



The Young Collector

By
Joseph Perrone

In my first column I would like to introduce myself and share how I have become a passionate philatelist. My name is Joseph Perrone, and I am a 16-year-old home-schooler living near Owen Sound, Ontario. I have many diverse interests including playing hockey, playing chess, hunting and fishing, metal detecting and playing the piano. I am currently working on my Grade 10 piano course with the Royal Conservatory of Music.

My room is filled with the typical trappings of any teenage boy: Games, *Lord of the Rings* and hockey posters. The shelves are full of my numerous collections, all in various states of organization.

In addition to stamps, I collect bottle caps, coins, interesting rocks and fossils, hockey cards, war memorabilia, along with all the neat finds I have made with my metal detector. Out of all these treasures, I am obsessed, and most proud of my stamp collection.

I was first attracted to the hobby by stories from my parents about my ancestors. According to family lore, my

mother's maternal great-grandfather put himself through at least one year of medical school at McGill University in Montreal in the 1940s by selling two rare stamps from the former French colony of Obock in Djibouti, which he had in his collection. These rare stamps were from 1894 and were probably the 25 and 50 franc values, which today have a combined catalogue value of over 13 hundred dollars.

I was further inspired by another family story, this time on my father's side, of how my enterprising uncle imported Canadian stamps from the U.S. and sold them at a profit when he was only a teenager. I think it is only natural that I love stamps as much as I do. From my artistic mother, I inherited an appreciation of the beauty of stamps, and my father's interest in philosophy and investing, contributed to my interest in the history of stamps and their potential value. My parents have a wealth of knowledge, and they have also helped me by offering advice on how to go further. They drive me to stamp club meetings, have paid my membership fees for the British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS), and have further fueled my hobby by buying me more stamps. As for my club membership, I pay the fees with money from my part time jobs.

One day when I was eight years old, my father and I went to the library around the corner from our house to read some books together and have a good time. As it turned out, the West Toronto Stamp Club met at the library. As Dad and I were leaving, he glanced at the posters on the bulletin board and realized that the stamp club meeting was that night. Dad asked me if I was interested and I said that I was game, so we went in.

We were warmly welcomed by many, including a wonderful man, Chris Edwards, who immediately took me under his wing. At that first meeting, Edwards explained the basic dos and don'ts of stamp collecting and even gave me a fine used example of Canada's 1859 five cent beaver definitive. (*Scott No. 15*) I was hooked. From then on, I looked forward to the auctions and saved money to buy stamps, plus collections I could afford. Dad often helped, too.

