

Jean-Pierre Beaudin, Photographer

by: Leopold Beaudet

Introduction

In a public auction scheduled for early May, Sparks Auctions of Ottawa is offering 19 lots of stamp-related material from the estate of Jean-Pierre Beaudin, a photographer who collaborated on the design of 37 stamps between 1973 and 1999. The auction lots consist of photographs of objects that were incorporated into stamp designs, images of unissued designs, and memorabilia pertaining to issued stamps. This material provides fascinating background information on the design of several Canadian stamps. Guillaume Vadeboncoeur of Sparks Auctions provided illustrations of the material from the auction for this article.

Biography [1]

Jean-Pierre Beaudin was born on 18 February 1935, the son of Joseph-Émile Beaudin and Carmelle Mathieu. He married Denise Couture, a textile artist.

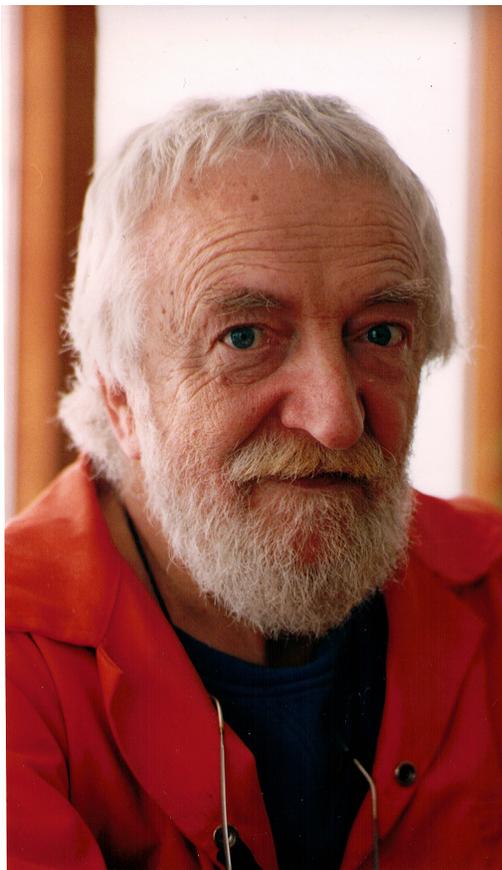


Figure 1. Jean-Pierre Beaudin. [Source: estate of Mr. Beaudin]

Beaudin studied at l'École des Beaux-Arts and at l'École des Arts graphiques in Montreal. He pioneered in the art of serigraphy in Montreal between 1955 and 1958. In 1958-1959, he pursued his studies at the Hamburger Photoschule in Hamburg and Agfa Laboratories in Cologne, Germany.

Upon his return to Canada in 1959, he worked at CBC as a photographer until 1966. He had exhibits at the Quebec Pavilion at EXPO 67 in Montreal and at EXPO 70 in Osaka, Japan. He produced photographs for a 30-volume work on crafts for Éditions Formart of Montreal. He was the official photographer of the organizing committee of the 1976 Montreal Olympics and the artistic director of Galerie Arts Sutton from 1985 to 1997. Among his later artistic endeavors were computer graphics and a large number of book cover illustrations.



Figure 2. Essay for a proposed Youth issue related to EXPO 70 in Osaka. The design is that of Jean-Pierre Beaudin's son. The picture was exhibited in the Canadian Youth pavilion at the exhibition. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

During his career, he exhibited both nationally and internationally, with 19 solo and 31 group exhibitions to his credit. He became a member of the Non-Figurative Artists' Association of Montréal (Association des artistes non-figuratifs de Montréal) in 1956, the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 1978, and the Groupe des poètes de Port-Royal in 2003.

Jean-Pierre Beaudin died suddenly on 2 August 2006.

Initial stamp designs, 1973-1981

The first Canadian stamp Beaudin worked on was the 1973 15¢ RCMP 100th anniversary. He took the photograph of the Musical Ride that the firm Dallaire Morin DeVitto Inc. used for the stamp design [2]. One of the principals of the firm, Jean Morin, was responsible for the design of many Canadian stamps.



Figure 3. 1973 15¢ RCMP 100th anniversary.



Figure 4. 1981 17¢ Florales.

Eight years later, Beaudin collaborated with Jean Morin and Tom Yakobina on the design of his second stamp, the 1981 17¢ Florales de Montreal commemorative. The design was based on a photograph taken by Roméo Meloche. One of the auction lots contains slides of the illustration used in the design and the exhibition grounds.

