

Welcome to the C.N.A. E-Bulletin Vol. 2, No. 24 – September 10, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

The highlight of past issues, I am told by a number of you, has been the series we published about the telephone calls and conversations that Tony Swicer has had in his coin shop from customers (the Florida United Numismatists has seen fit to also print Swicer's series in their bulletin). He has been my inspiration to draft a series of the telephone calls that I have received when I was Executive Secretary of the C.N.A. The first installment is published in this issue. More to follow in future issues.

WE HAVE MAIL

From Anonymous: "Post Office employees are not doing their work. Please see the postage stamps I am enclosing that were on the parcel you sent. They did not even cancel them. I happened to go to the Post Office today for a supply of stamps and I mentioned it to the clerk serving me. He said that happens often, save them and use them again. This advice from a government servant." - As we said in a previous E-Bulletin, dozens of callers were unanimous in their calls to a Toronto talk radio station that any postage not cancelled can be deemed not used. They would all...and have...without exception used them with a use of a glue stick. I personally have had all kinds of stamps with missing glue because they got wet and I could not distinguish them from previously used ones. I think the onus is on the Post Office to do their job properly. What do our readers think? Tell us at cnanews@look.ca.

eBAY SELLS MILLIONS OF ITEMS STOLEN IN BANK ROBBERIES

Did that headline tweak your curiosity? It's called a "grabber" because you just can't stop reading the rest of the article. I just know that curiosity has gotten the better of you because it involves eBay, the company we love to hate but wish we had bought shares of when we had a chance to! And millions of stolen items? This is indeed a fantastic scoop for the C.N.A. E-Bulletin!

Imagine, by their own admission, eBay is selling millions of stolen items! Have we ever lied to you? And we have the proof!

I Googled "bank robberies" the other day and you know what I found? That eBay is selling bank robberies items. Not just a few but by their own admission, over 5 million bank robberies items. Every day yet. Wow!

Don't believe me? Here is the exact quote:

"Find Bank Robberies items at low prices. With over 5 million items for sale every day, you'll find all kinds of unique things on eBay - the World's Online Marketplace. www.ebay.com

Is my English faulty? Or is it when you have lots of money to spend on advertising and your ad is the first line that pops up on a search engine, sometimes you will admit things that you don't want to? Like selling stolen goods!

If you don't believe this, Google in "Bank Robberies" yourself and see what pops up.

THAT'S ONE EXPENSIVE LUNCH - PART TWO

In the August 20 issue, we mentioned that a bidder in an online charity auction on eBay has offered \$455,100 to eat lunch with Warren Buffett. Since it included up to 8 people, it works out to less than \$57,000 each. Another person has decided that money isn't as important as having lunch with somebody.

A man who bid \$30,000 to have lunch with Jessica Biel, Esquire magazine's "Sexist Woman Alive," sealed the deal Friday at Denver's Palm restaurant. Identified only as John, he wore a white suit with a blue shirt and striped tie. Biel (7th Heaven, Elizabethtown) agreed to have lunch with the highest bidder as part of a fundraiser for Molly Bloom, an 18[-year-old woman who lost a leg in a May 13 accident.

I just want to go on record that the "John" referred to above is not me. I feel I have to point that out since in the August 20 write-up I stated that nobody bids to have lunch with me and that I would have to pay people to eat with me. Anyway, I never wear a tie.

HUMOROUS TELEPHONE CALLS TO C.N.A. EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The C.N.A. office received a lot of telephone enquiries about membership, values, identification and how to dispose of numismatic material during my term as Executive Secretary. They were answered in a straightforward professional manner. I kept track of a number of the unusual calls, thinking that one day I might take them public in an article. The first 10 are recorded below. I did not have to embellish them. Those of you that know me and my sense of humor well enough will be able to envision me saying these things.

1. A gentleman called and asked how much his error dime was worth. It is missing the date from the usual location beside the boat. I asked him if he can see "1995-2005" on the other side. He said yes. I told him instead of one date on the one side, he got a bonus of two on the other side.

