

Welcome to the C.N.A. E-Bulletin Vol. 2, No. 39 – December 29, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

I recently lost my tan leather wallet. It contained a number of pictures of the family, numerous personal papers, and \$200 in cash. If you found it, you may keep the pictures, the personal papers and the wallet, but I have a sentimental attachment to the money.

WE HAVE MAIL

From Brian Grant Duff: "There is a minor variation in the Christmas coin sets offered by Shoppers Drug Mart. These include \$2 coins with the new Mint Mark. The Christmas sets sold elsewhere have a non-mint marked \$2 coin. Merry Christmas!" – Thanks for letting us know so we can pass it on to our faithful readers. I will be speaking to my contacts at the Royal Canadian Mint shortly to get the details of mintages of each type.

From Lou Fontaine: "Re: 'I Create my original material in MS Word'...in the last issue, could you repeat that paragraph but more slowly...Ha Ha. Oh, and how many people put up their hands if they had a 6 or 12 or 18 year old? I wasn't surprised not to see a single one because we are all **older** than that...Ha Ha." – I go through a rather complicated process to assure that you receive bulletins without "Greek" characters, but it doesn't always work, apparently. Re your comment about age, I have said in previous bulletins the average age of people at coin clubs...and I assume also recipients of these bulletins...is at least 75. When I used the word "spouse" to describe a collector's "wife" I got letters. The fact that I did not hear from a single person about the comment on age might mean there is some truth to it.

AN APPROPRIATE CHRISTMAS PRESENT

For Christmas, Ryan always gives me a bottle of English Leather cologne, which is appropriate. To him, I always smell like a wallet.

AN INAPPROPRIATE CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Jay Leno mentioned the following on Wednesday's "Tonight Show" that we thought we would pass on:

The most popular gift this Christmas is a Gift Card. To the recipient, it says: "I don't know what you want, I don't care what you want, I'm not going to spend time looking for anything.

Leno also mentioned that there is a gift card now that you can use in any store in the U.S. He wants to know: "Isn't that called money?"

BOOZE STORE TAKING CANADIAN TIRE CASH

If you wondered up to now if Canada has one "official" currency just like the U.S. and every other country in the world, wonder no more.

The big shots at the Canadian Tire Coupon Collectors Club (CTCCC) have been preaching to us for years that we have two "circulating" currencies in Canada. This has been proven on numerous occasions, including when people successfully used Canadian Tire Corporation "money" in foreign countries to make a purchase as well as using it when all kinds of stores accepted it just as if it were the stuff the Bank of Canada makes available. They even point out

that it is printed by the same security companies as Canada's currency, namely the Canadian Banknote Company and the British American Banknote company.

The latest example of the popularity of Canadian Tire scrip comes to us from Edmonton, Alberta, where a liquor store is accepting Canadian Tire money at par as payment. Its owners say the program is a hit with shoppers, who have brought in all kinds of the stuff to make purchases. It was supposed to be a short-term gimmick but it proved so popular that it has been extended, according to Canadian Press.

I just know the Canadian Tire "money" collectors reading this right now wish they could go through the stuff looking for "replacement" notes, misprints, early scarce issues and other desirable pieces.

SPANISH BANKNOTES IN HIGH DEMAND

Traces of cocaine can be found on 94 percent of banknotes in Spain, which has one of the world's highest rates of users, according to a study published last weekend.

The 100 notes tested were collected in gyms, supermarkets and pharmacies across the country, where increased affluence and falling street prices have made the drug more accessible.

Cocaine now sells for as little as 60 euro (US\$91) a gram, or 5 euro (7.60) a line, and it is regularly used by 1.6 percent of Spaniards, up from 0.9 percent in 1999, a government report said.

It was not clear how many of the notes had been used to snort cocaine and how many had picked up traces from other bills, said the study by Sailab Laboratory, published in the daily El Mundo and circulated by Reuters.

There is no record of any test to find out how many notes have powder residue from donuts but, given the popularity in Canada of coffee shops, we estimate that it would be more than the 94 percent which contained cocaine. Maybe the sugar residue was confused for cocaine in the Spanish survey.

