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New counterfeit toonie varieties discovered

By Jesse Robitaille

Ontario collector and counterfeit coin researcher Brent Mackie has found two previously unseen obverses, including a 2005 “serif font» design and a 2007 Royal Canadian Mint logo design, on several fake toonies.

Mackie, who also recently discovered additional obverse die cracks

plus obverse and reverse die clashes, launched an online catalogue detailing his research in mid-July. At cameltoetonies.ca, he lists, describes and illustrates all six known year-dates (1996, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006 and now 2007) plus various “defects” found among the counterfeits. In the three months after he began his research in March,

Mackie examined more than 150,000 toonies.

“The 2007 is the first coin with that date and brings us up to six distinct years on these ‘Camel Toe’ toonies,” Mackie, the long-time treasurer of the Waterloo Coin Society, told *CCN* on Aug. 13.

He uses the term “Camel Toe” to describe the recent spate of counterfeit coins, which feature a tell-tale marker – one of several – on the reverse polar bear’s right paw.

Continued on page 21



Brent Mackie recently found a fake 2005-dated ‘serif font’ design (left) and fake 2007-dated Mint logo design (right). Both designs were previously unknown to researchers studying the so-called ‘Camel Toe’ counterfeits. Mackie has catalogued them as ‘CT05A’ and ‘CT07,’ respectively.

Pick our BRAIN

In this corner of each issue, our writers will work with collectors, dealers and other numismatic leaders to uncover practical knowledge for people who are looking to bolster their hobby. To submit an inquiry, email info@trajan.ca or write to ‘Pick Our Brain,’ PO Box 25009, Rose City RO, Welland, ON L3B 6G9.

Reader Mike H. writes: “Which official banknote issue is considered the smallest currency note in the world?”

While Romania’s 1917-dated 10-bani note, measuring 38 millimetres by 27.5 millimetres, is widely considered the world’s smallest banknote, there is another contender. Towards the end of the Second World War, Morocco experienced metal shortages leading to a lack of material to mint coins, so the North African country issued small-denomination emergency money. These cardboard banknotes, issued in 50-cent, one-franc and two-franc denominations,



Photo of 1917 Romanian 10-bani banknote courtesy of the National Numismatic Collection at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History.

measured only 31 millimetres by 42 millimetres. For comparison, the Moroccan notes have a total surface area of 1,302 square millimetres while the Romanian note measures 1,045 square millimetres. Because emergency notes

are often considered private or local issues, the *Guinness World Records* book lists Romania’s 10-bani note as the smallest official banknote. The Romanian notes are also the lowest-denomination issues printed in that country. 🍁

LETTERS to the Editor

THE QUEEN ON OUR COINS

Dear Editor,

You’ve seen the ads on TV about a new coin honouring the centennial of Banting & Best’s discovery of insulin. The new toonie is in circulation.

Funny, but in the ads, both online and on TV, they never show you the front of the coin. Perhaps they’re em-

barrassed that it neither names nor pictures the inventors, on either side.

Instead, this is the front of the coin that is meant to celebrate one of Canada’s greatest achievements, something Elizabeth Windsor had nothing to do with.

Our country’s mint has never featured a Canadian on the front of its own coins. There is no law prohibiting it, and each new coin is a fresh

opportunity, but the Ottawa mint has never once seized upon it.

In a republic, historic Canadians would take their rightful place on Canadian coins.

– *Republic Now*, a national organization whose stated mission is ‘to advocate for the replacement of the non-resident, British monarch as Canada’s Head of State with a democratically-selected, resident, Canadian.’

Send letters to: info@trajan.ca, fax (905) 646-0995, or by post to *CCN* Letters to the Editor, Trajan Publishing Corp., PO Box 25009 Rose City RO, Welland, ON L3B 6G9

Seals...

Continued from page 8

merger, the Royal Canadian Bank had placed its seal on the face of its 1865 issue of \$1, \$2, \$5 and \$10 notes.

The Bank of Nova Scotia is another bank that put its seal on notes it issued, beginning with its 1881 \$5 bills, on whose face it can be seen note. With the 1896 \$20 issue, the bank's seal is moved to the back of the note, where it remained on all subsequent domestic issues right up to its last series in 1935. On the bank's British West Indies notes, issued from 1900-30, the seal was replaced by the bank's crest.



A reversed image of an intaglio silver matrix depicts the first Great Seal of Canada featuring Queen Victoria.

In a future column, we will look at crests, which appear much more frequently than seals on banknotes. 🍁



After merging in 1876, the City Bank and Royal Canadian Bank formed the Montréal-based Consolidated Bank of Canada. That year, the new bank's first issue (back of \$4 note shown) featured the former banks' seals.

Update...

Continued from page 6

He's also cataloguing the 2004- and 2005-dated fakes struck at an advanced counterfeiting operation known to collectors as the "Montréal Mint."

Using his "BWJM" numbering system – a nod to his initials – Mackie is also cataloguing the fakes' defects, including die rotations, die cracks, die clashes, weak strikes and extra die metal.

The newfound obverse designs, the 2005 'serif font' and 2007 Mint logo, are catalogued as "CT05A" and "CT07," respectively.

Mackie began cataloguing the fake toonies and their defects and varieties "because there were so many of them," he told CCN in July ("Collector created fake toonie catalogue 'because there were so many,'" Vol. 59 #9).

An anonymous Toronto grocery store worker made what's believed to be the first report of the Camel Toe toonies last July on Reddit



Counterfeit \$2 circulation coins (bottom) feature a flaw on the obverse polar bear's front right paw plus less definition in the background design. A genuine toonie is shown at the top.

("Dozens of counterfeit toonies allegedly passed in Toronto," CCN Vol. 58 #10).

Since then, collectors have found and studied the fakes, which have been circulating in cities across the country ("Surge of suspected fakes

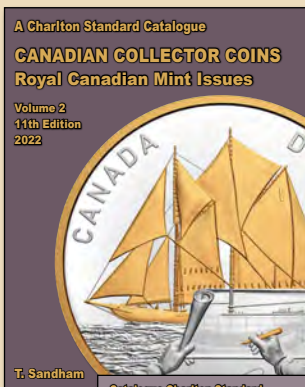
hits cities across Canada since fall, collector finds," CCN Vol. 59 #1).

Mackie and fellow counterfeit expert Mike Marshall believe there may be millions of fake \$2 coins currently in circulation. 🍁

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Todd Sandham, Editor

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