2. A teacher called and told me one of her students wanted to know how they got the lettering on the edge of the Canadian Olympic coins without crushing the coin. When I finish the explanation, I told her that they have "writing" instead of "reeding" on the edge. I had to explain the humor to her (writing-reading, get it?).

3. A gentleman with a foreign accent called to ask how much a Canadian \$1 note dated 2003 (if memory serves me right) was worth. I told him that there was no such thing and asked him to check the date. He confirmed it was definitely the right date. I asked him to describe the note. Turns out the note said Granada, not Canada.

4. A caller told me he has a two-headed coin and how is that possible? I explained to him that it is impossible for the Mint to place two dies of the same side into the presses and that they are available at magic and souvenir stores. He told me he knows it's genuine because it doesn't have a solder joint around the edge and I don't know what I'm talking about. He then hung up. I wonder why he called me for advice in the first place if he is so knowledgeable.

5. "Where exactly are you located. I want to buy some Canadian decimal coin." I explained that we do not buy and sell numismatic material. He told me we should change our name to make it clear. I made a mental note to recommend changing our name to "Canadian Numismatic Association That Doesn't Buy or Sell Numismatic Material." I also thought that it is good that my background in sales and marketing taught me when not to say things out loud.

6. "I have a medal commemorating the sinking of the Lusitania. Where can I obtain information on it? I thought I must have mis-heard. What, someone calls who doesn't want to know what it is worth? I refer him to the Google search engine on the Internet and also sent him a copy of *The CN Journal* that featured a write-up on the medal.

7. A caller told me that she bought a quantity of ancient coins from a stall at a market in India at a great price. She took them to a dealer when she returned to Canada who told her that they were counterfeit and, therefore, worthless. The reason she called, she tells me, is to complain about the Canadian dealer. I suggested to her that she would be far ahead of the game if she had dealt with someone locally where she would have recourse if the items were misrepresented. She then told me she would but they wanted about five times as much in Canada. I explained to her that in my lifelong experience, I have learned that a guaranteed genuine item by a storefront dealer or someone that is known to show organizers always costs more than a counterfeit item that carries no warranty. She asks me what to do. I suggested she either take them back to India to demand a refund (good luck!) or write it off as a learning experience. She said I misunderstood, she wanted to know what to do about the Canadian dealer that was so inconsiderate as to tell her they had no value. I think no matter what else I tell her, I won't be believed. I also remembered the joke I had heard about someone going to a stall at a flea market in India that has a sign "Genuine Queen Cleopatra Skull For Sale." The person asked to see it. The merchant asked his son to go home and bring it to the market. Before the son left, he asked the potential customer: "Are you interested in seeing the young Queen Cleopatra's skull or her adult skull?" I didn't dare tell it to the woman lest she wants to know who she can complain to about me.

8. A very young-sounding caller wanted to know what I would give him for his dad's coin collection. I asked him why his dad didn't call. He told me he didn't want his dad to know. I suggested to the young caller he should ask his dad for a bigger allowance instead. He told me he already did but his dad refused because he had spent that week's allowance buying his 9-year old girlfriend a doll. I suggested he should sell the coins back to his dad. I thought that if I ever tell anyone about this call, they would never believe me. He thanked me for the advice. We say goodbye. I thought I wish I were there to see how that transaction played out.

9. Another caller told me he is traveling to the Orient shortly and wanted to know the names of the mints that strike reproductions of rare coins. I asked him what he intends to do with them. He tells me he wants to bring them back and sell them at considerably lower pricing to those that can't afford the genuine coins. I asked him if it was his intention to tell people what he was selling. He said that if he did, it would be difficult to sell them. I asked him if he expects me and the national hobby association to be a partner in his scheme to defraud? He answered that he doesn't want us to be a partner because there might not be enough profit to make it worthwhile. I told him he misunderstood the intent of my question, that I didn't know who manufactures counterfeit coins and try to talk him out of it lest he winds up in jail. After we hang up, I wondered if the Fraud Squad, RCMP or some other law enforcement agency was testing me.

