

ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

VOLUME 46
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Pages 53-72

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION ISSN 0048-1815

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President's Message

The 2008 Convention is now history but will not soon be forgotten. This is the third time that the Nickel Belt Coin Club has hosted the ONA and by all accounts it gets better each time they have it.

The convention started off at full speed and never slowed down. There are so many people who are an important part of making a show a success and "thanks" to all the NBCC members. President Gerry Albert and his executive are getting to be experts at hosting and helping the ONA put on a worthwhile show. Once again another job well done.

An auction is always one of the highlights of any show and "thanks" to Hoares Auction. Wendy and her staff as usual did yeoman service and gave the collectors a great mix of both coin and paper.

Our exhibits this year were of a unique variety "Congratulations" to all the winners. Entering for the first time and winning best of show is quite an achievement just what we like to see. The exhibits were, in my view, one of the more interesting showings we have ever had.

The variety of dealers on the bourse floor this year included some new faces which we always like to see. Having the Bank of Canada representative at our show was a plus. This we would like to make a part of our annual show. "Thanks" Vanessa

If it were not for the help & support of so many people, dealers, club members, exhibitors, the public, the hotel and its staff, ONA executive, Exhibit Judges, organizers, our guest speaker and the hospitality workers there would be no show. Thanks to each and everyone, who sold or bought Dream Vacation tickets. The ONA thanks everyone for your support. This enables us to carry out many programs.

"Congratulations" to all winners of this draw. I am so happy to hear our Dream Vacation tickets are even being bought by dogs. What's more they did win. I guess you might say "Gold" has gone to the dogs, (got to love that).

Our banquet Saturday night was well attended by 76 guests. The guest speaker was Dr. David Pearson who spoke on the finding of Nickel in Sudbury and how coins are related to this area; very informative in deed.

(Over)

APPOINTED COMMITTEE

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* Available only evenings & on week-ends

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Regular Membership - \$15.00 per year
Husband & wife (1 Journal) - \$17.00 year
Junior (up to age 18) - \$5.00 year
Club Membership - \$20.00 year
Life Membership - \$450.00
(Life memberships are accepted only after one year of regular membership)

Send money order or cheque (payable to the ONA) for membership to:

Bruce Raszmann, ONA Treasurer
P.O. Box 40033, Waterloo Square P.O.
75 King St. S., Waterloo, Ont. N2J 4V1

Our Master of Ceremonies Bob Ross as always kept us entertained. The winners of the Award of Merit and the Fellow of the ONA are both well known gentlemen in the field of numismatics, this tribute to both the men is long overdue "Congratulations" Len & Joe.

A very special thanks to Toby for making sure our cases were here so we could have a show, Bruce for taking care of our finances, the judges Paul & Paul, Betsy, Betty Lou, Todd, and all my executive for an outstanding job.

Most of all I want to thank my wife Lois, the one who keeps me on track.

Next year is a "Biggie" it is the 50th Anniversary for the Waterloo Coin Society in conjunction with the ONA Convention

UPCOMING SHOWS

MAY 23 - 25, St. Catharines, ON
TNS, Quality Hotel, 327 Ontario St. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Saturday and Sunday. Daily admission is \$4, Show pass is \$20. Sponsor/Affiliate: TNS. Rick Simpson, Jo-Anne Simpson, rscoins@cogeco.ca (905) 643-4988, fax (905) 643-6329.

JUNE 8, Brantford, ON
Brantford Numismatic Society 47th Annual Coin Show, Woodman Community Centre, 491 Grey St. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission, free parking, 34 dealers at 65 tables. Local police protection, member assistance for dealer unloading and parking. For more information, contact Brantford Numismatic Society, PO Box 28071, North Park Plaza, Brantford, ON, N3R 7K5 or Ed Anstett, 519-759-3688, edanstett@rogers.com.

JUNE 28 - 29, Toronto, ON
Torex - Canada's National Coin Show, Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel, 5875 Airport Road. Featuring Canada's finest dealers. Hours: Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission \$6. Official Auctioneer: Moore Numismatic Auctions Inc., Charles Moore. The Hilton hotel is located directly across from Toronto's Pearson International Airport. For more information, please call 416-705-5348. Web site: <http://www.torex.net>.

JULY 17 - 20, Ottawa, ON
Canadian Numismatic Association 2008 Convention, Crowne Plaza Hotel. More details to follow. For information contact Serge Pelletier serge_pelletier@sympatico.ca. Web site: <http://canadian-numismatic.org>.

AUG. 10, Paris, ON
SWON, Special Events Building 139 Silver St. (Paris Fairgrounds). Hours 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. More than 50 tables of coins, papermoney, military and more. Admission \$2 includes ticket on a gold coin draw. Good food and drink available at show. Buy sell and trade. Sponsor/Affiliate: Ted's Collectables Inc. For more information, contact Ted Bailey at 1-866-747-2646 or E-Mail tedscollectables@bellnet.ca.

SEPT. 6, Guelph, ON
South Wellington Coin Society Fall Show, Colonel John McCrea Legion, 919 York Rd., Guelph or Hwy 7. Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. One of Southwestern Ontario's biggest shows, 50 dealer tables, free parking, fully accessible. Large display area, hot meals. Admission \$2 for age 16 and up. Free gold coin draw. For more information, contact Lowell Wierstra, 8 Smart St., Guelph, ON, N1G 4K9. Phone (519) 824 6534.

SEPT. 14, London, ON
London Numismatic Society 16th Annual Coin Show, Ramada Inn, 817 Exeter Rd. [off Hwy. 401]. Hours 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Draws for prizes with admission of \$1 - children free. Free parking. Displays, and dealers for coins, tokens, medals, paper money and more. For more information, contact Len Buth, 519-641-4353. Email lbuth@webmanager.on.ca.

SEPT. 26 - 28, St. Catharines, ON
TNS, Quality Hotel, 327 Ontario St. TNS, Quality Hotel, 327 Ontario St. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Saturday and Sunday
Daily admission is \$4, Show pass is \$20. Sponsor/Affiliate: TNS. For more information, contact Rick Simpson, Jo-Anne Simpson, rscoins@cogeco.ca (905) 643-4988, fax (905) 643-6329.

OCT. 18, Oshawa, ON
Durham COIN-A-RAMA, Five Points Mall, 285 Taunton Rd. E. Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free dealer public, and membership draws. Free admission. Featuring paper, coins, tokens, medals & many other items. Sponsor/Affiliate: Oshawa & District Coin Club. For more information, contact Sharon at 905-728-1352 or e-mail papman@direct.com.

OCT. 19, Mt. Elgin, ON
46th Annual Tillsonburg Coin Show, Mt. Elgin Community Centre, Highway 19. Hours: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Admission \$1. Free parking, lunch available. Sponsor/Affiliate: Tillsonburg Coin Club. For more information, contact Wayne MacFarlane, (519) 842-6666, waynemacfarlane@sympatico.ca.

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 40033, Waterloo Square P.O.,
75 King Street, South
Waterloo, Ontario, N2J 4V1



April 12, 2008

Richard Johnson – Editor
Ontario Numismatist,
309 Lorne Ave. E.,
Box 23016
Stratford, Ontario, N5A 7V8

Dear Richard,

Membership

The applications for membership that appeared in the Mar – Apr issue of the Ontario Numismatist have been accepted. We welcome:

J1956 Benjamin Alter, Toronto, Ont.,
1957 Rick Dupuis, Chesley, Ont.,
1958 Bob McDiarmid, Welland, Ont.,
1959 Ronald Cheek, Carleton Place, Ont.,
1960 Aubyn Blackman, Waterloo, Ont.,
1961 Judy Blackman, Waterloo, Ont.,

The following application has been received.

