



The Maple Leaf Rag

Friends of the Canadian Collections

Amis des Collections Canadiennes



SPRING 2015

The AGM of the Friends of Canadian Collection/Amis des collections canadiennes

Wed. May 13th, 3 pm. Earth Ranger's Studio,

Schad Gallery of Biodiversity,

Jacqueline Miller, Mammologist, Biodiversity, ROM will hold a lecture, titled *Larger than life, a leviathan for the ROM*. Jacqui was a participant in Marc Engstrom's whale expedition and will fill us in on their many experiences. She is now involved with the preservation of various parts of the whale and works currently on the plasticising of the whale's heart which is as large as a small car! During the FCC's tutoring session for the whale table project during March break Jacqui impressed us with her vast knowledge and the ease with which she explained complicated procedures so that a layman can understand them. You are in for a treat; please mark your calendars.

No registration required, but come early as there is a limit of 55 participants. Election of the FCC executive will follow the lecture.

Letter from the Chair

In this issue we introduce you to important supporters of the ROM who enriched the visitors' experience manifold by their donations. A museum's continued success is based on knowledgeable curators who know how to surround themselves with interested members of the public who ultimately make the museum a better place not only by their continuous involvement but also by enriching the museum's collections. The Friends of the Canadian Collections is such a group.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR FCC

MEMBERSHIP—WE COUNT ON YOUR SUPPORT

When you renew your ROM membership, look for the heading "Optional Donation" on the membership form. Under "My gift is in support of..." scroll down to "Friends of the Canadian Collections/amis des collections canadiennes," and place a check mark.

We need your donations to finance Canadian research and Canadian artifacts at the ROM.

THE JOHN AND MARY YAREMKO COLLECTION

In June, 1991, Janet Holmes who curated the Canadian glass collection for many years wrote that “The happy discovery at a 1958 auction of Gerald Stevens’ early books sparked John and Mary Yaremko’s interest in collecting Canadiana, particularly glass. For twenty-five years their collecting was sandwiched into the busy schedule of an Ontario cabinet minister. They sought pressed glass with Canadian motifs and production and detective work gave them the first knowledge of cut glass patterns made by the Toronto firm, Gowans, Kent.

Their gift of some 1100 pieces [in 1981] includes pressed Canadian glass and signed cut glass made by four Toronto firms. Their ‘private pursuit’ gave them ‘the most feverish pleasure of the hunt with the satisfaction of accomplishing something very worthwhile.’”

Gerald Stevens, who served as a Research Associate in the Canadiana Department at the Royal Ontario Museum between 1964 and 1968, was instrumental in



promoting historic Canadian decorative arts in the years leading up to the 1967 Centennial. He was primarily known as a scholar of Canadian glass. Stevens’ books and articles inspired many collectors from the 1950s to the 1980s. In addition to examples of glass with Canadian patterns such as maple leaves and others documented to glass houses like Burlington through archaeology and sherds, the Yaremkos collected 68 pieces of cut glass bearing the trademarks of Toronto firms and made between 1900 and 1920. After the death of his wife Mary, John Yaremko donated Victorian ceramics decorated with transfer prints showing Canadian subject matter and tiger maple furniture to the Canadiana Department.

A judiciously assembled private collection often constitutes the ideal acquisition for a major museum because it provides documented examples in good condition. The Yaremko glass illustrates the early stages of industrialization and popular design that followed the pioneer period and demonstrates the high degree of uniformity and universality of consumer goods in the period c. 1880-1930. Forty-two different patterns of pressed glass are found among a comprehensive range of forms. The factories represented include: the Nova Scotia Glass Co., New Glasgow, N.S. (operating 1881-1892); the Diamond and Diamond Flint Glass Companies, Montreal (1890-1913); the Jefferson Glass Co., Toronto (1913-1925); and examples attributed to or made by the Burlington Glass Co., Hamilton, Ont. (1874-1897). The more modest pieces include mason jars, glass bottles, and souvenir/ advertising paperweights with photographs. Representative examples of the tableware patterns are illustrated and discussed in Janet Holmes, *Patterns in Light: the John and Mary Yaremko glass collection* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1987).

