

Owen Sound Stamp Club
Chapter 191
Royal Philatelic Society of Canada

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 16th 2015 @ 7 PM

From the President...



Just a few weeks ago we held our 20th Annual Show. What a busy weekend! I want to thank everyone who participated in organizing and helping the day go well. As many of you know, a recent surgery limited what I was able to do as well as how long I was able to stay at the show. I did enjoy meeting everyone and again thankful for the guests and members that travelled great distances to come to the show.

Our second annual competitive exhibit was held. There were eight entries for judging contributed by five members. Thank you Marion Ace, Larry Crane, Bob Ford, John Lemon and I for entering exhibits. Our judge for the competition was again Ken Magee, who is a club member from a long distance, and so many of you don't get to meet him at meetings. The topic of this years challenge was Anniversaries in honour of our 20th show. The winner of the competition was myself, and so we will get to see the Vander Heyden Plaque at the meeting and hopefully engraved with this years winner. It would be really nice if all the exhibitors could bring their exhibits and judges sheet so that those who did not compete may learn and perhaps prepare one for next years show. Search your minds to come up with a topic for next years show and that should give you time to search for material to exhibit.

At the show there were other exhibits entered by Marion Ace and Dave Pugh. Marion's exhibit of German Philatelic Shows won a Vermeil award at the Royal show in London earlier this year. I am forever amazed what Dave Pugh comes up with! Thank you both for the work done in preparing these exhibits and sharing them with everyone that took the time to look at the exhibits.

This months meeting we will have an opportunity to go through the Cambridge Stamp Club Circuit Books. I hope that the funds are not too limited by purchases at the show or elsewhere. We will be having the Brantford club come with their circuit books in November and then at the December meeting we can have an informal meeting to celebrate as well as having the annual Presidents Auction. The only valid currency there will be the "Funny Money" distributed to those attending during the year as well as at the start of the December meeting. Please start to sort through your excess stamp material and books to see what interest it may create with fellow club members.

Our meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 21st in Hillyer Hall at the St Mary's High School from 7-9 PM. I hope you will be able to come to the meeting

Phil Visser
President
OSSC

We meet again at our regular meeting place, St Mary's High School, 555 15th Street East

Summary Tip #3: Save £100's - don't spend money on expensive accessories you don't need.

Dear Philip

We've discussed the often overlooked link between budget and collecting interest, and the importance of adequate focused insurance - this week we are looking at stamp accessories.

Time after time that we are offered collections for sale, I am amazed at the number of collections which are not very valuable in themselves - but are 'contained' in expensive albums and come complete with the most expensive watermark detectors - electronic perforation machines, high powered 'computer' magnifying glass 'loupes'.

You don't need any of these - even if your eyesight is challenged electronic watermark detectors almost invariably yield poorer results than the product I mention below.

Here's what you need to start with and what we use:

1) A loose-leaf stock-book system such as a 4 ring binder with 'hagner/prinz' style leaves (single side leaves may cost a little more - but are best. Plastic type leaves should be avoided - they can look and feel cheap, stamps can be more easily damaged in them). Loose-leaf systems are flexible permitting re-arranging with minimal re-organisation.

2) 'Fixed leaf' stockbooks look lovely but are more useful for duplicates.

Don't buy expensive albums until you have a collection that justifies them - many collectors interests change within a short period of starting to collect.

3) Tweezers - 'spade-end' are better than 'pointed' ones to start with. Check how finely 'honed' the spades are when they 'meet' - too thick may be too difficult for you to pick stamps up off a flat surface. 'Showgard 903' is a good spade-end tweezer which we have used for 35 years. They only cost a couple of £'s.

4) Magnifying glasses. Don't be tempted by x35 magnification - you simply won't see the part of the design you are looking at, in context. Note -we have used a good x10 costing less than £20 for the last 30 years. Only recently have we treated ourselves to an illuminated x10 costing £200 - a lot of money - but we use it every day and it has already repaid itself.

x 10 magnification suits most people. Most collectors make the mistake of not realising how close they have to be to the lense and the stamp to get the best result. Focussing distance may be as close as an inch. You don't need a computer linked glass unless you intend to manipulate upon the computer - a good scanner may be best and will handle a multitude of other uses.

5) Watermark detectors. Don't buy any electronic device. We have 2 different that we have 'inherited' with collections purchased - we might only try using them if we have a mint NZ 'postal fiscal' stamp (notoriously difficult)to watermark. Even then - we have not used them in several years - the best product is old-fashioned 'watermark fluid' - and a watermark tray. We use Prinz 'Super-Safe' + a watermark tray - costs less than £10.