1962 Keith Novak, Ajax, Ont.,

Bruce H. Raszmann
O.N.A. Treas. & Membership Chairman

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
Treasurer's Report
For The Period January 1, 2007 To December 31, 2007

General Account

Petty Cash @ January 1, 2007	\$ 46.33	
Bank Balance @ January 1, 2007	<u>\$1034.97</u>	
	\$1081.30	\$1081.30

Receipts

Memberships (Regular, Junior & Club)	\$4699.00	
O.N.A. Convention Draw	\$1766.27	
Club Ticket Rebate	\$ 64.00	
Premium U.S.A. Money	\$ 3.21	
2007 O.N.A. Convention	\$2749.09	
Interest on Certificates	\$ 353.33	
Medal Sold	\$ 400.00	
Donation	\$ 10.00	
Transfer From Contingency Acct	<u>\$ 600.00</u>	
Total	\$10644.90	\$10644.90

Expenses

O.N.A. Publication "Ontario Numismatist"	\$5355.77	
Postage	\$ 158.76	
Office Supplies	\$ 126.93	
P.O. Box Rental & G.S.T.	\$ 125.08	
Safety Deposit Box Rental & G.S.T.	\$ 129.85	
Photocopies	\$ 33.44	
Printing	\$ 23.77	
Executive Meetings	\$ 19.71	
Expenses For Projects Within The O.N.A.	\$2275.00	
Convention Table Covers	\$ 187.27	
Library Books	\$ 377.00	
C.N.A. Dues	\$ 35.00	
Bookbinding	\$ 134.36	
DVD Conversion	\$ 66.90	
Audio Visual	\$ 18.79	
10 Allstate Cases	\$1750.00	
Trailer Accessories	\$ 118.01	
Future Convention Travelling (Kingston)	\$ 166.25	
Transfer To Life Membership	\$ 500.00	
Transfer to Inscce Acct (2007) Subsidy	\$ 600.20	
Hem Deposit Fee	\$.16	
Certificate Cashed	<u>\$-3000.00</u>	
Total	\$ 9202.25	\$9202.25
Excess Receipts Over Expenses		\$1442.65
Petty Cash @ December 31, 2007		\$ 33.67
Bank Balance @ December 31, 2007		<u>\$2490.28</u>
Total		\$2523.95

General Account - Bank Reconciliation

Bank Ledger Sheet Balance @ December 31, 2007	\$2490.28
Outstanding Cheques	\$ NIL
Bank Statement Balance @ December 31, 2007	\$2490.28

General Account Assets

Guaranteed & Premium Rate Redeemable Cert.'s	\$8000.00
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ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
 Treasurer's Report
 For The Period January 1, 2007 To December 31, 2007

<u>Contingency Account</u>		
Bank Balance @ January 1, 2007		\$8.47
<u>Receipts</u>		
Interest Guaranteed Investment Certificates	\$ 870.94	
Interest Premium Rate Redeemable Certificate	\$ 82.22	
Matured Guaranteed Investment Certificates	<u>\$12500.00</u>	
Total	\$13453.16	\$13453.16
<u>Expenses</u>		
Wait & See Certificate	\$ 2000.00	
Premium Rate Redeemable Certificates	\$10000.00	
Transferred to General Account	<u>\$ 600.00</u>	
Total	\$12600.00	\$12600.00
Excess Receipts Over Expenses		\$853.16
Bank Balance @ December 31, 2007		\$ 861.63

<u>Contingency Account Assets</u>	
Guaranteed Investment Certificates	\$21500.00
Wait & See Certificate	\$ 2000.00
Premium Rate Redeemable Certificates	\$10000.00

<u>Insurance Account</u>		
Bank Account @ January 1, 2007		\$890.29
<u>Receipts</u>		
27 (2008) Club Premiums @ \$90.00	\$2430.00	
2 (2008) Club Premiums @ \$110.00	\$ 220.00	
3 (2008) Additional Named Insured	\$ 30.00	
Interest on Certificates	\$ 156.86	
Matured Money Market G.I.C.'s	\$3700.00	
(2007) Subsidy from General Account	<u>\$ 600.20</u>	
Total	\$7137.06	\$7137.06
<u>Expenses</u>		
Insurance Premium (Nov 1/2007-Nov 1/2008)	\$3256.20	
Postage, Photocopies	\$ 37.38	
Premium Rate Redeemable G.I.C.'s	<u>\$3300.00</u>	
Total	\$6593.58	\$6593.58
Excess Receipts Over Expenses		\$ 543.48
Bank Balance @ December 31, 2007		\$1433.77
<u>Insurance Account Assets</u>		
Premium Rate Redeemable G.I.C.'s	\$3300.00	

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
 Treasurer's Report
 For The Period January 1, 2007 To December 31, 2007

Cash Asset Summary @ December 31, 2007

Cash & Bank Balance – General Account	\$ 2523.95	
Guaranteed Investment Cert.- General Account	\$ 4000.00	
Premium Rate Redeemable G.I.C. – General Account	\$ 4000.00	
Bank Balance – Contingency Account	\$ 861.63	
Guaranteed Investment Cert.'s – Contingency Acct.	\$21500.00	
Wait & See Certificate – Contingency Account	\$ 2000.00	
Premium Rate Redeemable Cert.'s – Contingency Acct	\$10000.00	
Bank Account – Insurance Account	\$ 1433.77	
Premium Rate Redeemable Cert.'s – Insurance Acct	\$ 3300.00	
Total	\$49619.35	\$49619.35
Cash Assets (2006)		\$50680.06
Decrease In Cash Assets		\$-1060.71

Life Membership Account

Bank Balance @ January 1, 2007		\$988.78
<u>Receipts</u>		
Interest Premium Rate Redeemable Cert.	\$195.00	
Interest Guaranteed Investment Cert.	\$165.25	
Transfer From General Account	<u>\$500.00</u>	
Total	\$860.25	\$860.25
<u>Expenses</u>		
58 Membership Dues (2007) @ \$15.00	\$870.00	\$870.00
Excess Receipts Over Expenses		\$ -9.75
Bank Balance @ December 31, 2007		\$979.03

Life Membership Assets

Premium Rate Redeemable Certificate	\$5000.00
Guaranteed Investment Certificates	\$4700.00