The 1982-1988 Heritage definitives

Beaudin's next commission from Canada Post was a pivotal one, the low and medium value Heritage definitives that were current between 1982 and 1988. Beaudin and Jean Morin collaborated on the designs.



Figure 5. Inscription block of the 1982 2¢ Fishing Spear autographed by Jean-Pierre Beaudin and Jean Morin. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

Beaudin photographed all the artifacts. The small ones for the low values were apparently all done at the beginning of the project. Besides those for the initial six stamps issued on 19 October 1982, this includes the one for the 25¢ Butter Stamp issued on 6 May 1987 and three that were not used although stamp design essays were prepared. Figures 7 to 12 show the photographs he took for the 1¢, 3¢, 5¢, 10¢, one of the skates on the 20¢, and the 25¢. The figures include an image of the issued stamp to compare against the photograph and an unmounted slide showing the components of the design (artifact, lettering, and background colour). Because of scanning challenges, the detail in the slides is difficult to see in the figures.

The slides were made at an early stage in the stamp designs before the denominations and background colours were finalized. For example, the slide for the 1¢ Decoy in Figure 7 shows a 3¢ denomination and a background colour that is closer to the 10¢ Weathercock. In the slides, the designs consist of three colours, black and grey for the artifact and a third colour for the background. The denomination is black and "Canada" is white. In the final designs, a fourth colour was added, a dark shade of the

background colour, for the denomination and "Canada". The artifact on the stamp is similar to the image in the photograph, but there are definite differences in the shading.

Although the 25¢ Butter Stamp (Figure 12), was issued in 1987, the copyright legend on the issued stamp reads "1982". The reason for the apparent anomaly is now evident – the copyright date refers to the date when the basic design was produced.

The 2¢ Fishing Spear is particularly interesting because two different spears were considered for the design (Figures 13 and 14). The slide shows the rejected spear rather than the one in the final design. Figure 14 illustrates a black and white essay with the final design elements except for the copyright inscription in the lower right. The denomination in the essay is 5¢ rather than 2¢. Figure 15 shows the spear used in the final design with a glassine overlay containing notes on the design.

The three artifacts that were never used are a broad axe, a chopper, and a crock (Figure 16). The broad axe exists in proof form at Library and Archives Canada with a green background colour.

Figures 17 to 22 show photographs of six of the nine medium values along with the issued stamps. The auction material does not have photographs of the other three artifacts nor are there slides of any of the values.

The medium value Heritage definitives were issued in three sets of three stamps pursuant to postal rate increases:

- 37¢ Wooden Plough, 48¢ Cradle, and 64¢ Wood Stove (no photo) issued on 8 April 1983
- 39¢ Settle-bed, 50¢ Sleigh, and 68¢ Spinning Wheel issued on 1 August 1985
- 42¢ Linen Chest, 55¢ Iron Kettle (no photo), and 72¢ Hand-drawn Cart (no photo) issued on 6 May 1987

The copyright date on the 55¢ and 72¢ stamps reads "1986". On all the others, it is "1983", presumably because the artifact photographs and the preliminary designs for the stamps were produced prior to the issue of the first set. In fact, Library and Archives Canada has proofs showing designs issued at different times on the same proof sheet.

According to the estate, many of the artifacts photographed for the designs are in the collection of the Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, QC. The settle-bed on the 39¢ comes from le Musée du Québec, and the sleigh on the 50¢ and spinning wheel on the 68¢ are from le Musée François-Pilote at La Pocatière, QC [3].

Traditional Trades and other stamps, 1987-1999

One auction lot consists of slides showing 34¢ and 39¢ Christmas Nativity scenes with the year "1987". These were presumably essays produced early in 1987 before the

postal rates increased. In any event, the designs were not used.

Beaudin's next stamps were the Provincial Premiers se-tenant set of ten issued on 18 February 1998. Quoting from the 1998 Annual Collection, "Designer Raymond Bellemare used flags from his 1979 Canada Day stamps as backdrops for this set honouring provincial premiers. To give the portraits of his subjects a unified look, illustrator Pierre Sasseville scanned old photographs and enhanced them on computer." [4] Jean-Pierre Beaudin's contribution is a photograph of the flag of Canada that Raymond Bellemare used as a background on the pane. The same image of the flag was used on Canada Post's two first day covers. The left half of the flag was used on one envelope and the right half on the other.