Note: Don't use benzine - some battle-hardened dealers use benzine or lighter fuel - you can often tell a mint stamp that has been dipped in these, by 'suffused' colour into the surrounding paper. Some of these fluids will 'melt' a plastic watermark tray. You can use 'Super-Safe' on MINT as well as used stamps - it does not affect the gum and dries in moments. Always experiment on cheap stamps first. Replace the top tightly - it evaporates quickly. Take this tip and save up to £100 or more.

6) Perforation Gauge. There is only one worth purchasing - Gibbons 'Instanta' - this is superbly accurate - just takes a bit of getting used to/perseverance. Don't use the 'dot' type perforation - not accurate enough. Electronic Perforation gauges are a waste of money unless eyesight is a consideration. Save another £100.

7) Colour Keys. Once again Gibbons is the only one worth buying - but beware - colours are only a 'guide' - an 'ultramarine' in SG for Gambia is different from an 'ultramarine' in GB KGV issues. Colours quoted in catalogues have not been re-calibrated over 100 years - experience is the best measure and the 'colour key' is useful in determining 'deep' shades from 'dull' shades etc.

8) Ultra-violet lamps. Don't buy one till you are absolutely sure you need one. Most full-time dealers hardly ever use one.

You may know what you want - but these are what you actually need to get started. You can spend £400++ getting started on accessories and have no stamps - or spend a relatively modest £70 or so and have money for your first stamps.

Next time I write we'll talk about stamp catalogues and the ones not to buy!

Happy collecting from us all,

Andrew

PS. If you find this 'tip' interesting please forward it to a philatelic friend.

Andrew McGavin

Universal Philatelic Auctions (UK)

Cavelier de la Salle: Accidental Hero

by Phil Visser



I recently came into possession of a book on a conference held in Harvard University about longitude and time. The conference started with a well known speaker who spoke about the death of de la Salle in Texas due to a lack of knowledge about longitude. This sparked my desire to write about the stamp that Canada issued in 1966 to commemorate the 300th anniversary of de la Salle's arrival in present day Canada.

This common stamp can be found in most collections, but it does raise some interesting points in the design. The *Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps* provides some basic information about the stamp. The designer of the stamp was Leendert Verhoeven with Yves Baril engraving the portrait of de la Salle in the center of the stamp (and likely the other components in the centre of the stamp) and Donald J. Mitchell engraving the lettering on the sides of the stamp. The stamp was printed in sheets of 300

stamps, with six panes of 50 stamps on each sheet. The stamp was printed by the Canadian Bank Note Company.

A casual glance will show some of the elements of the design which may seem insignificant the first time one looks at the stamp. Boldly in the center of the stamp is an engraving of Cavalier Rene Robert, Sieur de la Salle. Surrounding the image of de la Salle is a series of sixteen points around the portrait. These sixteen points actually replicate the points of a compass, started from North at the top, and going clockwise from North, to NNE, NE, ENE, East etc until the compass circle is completed back at North. Without the designer and engraver labeling the points, I wonder how many people recognized the points as part of a compass.

Below the portrait of de la Salle one can see a chart (map for the landlubbers), a telescope, set of dividers, and a small compass. The chart is a fairly accurate representation of the North American east coast from present day Newfoundland to some where in the Carolinas in the United States. Attempting to authenticate the chart, the designer is actually showing the North American coast line, but at the time of de la Salle, how to find longitude was unknown!

On the right side of the image of de la Salle is a part of a canoe with a First Nations person in it. The First Nations people were very important to de la Salle in the exploration after his arrival in Canada. Above the image of de la Salle is a sailing vessel. From visiting a website, (<http://postalhistorycorner.blogspot.ca/2010/10/1966-de-la-salle->

rene-robert-cavelier.html) there is an engraving of the sailing vessel *Belle*, one of the ships in the convoy to find the entrance of the Mississippi River, but not the ship that de la Salle sailed on during the voyage. On the same website are visible several essays, trial designs submitted to Canada Post, on the topic of de la Salle. Finally at the bottom is the completed design. It really is a process before a stamp is actually used on a letter.

Sieur de La Salle was born in Rouen, France on November 21st, 1643. Robert was trained as a Jesuit priest at the age of 15 until his release from the priesthood in March 1667. According to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cavelier_de_la_salle_rene_robert_1E.html) he arrived in Montreal (Ville Marie at that time) in the late fall of 1667. This is just the first of many contradicting points in the life of de La Salle because the Stamp Catalogue uses the date of 1666 as the arrival year in Canada. Granted a land title on Montreal Island, de la Salle's sense of adventure and wandering spirit led him to sell the title back and finance an exploration for the Ohio River and a route to the Mississippi River a short time thereafter. By all accounts this exploration was a failure.