10. A lady called and asked what her son has to do to become a professional grader. I told her that I did not wish to disappoint her son, but it is a long, long learning curve. People have been in the hobby for 20 or 30 years and have not earned the respect of collectors and dealers where they could make a living at it. I then asked her how old her son is, to which she answered (I kid you not!) "Right now he's only five, but I'm trying to get him started early."

POLICE LOOKING FOR COLORFUL BANK ROBBER

York Regional Police are hoping red dye will lead them to the man who robbed a bank in Richmond Hill recently.

A man walked into a Scotiabank at 10909 Yonge St. around 3:15 p.m. demanding cash and claiming he had a gun. A teller gave him money and he fled, but not before an anti-theft dye pack inside the cash exploded.

Most of the stained money was left in the parking lot and investigators believe the man is still covered in dye.

IMPOSTER RIPS OFF BANKS FOR \$2 MILLION

A man being sought in the U.S. for allegedly ripping off banks for up to \$2 million by posing as a rap music promoter to get loans has been arrested in Toronto.

Nathan Deveron Brennar, 38, a.k.a. David North, of Florida was arrested at Yonge and Sheppard Ave., a stone's throw from where your E-Bulletin editor turns out this stuff, by the Toronto Police fugitive squad.

We wonder how much money he would have been able to get if he claimed to be the artist rather than just his promoter?

NEW CTC CREDIT CARD IMPACTS COUPON COLLECTORS

In the September 1, 2006 C.N.A. E-Bulletin, we published Louis Fontaine's letter which made us aware of the fact that Canadian Tire Corporation has 11 basic types of cards (in denominations of \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100), 7 no amount card designs and 38 cards with dates on the reverse, for a total of 49 cards for an up-to-date Canadian Tire card collection. You might find the following brief article interesting, which mentions the fact that if you use one of their new cards, you forfeit receiving the discount coupons. Written by Doug Adams, it was published in the CTCCC bulletin.

Private Label MasterCard's have become the hot fashion. Seems every charity and association wants their name (and kickback) as part of a credit card. Canadian Tire Acceptance is a very profitable subsidiary of CTC and they are no exception. But collectors should be aware of this one. The idea is to compute the total amount of your purchases in a month, and then the following month you would receive a rebate/discount of up to ten cents per liter on every gas purchase you make.

The advertising demonstrates that if you spend \$49 a week on gas and another \$100 a week on groceries (remember it is a MasterCard), then you would qualify for a \$0.05 rebate on every liter of gas you bought in the following month. That's enticing! If you want more details on this program, you can surf to www.canadiantire.ca/gasadvantage.

Problem for collectors is - You do NOT receive any coupons when you use this card. I think I'll stick with my debit card, it's like cash and you do get coupons.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

While Canada Post has promised not to continue promoting commercial businesses by placing corporate names and logos on postage stamps, I think just the opposite should happen with our country's coinage.

The Royal Canadian Mint could make a lot of money so the government does not have to raise taxes by selling cash sponsorship to corporations. The large corporations have most of our money anyway, so why shouldn't they pay for naming rights?

Disney could sponsor the penny because that's a Mickey Mouse denomination anyway. Or the Psychic Network. You know, a penny for your thoughts!

The Quarter? Imprint the coin with a burger, the McDonald's Quarter Pounder with Cheese. The dime? Sponsored by Wal-Mart, only now it's marked down to 6-1/2 cents.

The nickel should go to Inco to promote...what else...nickel.

Any other bright ideas from our readers?

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Michael "Stan" Turrini recently sent out a copy of Volume 1, Number 1 "First Edition" of "NCNA Heads and Tales," official publication of the Northern California Numismatic Association. It was included with my complimentary copy of Volume XXXI, Number 2. In case your right brain is a bit rusty with Roman numbering, that works out to 86 issues in total, or the Silver Jubilee Issue 1981-2006.