(Figure 24). The denomination on the essay is 45¢ and the lettering for "BARREAU DE QUÉBEC" is white rather than yellow.

The material from the estate of Jean-Pierre Beaudin provides a fascinating glimpse into the work that went into the designs of several Canadian stamps, the collaboration of talented artists in bringing together the different elements of the design, and the career of an artist who excelled not only at photography but in many other art forms.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Guillaume Vadeboncoeur for providing illustrations of the material from the estate of Jean-Pierre Beaudin. Thanks also to Pascal LeBlond of



Figure 6. 1998 Provincial Premiers issue. The background of the pane is Jean-Pierre Beaudin's photograph of the Canadian flag. [Source: Robin Harris]

Beaudin's second set of definitives was the Traditional Trades low values issued on 29 April 1999. Monique Dufour and Sophie Lafortune designed the stamps from photographs taken by Beaudin. One of the auction lots has essays of the 3¢ Glass Blowing, 5¢ Weaving, and 10¢ Woodworking designs (Figure 23). Although elements of the final designs are apparent in the essays, it is also apparent that there was considerable evolution from essay to final design. For example, based on the annotation "Approche Luthier" on the essay for the 10¢ Woodworking design, it depicts the making of stringed instruments rather than the more generic "woodworking".

Beaudin's last stamp was the 46¢ Quebec Bar Association commemorative issued on 3 June 1999. Pierre Fontaine based the design on a Jean-Pierre Beaudin photograph of a cast-limestone sculpture by Morton Rosengarten. One of the auction lots contains a preliminary design that is close to the issued stamp

Library and Archives Canada for clarifying Jean-Pierre Beaudin's role in the design of the Provincial Premiers stamps and Robin Harris for the scan of the pane.

References

1. The biography is loosely translated from a French version written by François Beaudin on 25 September 2006 that appears on the web site: http://www.rca-arc.ca/fr/nouvelles_membres/memoriaux.asp.
2. The Canada Post new issue brochure does not mention Beaudin's role in the design. However, the Library and Archives Canada web site does: http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02011703_e.html.
3. *Souvenir Collection of the Postage Stamps of Canada 1985*, Canada Post Corp., 1985.
4. *The Collection of Canada's Stamps 1998*, Canada Post Corp., 1998.



Figure 7. Photo of the decoy artifact at left (80% of actual size) and the issued stamp (4 times actual size) at right. Note the differences in shading between the two and the additional detail in the photograph. The slide at the upper left shows a preliminary version of the design. It has a bluish background, the denomination is black and the value is 3¢ (perhaps just a placeholder at this stage in the design), "Canada" is white, and the copyright legend is missing from the lower right corner. [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 8. Photo of the stable lantern artifact at left (80% of actual size) and the issued stamp (4 times actual size) at right. The background colour in the slide at the upper left is dark purple, and the value is 20¢. [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 9. Photo of the bucket artifact at left (80% of actual size) and the issued stamp (4 times actual size) at right. The background colour on the slide at upper left is greenish olive, similar to the 37¢ Wooden Plough in the first set of medium values, and the value is 20¢. [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 10. Photo of the weathercock artifact at left (80% of actual size) and the issued stamp (4 times actual size) at right. Although the shape on the stamp matches the artifact in the photograph, the metallic finish on the stamp seems much rougher. The background colour on the slide, bottom centre, is close to that of the stamp and the value is 15¢. [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 11. At left, photo of the top skate depicted on the 20¢ stamp (80% of actual size) and, at right, the issued stamp with three different skates (4 times actual size). There are no photos of the other two skates in the auction consignment. The background colour on the slide at bottom left is similar to the 10¢ Weathercock, and the denomination is 10¢. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