Upon his return to Montreal, de la Salle was able to ally himself Governor Frontenac and with his assistance was able to return to France and in the period of 1674-5, secures a commission to build a fort/settlement. The former Fort Cataraqui was renamed Fort Frontenac which is now present day Kingston. His wandering spirit led him to seek permission to establish two forts, one at the entrance of Lake Ontario and the other at the exit of Lake Michigan and so in 1678 was granted permission by King Louis XIV to do so.

By January of 1679, de la Salle had a small ship built (Le Griffon) to sail the lakes and proceeded to voyage across Lake Erie, northward across Lake Huron and reached Fort Michilimackinac. They continued on to present Green Bay on Lake Michigan and commenced trading with the natives. The ship was to return to Lake Erie and left Green Bay in the fall of 1679 never to be seen again. This financial disaster was to plague de La Salle greatly. When the ship left Green Bay, de la Salle left with canoes to the south end of Lake Michigan and established a fort at Saint Joseph. From here he connected to the Illinois River and then the Mississippi River. In April of 1682 de la Salle solemnly claimed the river and its tributaries in the name of King Louis of France. It is likely that the claim was made near present day city of Venice, Louisiana.



Traveling the length of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers he returned to Quebec to discover a new leader and that he was out of favour with the leader. He set sail for France and using his connections managed to have King Louis XIV finance another expedition to reach the mouth of the Mississippi River from the sea (Gulf of Mexico). To do so, de la Salle moved the position of the Mississippi River further westward, closer to the Rio Grande River and therefore to the gold mines in New Mexico. This was of interest to King Louis since gold was money for the royal coffers.

In 1684 de la Salle left France with four ships to establish a base at the mouth of the Mississippi River. No expedition can prosper with two leaders as de la Salle was in conflict with the mariner of the fleet. The conflict between de la Salle and the Captain led to great difficulties later. The Spanish capture one ship of the fleet and that particular ship carried the supplies and provisions. By the end of the year, de la Salle actually found the entrance of the Mississippi River, but his calculation errors earlier gave him the wrong latitude of the River and thought he had drifted eastward from the mouth of the River. Consequently he set to the west and in February of 1685 landed at Matagorda Bay, just east of present day Corpus Christi, Texas.

At this point I need to share that the calculation of Latitude has been known for hundreds, if not for a thousand years. However, the ability to find longitude was not known and would not be known for a further one hundred years. Therefore navigational mistakes were not uncommon and they cannot be blamed on de La Salle as an explorer, particularly when information was closely guarded between the rival powers of the day, France, Spain and England. Simply put, France was not familiar with the Gulf of Mexico because they hadn't been there before. Alistair Cooke in his opening speech at the Longitude conference suggested that his untimely death came about because of the lack of knowledge of calculating longitude.

The Canadian Encyclopedia gives a rather unflattering account of de la Salle where it says “he displayed incompetence and paranoia.” This assessment is also shared in much gentler terms by the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. The surviving members of the expedition tried to establish a base while the Captain sailed off back to France. Those left in Texas had to contend with unfriendly natives, sickness and lack of supplies because one of the ships had run aground while entering Matagorda Bay. The terrible conditions lead to further dissensions among the survivors and this ultimately led to the death of de La Salle.

Leaving the base at Matagorda Bay, de La Salle wanted to travel inland to Fort Saint Louis de Illinois to get help and supplies. The initial sortie was thwarted by attacks and disease and so he returned to Matagorda Bay. His final trip departed Matagorda Bay on the 12th of January 1687 again in search of his established fort on the Mississippi tributary, the Illinois River. Internal dissensions and rivalries led to the assassination of de La Salle on March 19th, 1687. The exact place of his death is unknown.



The accidental explorer and hero in our eyes did leave a legacy for us. The discovery of the Mississippi River led later to the Louisiana Purchase of the river and territory by the United States from France in 1803. This purchase was celebrated with the release of a stamp in 1953. The name de La Salle lives on in several places in the United States, for instance Lasalle Illinois and Texas as well as other counties, a township and a parish.