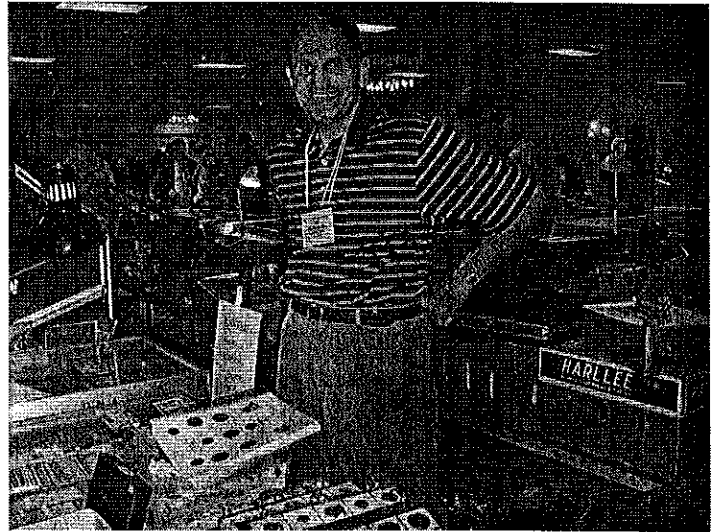
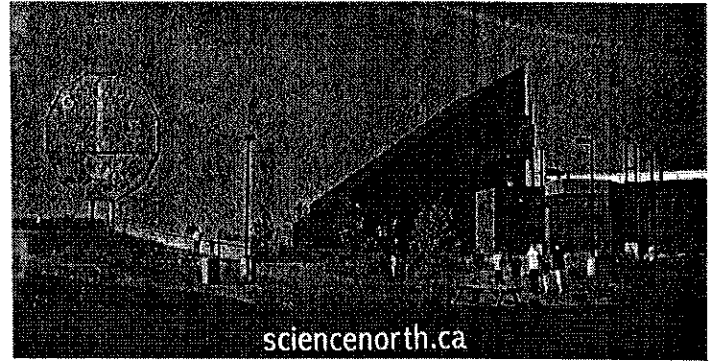
The Bank Accounts are maintained at the
 T.D. Canada Trust, Belmont Branch,
 Kitchener, Ontario

Treasurer Bruce H. Rasmann

2008 ONA CONVENTION

This was the most enjoyable convention for me since I began attending in Windsor a number of years ago. Perhaps it was because it was an opportunity to get away for a few days. Perhaps it was the opportunity to meet and talk to a number of dealers. Perhaps it was the fact that I entered an exhibit for the first time. Or maybe it was the friendly smiles from the hospitality suite. Or the great meal and enlightening talk at the banquet. In reality I believe it was all these things combined. Congratulations to the Nickel Belt Coin Club and President, Tom Rogers for the work that went into making this show a success. It was nice to see some new dealers and the Bank of Canada on hand. Hats off to Lorne Barnes for his great exhibits and for winning "Best of Show" The Award of Merit went to Len Buth and Joe Ash received the Fellow of the ONA Award. Dr. David Pearson gave an information talk at the banquet on how nickel came to be readily available in the Sudbury Basin. He also talked about the coin collection that has been amassed over the years containing nickel and other minerals from the area. He seemed genuinely pleased when presented with a silver convention medal at the end of his presentation. Thanks to Lois Rogers who took the pictures included in this report

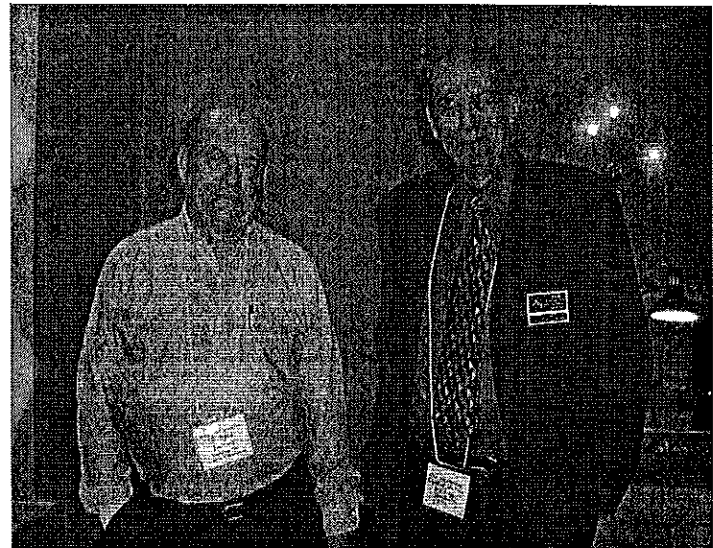
Sincerely
Rick Johnson
Editor



Dealer Bill Dimitropoulos takes an opportunity to smile for the camera during a lull on the Bourse Floor



Bruce Raszmann, ONA Treasurer looks on as our President, Tom Rogers talks to Gerry Albert President of the Nickel Belt Coin Club and 2008 Convention Chairman.



Your Bulletin Editor and Canadian Coin News Associate Publisher, Bret Evans were chosen to help photographer Lois Rogers adjust her camera for glare.



Roland Albert Convention Delegate
Representing Nickel Belt Coin Club



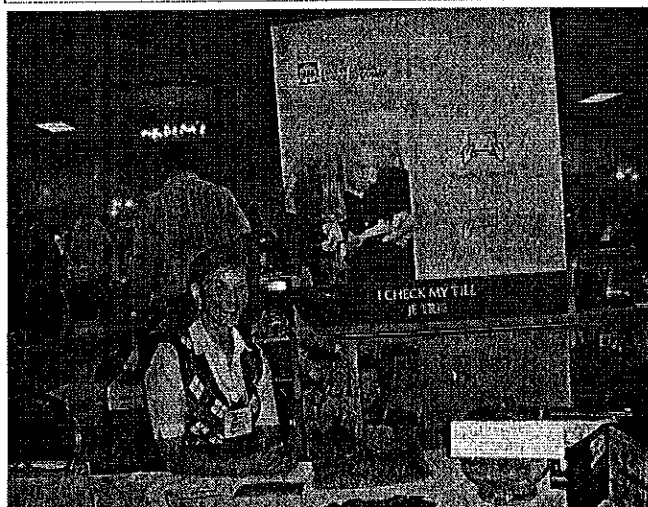
Area 10 Director William Waychison looks over
material at the Canadian Coin News Table
as Associate Publisher Bret Evens looks on.



Tom Rogers and Bruce Raszmann
hard At work



Tom Rogers and Gerry Albert
still talking



Bank of Canada Representative
Vanessa Sterguc offers a cheerful smile!



William English Convention Delegate
from Midland, Ont.

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
DREAM VACATION

2008

DRAW WINNERS

FIRST PRIZE – DREAM VACATION DRAW WINNER

YVAN ROBERT – SUDBURY, ONTARIO

SELLERS PRIZE – (\$100.00 Cash) - NICKEL BELT COIN CLUB

SECOND PRIZE - \$100 GOLD COIN

C.J. HUME – FORT ERIE (Todd & Betty Lou Hume's Dog)

FIVE CONSOLATION PRIZES – **2008 O'CANADA SETS**

BRIAN FAULKNER – WATERLOO, ONTARIO

ANGELA JAMIESON – LONDON, ONTARIO

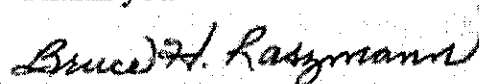
SUE EVERINGHAM – CODRINGTON, ONTARIO

EVERT BERGSMA – MOSSLEY, ONTARIO

BERTHA MacFARLANE – TILLSONBURG, ONTARIO

The ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION would like to thank all those who sold tickets or purchased them. Your support enables us to carry out our many programmes.

