



Bulletin

The Newsletter of the West Toronto Stamp Club
www.westtorontostampclub.org

The Club meets at
Fairfield Seniors' Centre
80 Lothian Ave., Etobicoke, ON
416-394-8687

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B. Timberg, Editor

President Sid's Message

I am confident you would concur that we are fortunate to live in a time of readily available technology - to search for philatelic items for our collections and exhibits; to delve deeper by doing online research; and to expand our personal philatelic community and contacts by "Zooming". Recognizing the veracity of this statement, October continues to be a time of multiple philatelic opportunities for WTSC members.

Plan to participate and join fellow club members by attending the following:

Learning Workshop, Tuesday, October 6, 7 pm, via Zoom - Fun With Community Name Cancels.

A Zoom invite from me with the needed link has been sent to all members. If you have trouble connecting or cannot locate the link, please email me at sidmensinga@gmail.com. Guests are welcome!

WTSC Virtual Exhibition, Tuesday, October 20, 7 pm, via Zoom. A Zoom invite with the needed link will be sent to all members prior to the date.

Circuit Book opportunities continue to be available. To make arrangements to view circuit books or to submit new pages, contact Simon at [simon \(at\) berlet \(dot\) com](mailto:simon(at)berlet(dot)com).

Learning Workshop, Tuesday, November 3, 7 pm, via Zoom - Look What I Discovered and Recently Learned. See page 5 for details.

Our online meetings via ZOOM have been most successful and informative. If you have yet to join one of these sessions, consider doing so this month by accessing Zoom on your computer, tablet or phone. See "How To Use the Zoom Application" near the end of my message, in the column to the right.

VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIP Our excellent Zoom presentations have attracted non-club members eager to participate even more fully. Therefore the board has decided to expand our membership base to include virtual memberships. Those joining WTSC virtually will be offered a free virtual membership for one year.

Those who wish to become a virtual member need to complete the membership form on our website at <http://www.westtorontostampclub.org/resources/Membership+Application.pdf> and forward it to our

membership officer, Patricia Blanchard, at membership@westtorontostampclub.org

Virtual members will be able to join our Zoom sessions as member participants and presenters, receive the WTSC Bulletin, be added to our email communication distribution lists, and be able to fully participate in any and all online club activities.

Free/For Sale/Wanted Column A second new initiative is the free/for sale/wanted column to begin in November with actions to be taken by interested members this month. For details, see page 2 near the end of my column

This initiative recognizes that many of us have been culling and refocusing our stamp accumulations/collections these past few months. No longer having our twice monthly auctions and face-to-face meetings, you will now have a new way to dispose of those unwanted items and seek gems to fill gaps.

A further change to make you aware of - member **Don Hedger** has volunteered to be our **new exhibition chair** and will head up the **Virtual Single Page Exhibition** to be held on Tuesday, October 20. See page 4 for details.

Don is an experienced exhibitor who has gained noteworthy exhibiting success both locally, nationally and internationally. We are fortunate to add his experience and willingness to serve to our leadership team. A special thank you to Garfield Portch, our exhibition chair for the past number of years. Garfield's monumental leadership, enthusiasm and untiring efforts to help all of us grow as philatelists and exhibitors are greatly appreciated and valued. Thank you Garfield.

HOW TO USE THE ZOOM APPLICATION TO FULLY PARTICIPATE IN WTSC ONLINE ACTIVITIES

Consider using Zoom this month on your computer, tablet or phone to join your WTSC colleagues online. Zoom will download automatically when you start or join your first Zoom meeting, and is also available for manual download at <https://zoom.us/download>

On the day of the meeting, about 15 minutes prior to the start time, click the special meeting link that will be sent to you. This will open Zoom automatically so you can be added to the meeting or you can open up your downloaded Zoom app and enter the meeting ID and password. When you enter you will be placed in a "waiting room" and shortly thereafter admitted to the meeting.

It's that easy. If you want help or have questions, contact me sidmensinga@gmail.com

THE FREE/WANTED/FOR SALE COLUMN - Details and Submission Requirements

Members will have the opportunity to submit one or more adverts per month to be included in this new advertisement column. There will be no charge for the advert. No percentage of sales fees will be collected. The club will not be directly involved; all communication and transactions, etc., will be between members.

The number of ads per member will be limited to one Free item advert, one For Sale advert, and one Wanted advert per month. Space permitting, one or all three adverts per member may be included in a given month.