The editor of the first issue was Stan Turrini. The editor of the 86th issue is Stan Turrini, as well as every issue in-between. That's a lot of words. At an average of 10 to 12 pages per issue, that's a lot of research, a lot of writing, a lot of licking of envelopes.

Do you know of anybody that can match or beat that feat? Let us know at cnanews@look.ca so we can give them recognition.

BRITISH NUMISMATIC SLANG

Tiny Hine sent us another submission from the daily press:

The Globe & Mail Columnist Michael Kesterton credits Prof. Thorne for the following slang for amounts of money:

"Octopus" for six pounds - "Here's that sick squid (six quid) I owe you."

"Carpet" for three, or 300, pounds - in the 18th century, British prisoners got a carpet in their cell after serving three years.

OUR FAVORITE ANA COLUMNIST RETIRES

In the last E-Bulletin, we mentioned that my favorite columnist in the ANA Numismatist, Don Pearlman, is retiring after 20 years.

My favorite column in The Toronto Star is entitled "Title Page" written by Bob Aaron. Bob is best known in publishing circles as the only individual that ever wrote three different columns for the century-old The Toronto Star at the same time, namely the coin column, stamp column and the column involving the legal problems that people run into in the real estate market.

Quite often, he touches on scams involving mortgages and money. Look him up at www.aaron.ca/starindex.htm where you will see the titles of the columns he has written since 2000. The names of the columns will, quite often, give you an idea if they involved money

scams. For example, his column published on September 2, is entitled "Fraud, forgery alleged in mortgage scheme."

NON-NUMISMATIC JOKES FROM OUR NUMISMATIC FRIENDS

This one arrived from a few different people, except the nationalities have been changed to make it more personal to the people receiving this.

Discoveries

After digging to a depth of 100 meters last year, French scientists found traces of copper wire dating back 1000 years, and came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network 1000 years ago.

So, not to be outdone, in the weeks that followed, American scientists dug 200 meters and headlines in the US papers read: "US scientists have found traces of 2000 year old optical fibers, and have concluded that our ancestors already had advanced high-tech digital telephone 1000 years earlier than the French."

One week later, the Canadian newspapers reported the following: "After digging as deep as 800 meters, Canadian scientists have found absolutely nothing. We have concluded that 5000 years ago, our ancestors were already using wireless technology."

PENNIES FOR PEACE

There is a project on the go right now that is asking for peoples' pennies to fund the removal of landmines in Afghanistan and Pakistan and for education. According to an interview with organizers yesterday on CNN, Roots of Peace has already collected 10 million pennies.

Imagine kids all over North America and beyond, breaking open their piggy banks and adults cleaning out their drawers of all those cents that they have accumulated over many, many years!

I have a suggestion for them: let some numismatists go through the hoard and maybe the numismatic value will double or triple that amount.

Or sell them for melt value!

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR PENNIES

The debate of whether or not to discontinue our 1-cent coin has been raging for quite some time. With the cost of copper reaching record levels and the world mints able to reduce costs only so much, what does the future

The Here and Now column in a recent Readers Digest, under the heading of "What do you do with your Pennies?" stated that they would love to know what you do with your pennies and whether you think the one-cent piece should be scrapped.

"Consider this: Fifty years ago, the penny had about 6-1/2 times the buying power it has now. In 1914 it packed 16-1/2 times more buying power. Today it can buy...well, what can a penny buy you today? New Zealand and Australia have already gotten rid of their penny. Maybe it's time we followed suit?

I know it has been covered in the numismatic press, but we are giving you, our faithful readers, an opportunity to express your radical thoughts. E-mail cnanews@look.ca. And don't tell us to donate them to Pennies for Peace. That's too easy.

CONCLUSION

Now that we are back on our normal schedule of publishing the C.N.A. E-Bulletin on about the 1st, 10th and 20th of each month, It is our intention to issue special editions on the 2006 C.N.A. Convention news on September 15 and 25 that will honor the many people that made the Convention such a success.

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

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