Thank you



Bruce H. Raszmann

Draw Chairman

B.C. COINS LTD 

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O.N.A. LM No. 96
C.N.A. LM CAND

DREAM VACATION

2008

Lottery Results Tickets Sales by Clubs

Clubs	Books Sold
Brantford Numismatic Society.....	8
Cambridge Coin Club.....	12
Canadian Tire Coupon Collectors.....	2
City of Ottawa Coin Club.....	6
Champlain Coin Club.....	4
Essex County Coin Club.....	1
Georgian Bay Coin & Stamp Coin.....	9
Ingersoll Coin Club.....	68
Kent Coin Club.....	10
Kingston Numismatic Association.....	2
Lakeshore Coin Club.....	1
Lake Superior Coin Club.....	1
London Numismatic Society.....	9
Mississauga-Etobicoke Coin, Stamp & Collectibles	2
Niagara Falls Coin Club.....	22
Nickel Belt Coin Club.....	79
North York Coin Club.....	3
Ontario Numismatic Association.....	44
Oshawa & District Coin Club.....	26
Peterborough Numismatic Society.....	2
Polish – Canadian Coin & Stamp Club	4
Sarnia Coin Club.....	---
Scarborough Coin Club.....	9
South Wellington Coin Society.....	12
St. Thomas Numismatic Association.....	10
Stratford Coin Club.....	32
Tillsonburg Coin Club.....	22
Timmins Coin Club.....	5
Waterloo Coin Society.....	69
Watford Coin Club.....	6
Windsor Coin Club.....	36
Woodstock Coin Club.....	12
<u>None Member Club</u>	
St. Catharines Coin Club.....	1
Total Books Sold	529
Registration Kits.....	20
Door Prizes.....	4
Total Books	553

Ontario Numismatic Association 2008 Convention

Exhibit Winners

Category	Category Description	Place	Name
A	Canadian Coins & Tokens	1st	Lorne Barnes
		2nd	Bill Kamb
		3rd	Lorne Barnes
B	Canadian Paper Money	1st	Gerry Albert
C	Non-Canadian Coins & Tokens	1st	Colin Cutler
D	Non-Canadian paper scrip	1st	Samuel Lipin
		2nd	Colin Cutler
		3rd	Rick Johnson
E	Junior Exhibits	1st	Thomas Steven
		2nd	Thomas Steven

BEST OF SHOW Lorne Barnes

Head Judge	Paul Johnson
Asst. Judge	Norm Belsten
Asst. Judge	Dick Dunn
Exhibit Chairperson	Lorraine McDowell





www.bwcoin.com

Willard Burton
416-254-6569

CNA LM 350
ONA CPMA

345 Queen St. W. Unit #9,
Brampton, ON L6Y 3A9
Store Phone: (905) 450-2870
• Fax: (905) 450-3170
E-mail: b_and_w@sympatico.ca
• willardb@bwcoin.com

Robert Beaton
519-939-8577

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April 25, 2008

O.N.A. 2008 General Meeting

I have completed my 3rd year as the O.N.A. area 7 director. There are 6 coin clubs in the Toronto area which includes the Polish club. Being a director you get to go to other coin club meetings keeping them up to date on the O.N.A. Most clubs are very similar but they do a few things different.

Oshawa Coin Club have about 90 members, have a coin show twice a year at the Five Points Mall, promote the club with a flyer and a business card with their meeting dates on it, have 5-6 dealers at the monthly meetings with improves attendance and have a monthly draw and auction. There one concern is other clubs having a show on the same day as their show since their dates are promoted well in advance.

North York Coin Club is finding it hard to have executive meetings since the members are very busy with other things. It is difficult to make long term planning for the club.

The Polish Club are receiving information about the O.N.A. through one of the members of the Scarborough Coin Club but I have not attended one of their meetings yet.

Thanks
David Bawcutt

Scarborough Coin Club

- Meets 1st Wednesday of each month at Cedarbrook Community Centre at 7:30 p.m. (No meetings during July and August)
- We have approximately 50 members
- We are selling our club wood sets for \$12.00 with shipping extra.
- We have our 12th Annual Coin Show on November 1, 2008
- Our last meeting in June will be a barbeque in the park.

Submitted by
David Bawcutt
Scarborough Coin Club Delegate to the general O.N.A. meeting

THE REDEMPTION
A short story by James J. Antonio

It's funny how a misdemeanor can come back to haunt someone years later, causing them all kinds of worry, even compelling them to redeem themselves in one way or another.

No one could figure out what was going on. It was the strangest thing. A woman by the name of Madame Beauparleant over in Côte-des-Neiges was the first to receive one of the padded envelopes in the mail. There was no sender's name or address on it but inside she found the nicest old coin she'd ever seen. It was a shiny new Canadian one-cent dated 1933, from the days when she was a little girl. There was a note along with it too, very neatly written out but with a sharp backhand. All it said was "Congratulations".

Then a family in Outremont got a padded envelope in the mail and found a brilliant new 1945 Canadian silver dollar along with a handwritten note, in backhand again, with the same thing on it, "Congratulations".

This kind of thing went on in Montreal for several years. Finally, the newspaper did a story on the envelopes, hoping it would draw the good Samaritan out of the woodwork and satisfy everyone's curiosity.

No one came forth, however, and it only piqued the public's curiosity. The padded envelopes kept coming. One young man got two 1948 Canadian silver dollars courtesy of the unknown benefactor.

Down at the police department, detective Grise was sick of getting calls about the envelopes. Four or five times a week he'd pick the phone up and have to tell someone that it wasn't police business and no crime was being committed and no, they didn't know who was sending the things. Guy Grise was a surly little fellow with a peevish look. He had thinning hair, a pointed nose, and a pursed mouth. He seldom spoke to anyone unless he had to and loved his Montreal gin sours. Nonetheless, he was silently admired for his shrewd police work. His big thing was motive, the psychology behind a crime: why did they do it? Guy was an avid coin collector but rarely had enough money left over at the end of the month to buy much of anything. He was jealous when he heard about some of the coins the "nut" was sending out, though he wouldn't admit it, and he was more than a little interested in finding out who it was. He paid a visit to all the main post offices and spoke to the supervisors, flashing his badge. This gave his ego a boost and sparked some attention too.

"Any o' the clerks remember anything? How many people can be sending' out envelopes like that, huh? C'mon now! And anonymously! Can't be many, can it? One o' youz must have a clue. I can't believe it. Know sumpin', if I worked here I'd know who it was in a hurry. I'd remember alright, you bet!"

The supervisors all told him the same thing in so many words:

"Hey, Montreal's a big city, you know. Lots o' people use those there padded envelopes. We'll keep an eye out for you, see what we can come up with."

There was a big Italian style house on Rue St. Hubert. It looked like a white cake made of three blocks set side by side and laced with icing. The yard in the back was like a little park, laid out with four large kidney-shaped flower beds blooming with colour. Impatiens were the order of the day, but there was no shortage of geraniums and petunias either, and red and white seemed to be the colours of choice. It was a private place, the yard was, and though large, set up for not more than two or three people. One only inviting white, and intricately designed, wrought-iron bench seemed to gaze dreamily into a small pond where five or six goldfish slithered and flashed on sunny, bright days. There were only three trees, off to the back, near the fence: a beech, and two birches, so favoured because of their white bark. The fence was old enough, made of real cedar, but

hardly visible at all though it embraced the whole yard: honey suckle grew up all around it, and rose of sharon and clematis and holly-hocks and hydranges, as well as ivy, helped to close things up even more. All in all, it was easy to see that whoever lived in the great white house was probably an eccentric of sorts bent on keeping their privacy.

One late afternoon the door bell rang. The paperboy had come to collect and he was always reluctant to come to this one particular house where the man, not so much the lady, seemed so "weird". The young fellow breathed a sigh of relief when he saw Madame Delacroix open the door. She was nicer to him and she actually spoke where the man hardly ever did. She had orange hair, short and in curls, and she paid him with a mushy, red lipstick smile. "There you go and there's a bit of a tip for you too."

