

A numismatic legacy

The Toronto Coin Club marks its 80th anniversary this year, holding its place as the oldest continuously meeting coin club in Canada. Established in 1936, when interest in Canadian numismatics was at its twentieth-century nadir, the club has weathered the storm of collecting booms and busts, and continues to be an engaging, friendly group for Toronto's keen numismatists.

In addition to a long-standing contribution to the collegiality of collecting, the Toronto Coin Club has in its eight decades left a numismatic legacy through the issuance of medals and woods to commemorate milestone moments.



The 1954 CNA Convention medal (1), with a mintage of 200, was issued in brass; a single piece was struck in silver for presentation to Peter Favro. In the 60s the medal was re-issued in brass with a punched R, and in silver.

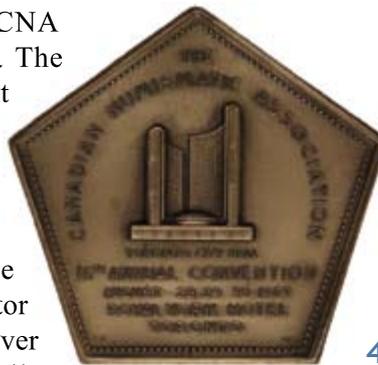
Canadian Numismatic Association Medals

As the host of the inaugural CNA Convention in 1954, the Toronto Coin Club issued the first CNA medal – a plain, text-only affair in brass designed by Peter S. Favro and produced by the Barnard Stamp & Stencil Co. of Hamilton. It is one of the scarcer CNA medals in its original form, with a mintage of 200, and is more commonly found as one of the restrikes (with punched “R”) sold by the club in the 1960s.

The club has hosted or participated in the CNA Conventions on three further occasions to date. The large pentagonal medal of 1969 is one of the most instantly recognizable CNA medals, for both its form and its finely engraved club emblem on the reverse. It is the work of Orazio Lombardo at Canadian Artistic Dies of Sherbrooke, Quebec.

The 1981 CNA medal was designed by active club member and internationally acclaimed sculptor Dora de Pédery-Hunt, on the condition that whatever design she submitted be accepted unconditionally. The Lombardo Mint expertly reproduced her resultant contribution of trillium flowers and maple leaves.

The most recent Toronto Convention, in 2004, hosted in conjunction with three other clubs, saw medals displaying the winged goddess of victory, copied from the statue atop the Prince's Gates at The Canadian National Exhibition grounds. The Toronto Coin Club was responsible for the design of the medal.



Medal Images: (2) 1969 CNA medal reverse in antiqued bronze; (3) modified “award” reverse in nickel-plated bronze; and (4) obverse, in antiqued silver, issued only as an award medal with modified reverse; (5) 1981 CNA medal obverse in bronze; (6) 2004 CNA medal obverse in silver.

Images: Jeff Wilson

CLUB MEDALS

The first club-specific medal was issued to mark the club's 25th anniversary dinner on April 22, 1961, displaying Toronto's "new" City Hall, then about to start construction. The intellectual property rights to the image of the City Hall were at the time closely guarded, and the issue was the first properly licensed item to feature the subject. Struck by the Lackie Mfg. Co. Ltd., the piece was widely available in aluminum, bronze, and silver, with a limited production of three gold specimens.

In the midst of the coin speculation boom of the mid-1960s, the club hosted a pair of successful Fall Rally shows, issuing medals in bronze and silver in conjunction with these fairs in 1963 and 1964. Produced by the Wellings Mint, the 1963 emission commemorated the old Toronto Armouries, then being demolished, while the 1964 piece commemorated Canada's forthcoming Centennial celebrations – if not the earliest, then certainly one of the earliest Centennial medallions to come to market.