2006 IDIOT REPORT

Terry Johnson passed along the "2006 Idiot Report" which we are pleased to publish since 4 of them involve money and stupid criminals.

Idiot Number Seven of 2006 - Seems this guy in Arkansas wanted some beer pretty badly. He decided that he'd just throw a cinder block through a liquor store window, grab some booze, and run. So he lifted the cinder block and heaved it over his head at the window. The cinder block bounced back knocking him unconscious. It seems the liquor store window was made of Plexi-Glass. The whole event was caught on videotape.

Idiot Number Six of 2006 - A pair of Michigan robbers entered a record shop nervously waving revolvers. The first one shouted, "Nobody move!" When his partner moved, the startled first bandit shot him.

Idiot Number Five of 2006 - A guy walked into a little corner store with a shotgun and demanded all of the cash from the cash drawer. After the cashier put the cash in a bag, the robber saw a bottle of Scotch that he wanted behind the counter on the shelf. He told the cashier to put it in the bag as well, but the cashier refused and said, "Because I don't believe

you are over 21." The robber said he was, but the clerk still refused to give it to him because she didn't believe him. At this point, the robber took his driver's license out of his wallet and gave it to the clerk. The clerk looked it over and agreed that the man was in fact over 21 and she put the Scotch in the bag. The robber then ran from the store with his loot. The cashier promptly called the police and gave the name and address of the robber that he got off the license. They arrested the robber two hours later.

Idiot Number Four of 2006 - A motorist was unknowingly caught in an automated speed trap that measured his speed using radar and photographed his car. He later received in the mail a ticket for \$40 and a photo of his car. Instead of payment, he sent the police department a photograph of \$40. Several days later, he received a letter from the police that contained another picture, this time of handcuffs. He immediately mailed in his \$40.

Idiot Number Three of 2006 - A man, wanting to rob a downtown Bank of America, walked into the Branch and wrote this: "Put all your munny in this bag." While standing in line, waiting to give his note to the teller, he began to worry that someone had seen him write the note and might call the police before he reached the teller's window. So he left the Bank of America and crossed the street to the Wells Fargo Bank. After waiting a few minutes in line, he handed his note to the Wells Fargo teller. She read it and, surmising from his spelling errors that he wasn't the brightest light in the harbour, told him that she could not accept his stickup note because it was written on a Bank of America deposit slip and that he would either have to fill out a Wells Fargo deposit slip or go back to Bank of America. Looking somewhat defeated, the man said, "OK" and left. He was arrested a few minutes later, as he was waiting in line back at Bank of America.

Idiot Number Two of 2006 - Early this year, some Boeing employees on the airfield decided to steal a life raft from one of the 747s. They were successful in getting it out of the plane and home. Shortly after they took it for a float on the river, they noticed a Coast Guard helicopter coming towards them. It turned out that the chopper was homing in on the emergency locator beacon that activated when the raft was inflated. They are no longer employed at Boeing.

Idiot Number One of 2006 - I am a medical student currently doing a rotation in toxicology at the poison control center. Today, this woman called in very upset because she caught her little daughter eating ants. I quickly reassured her that the ants are not harmful and there would be no need to bring her daughter into the hospital. She calmed down and at the end of the conversation happened to mention that she gave her daughter some ant poison to eat in order to kill the ants. I told her that she better bring her daughter into the emergency room right away.

Terry Johnson points out that all of the above people are allowed to vote. But here is something even scarier. I Googled "2006 Idiot Report" to find out the original source so that we could give appropriate credit. I did not find it, but what is really worrismatic is that out of 2,330,000 files found by Google, the very first one was "Jobs, News and Views for All of Higher Education." Are they looking to hire idiots at universities and colleges?

CANADIANS COMPETE WITH NIGERIANS

A Montreal telemarketing operation bilked millions from seniors in the United States and Canada with phony pleas that turned the stomachs of senior investigators listening on wiretaps, the RCMP said recently.