Advert Requirements

- **Words only**; no images
- Ads should be brief and **no more than 40 words**
- Must **clearly state the type of advert** – free, wanted, for sale. Ads mixing or combining categories will be rejected.
- Must include your **email address** and club **membership number**.
- Must be **submitted to our editor** Bob Timberg at timberg@bell.net **no later than the third Monday of the preceding month**. (For example, for inclusion in the November WTSC Bulletin, the ad must be submitted by Monday, October 19.)



Sid Mensinga

When Stamp Collecting Could Get You Imprisoned, or Worse

This past spring, Jerry Piotrowski from the Bramalea Stamp Club mentioned that he was reading the book *Gulag* (Doubleday, 2003) by Anne Appelbaum. "The Gulag – the vast array of Soviet concentration camps – was a system of repression and punishment whose rationalized evil and institutionalized inhumanity were rivaled only by the Holocaust." (Book jacket)

Jerry offered a detail from the book. He noted, "If we had been active stamp collectors living in Stalin's Soviet Union during the 1930's, we could be suspected of being spies."

The U.S.-based Constitutional Rights Foundation states on its website: "Stalin often persecuted people not for what they did, but for who they were. Anyone having anything to do with foreigners or foreign countries automatically became suspects of spying. This included entire groups of people such as foreign language teachers, members of pen pal organizations, even stamp collectors."

Jerry, thanks for the piece of history.

Board of Directors

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What Postcards Teach Us: The Strange Story of Neutral Moresnet

This article appeared in the Fall 2020 issue of Card Talk, the newsletter of The Toronto Postcard Club. It is reprinted here with the kind permission of Andrew Cunningham, editor of Card Talk and author of the article.

The Toronto Postcard Club is the largest postcard club in Canada. A one-year membership in the club is available for \$22.00. As more and more philatelists begin to collect and exhibit postcards, a membership is well worthwhile.

Collectors of postcards of the "Golden Age" know things about that period (roughly 1903-1912 in Canada) that most academic historians would never know. Through their postcards, collectors can experience a period of history almost as if they were there. They join in its parades, enter into its homes, work its ploughs, build its bridges, gawk at its burning buildings and share in its joys and sorrows. Often, collectors learn things about the world that they would not have known otherwise.

The postcard in Figure 1a/b is an example of that. I don't recall why I bought it – just that it seemed interesting and probably didn't cost much. It also deals with an international border – borders being a topic I've looked for over the years. Of course, unlike most of my other "border" postcards, this one doesn't show the Canada-U.S. frontier but, rather, a point in Europe at which three countries met (and still do):

Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. Now it so happens that in the town of Vaals, in the far south of Holland, where this postcard was mailed, there is a tower that offers the visitor an outstanding view of the surrounding lands. As noted on the postcard, this is called the "vierländerblick"; literally, the "Four Country Lookout"



Figure 1a. Soldiers of the three powers that controlled the area. As noted, numbers 1, 2, 5 and 7 are German, while 4 and 6 are Dutch and 3 and 8 Belgian.



Figure 1b. Reverse of the card, posted (it appears) on 12 October 1906 at Vaals.

But wait? Four country lookout? Belgium ... Holland ... Germany ... that's just three. Well if you look at the little map on the card, you might notice that, wedged between "Belgien" and "Deutschland" is another territory, labeled "Neutrales Gebiet" ("Neutral Area"). It turns out that, for over a century, from 1816 to 1920, this triangular parcel of land – known as "Neutral Moresnet" (Mor-uh-NAY) – was jointly administered by Prussia and the Netherlands (upon Belgium's independence in 1830, the Belgians replaced the Dutch). Figure 2 is an even larger map from a 1908 postcard that I found online.

The story of Neutral Moresnet emerges from the dissolution of Napoleon's empire as negotiated at the Congress of Vienna in 1814-15. This established the modern boundary between Germany and the Netherlands, about which there was generally little dispute, with the exception of an area near the tiny village of Moresnet, which while otherwise unremarkable happened to be continental Europe's only significant source of zinc ore, which was essential for the production of brass (and zinc, obviously).