Peter Kaellgren

Gundy Clapperton Company Ltd. Punch bowl,
981.163.42/49-50, photo © ROM Images

Sir Edmund Boyd Osler (1845-1924) and the Paul Kane Collection

In 1912, Sir Edmund Boyd Osler donated a large collection of Paul Kane's paintings to the ROM, the first documented acquisition for the museum. Osler had bought the collection nine years earlier. 1912 was the year the Crown passed the Royal Ontario Museum Act, leading to the opening of the museum two years later. It was also the year that Osler was knighted.

Osler had been born in Canada, growing up in what is now Hamilton. His father bore the unusual name of Featherstone Lake Osler, and had served in the Royal Navy as a Lieutenant on HMS Victory. In fact, he had been offered a position as the science officer on HMS Beagle for Charles Darwin's voyage to the Galapagos Islands, but he turned that down and emigrated to Canada instead. Here he became an Anglican clergyman and married Ellen Free Pickton; Edmund was the youngest of their four sons.

Osler was not particularly well educated compared to his siblings, only attending grammar school in Dundas, but that was no impediment to his business success. His first job was as a bank clerk at the Bank of Upper Canada, and when that bank failed, he and his colleague Henry Pellat, later of Casa Loma fame, set up their own firm as stockbrokers, offering investment and insurance services. Osler made his fortune mainly through transportation and land. He founded the Ontario and Quebec Railway and the Canada Southern Steamboat Company Ltd., became the president of the Toronto Ferry Company, was a director of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and later the president of the Dominion Bank.

Encouraged to enter politics, Osler ran for mayor of Toronto in 1892, but lost to R.J. Fleming. He was, however, elected to the House of Commons representing West Toronto in 1896 and served there until 1917. In 1896 he was also president of the Toronto Board of Trade. When he retired, he did not become inactive, holding eight directorships, three presidencies and a vice-presidency in 1921.



Paul Kane, Red River Settlement, 1849-56

912.1.23 © Photo ROM Images

At his death, his estate was valued at \$4,000,000. He was then living in his 20-bedroom mansion, Craighleigh, on 13-acres, complete with greenhouse. Over the years, he had promised money to various friends, and those who came forward when he died, received the money from his estate.

Osler's descendants, philanthropists Judy and Wilmot Matthews, have followed in Osler's footsteps contributing to the ROM to establish the Matthews Family Court of Chinese Sculpture.

While Kane's paintings were donated to the Museum by Osler, Raymond Willis, the great grandson of Hon. George William Allan (1822-1901), Paul Kane's major patron, donated Kane's sketches, carrying out his mother's wishes – Chelsea, daughter of Maude and Allan Cassels. The Hon George William Allan had commissioned 100 oil paintings from Kane in the 1860s at a cost of \$20,000. Allan had been the 11th mayor of Toronto and in the Canadian Senate from 1867-1901. He lived at his house, Moss Park, Toronto.

Elizabeth Gillan Muir

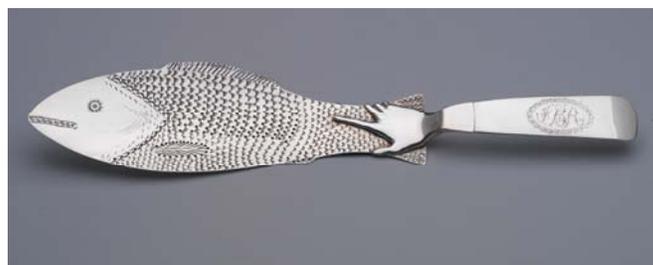
John Emerson Langdon (1903 – 1981)

We have to thank the late F. St. George Spendlove, then curator of the Sigmund Samuel Collection, that Mr. Langdon was convinced to donate his Canadian silver collection to the ROM. Collected over fifty years, the Langdon Collection is of national significance. Over the years Mr. Langdon gave nearly 600 pieces of Canadian silver to the ROM. The collection spans the gamut of early church silver, early flatware and domestic silver to 19th century presentation pieces. It also presents a record of nearly all the marks of early Canadian silversmiths. As Mr. Langdon's first interest were silver marks he started with a collection of spoons, but soon added precious early church silver made mostly in Quebec in traditional French styles. Domestic silver such as the wonderful tea set by Robert Cruickshank followed English fashion. Later on, Indian trade silver, made mostly by R. Cruickshank, rounded out the collection of Canadian silver.