The paperboy, whose name was Amos, chirped with delight when he got home and started to really look at the coins the lady with the orange hair in the big white house had given him. He knew they were hers because he'd only collected at two houses; the man in the other house had certainly given him two five-dollar bills. He examined the coins one by one with big saucer eyes. There were old nickels and dimes and quarters and half-dollars, most of them older even than his grandma and grandpa, and golly gee! they were all in good condition too with easy to see dates and lots of detail and he just couldn't believe it.

Now, Amos seldom read the papers he delivered, but when the dust of the storm of discovery had settled down and his mind got back to normal, it dawned on him and he began to wonder. He'd seen something on the front page once, he was sure he had, and he'd heard about the man, too, off and on and...

Four days later, Amos' father called the paper. He'd put two and two together, he told them. "My boy's gotten these coins, see, as pay for deliverin' your paper, and I've taken them to a coin dealer because they're pretty old, see, and the coin guy checked them out, okay, right there, and he said they were worth plenty and did I wanna sell 'em and I said I didn't know, no, but how much would he pay and he said he'd pay me over two grand. Well, hey, you can guess how surprised I was! I figured right away they were maybe stolen or somethin', so I told 'im I'd be back, maybe--just maybe--when I got the whole mess sorted out...Anyhow, do you think that's where the coins are comin' from, the ones that are goin' out to everybody in those padded envelopes? D'you think it could be? I mean, I remember seein' that thing there in your paper and I just thought I'd give you a call."

There was quite a bit of verbal sparring over dinner one evening in the big white house on Rue St. Hubert. It was a couple of hours after Madame Delacroix had paid the paperboy out of the big bowl of old coins that Mr. Delacroix (his first name was Guiscard) had forgotten on the dining room table earlier in the afternoon. It was too bad because it really was a lovely dinner, lamb stew and dumplings with sugar pie for dessert. Guiscard got so loud and hostile (which was so out of character for him, quiet fellow that he was), that Michel, their bluish gray Chartreux cat, hopped onto his paws from his recumbent slumber and trotted out of the room in a huff to a quieter place.

"How could you? Just how could you, Oriande?" "Oh hush, Guiscard! Hush! You know you have too many coins. What on earth are we ever going to do with them all? It's insanity. The bedroom upstairs is full of them. One of these days the ceiling will fall in on our heads, and then what? Tell me! I thought it would be a good idea to give a few of them to that little boy. He's so good. He delivers our paper every day and even in the worst rain and snow storms."

"You're a fool, Oriande! You don't know. They're worth a lot of money." "And what are we going to do with all this money at our age, can you tell me that? We should stand on a busy corner downtown and give those coins out by the handful if you ask me!"

Guiscard realized only too well that his wife was right. But she didn't know what he'd been up to and he didn't really want to tell her either. It was his own secret.

The newspaper editor was going to run a short column on the fortunate paperboy but then thought the better of it. Given the value of the coins, anything written about them might jeopardize a police investigation. Even though they had probably come from whoever was sending out the coins in those padded envelopes, he couldn't take a chance; they might be part of a theft. So he did the wise thing. He called the police and told them the whole story.

The evening Guy Grise walked up the steps of the big white house on Rue St., Hubert and rang the doorbell, it was raining so hard that torrents of water were sloshing noisily through the gutters. And even though the thunder cracked like the sky was being ripped apart, he didn't flinch a bit. The detective's little eyes were bloodshot and watery and he'd had one too many gin sours at the bistro.

A lady who looked like an older, plumper version of his sister opened the door and he immediately introduced himself, flashing his badge proudly.

"Why, whatever could be wrong?" Madame Delacroix muttered as she stepped back and let the pointy fellow slip past her. He didn't utter a word.

The Chartreux cat scurried away with a screech, as if someone had stepped on its tail, and flew up the staircase in a gray flash.

Detective Grise boldly plopped himself down on the edge of a black leather chair by a window in the living room where the sheer white curtains fell to the gleaming hardwood floor like a misty falls.

"Is Mr. Delacroix home by any chance?" he wanted to know, folding his bony hands in his lap so that his forefingers, set side by side, pointed out like a gun. "I think he's the one I wanna talk to."

Madame Delacroix was suddenly all in a tizzy over the sudden intrusion. "Just one minute, please," she said, moving tentatively over to the staircase. "Guiscard!" she called up the steps. Her voice was tremulous and the curls of her orange hair quivered like loose springs. "Guiscard, can you hear me?"

There was a brief silence and then: "What do you want? I am busy up here."

"He's always in that room, Monsieur Grise," Madame Delacroix complained apologetically as she turned her head toward the detective. "Those coins! They've become an obsession...Guiscard, come down at once! There is a policeman here to speak with you." It was only a minute or so before Guiscard came down the steps. He moved slowly, clutching the banister along the way. He had on wrinkled black pants and a white shirt and looked like he'd just gotten out of bed. His blue eyes were squinting through the thick lenses of his horn-rimmed glasses and his gray hair swooped from side to side down across his forehead. He gave you the impression of someone trying to hide inside himself.

Guy Grise jumped up and approached the old man to shake the diaphanous, blue-veined hand being offered to him. He could tell right away that Guiscard Delacroix was no thief, no crook at all, but perhaps just a little strange.

"Okay, Monsieur Delacroix," he began, not mincing words. "I'm detective Guy Grise and I'm here to find out a few things as part of an investigation. I know either you or your wife here gave some valuable coins to your paperboy in payment for his loyal work...where did you get them?"

"It was her actually," Guiscard said, pointing a crooked finger at his wife. "She was the one who gave him the coins. She shouldn't have, I didn't want her to. It was a faux-pas on her part."

"So, would you like the coins back?" Guy Grise wanted to know. "I can get them for you with a phone call."

Guiscard waved off the suggestion. "Oh, certainly not. Let the little boy have them."

"Tell me where you got them," Guy Grise said, leaning forward

and a little closer to Monsieur Delacroix. "I have to know that."

Guiscard gaped at the detective reluctantly, with rheumy eyes. "My mother and father used to run a grocery store, you see, many years ago, in the early part of the twentieth century. Right here in the city. My mother saved all the old coins. Oh, she was no collector. I do know that. But she put away everything old anyhow. And then when I began running the store myself in the early 1930's, I too began to save all of the old coins that I took in. I became interested in numismatics and began buying many pieces to add to those I already had. To make sets, you see...I don't know whether or not you are a coin collector?"

"I am," Guy Grise owned up proudly. "And an avid one to boot!"

"Then you know that some dates are harder to find than others and the only way to get them most of the time is to buy them."

Madame Delacroix was shaking her head, her eyes raised in frustration at the ceiling. "You have no idea, Monsieur Grise! You have no idea how many coins this man has!"

Guy Grise chuckled, getting a real kick out of it. He shoved his hands in the pockets of his long, dark coat, and stood there carefully listening to the rest of the man's story.

"Business in the grocery store was very good, even in the mid-30's and then all through the war too. But when the plazas started up and the big supermarkets came along in the 1960's, business dropped off. We managed to hold on, Oriande and I, right up until 1989, when I rented the store to someone and took my retirement."

The next question was dangling on the end of Guy Grise's tongue like a drop of dew on a flower. "Monsieur Delacroix, are you the person who's been sendin' coins out in the mail to people?"

"Yes, I am."

There was quite a long silence. Madame Delacroix, speechless and in a state of shock, shuffled out of the big bright room and disappeared into the kitchen. The clicking of the grandfather clock seemed intolerably loud to Guiscard. He wanted to cover his ears, but only lowered his eyes to the floor and stood there almost in shame, like a truant schoolboy.