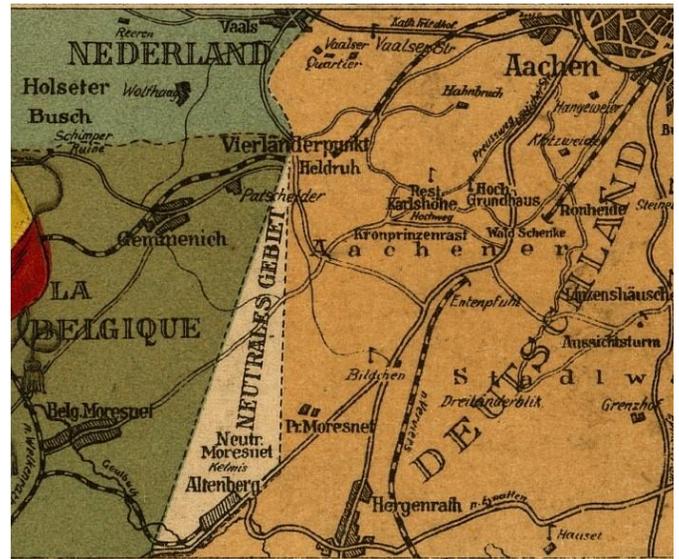


Figure 2. The map, showing the location southwest of Aachen.

So, a "condominium" was established, under which the tiny Moresnet district – only 900 acres; a square mile and a half, give or take – became an entity unto itself, with its own flag (a black, white and blue horizontal tricolour) and its own governing council. It was also an early version of a tax haven. After the mine closed in 1885, a local leader named Dr. Wilhelm Molly (1835-1919), a philatelist, attempted to issue postage stamps for the territory, presumably to fill the economic void, but was stopped by the Belgian authorities, who cancelled the unused stamps as "not valid". Needless to say, these stamps are scarce and much valued (if apparently little known) by collectors today. Figure 3 is a postcard image (not my own) that shows the territory's stamps.



Figure 3. A postcard showing the short-lived 1886 edition of Moresnet postage stamps.

Another aspect of Moresnet's history, also a product of the enterprising Dr. Molly, was an attempt to establish it as the homeland of Esperanto, under the name "Amekijo". Esperanto, of course, is the universal language that has a certain relationship with the history of postcards (see *Card Talk* 38:2 and 38:3 for more).

Any grandiose dreams the residents of Neutral Moresnet – who appear to have numbered only a few hundred – might have harboured were interrupted

forever by the Great War. Bearing that in mind, the image in Figure 1a, with its friendly meeting of local constables, is rather ironic given that, only a few years later, Germany was treating Belgium in a markedly less congenial manner. This included annexing the Moresnet territory, which annexation was reversed by the Treaty of Versailles, whereupon the lands became Belgian and its chief town was renamed "Kelmis". This was again reversed in the Second World War although Germany returned Moresnet to the Belgians in 1944.

It's appropriate, perhaps, that we write about Moresnet in 2020, as it was actually just this past February that the last living former Neutral Moresnet "citizen", Catharina Meessen, passed away. Born in 1914, she was 105 years of age.

In Figure 1a, you can see a circular ink-stamp reading "Aussichtstum Vaals", which refers to the Lookout Tower at Vaals where you could contemplate the historical accident that was Neutral Moresnet. Happily, you can do exactly the same thing today at the modern Tower at what is now known more sensibly (in Dutch) as the *Drielandenpunt* (i.e. the Point where *Three Countries Meet*), with what, for more than a century, was the fourth "country" having been reduced to a few sleepy hectares in the German-speaking margin of Belgium.

For those in the philatelic world, if collecting Dr. Molly's Moresnet stamps is a little too daunting a challenge, I did notice that Belgium issued an attractive sheet of Moresnet commemorative stamps in 2019, the 100th anniversary of the territory's incorporation into their Kingdom.



Andrew Cunningham

Quote of the Month

"There are many doors to the hobby." *APS Facebook post, Scott English, Executive Director, July 19, 2020*

Circuit Books

We encourage members to prepare pages for the circuit. See an example in the column to the right.