Mr. Langdon assembled a collection of Canadian silver in a time when Canadian silver was neither recognised, nor researched and therefore relatively inexpensive. Today to amass a collection of this calibre would nearly be impossible or take vast financial resources.

Mr. Langdon was not only a collector par excellence; he contributed enormously to the research of Canadian silver. Working as vice president and director in charge of corporate finance at McLeod, Young, Weir, a Toronto investment firm, he spent nearly all his leisure time travelling to archives, churches and institutions to go through directories, old records and documents to find out more about Canadian silversmiths and their marks. He willingly shared his knowledge with other silver enthusiasts. He wrote many articles for various antique journals and the English Silver Society journal. His book *Canadian Silversmiths 1700 – 1900*, published in 1966, is still the definite go-to-book for Canadian silver marks and in daily use by many collectors of Canadian silver.

Dorothea Burstyn



Above: Holy Water Stoup and aspergilla, marked SM in rectangular for Salomon Marion (1782-1830)

984.214.1&2

Middle: Silver tea set by R. Cruickshank

Below: Fish slice, with wrap-around hand in relief and engraved initials JBR, marked "HP" "MONTREAL" for

Henry Polonceau (1766-1828)

984.10.127

Both photos © ROM Images

Sigmund Samuel (1867-1962)



Stretcher table, 954x45

Photo © ROM Images

The great ROM patron Sigmund Samuel was fascinated by Canadian history. He collected from the age of ten. Starting in England, he acquired paintings, prints, maps and artefacts related to Canada, and chosen for their usefulness to scholars. The Sigmund Samuel Collection is visual evidence of our country's growth and change.

In 1940, he presented his collection to the ROM, which opened the Sigmund Samuel Building (1951) to house it. Since 2007, items from the collection have been on view in the Sigmund Samuel Gallery of Canada (Weston Family Wing), with Samuel's own portrait at the entrance. There are a lot of interesting things in the gallery but a stretcher table caught my eye.

This table comes from the Hôtel-Dieu Hospital in Ville-Marie in New France (now Montréal, Québec), and dates from c. 1690-1725. It may have been among furniture commissioned in 1697 from cabinetmaker Vincent Lenoir (1661-1734) for the hospital.

The table's stretchers are turned, echoing French fashion from the reign of Louis XIII (1601-1643). The wood looks like dark walnut, often used for fine furniture in France. It is actually birch and pine, more common in New France. The hardware is modern.

As Sigmund Samuel left a trust fund for acquisitions, the Sigmund Samuel Collection is still growing.

Anne Thackray



J.H.Fleming, 1939, © ROM Biodiversity

James Henry Fleming (1872 - 1940)

At this time when museums are facing increasing pressure on many fronts to become entertainment centers, it is worthwhile to look back to a time when the basis of every museum was its collections. The variety of purposes for many Natural History collections including the vast collection of birds donated to the ROM by J.H. Fleming included identification, classification, description of animals and their habitats, preserving representative species, research, publication of studies and display of animals all of which contribute to learning. Fleming, an amateur Ornithologist and passionate private collector, was also a respected scientist. He was born in Toronto at the end of the 19th century. Inheriting his father's seed growing business and extensive land holdings in the center of the city gave him financial security and allowed him to pursue his interest in birds. He started his first collection at the age of 12 and began to assemble his collection of birds by the

age of 14. At age 16 he became a member of the Royal Canadian Institute – Canada’s oldest scientific society.

There were few restrictions on collecting wildlife in the 19th and early 20th centuries and displaying birds was very popular. Stuffed birds were worn on women’s hats and many homes had mounted displays. Buying and selling of specimens was commonplace but at the time there was little public demand for a serious study of birds so James Fleming operated a one man museum in his parental home on Rusholme Road amassing and studying thousands of species.