Guy Grise pushed on: "Look, Monsieur Delacroix, I just want to know one thing: Why? Why are you givin' your coins away?"

Guiscard wanted to get it out, to tell him, to get the awful weight off his shoulders. But Monsieur Grise was a policeman after all. That made a difference. Perhaps he needed a lawyer before saying another thing.

An hour later, Guiscard and Guy were seated at a big old table upstairs in the bedroom where all the coins were. They were laughing at this and that, real friends now, as they chatted about numismatics. The older man kept passing coins to the younger one. "I've never seen anything like it!" detective Grise exclaimed. "There are more here than at the coin shows." "It has taken me a long time." "No doubt...I know there was a reason behind all that good will. There's always a reason behind everything. It's only good police work to know that...I would have never figured this one out myself." Guy Grise shook his head, astounded. "So, you've been feeling guilty all these years for cheatin' your customers and now you're tryin' to come good for it with this free coin giveaway thing, eh? Well I've heard it all now, yes I have. It was the scale then?" Guiscard nodded reluctantly. "You tagged on a little here and a little there, but the funniest thing of all--even though I shouldn't be laughing at the prank--is what you told me about stuffing the chickens and the turkeys and the roasts and the hams with weights before you put them on the scale." the detective broke out laughing. "You sure couldn't get away with that kind o' thing these days, Guiscard, not with prepackaging!"

Detective Grise couldn't believe his luck when he left the house later with a whole box full of coins. Guiscard had literally completed his Canadian silver dollar set for him with the three varieties of 1947 and the prize above all, the 1948! Guy had promised poor old Monsieur Delacroix not to say a word about anything. It was going to be their secret.



The Windsor Hotel

DID YOU KNOW.....?

By Scott E. Douglas

.....that the Windsor Hotel which opened in January 1878 in Montreal, Quebec was at that time one of the most luxurious hotels in the world? The Windsor occupied the entire block of Peel, Dorchester, Stanley and Cypress streets and faced the Dominion Square. It had a Ladies entrance on Dorchester Street equipped with a broad canopy to protect its female guests from rain or harsh sun. The main entrance was off of Peel Street. The Windsor was equipped with a ticket and telegraph office, a cigar stand, a book store, a barber shop, men's clothing shop, drugstore, billiard parlor, café and a bar. One of the hotels much talked about features was the gentlemen's waiting room furnished in a luxurious 'Egyptian style'. The success of this grand hotel was such that a new wing of 134 rooms was added some 8 years later making the Windsor one of the largest hotels in the world.

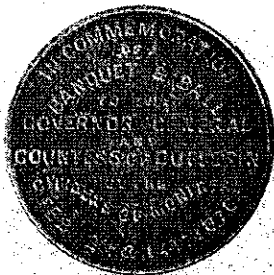
In February 1878 the Windsor hosted a banquet and ball for the Governor General and the Countess of Dufferin. A medal to commemorate the occasion is listed as LeRoux 1535. Some of the celebrities that stayed at the Windsor in its heyday are Sarah Bernhardt (1880) Mark Twain (many occasions in the 1880's), Rudyard Kipling (1907), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1914) and King George VI with Queen Elizabeth who in 1939 stood on the balcony and received cheers from a very large crowd in adjacent Dominion Square.

In 1985 the now defunct Windsor hotel underwent major reinventions and is presently known as Le Windsor. This refurbished Grand Lady is currently accommodating banquets, conventions, weddings, press releases, and product launches.

Le Windsor has been host to film sets (Sum of All Fears) and TV shows (Canadian Idol).



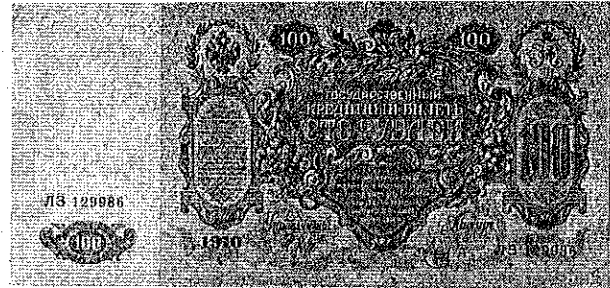
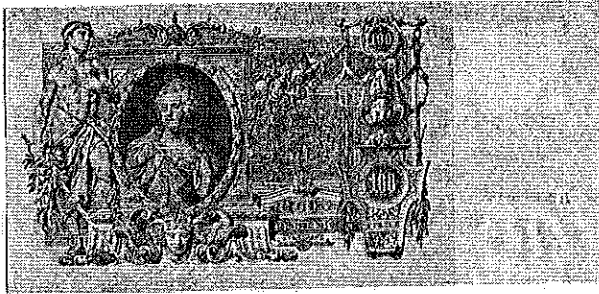
LeRoux 1535 -----



The Historic Windsor Hotel 1885

Babki: 100 Ruble Pre-Revolution Russian Banknotes

By Ron Cheek



In researching the history of the Romanov dynasty for a recent COCC article, I came across a lot of information about one of the most famous Russian monarchs, Catherine II, more commonly known as Catherine the Great. I also stumbled across an interesting little fact: a common slang word for money in Russian is *babki*, literally meaning: “old women”. It is said that this refers to the pre-revolution 100 ruble banknotes (State Credit Notes) bearing the portrait of Catherine the Great. (1) So, naturally, when I saw several mint condition 100 ruble notes offered for sale by Dr. Graham Neale a few months later, I bought one, the note pictured above. It is huge, measuring 258 x 121 mm. That requires a big wallet! I assumed the people of the time either folded or rolled these notes up. Finding one in perfect condition was, therefore, a thrill for me, as a collector. But, of course, after digging into it a bit, I discovered there is more to it than the obvious good fortune of finding such a perfectly preserved example of old paper money.

Pick (2) lists two different pre-revolution 100 ruble State Credit Notes bearing the portrait of a mature Catherine the Great: #5, dated 1898, and the other (mine, #13) dated 1910. (Some notes in other pre-revolution denominations show what Pick describes as an “allegorical figure” a female wearing the Russian crown. I suppose this might represent a younger Catherine, but Pick does not indicate it does.)

Closer scrutiny of Pick reveals that State Credit Notes were issued with several different signatures, by which the notes can be roughly dated. For instance, the note pictured above, with the signature of I. Shipov, although dated 1910, was actually issued somewhere between 1912 and 1917. Similarly, Pick # 5 (the 1898 100 ruble note) could have been issued as late as 1909 to 1912. This is the case with all the State Credit Notes; they were reissued several times, well after the dates on the notes. Why was this so? The answer, of course, lies in the economics and politics of the times. It is instructive, however, to start somewhat further back in Russian history to put the early 20th Century events and economics into context.