More than 30 people are facing charges following a series of busts in the Montreal area that broke up an operation police estimate has raked in \$8 million to \$13 million a year since 2003. About 500 people fell victim every week and losses ranged from \$1,500 to \$65,000 per person.

Seniors were convinced to play fake lotteries, and then told they had to pay tax to collect winnings. Some victims mortgaged houses to pay fees demanded by the marketers, according to Canadian Press. One of the more lucrative phony pitches had marketers posing as people in authority and demanding tax payments on lottery winnings.

Police say the fraud scheme operated out of "boiler rooms" around Montreal with a variety of pitches aimed mainly at seniors but also at small business owners who were sold cheap first-aid kits and cash register tape at vastly inflated prices and told they were required by law or bank regulations. The Federal Bureau of Investigation assisted in the probe.

CHRISTMAS SPENDING AND YOUR HOBBY

Canadians were expected to spend a little less money on holiday shopping this year, according to a poll released by Scotiabank. People surveyed said they plan to fork out about \$822 this year on average, from \$900 last year.

Across Canada, the biggest spenders are expected to be Atlantic Canadians, who were expected to spend an average of \$1,049 during the gift-giving season. Quebecers rank as the thriftiest, spending about \$626.

Although the survey did not question what types of gifts were being purchased, we wonder how much of that would be to improve or add to your numismatic collection. I know I could not persuade my wife to buy me one of those 1911 Canadian silver dollars or 1804 U.S. silver dollars, because I made the mistake of telling her what it would cost.

RCM CELEBRATES CN TOWER

The CN Tower, located in downtown Toronto, is known around the world. After all, it set records when it was built 30 years ago as the world's tallest freestanding structure. The Royal Canadian Mint celebrated its anniversary earlier this year with the issue of a \$20 photographic hologram silver coin. If you went to the RCM's Website you would have read the following:

"Reach for the sky! - Take your collection to fabulous new heights with the second coin in our architectural series that celebrates Toronto's defining landmark - the CN Tower. At 553.33 m (1,815 ft 5 in), it is the tallest building in the world! The CN Tower took 1,537 workers 40 months to build. Once the graceful tower was complete, the steel broadcasting antenna was put into place. Each section was raised by helicopter and secured into position by workmen who were standing on a 1.5 m (5 ft) diameter platform more than (450 m) 1,500 ft in the air! After all, this is why Canadian National built it - to send transmission signals far above the skyscrapers that were built during the 1960's. With microwave receptors at 338 m (1,109 ft) and a broadcasting antenna at 553 m (1,815 ft), Torontonians would enjoy some of the clearest reception in North America! But the towering architecture quickly surpassed this achievement as the tower was named "one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World." From the moment it opened its doors in 1976, the CN Tower has reigned as one of Canada's premier entertainment destinations - celebrate its 30th birthday with this fabulous 99.99% pure silver hologram coin!"

In the Mint's desire to honor Canadian events, people and places that celebrate the Canadian story, the CN Tower is an obvious landmark that tells of achievements of world-renowned proportions. The pure silver coin features a holographic image of the CN Tower surrounded by

lightning, with the nighttime downtown Toronto skyline in the background. The design, by Royal Canadian Mint artist Jianping Yan, was transferred onto the coin using a photographic hologram technique that produces a three-dimensional image.

When the CN Tower marketing manager Irene Knight was asked by The Toronto Star how many of the 2.97 millimetre coins it would take to reach the top of the CN Tower, her answer was: "At 553.33 metres tall, you would need to stack approximately 186,306 CN Tower collector coins to reach the top of the CN Tower."

When I put together an article on the CN Tower's 25th Anniversary five years ago for the ONA Numismatist, I had a very good numismatic reason for doing so. When Interbranch International Mint was forced into bankruptcy and its assets were purchased by Johnson Matthey, I acquired all of Interbranch's medals, including in-house issues, overruns, salesmen's samples and display copies, amounting to one-and-a-half tons. Amongst the hoard were over 3,000 medals featuring the CN Tower, the same medals that were sold in the CN Tower's souvenir shop at the base of the tourist attraction. Apparently, Interbranch used their slow times to strike additional medals for repeat customers but, because of the bankruptcy, did not have an opportunity to sell them. They were manufactured in 34mm and 51mm diameters in copper, nickel and gold-plate, with the 34mm size also being available holed for use as key chains.