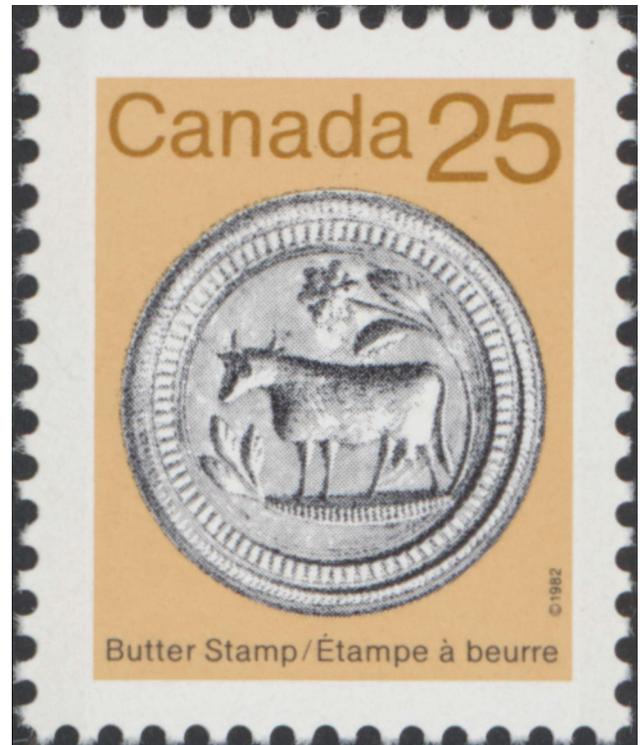


Figure 12. Photo of the butter stamp artifact at left (80% of actual size) and the issued stamp (4 times actual size) at right. There is obviously more detail in the photograph. The background colour on the slide, upper left, is orange, and the value is 2¢. The slide appears to have been produced at the same time as the other low values, and the copyright date on the stamp is "1982" even though it was issued on 6 May 1987. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

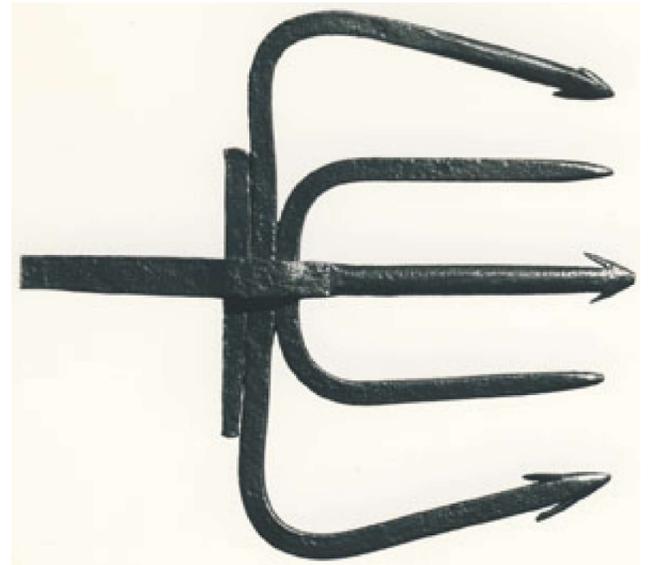
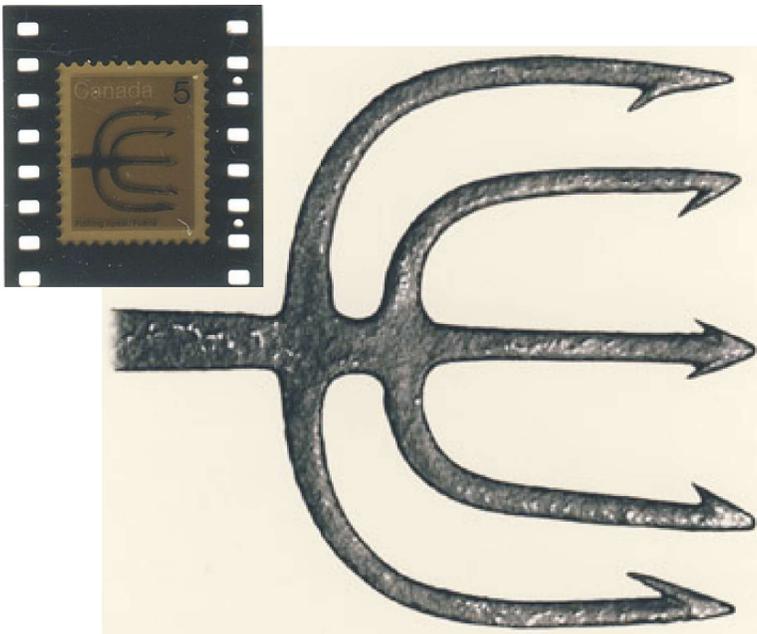