Alexander II (1855-1881) freed the serfs early in his reign; they had effectively been peasant slaves. He brought about many reforms, and liberalized foreign trade and investment. Restrictions on private economic activity were lifted and, although the former serfs had no land, the economy improved greatly. This gave a chance for the Russian Empire to start stabilizing its monetary system. A war with Turkey, however, brought new spending requirements and postponed hopes for a stable currency to the distant future. There was inflation and paper rubles were printed in large numbers. Their value continued to fall in relation to the gold ruble coins then in circulation. (3)

The reign of Alexander II and his liberalization of Russia ended abruptly with an assassin's bomb on March 1, 1881. Alexander III succeeded his father. He did not

favour the liberalization of Russia at all; he was an autocratic Tsar. However, he did continue to pursue policies that put the Empire on a more sound financial and economic footing and he implemented stabilization of the currency. During the reign of Alexander III (1881-1894), prudent monetary policies of the Tsar and his ministers resulted in increased gold reserves and smaller budget deficits. Russia mined over 17% of the world's gold production at that time, and exports of wheat further increased gold reserves. Beginning in 1882, Russian exports exceeded imports and the Russian economy experienced healthy growth (as did other European economies) during this peaceful time. The government decided to stop new currency emissions and then to institute free exchange of paper rubles into gold. This was also the time that Gold Loans were issued, based on issuing foreign debt. The scholarly article in Reference (3) explains the changes taking place in the currency system:

“What were “gold rubles”? After all, at this time the official monetary unit in Russia was [the] silver ruble. Nevertheless, the money in circulation consisted of gold, silver, and copper coins and paper banknotes. There were two gold coins: [the] 10 ruble coin (imperial) and [the] 5 ruble coin (poluimperial). ... there was [an] exchange rate between coins and paper rubles. At times, the exchange rate was officially fixed, at times it was floating. In the second half of the 19th Century, the price of silver relative to the price of gold fell, and throughout Europe gold emerged as a major measure of value. Until 1895 [Russian] contracts could not be written in gold rubles, and the only legal operations in gold rubles were the ones that involved Gold Loans. For these transactions [a] golden ruble standard was set as 1/10 of the ten-ruble gold coin. The standard also specified the weight and content of pure gold in the gold ruble. In the years 1889 -1896 the government succeeded in placing several issues of Gold Loans. These bonds were successfully sold and helped to increase the gold reserves. After the monetary reform of 1895 -1897 [under Tsar Nicholas II] paper rubles became freely exchangeable into gold, and [the] Russian ruble became freely convertible currency. Since now paper rubles were freely convertible into precious coins, the system of “two currencies” - paper and silver rubles was no longer in existence.”

Nicholas II succeeded his father in 1894. Although a weak man, and unprepared for the great office he inherited, he nevertheless continued (unwisely) his father's autocratic policies. (It is important to note that, despite the reactionary policies of Nicholas II and his father, the prevailing mood of the people of Russia as the 20th Century arrived was one of liberalism and socialist thinking.) Nicholas' efforts were ably assisted and encouraged by his wife, Alexandra, the former Princess Alix of Hesse, whom he married barely a month after his father's death. She was even more reactionary than the Tsar and, as is well known, later fell under the influence of the malignant and destructive mystic monk, Rasputin. The story has been told and re-told of the path of destruction of the monarchy and the Empire that Alexandra and Rasputin wrought, especially as the Great War sapped Russia of its resources and people, and its will to follow the Tsar.

But when Nicholas became Tsar in 1894 the Russian Empire was in a period of relative prosperity. With a very large gold reserve and confidence in the Russian economy by western European nations, there were large influxes of foreign capital. Industrialization

increased rapidly; major railway extensions were constructed; iron and coal mining increased dramatically. At the same time, peasant agriculture remained a mainstay of the economy, and harvests were plentiful. (4) There were hard times, strikes, riots and economic problems due to the disastrous Russo-Japanese war in the early years of the 20th Century, to be sure. But by 1910, Russia had become an inseparable part of the capitalist world economy. (5)

The currency reform started under Alexander III was completed, in stages, under Nicholas II. It was somewhat complex. However, by the law of Nov 14, 1897, unlimited exchange of paper rubles into gold was allowed. Fifteen ruble face value gold coins were struck dated 1897. These served as full collateral for 15 paper rubles. Paper rubles thus became the official monetary unit, just as gold rubles were. (3) Interestingly, the 15 ruble gold coin was only struck dated 1897. Ten ruble gold coins of proportionately less weight were then struck dated 1898 through 1911 (with some dates missing) and 5 ruble gold coins were produced between 1897 and 1911. (6)

So, when the *babki* 100 ruble bank notes were originally issued (1898 and 1910) they were actually worth 100 gold rubles. I was curious as to how much money that would have been. By comparing the 10 ruble gold coins with the five dollar gold coins of the U.S.A. and Canada of the same period (which are similar in size and identical in purity) and using a little math, it is seen that a ruble was worth \$0.514 Canadian or U.S. (6) The *babki* notes, when originally issued, were therefore worth about \$51.47. That was a lot of money at the time, but this was not to last.

The period of peaceful economic development lasted until 1914 when Russia entered the First World War. Military expenses became a great burden and budget deficits were necessary. A law enacted July 27, 1914 terminated the exchange of paper bank notes into gold. The government successively allowed itself to print more and more paper money as the war years passed and the Russian economy fell into ruin. By February, 1917, before the revolution, inflation had devalued the purchasing power of the ruble to about 26 % of what it had been before the war began. In January, 1914, there were 1,633 million paper rubles in circulation. By January 1, 1917, the number was 9,103 million. These paper rubles were of "the old type", i.e., they were all reissued notes of the earlier dates. Other bonds and paper obligations were issued as well (3)

The 1917 "February Revolution" brought the Russian Empire and the Romanov Dynasty to an end. Quoting again from Reference (3):

"Immediately after the fall of the Russian Empire, the country was briefly entitled Free Russia ... On September 1, 1917, the Provisional Government announced the creation of [the] Russian Republic. [The] Provisional Government decided to continue the war. The budget deficit was already enormous, and the need for additional large military expenses made matters even worse. To fight inflation and to raise budget revenues, several measures were taken. One was the issuance of the internal loan, "The Freedom Loan", as it was officially called. Other measures included the introduction of state monopoly on the sales of sugar, tea, matches, tobacco, and other consumer products. The "Freedom

Loan” of 1917 was sold, but the proceeds were not sufficient to cover the deficit. The Provisional Government actively used the printing press. On March 4, 1917 [a] special decree of the Provisional Government raised the ceiling on paper currency emissions to 8.5 billion rubles. Several other decrees followed ... and the ceiling was raised to 16.5 billion rubles. During this period, paper money of the old type was printed, [my underlining, for emphasis] as well as new banknotes with face value [of] 250 and 1,000 rubles.

... The total amount of paper currency in circulation equaled 19,574.7 million rubles as of November 1, 1917. During the eight months the Provisional Government ruled over Russia, it issued more paper rubles than the Imperial Government of Nicholas II during 32 months of the war.

... This was a period of hyperinflation. The prices were rising so quickly there was a constant demand for banknotes of higher denomination. In August and September of 1917 the demand for currency was so high that the Provisional Government could hardly satisfy it through the existing capacity of the State Banknote Company. Short-term bonds issued by the State Treasury of the Imperial Government circulated as money. In September of 1917 the Provisional Government allowed coupons of government bonds, the certificates of War Loans, and certificates of the “Freedom Loan” to circulate as money.

On October 24-25, 1917, the Provisional Government was overthrown. [The] Soviet government was created.”

The end of the Provisional Government marked the end of the Russian monetary system and a new epoch began. On Nov 7, 1917, the State Bank was disestablished and succeeded by the People's Bank of the RSFSR. (7) Russia's colossal debt, owed to international creditors, was wiped out when the Bolshevik dictatorship refused to recognize the debts of the Tsar. (5) Of course, the old bank notes became worthless.

My well-preserved *babki* note was likely issued in the later period of the hyperinflation described above. It certainly never circulated, probably because it could buy nothing. Or perhaps it survived in such good condition within a large bundle of worthless notes held onto by an unfortunate Russian. In any case, it was a sad reflection of the \$51.47 value notes that were originally issued before the war.

