by novelty concerns like magic shops and through ads in comic books for decades for prices starting at about \$3 or \$4 for cents up to about \$8 or \$10 on half dollar coins. Many of these get into circulation quite innocently and are later found by unsuspecting collectors who think they found rare Mint errors! Such is not the case!

To read more about the specifics of these alterations go to Ken Potter's write-up entitled [Two Headed Coin Unlucky for Some](#).

## **ANA TO HOST BOARD CANDIDATES FORUM**

Gail Baker has made us aware that the ANA will host a Board of Governors' Candidate Forum on Friday, March 16, and a Town Hall Meeting on Saturday, March 17. Both activities will take place during the "National Money Show" at the Charlotte Convention Center. All announced candidates for the offices of president, vice-president and governor are invited to present opening remarks and participate in a question and answer session during the Candidates Forum. For full details, go to [www.money.org](http://www.money.org).

## CONCLUSION

As editor of this E-Bulletin, I have been fortunate in receiving e-mails from a number of people whose names I have seen in numismatic publications over the years. I don't believe I would have exchanged e-mails with the likes of Clifford Mishler and Colin Bruce of Krause Publications, a number of well-known people from ANA Headquarters, funny guy Donn Pearlman who wrote a funny column for the ANA Numismatist until recently, and quite a few others too numerous to mention here. In the last while, I corresponded with two other numismatists that impressed me.

I discovered that Ashmore "Ash" Harrison is not only President of Ashmore Rare Coins and a PCGS and NGC Dealer, but that his volunteer work in the hobby is major. He is President of the Society of Silver Dollar Collectors, a Governor of the National Silver Dollar Roundtable, Past President of the Greensboro Coin Club, Bourse Chair and VP of the Winston Salem Coin Club and an instructor at the ANA Grading Seminars. His website is:

<http://www.ashmore.com/index2.htm>.

The other individual who can boast a good track record in more than just numismatics is Gar Travis, recipient of the Krause Numismatic Ambassador award and the ANA Glenn Smedley memorial award, who is also an accomplished photographer. Visit:

<http://www.numisconsult.com> to view the thousands of photos he has posted, both numismatic and otherwise.

John Regitko  
Your C.N.A. E-Bulletin Editor  
Canadian Numismatic Association

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