We will work on having the circuit fully ready for the next season when meetings resume. Pages can be dropped off at our office in the 401 / Dixie Road area,

AUSTRALIA

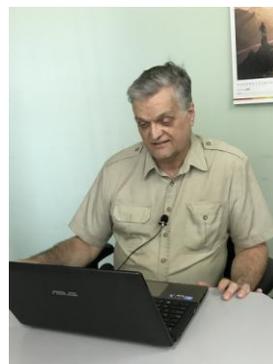
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						Row total
Cat# 47 Price 3.00	Cat# 47A Price 19.00	Cat# 47B Price 4.50	Cat# 48 Price 5.75	Cat# 48A Price 3.00	Cat# 48C Price 7.25	47.25
						Row total
Cat# 49 Price 2.50	Cat# 50 Price 2.00	Cat# 50A Price 2.00	Cat# 51 Price 5.00	Cat# 51B Price 5.00	Cat# 52 Price 9.00	37.50
						Row total
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Members # 1083		Sheet Total 210.75				

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Berlet Group of Companies, 1715 Meyerside Drive, Unit #6, Mississauga, Ontario L5T 1C5 (Tel: 905-564-2710).

Also if any member would like to examine the circuit books, arrangements can be made to view them at our office after hours.

For any of the above, please contact Simon at [simon\(at\)berlet\(dot\)com](mailto:simon(at)berlet(dot)com).



Simon Cloughton

Annual Club Exhibition

The **annual club exhibition** will be held **via Zoom** on **Tuesday, October 20 at 7 pm**. This will be a virtual exhibition of single page exhibits for the Frank Alusio Trophy. The trophy honours our past president Frank Alusio and was donated by club members Gordon Payne and Garfield Portch to encourage all members to exhibit at a club level.

The judging will be of **single page exhibits**, 8 1/2" x

11" paper, and based on GTPA evaluations. Exhibits will be evaluated and commented on by a judge.

Please send a scanned PDF of your exhibit to me at don.hedger@gmail.com Please note **entries close Tuesday, October 13.**

This is your opportunity to show what interests you as a philatelist and collector. We look forward to your entry.

A Zoom link will be provided a couple of days prior to the exhibition. Watch for it.

If you require help with Zoom or have questions about the exhibition, please contact me at the email above or at (416) 621-9982.

Don Hedger

Single Frame Display

Don Hedger has one single frame exhibit display (36" x 46") remaining. It displays 16 pages and will be an asset to a club member wanting to see his or her exhibit as it would be seen by a judge. Anyone wanting it can call Don at (416) 621-9982.

Discussion Group Meetings

There will not be a discussion group meeting in October. It is being replaced by the annual club exhibition.

The next meeting of the discussion group will be Tuesday, November 17 at 7 pm via Zoom. To receive an invitation, email me at garfield.portch@gmail.com Guests are always welcome.

Our speaker in November will be **Ken Pugh** of Chilliwack, British Columbia. His subject will be **A Stamp Valid For One Day Only - 1892 Columbus Issue of Argentina.**

Ken is a widely recognized expert in the field of philatelic fakes and forgeries. He is the author and publisher of several (25+) books relating to fakes and forgeries and their creators. He has previously spoken to the club.



Garfield Portch

From the NTSC

Jean Wang's updated presentation on covid-19-related philately, which was presented at SEAPEX 2020 on September 13, 2020, is available on the North Toronto Stamp Club's YouTube Channel (NTSC Presents) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpF1pN9XtjE&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2Mcx1Ce9wGazAB7mle8V6En-urOMyJGKsWCzKXTys-agTj5gN_A3Hd8

If you missed Klaus Hintz's presentation on September 10 on the history and spirit of Berlin as seen through stamps, you can view it on NTSC's YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyTXmo-nNY&fbclid=IwAR3blmc705J7mhUyXiuW5rz_Y--ig3-eDwLqvWDOOrYUF7HmIfGcAWzJU7s

On Thursday, October 8, **Derwin Mak** will present at 7 pm via Zoom on **Superman, the Last Son of Krypton, the Man of Steel**, the most popular comic book character of all time. To receive an invite, email Klaus Hintz at NTSC.Membership@gmail.com

November Learning Workshop

Our third learning workshop of the season will be on **Tuesday, November 3 at 7 pm.** It is titled **Look What I Discovered and Recently Learned.**

As autumn chills in this waning year, and occasional malaise leaves some people facing a winter of covid-19 discontent, it is heartening to learn that philately provided inspiration and contentment for many of our members.