To end this somewhat mind-bending dissertation, let us return to the portrait on the *babki* note the “old woman”. It is, as already noted, that of Catherine the Great. Portraits of Peter I and Nicholas I were also used on other bank note denominations during the reign of the last Tsar. Curiously, no banknotes bearing the portrait of Tsar Nicholas II were issued, although his portrait does appear on some of the small change postage stamp currency and on the gold coins of his reign. (2) (6) Instead, portraits of great figures of Russian history were used on larger denomination bank notes.

Catherine II was certainly a beloved and noteworthy (sorry) figure of Russian history. She was a German (Prussian) minor princess, daughter of Christian August, Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst. Born in Stettin, Prussia (now Szczecin, Poland) in 1729, she was named Sophie-Friederike Aguste von Anhalt-Zerbst. At the time, her father, a general, was Governor of the city of Stettin (which is not in, or even near, Anhalt-Zerbst, incidentally.) After some royal intrigue and interventions, Sophie was married to Grand Duke Peter, the prospective Tsar of Russia, the son of Empress Elizabeth I, at age 17.

“Princess Sophie spared no effort to ingratiate herself not only with the Empress Elizabeth, but with her husband and with the Russian people. She applied herself to learning the Russian language with such zeal that she rose at night and walked about in her bedroom barefoot repeating her lessons. This resulted in a severe attack of pneumonia in March 1794. When she wrote her memoirs she represented herself as having made up her mind when she came to Russia to do whatever seemed necessary, and to profess to believe whatever required of her, in order to become qualified to wear the crown. The consistency of her character throughout life makes it highly probable that even at the age of fifteen she possessed sufficient maturity to adopt this worldly-wise line of conduct.” (8)

Born a Lutheran, she converted to Russian Orthodoxy and took the name Catherine Alexeyevna before she was married. The marriage was unsuccessful, and may never even have been consummated, although this is officially denied. Catherine carried on liaisons with many men of her court throughout her life, and implied in her memoirs that her son, who became Tsar Paul I, was fathered by one of them. Catherine and her husband (as Tsar Peter III) took the throne in 1762 upon the death of the Empress Elizabeth. Within months, a palace revolt, led by Catherine, deposed the Tsar and Catherine was proclaimed Empress and Autocrat of All the Russias. (8)

She went on to rule for 34 years until she died of a stroke in 1796 at age 67. She had a great personal effect on the politics of Europe and the furtherance of Russian interests. She was a “Benevolent Despot”. (4, p. 285) As well, she had enormous influences on the culture of Russia and the strengthening of its official religion. Catherine the Great well deserved her name; although she had not a drop of Russian blood in her veins, she was one of the greatest monarchs of her time and certainly became one of the most beloved in all of Russian history. She may have appeared as an “old woman” on the banknotes, but she was certainly no ordinary *babushka*.

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- (4) Bernard Pares, *A History of Russia* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1966)
- (5) http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/lo/countries/ru/ru_economic.html

- (1) Chester L. Krause and Clifford Mishler, 1993 *Standard Catalogue of World Coins* (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, Inc. 1992) 20th Anniversary Edition
- (2) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Bank_of_the_Russian_Empire
- (3) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catherine_II_of_Russia

P.S. There is a great web site showing excellent colour scans of all known Russian banknotes, Empire, U.S.S.R. and contemporary (a virtual Pick): <http://russianmoney.info>

Centennial of the Royal Canadian Mint

By Tony Hine

Controversial fence battle delayed Mint's 1907 opening schedule.

1908:First Strike

The Royal Canadian Mint in Ottawa opened on January 2, 1908. Although Governor General Earl Grey struck the first coin, he will be better remember for his football trophy and his taste in tea. At the time of its grand opening the mint was in fact the Ottawa Branch of the Royal Mint. It was not until December 1, 1931 that the Dominion of Canada took over the Ottawa Branch of the Royal Mint, renaming it the Royal Canadian Mint. In honour of this anniversary, your bulletin, will, throughout 2008, feature some historical vignettes of the Mint's colourful past.

For some time, the Royal Canadian Mint continued to rely on the Royal Mint for the production of dies upon which Canada's coinage was struck. Indeed as late as 1937, the Royal Mint farmed out some die engraving to the Paris Mint. The history of the Royal Canadian Mint is of great interest to numismatists, historians and Canadian nationalists.

Histories of the RCM

In 1968, the Royal Canadian Mint celebrated its sixtieth anniversary by issuing a 60th Anniversary souvenir commemorative history entitled "Heads and Tales" through the Queens Printer. Reflecting the age of Marshall McLuhan, the book was more souvenir than history, the layout simulating a scrapbook. In 1983, a more scholarly work by James Å. Haxby, entitled "Striking Impressions," was published by the mint on the occasion of the seventy fifth anniversary.

The land for the mint was expropriated from the Canadian Pacific Railway. Tenders were invited in November 1904. Quotes for construction and site preparation were received, and Sanders & Sutherland of Kingston began construction as contractors in June 1905. Originally opening was planned for January 1907.

An employee transferred from the Royal Mint in London, England to Ottawa on September 1, 1906 prepared specifications and drawings for the equipment for the Ottawa Branch. Imperial protocol resulted in tenders being let in England in November 1906. In July 1907, Dr. James Bonar, LLD, was appointed Deputy Mint Master. Bonar had been Chief Examiner of the Civil Service Commission. An examination of the site and the plans disclosed that a surrounding security fence made of stone, specified by the Royal Mint, was absent. Although this was deemed an emergency, no solution foreseen could be completed before 1908.

The Royal Mint specified a surrounding security fence made of stone, but a series of miscues resulted in the fences construction costing three times the original estimate. Numismatic Researcher Henry Neinhuis, reviewing the Hansard transcript with the assistance of Dan Gosling, discovered that a fence that should have cost \$14,000.00, wound up costing \$45,000.00. A detailed description of the equipment ordered for the Ottawa branch was published by mint master Arthur H. W. Cleave, M.I.M.E., in a paper read before the mechanical section of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers and published in April 1908 in Volume 22 of the Transactions of the Society of Civil Engineers at pages 134-152. The article was reprinted in the CN Journal in three parts in 1978. The equipment specified by Cleave arrived in the fall of 1907, and in November 1907, bronze trial run tokens were produced. A December 10, 1907 article in the Ottawa Citizen reported on the production of the test pieces, which are now considered a numismatic rarity. In the Canadian Numismatic Journal, Henry Neinhuis reviewed the history of the test pieces in a November 2007 article.

The history of the Ottawa branch starts long before 1908. British Columbian gold miners had been agitating for a mint from the middle of the nineteenth century.

The Ottawa Mint Act was passed by Canada's Parliament in May 1901. The key provision was the creation of a \$75,000.00 per year annuity to cover expenses.

The Mint added a refinery in 1911.

In 1998, the RCM offered a double-dated commemorative replica of the 1908 mint set available in red (proof) or antiqued finish. The antiqued finish is valued more highly in "trends." So far, comparable offerings for 2008 have not been announced. If the Royal Mint's marketing efforts are in any way predictive, collectors may expect a sovereigns collection offering Victorian, Edward VII and George V reproductions in a premium priced collectors set. This writer believes a RCM reproduction of the 1911 dollar pattern in .9999 silver would be well received by collectors, although pricing is unlikely to be nostalgic because of the high metallic value of silver in the 2008 market.

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