The 1964 medal marked the first numismatic appearance of the club's now-familiar emblem, that is based on a design by Hazel Munro, approved in February 1964. The emblem was inspired by a tetradrachm of Alexander the Great, which forms the central part of the club's presidential badge, presented by the inaugural club president, G.M. Robillard. While the aging badge is seldom, if ever, worn any more, its transmission from outgoing to incoming president remains a part of the club's continuity, and it is displayed in its clamshell case at every meeting.

In 1969 the club produced an aluminum souvenir medal, again displaying Toronto City Hall, for sale at the CNA Convention it hosted that year.

Medals in silver and bronze, displaying the club obverse die used for the 1964 medal, were produced by Wellings Mint to mark the club's 35th anniversary party on September 25, 1971. Similar award medals were produced in brass, pairing the Wellings Mint's obverse die with a generic oak leaf wreath reverse, for engraving and issuance as awards at subsequent club shows.

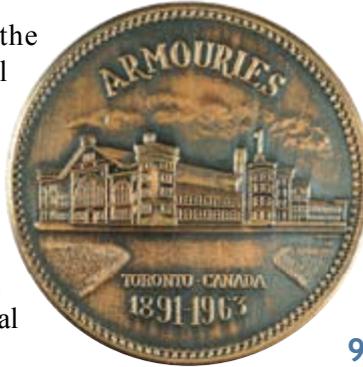
For the club's half-century celebrations in 1986, Dora de Pédry-Hunt was commissioned to provide a fine medallic reinterpretation of the club emblem, and a simple but elegant reverse of a maple leaf and the double dates of the club's foundation and anniversary years. Struck primarily in bronze and silver by the Lombardo Mint, for the first (and to date, only) time since the 25th anniversary medal, the pieces were also available in gold, with just three being produced for those willing to pay the steep cost of the required bullion.



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See page 118 for descriptions.

A different commemoration was made for the 60th anniversary in 1996: a counterstamp on \$2.00 circulating and \$5.00 silver bullion coins, realized by Rick Craig.

By the time of the club's 75th anniversary in 2011, the club's previous dies could not be located. Accordingly a new die, engraved by Larry Colburn, was commissioned to permit a subscription-only limited anniversary issue of just 65 pieces, these struck by the Mississauga Mint in bronze, brass, and silver. The reverse motif with the anniversary message was produced by laser engraving, which allowed artwork for the 75th anniversary plus the name of the medal's purchaser to be included on the medal.

A fantasy note, inspired by the 1937 Bank of Toronto \$5 note, designed and produced by Henry Nienhuis, was also available alongside the 75th anniversary medals.



The club has issued two woods to date, one in 1981 to mark the club's 45th anniversary dinner (held in conjunction with that year's CNA Convention), and another included in the 2006 Convention's registration kit to mark the TCC's 70th anniversary.

Delegates to this year's RCNA convention should be on the lookout for the club's latest numismatic endeavour: an 80th anniversary wood is in preparation and will be included in the 2016 convention registration kit. To further commemorate the anniversary, the club is working on plans that also include a detailed catalogue of the club's numismatic legacy. (Those having any club-related medals -- particularly in off-metals -- or woods not mentioned above are invited to contact the author at ian.speers@utoronto.ca.) Check the club Web site at www.torontocoinclub.ca for updates -- or better yet, if in Toronto, do come out to a meeting, typically held the third Monday of each month at Metro Hall.

RCNA



The fantasy note (r) issued by the Toronto Coin Club on it's 75th anniversary.



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Medal images: (7) 1961 25th anniversary dinner medal in bronze and (8) in sterling silver; (9) 1963 Fall Rally - Armouries medal in antiqued bronze and (10) in silver; (11) 1967 Centennial in antiqued bronze, issued in 1964; (12) 1971 35th anniversary party medal in bronze and (13) in .999 fine silver; (14) 1986 50th anniversary medal in bronze; (15) 1996 "Toonie" Counterstamped "TORONTO COIN CLUB / 60 / 1936-1996"; (16) 2011 Laser Engraved 75th anniversary medal in brass (also in bronze and silver).