As public demand for museums increased and the University of Toronto collections began to exceed their available space, plans were made for a separate museum building. The ROM was founded in 1912 and a year later a new section of Natural History was created. J.H. Fleming was a respected collector and scientist and was appointed Honorary Curator of the National Museum of Canada in 1913 and Honorary Curator of the ROM in 1927. He served as President of the American Ornithology Union from 1932 to 1934. Fleming devoted his life and fortune to the accumulation and preservation of specimens and information. When he died at the age of 67 in 1940, he left his entire holdings without conditions to the Royal Ontario Museum. His research focus was based on taxonomy or systematics which is the system or process of describing the way in which different things are related by putting them in groups. Accordingly his was the most representative private bird collection in the world and included all modern families of birds. It consists of 32,267 specimens, all 27 orders, 163 of 167 families, 2074 of 2600 genera and over 6300 species. It also included his vast library and his meticulous notes. Almost singlehandedly, Fleming’s bequest made the ROM’s Ornithology collection one of the world’s best.

Because of the Migratory Bird Convention act of 1917 it is no longer possible to buy dead birds except for collections, research and education. The generous donation of the Fleming collection has vastly increased our understanding of birds and their important historical place in our environment. It informs our efforts to respect, understand, educate and protect so that fewer birds end up on the endangered list.

Betty Stein

Footnote: Sources for this article were “Ornithology in Ontario by McNicholl and Cranmer Byng, 1994, the files of Jim Bailey and the generous help of Mark Peck.



Above: Greater Bird-of-Paradise - a small sample of the 32,000 birds donated to the ROM by J.H. Fleming

Below: Bird-of Paradise - a small sample of the 32,000 birds donated to the ROM by J.H. Fleming

Photos © ROM Biodiversity



FCC members Velma Jones, Jean Read and Vera Hall are helping at the whale table. Photo by D. Burstyn

March break in the Earth Ranger’s Studio:

Members of the FCC joined staff and volunteers of Biodiversity at the whale table during March break. Kids enjoyed touching the whale specimens, the expedition video and hearing whale calls. We answered a lot of questions and had fun with the kids. The whale table was a great success, 1950 people of all ages came through even on a light attendance day. If you want to help the FCC in future endeavours please let us know.

ADOPT–A-CANADIAN JOURNAL

Journals are vital for the support of the ROM collections and research by its curators and for use by students. Subscriptions costs are increasing every year. For that reason, the “Adopt-a-Canadian Journal” program was launched to help defray costs.

The ROM Library has benefited significantly from your support in the past. Again, we are including a list of the journals up for adoption this year. Contributors are acknowledged with a small plaque in the journal rack in the ROM Library.

To make a contribution, send the title of the journal (see page 8) with your check, made out to the “Adopt-a-Journal-Program, ROM” to

Malika Mendez, FCC/ACC Treasurer
Department of Museum Volunteers,
Royal Ontario Museum
100 Queen’s Park, Toronto, ON, M5S 2C6

FCC/ACC 2014/2015 Board of Directors

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- Above executive will be up for a election for the 2015/1016 period.

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ADOPT-A-JOURNAL

List of journals:

**A/J: Canada's Environmental
Voice \$83.00**

BC Birds \$45

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Bird Studies Canada \$112.00

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Canadian Entomologist \$220.00

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Canadian Gemologist \$60.00

Canadian Geographic \$36

Canadian Mineralogist \$666

**Cap aux Diamants: revue d' histoire du
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**Contact (newsletter of the Historical Light-
ing Society) \$46.00**

Ecoscience \$250

**Ethnologies: Bulletin of the Folklore Studies
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Fusion Magazine \$91.00

Heritage - Heritage Canada \$166.00

Journal of Canadian Art History \$86.00

**Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical
Society \$45.00**

Material Culture Review \$65.00

**Muse (Canadian Museums Associa-
tion) \$61.00**

Le naturaliste canadien \$53.00

Nature Saskatchewan \$41.00

Ontario Archaeology \$78.00

Ontario Bird Banding \$36.00

Ontario Birds \$56.00

Ontario History \$40.00

**Ornamentum (Journal of the Canadian So-
ciety of Decorative Arts) \$166.00**

Pickering Naturalist \$34.00

RACAR: Canadian Art review. \$111.00

**Recherches Amerindiennes au
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Scientia Canadensis \$66.00

**Studio Canada (Ontario Crafts Coun-
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