As our own tribute to the 30th Anniversary of this world-famous landmark, we put together some mind boggling statistics about the CN Tower which we hope you will find interesting.

1. A 400-ton mould of the structure was built of wood and steel and in a round-the-clock operation, concrete mixed on the site was poured inside the mould as it moved, slowly but continuously, skyward. The tapering shape of the tower was created by reducing the size of the mould as it moved upwards.
2. More than 62,000 tons of earth and rock were removed in digging the main, 50-foot deep hole.
3. More than 18,900 tons of concrete and 500 tons of reinforcing steel were used to build the 22-foot thick foundation.
4. The tower weighs 130,000 tons, which is twice as heavy as the world's biggest luxury liner and about the same weight as 23,214 large elephants.
5. Fifty-three thousand cubic yards of concrete were poured to build the tower.
6. The seven-story sky-pod, 1,100 feet above ground, houses the microwave equipment on the lower floor, while the next three floors are open to the public, including an enclosed observation deck, a partially opened one, and the revolving restaurant. The top three floors are devoted to television and FM transmitters.
7. The 420-seat revolving restaurant is the world's tallest, with a diameter of 150 feet (the one at Australia Square in Sydney, which is in second place, has a diameter of 122 feet) and that part of the floor that rotates does so at five feet a minute for dinner, which means you can orbit the 450-foot circumference in 90 minutes. The 16-foot-wide moving platform is driven by one 2 hp electric motor. The moving platform runs on bearings so precisely designed that two strong men can push it.

8. Originally, there were supposed to be a cluster of three separate antennas on top of the concrete tower. Had this plan been adopted, it is possible that the total height of the structure would not have topped that of the 1,761.89-foot-high Ostankino Tower in Moscow. However, communications engineers decided the most efficient design was one that stacked one kind of antenna atop another to make a single antenna 350 feet high. That slender five-sided needle has finally rid the Toronto area of the worst television and FM-radio reception of any North American city. One part of the problem was that the countryside is dotted with high-rise apartments and offices, so TV sets usually received two signals: a strong one from the transmitters and a weaker one “bounced” from those high-rise buildings. It was this “bounce that caused TV-screen ghosting.

9. Four glass-walled elevators, holding up to 22 people, zip up the sides of the tower at 1,200 feet per minute, which means you go higher quicker during its 70-second trip than when taking off in a jet plane. It gives just about everyone an attack of Otitis-media. No, that’s not a reference to Otis, the elevator maker, but to ear popping. Short of piloting a jet fighter, there’s nowhere else in the world you can climb so high so fast. The elevators are capable of carrying 30,000 people a day, or 10,950,000 a year, counting Sundays. At that rate, however, the place gets a bid crowded. Anyone wishing to take the elevator to the observation decks is charged a fee. The only exception is when you are going up to the revolving restaurant for dinner and you have made an advance reservation.

10. Between the Sky Pod and uppermost observation platform - the Space Deck- there is a special shuttle elevator. It takes you up to the 1,450 foot level, which makes it the highest elevator ride in the world. For many, the greatest attraction is the view from The Space Deck observation platform. There’s nothing further up but the antenna and the sky. The observation deck has floor-to-ceiling windows that lean outwards so that you feel as though you are perched on the edge of..well, nothing.

11. The tower has the longest concrete staircase in the world, used in an emergency. It has 2,570 steps. A physically fit person would take 20 minutes to get down the 2,570 stairs in the hexagonal core, and at least 40 minutes to climb up. When the stairway was finished, one construction worker shucked his clothes and streaked the tower from top to bottom, setting yet another tower record.