Also, two monuments have been erected in honour of La Salle. The first monument is at a ghost town, Indianoala Texas just east of Corpus Christi, and the second is at Navasota Texas where it is claimed that La Salle was assassinated. To our members who winter in the south, is there any interest in a picture of either/both of the monuments? Perhaps a post card may also be available. Enjoy the search!

Coming Events...

- OCT 24 Middpex 2015
Westview Baptist Church, 1000 Wonderland Road South, London, ON, N6J 3S4 London, Ontario Stamp Exhibition – 96 frames of judged exhibits. 18 dealers. Westview Baptist Church, 1000 Wonderland Road S., London, ON, N6K 3S4 (north of Southdale Road, on the east side). Free admission, free parking, no stairs, easy wheelchair access. 9: a.m. to 4 p.m. Phone: 519-434-4629 Email: hazelelmslie@hotmail.com
- OCT 24 GRVPA 21st Club Fair
United Kingdom Hall, International Dr. (Dunbar and Hespler Rd.), Cambridge, ON, L2V 4S1 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. There will be 10-12 clubs in attendance with 450 circuit books. 2 silent auctions, free admission and parking, snack bar. Phone: 905-227-9251 Email: stuart.keeley@sympatico.ca
- NOV 6 Hamilton Fall Show
St.Jean De Brebeuf Secondary School, 200 Acadia Dr., Hamilton, ON, L8W 1B8 Large silent and voice auctions Friday evening with viewing starting at 5 p.m. Saturday is a 20 dealer bourse plus Canada Post, youth booth and silent auction from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. GRVPA club circuit sales books Friday and Saturday. Light food and refreshments available with ample free parking. Sponsored by the Hamilton Stamp Club. For more information contact Steve Forten at southont@cogeco.ca Email: southont@cogeco.ca web: www.hamiltonstampclub.com
- NOV 6 National Postage Stamp Show November 6, 2015 to November 8, 2015
The International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga, ON, L4V 1E8 The Canadian Stamp Dealers' Association National Postage Stamp Show with dealers from across Canada and the United States, Canada Post, society and club information, stamps for kids, hourly draw prizes and much more. Sponsored by the Canadian Stamp Dealers' Association. New location. HALL 4. Show Hours: Fri.: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. (See Early Bird Bourse above.); Sat.: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun.: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Phone: (519) 681-3420 Email: director@csonline.com Web: www.csonline.com/shows

- NOV 8 Troyak Club Fall Stamp, Coin & Collectibles Show & Sale
John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre, 4300 Cawthra Rd. (just south of Hwy. 403), Mississauga, ON, L4Z 1V8
Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Canadian and world stamps, coins, medals, tokens, supplies, paper money, gold and silver, RCM coins, military and other collectibles. Buy, sell, trade, appraise. Presented by Members of the Polish-Canadian Coin & Stamp Club (Troyak Club) – free stamps & coins for kids. Club Members Exhibits of Coins, Stamps & Collectibles. Free admission & parking. Handicap Accessible. Easy to get to via Mississauga MiWay transit. Phone: 416-505-7999 Email: leszekp@rogers.com Web: <http://www.troyakclub.com>
- NOV 21 Scarborough Stamp Club Show
Cedarbrook Community Centre, 91 East park Blvd, Toronto, ON, M4K3Y1 Free admission and free parking, club circuit books, 4-6 dealers, near Markham Rd and Lawrence Ave E Phone: 416-778-4175
- NOV 21 Burloak Stamp Fair
Burlington Senior Centre, 2285 New St., Burlington, ON, L7R 1J4 Hours: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Eighteen years of regular monthly shows on the third Saturday of every month. Six to nine dealers, active buyers, and always something new. For more information contact Steve Simon, telephone 905-575-2950, email bas6@bell.net.
- NOV 21 North Toronto Stamp Club Show
Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St., Toronto, ON Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission, about 40 free parking spaces on site, easy subway access (St. Clair subway station), wheelchair access. Sponsor/Affiliate: North Toronto Stamp Club. For more information, contact Ernie Nyitrai. Email: NTSC.Treasurership@gmail.com Web: <http://www.northtorontostampclub.ca>

From the Editor...

I hope the readers will find the opinions of Andrew McGavin useful, even if you have been a long time collector. The club is still looking for a full time Newsletter Editor. I will be able to do a few more but once I return to work, there will be a number of months without the newsletters.



During the school year, the Owen Sound Stamp Club meets at 7:00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month in the cafeteria of St Mary's High School, 555 15th Street East. Meeting agendas will vary between having visiting club circuit books, speakers and an auction. Guests and new members are always welcome. Annual membership fees: \$15.00

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