Figure 13. At left, photo of the initial fishing spear (80% of actual size) considered for the 2¢ stamp. The slide at upper left incorporates the initial spear. The background colour on the slide is similar to the 20¢ Skates and the denomination is 5¢. At right, photo of the fishing spear used on the issued stamp (80% of actual size). [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 14. At left, black and white essay of the 2¢ Fishing Spear with the spear used on the issued stamp. The denomination is 5¢ and the copyright legend is missing, just like on the slide in Figure 13. At right, the issued stamp (4 times actual size). Unlike most of the other designs, the details of the artifact are more apparent on the stamp than in the photograph. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

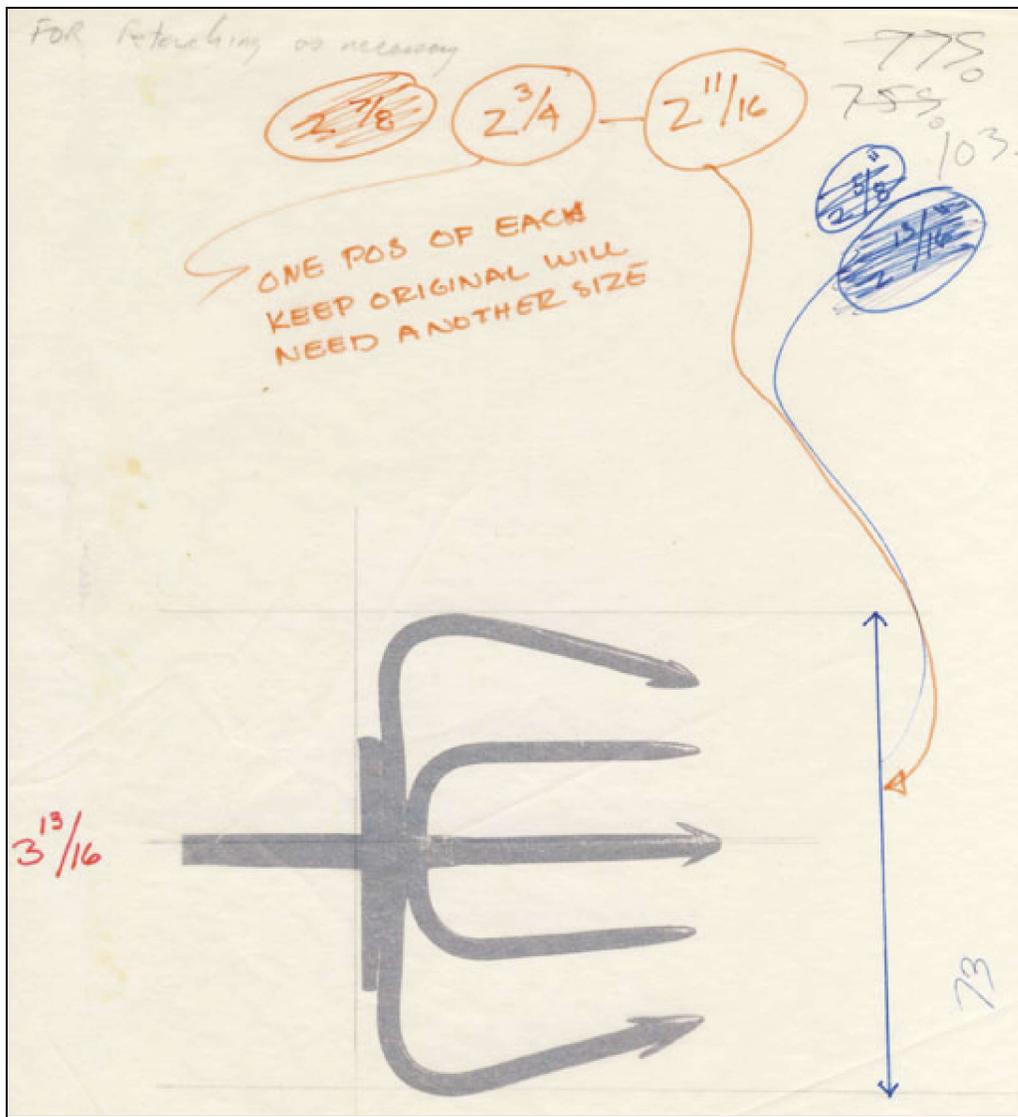


Figure 15. Essay of the fishing spear used on the issued stamp with annotation written on a glassine overlay (reduced to 70% of actual size and trimmed). The note in pencil at the top left reads, "For retouching as necessary". [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 16. Unused designs. At left, photo of a broad axe (70% of actual size) with slide of the axe to the upper right of it. The background colour on the slide is an orange beige colour and the denomination is 1¢. At right, photo of a chopper (70% of actual size) with slide of the chopper to the upper left