12. Lightning strikes the tower between 150 and 200 times a year, which means it is also the world’s tallest free-standing lightning rod. Lightning conductors atop the tower are linked to three copper strips that run down the tower and are grounded by 42 rods, each 20 feet long and buried 20 feet below ground. The stairs, elevator rails, window frames, sewage, water pipes and anything else that could attract lightning are linked to the copper strips.

13. Anywhere ice is likely to form has been ice-proofed, either with heated de-icing cables or sheathed in shiny plastic to which ice cannot cling. This means that ice will never build up to a dangerous thickness and fall to the ground in chunks.

14. All furnishings are as fireproof as any furniture can be. The main kitchens, where open-flame cooking is permitted, are in the basement. Also located there are the emergency fire pumps that can each squirt water to the top of the tower at the rate of 500 gallons a minute. Since electrical transformers have been known to explode into flames, the seven installed in the tower are immersed in a non-flammable fluid.

15. The tower was built to withstand strong winds as Toronto will ever see. Weather records show 114 mph as the top wind speed in this century. The tower was built to withstand a wind of 160 mph. The main concrete tower - 53,000 cubic yards of concrete "tied" together with 80 miles of steel cable - would only wobble 10 inches from side to side during severe wind storm, and the movement would be so slow you wouldn't even notice a change in the level of the champagne in your glass (that is, presuming you'd been stupid enough to go out to dinner in such weather).

16. The CN Tower's souvenir shop ran out of the souvenir medals ordered from Interbranch International Mint at least 15 years ago. I sold most of my 3,000-plus to a dealer in Ottawa as soon as I obtained them.

LOTTERY EMPLOYEE WINS \$8.5 MILLION

With all the flack that the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation has been getting lately, I thought I would tell you what happened when one of their employees, Stephen Cook, 50, an operations analyst at the lottery corporation, won \$8.5 million dollars in the 6/49 draw with the same numbers he has been playing every week.

He felt it necessary to explain to his fellow employees at a gathering: "If I had an inside edge, do you think it would have taken me 20 years to win?"

He became the first lottery employee in more than 30 years of draws across Canada to win a jackpot this size, officials said. Only twice before, they say, has a lottery corporation employee in Ontario won prizes in the \$200,000 range.

Because of the heavy security surrounding provincial lotteries, there is no restriction on employee participation. Less heavily regulated draws, such as those for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, do forbid employee participation.

Lottery brass, sensitive to suggestions of an insider's edge, were quick to detail the scrutiny surrounding the draws. The lottery corporation has an "Insider Win Policy and Procedures Process" which subjected Cook to a rigorous security check before he was allowed to pick up the cheques. As well, an internal audit system and an outside auditor are charged with the responsibility of assuring that everything is on the up and up. During the week-long security check, Cook was not allowed to report to work.

C.N.A. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

Norman A. Wahn wrote us recently: "Congratulation to you for going hi-tech! A website, dues payment through PayPal - very cool! I only found about it all now, including the e-bulletin. Please put me on the list to receive future editions. A fast glance at some of the back issues shows that it's a good read."

We want to point out to all recipients of the C.N.A. E-Bulletin that membership in the C.N.A. is easy. Go to www.canadian-numismatic.org and click on "Join" and scroll down to "Secure Online Payment." Note that this link is good for all types of membership and can be used both for new members as well as renewals.

Since membership is on a calendar year basis, now is a great time to join. If you wish to see a copy of our Journal that is sent to members first without cost or obligation, e-mail your name and mailing address to Paul Johnson, C.N.A. Executive Secretary, at cnainfo@rogers.com.

MY LAST NEWSLETTER

I spoke to Ralph Trimble, the stamp collector, last week and asked him if he'd seen my last newsletter. He replied, "I hope so!"

However, despite Ralph's encouragement, I intend to forage ahead. Our plans call for the continuation of publishing every Friday as long as time - and material - permits. While the next issues, on January 5 and 12, will contain our normal content, we intend to issue a special Second Anniversary Issue on January 15. Drop us a line before January 13 summarizing what you think so far, good or bad, and what you would like to see different in future, at cnanews@look.ca. Remember if we don't hear from you I will continue what I enjoy writing about!

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

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