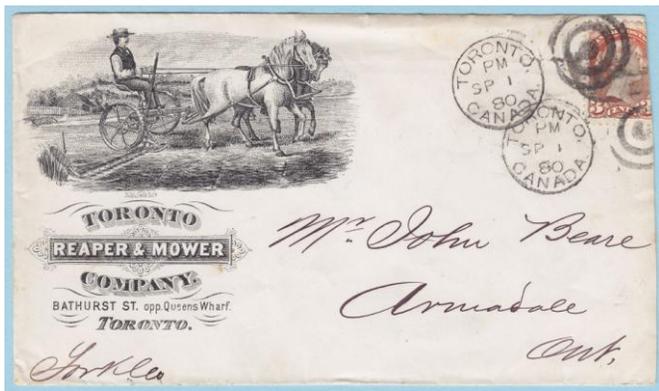
Learning of inspiring activity and achievement prompted the subject for our next learning workshop.

Did you finally get an elusive stamp or cover online? What turned up among long-forgotten goodies awaiting future study or album mounting? Did a decent variety surface from among others in storage? Was a special postmark identified after scanning the Internet, reading a journal article, a reference book or a collector's biography? Had you forgotten a stamp suddenly remembered while looking at an empty album space?

For instance, Garfield Portch "had a great summer" delving deep and finding old Toronto postmarks with twelve early dates, three late dates and one second day-of-issue. Several members reported finding success in more recent issues.

For instance, how many of you have a 2020 bilingual "Personnel soignant, merci / Thanks, healthcare workers" dot matrix computerized machine cancel on cover?

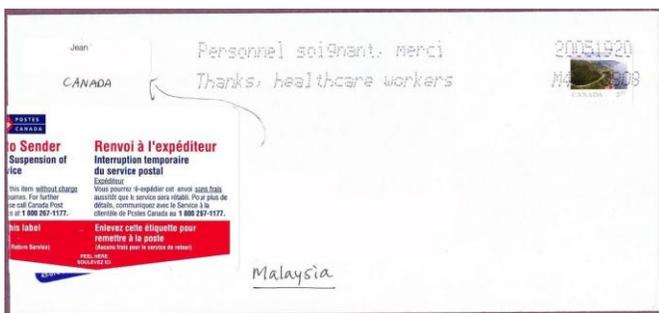
While vast quantities of information is available about engraving, varieties dating from the 1800s through the 1960s — before faster, cheaper and less-troublesome offset lithography printing took over —



Beautiful cacheted cover with earliest recorded date for Toronto unofficial duplex cancel, Sept. 1, 1880 (Courtesy of Garfield Portch)



Earliest recorded date for Toronto unofficial duplex cancel, Sept. 1, 1880 (Courtesy of Garfield Portch)



Bilingual 2020 'Personnel soignant, merci - Thanks, healthcare workers' dot matrix computerized machine cancel on cover (Courtesy of Canadian Stamp News)

plus studies of cancel styles and postmarks on covers, some collectors like modern issues.

Few old-style circular 'hammer' cancelers are used today, though an Alberta friend told me many small post offices there and in Saskatchewan still have them. Some outlets have hinged hand-operated devices with larger round postmarks, which are more popular than rectangular versions. There are even cancels promoting local attractions and events, including stamp shows.

In addition to seeking them for a post-2000 postmark collection, consider modern covers with special handling markings or labels. They may someday become the topic of an article — even a book!

Modern diecut stamps can also offer a challenge, as Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps



Clockwise from upper left, be square or in-the-round with modern Almonte, Ont. hand-applied cancellations; attractive, unusual decorative oval cancel used in Chatsworth, Ont. post office; in addition to this fancy Atikokan, Ont. postmark, the 51-cent stamp was printed on two different papers; 2000 Cambridge Annual Stamp Show postmark

editor Robin Harris has described on his website and at talks to clubs including in Toronto. Robin spent countless hours studying small format Canadian booklet definitives and coils, recording different "perf tips" plus look-alike stamps with different perforation gauges. You can also find flower definitives produced more than a decade ago on two types of paper.

Among recent commemoratives, try finding the diecut perf varieties of the 2017 Battle of Vimy Ridge 'P' for Permanent Postage issue. As a guide, Unitrade illustrates all seven.

Other recent commems include microprinting revealed under ultraviolet light. There are also large-format souvenir sheets with perforated, PVA gum stamps featuring designs on look-alike booklet versions with diecut perfs and self-stick gum. There have even been modern mistakes.

For instance, 2017 Hannukah booklets were recalled and reprinted without the Star of David on the cover. Most noteworthy was the recall of 2015 booklets and mini-sheets later reissued with a correct photo on the \$1.20 Dinosaur Provincial Park, Alberta stamp.