of it. The background colour on the slide is orange and the denomination is 20¢. At bottom centre, slide of a crock with reddish orange background and 20¢ denomination. There is no photo of this artifact in the auction consignment. [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 17. Photo of the wooden plough artifact (80% of actual size) used on the 37¢ stamp, part of the first set of medium value definitives issued on 8 April 1983, with stamp to compare (2 times actual size). [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 18. Photo of the cradle artifact (80% of actual size) used on the 48¢ stamp, part of the first set of medium value definitives issued on 8 April 1983, with stamp to compare (2 times actual size). [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 19. Photo of the settle-bed artifact (80% of actual size) used on the 39¢ stamp, first stamp in the second set of medium value definitives issued on 1 August 1985, with stamp to compare (2 times actual size). Although issued in 1985, the copyright date on all three stamps in the second set is 1983. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

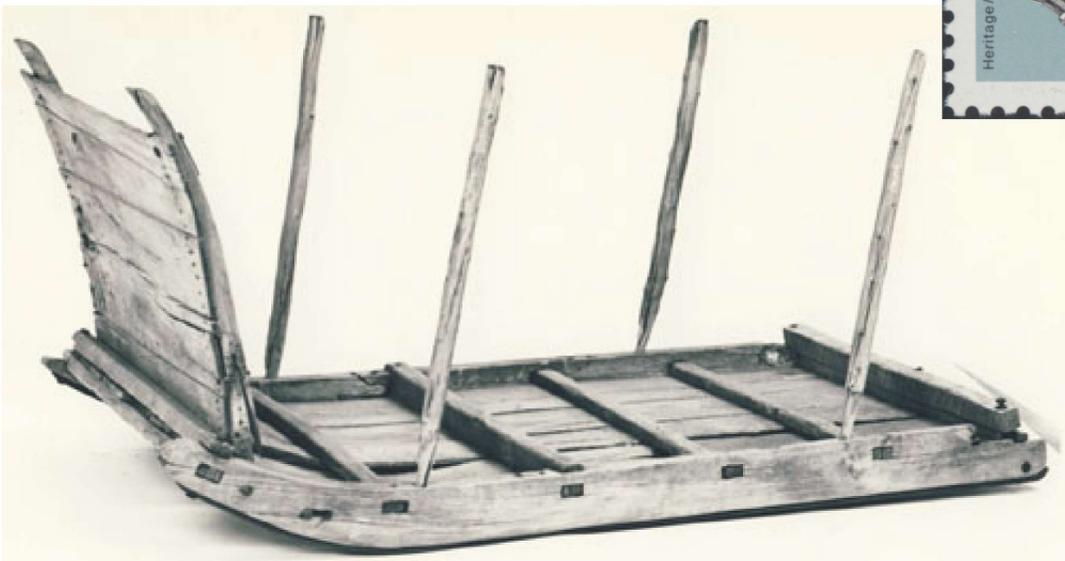


Figure 20. Photo of the sleigh artifact (80% of actual size) used on the 50¢ stamp, second stamp in the second set of medium value definitives issued on 1 August 1985, with stamp to compare (2 times actual size). [Source: Sparks Auctions]