Are there other gems, inexpensive or not, lying in wait on a shelf, in a dusty box, or known by a club member who is all-too-happy to share information?

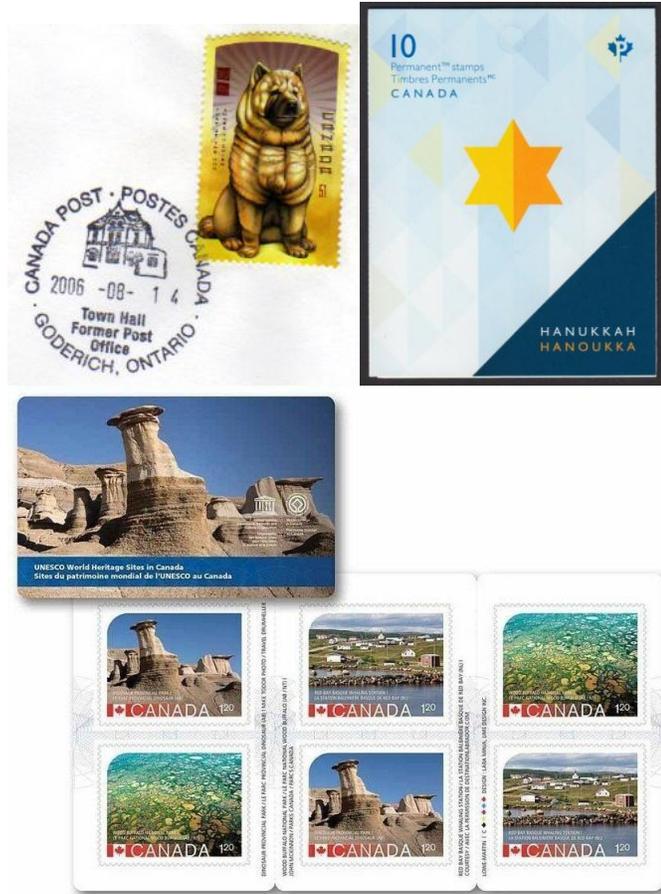
With all the above and perhaps other subjects, I'd like to showcase your experiences which — despite no

face-to-face round-table sessions — can be enjoyed at our November 3 ZOOM session.

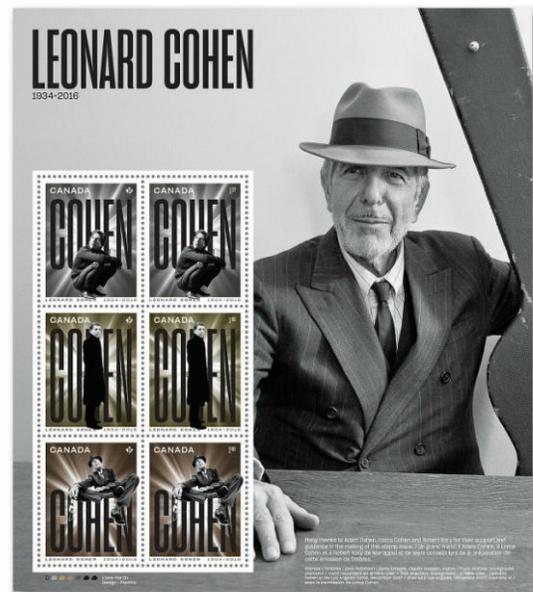
By participating and sharing, you learn as you prepare to share.

Stay tuned, fellow zoomers!

Ian Robertson



Counterclockwise from upper left, special cancel in 2006 shows Goderich, Ont. town hall, the community's former post office; Canada Post's first recall and reissue of stamps, after learning HooDooos on 2015 \$1.20 Dinosaur Provincial Park, Alberta commemorative were photographed elsewhere; rare 2017 Hanukkah stamps booklet - recalled and reprinted without Star of David on the cover, after Canada Post received undisclosed objections



From top to bottom, 2017 Battle of Vimy Ridge 150th anniversary commemorative has seven different die-cut perforation varieties; 2019 booklet of nine diecut, self-adhesive commemoratives featuring late Canadian singing star Leonard Cohen; 2019 sheet with six commemoratives on pin-perforated sheet with moisture-activated gum, which are different than the nine booklet stamps