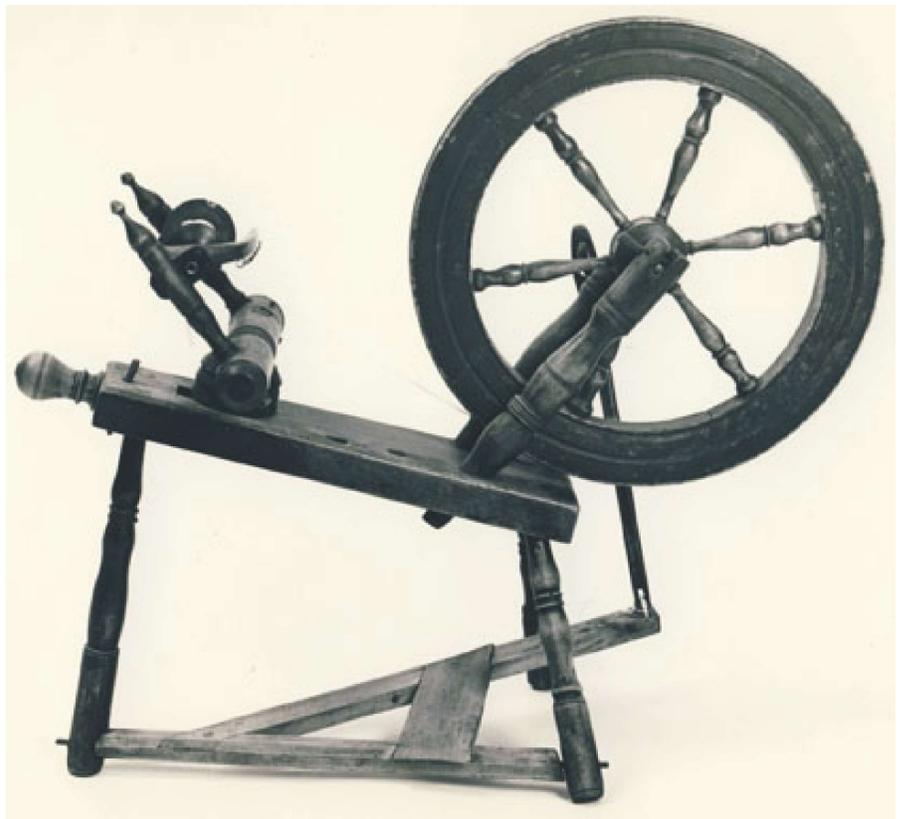


Figure 21. Photo of the spinning wheel artifact (80% of actual size) used on the 68¢ stamp, third stamp in the second set of medium value definitives issued on 1 August 1985, with stamp to compare (2 times actual size). [Source: Sparks Auctions]



Figure 22. Photo of the linen chest artifact (80% of actual size) used on the 42¢ stamp, part of the third set of medium value definitives issued on 6 May 1987, with stamp to compare (2 times actual size). The copyright date is 1983. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

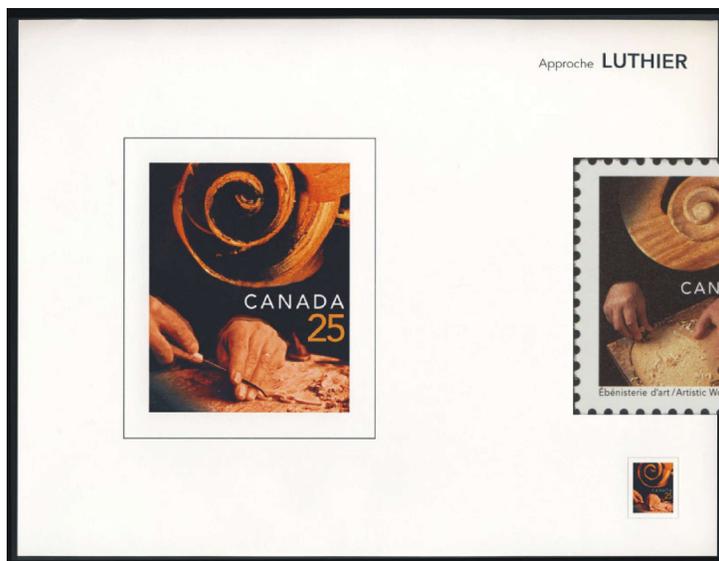


Figure 23. Essays of the 3¢, 5¢, and 10¢ Traditional Trades definitives issued on 29 April 1999 (1/3 actual size) showing a large image at left and the same image, stamp-size, at bottom right. For purposes of comparison, the issued stamps (1.4 times actual size) are shown at centre right. [Source: Sparks Auctions]

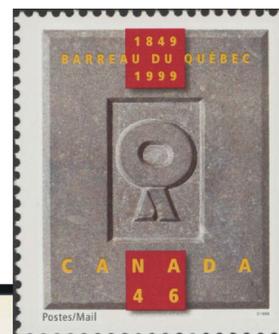


Figure 24. Essay of the 46¢ Barreau du Québec (1/3 actual size) issued on 3 June 1999 showing a large image in the centre and a stamp-size image at bottom. The issued stamp (1.2 times actual size) is above the essay. [Source: Sparks Auctions]