

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: OUR NEW LOOK, AND A NEW WAY TO BUY AND SELL COINS

# COIN COLLECT

THE NUMBER ONE COIN MAGAZINE

## CANADA'S CROWN JEWELS



The Story  
Behind Our Nation's  
Rarest Coins







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# Editor's Note

Dear Collectors,

Welcome to another exciting edition of Coin Collect! As we delve into the fascinating world of numismatics once more, it's exhilarating to reflect on the journeys that coins make across borders, carrying stories of culture, history, and art. From the highlands of Canada to markets across the globe, coins continue to ignite passion and curiosity among collectors and enthusiasts alike.

In this issue, we explore the global travels of Canadian currency, revealing how these coins find their way into collections around the world. We kick off with a deep dive into "The Evolution of the Loonie," tracing its influence from Canadian pockets to international coin shows. Next, we shine a light on the cutting-edge technology behind modern coin minting in "Crafting Currencies: The Art and Science of Canadian Coin Production."

But our focus isn't just on the coins themselves—it's also on you, the dedicated collectors whose enthusiasm and dedication continue to drive this community forward. Inside, you'll discover "Guardians of History: Profiles of Canada's Top Coin Collectors," featuring stories from some of the most influential figures in our field.

Looking forward, there is much to anticipate. We are excited to introduce more in-depth articles, exclusive interviews, and behind-the-scenes looks at the minting processes that transform raw metal into the masterpieces you collect. Whether you're a seasoned numismatist or new to the world of coin collecting, this issue promises to enrich your appreciation and knowledge of this unique hobby.

Thank you for joining us on this numismatic adventure. Let's continue to explore the rich tapestry of history and art that every coin represents. So, without further ado, let's delve into the fascinating world of coin collecting!

Happy Collecting,



Yaread Habte

Editor-in-Chief

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# Canada's Crown Jewels: The Story Behind Our Nation's Rarest Coins

By The Royal Canadian Mint



In the heart of Canadian numismatics lies a treasure trove of history, art, and culture, embodied in the rarest coins of the nation. Known affectionately as “Canada’s Crown Jewels,” these coins are not only monetary objects but relics of a rich historical tapestry that continues to captivate collectors and historians alike. They are reowned for their unique design. Each piece serves as a testament to Canada’s rich cultural and political history. Our overall representation.

Among these prized possessions is the 1911 Canadian Silver Dollar, one of the most storied pieces in Canadian currency. Known as the “King of Canadian Coins,” it is shrouded in mystery and scarcity, with only two known specimens existing today. Originally struck to commemorate the coronation of King George V, these silver dollars never went into circulation, making them a numismatist’s dream. Today, they represent not only a missed opportunity in Canadian minting history but also a piece of what might have been, encapsulating the shifts in monarchy and governance during the early 20th century.

Another jewel in the crown is the 1921 50-cent piece, famously dubbed the “King of Canadian Half Dollars.” With less than 75 coins believed to

be in existence, this rarity was the result of a large melting down of the coins that were never released into circulation. The few that survived became legends in the collecting world, each carrying a story of survival and the changing economic landscapes of post-World War I Canada.

Not to be overlooked, the 1936 “Dot” Penny takes its place among these illustrious rarities. This penny was minted during a transitional period in Canadian history, marked by the abdication of King Edward VIII. The tiny dot placed below the date on the coin signifies the last-minute halt in production to adjust the dies for King George VI’s effigy. This small detail marks a significant moment in time, capturing a period of constitutional crisis and change. It underscores the profound impact of royal transitions on the nation’s currency and collective memory. A unique approach.

The fascination with these coins goes beyond their scarcity. Each coin tells a story of its era, reflecting the economic, political, and social currents of its time. For instance, the 1890H Newfoundland \$2 gold coin, which features Queen Victoria, is not only rare due to its limited mintage but also tells of Newfoundland’s late 19th-century prosperity and its status as a self-governing colony.

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Collecting these coins is much more than a hobby; it is a pursuit of history, a quest to own a piece of Canada’s past. As these coins change hands among collectors, they carry with them tales of yesteryear, each exchange adding to their legend. The collectors who seek these coins are

often as diverse as the stories the coins themselves tell. From historians to investors, the allure of Canada’s Crown Jewels draws a wide audience, each individual eager to hold a fragment of history.

As we showcase “Canada’s Crown Jewels” in this edition, we delve deeper into the stories behind these rare coins, exploring their origins, their journeys through history, and their place in the collections of those who cherish them. Each coin, a masterpiece of minting, stands as a sentinel of history, a reminder of what has been, and a beacon for what is to come.

Collectors and historians alike seek these coins, each transaction and acquisition is not merely a trade of valuable metal, but a passing of the torch of history from one guardian to another. There is always constant inspiration for unity and pride.







# The Evolution of the Loonie: Canada’s Beloved Dollar Through the Decades

By The Royal Canadian Mint

The Canadian one-dollar coin, affectionately known as the “Loonie,” holds a special place in the hearts and wallets of Canadians. Since its introduction in 1987, the Loonie has not only become a symbol of Canadian innovation and identity but has also undergone fascinating changes that reflect the nation’s cultural and economic shifts.

The story of the Loonie begins with a significant decision to replace the one-dollar bill, aiming to save the government millions in printing costs due to the coin’s longer lifespan. The Royal Canadian Mint first issued the Loonie with the iconic “Voyageur” design, which depicted a canoe with a voyageur and an Indigenous person paddling, a nod to Canada’s fur trade history. However, a dramatic twist occurred when the master dies for this design were lost in transit, prompting the creation of a new design featuring the common loon on a lake, which gave the coin its now-famous nickname. The loonie.

This emblematic image of the loon was crafted by artist Robert-Ralph Carmichael, and it resonated deeply with the Canadian public. The loon, a bird known for its haunting calls and presence in Canadian lakes, symbolizes wilderness and tranquility, qualities much revered in Canadian culture. It embodies national pride and respect. It reflects Canada’s natural beauty and overall tone with the loonie.



Over the years, this image has become synonymous with the Canadian landscape, embedding itself into the national consciousness.

Throughout its history, the Loonie has also been at the forefront of commemorative design and technological advancements in minting. In 1992, to celebrate Canada’s 125th anniversary, the Mint released a series of Loonies with provincial and territorial designs, each coin showcasing unique aspects of Canadian heritage and natural beauty. These coins not only enhanced national pride but also became a collector’s delight, each release eagerly anticipated by numismatists and the general public alike. Each edition also serves as an educational tool, introducing new and seasoned collectors to the rich tapestry of Canada’s provincial symbols and historical milestones.

Moreover, the Loonie has been a pioneer in security and durability features. In 2012, the Royal Canadian Mint introduced multi-ply plated steel technology with enhanced security features to combat counterfeiting and reduce manufacturing costs. This innovation underscored Canada’s commitment to maintaining the integrity and longevity of its currency in an era where digital transactions are on the rise.

The cultural impact of the Loonie extends beyond everyday transactions; it has become a talisman for Canadian athletes. It is a longstanding tradition for a Loonie to be buried beneath the ice during international hockey tournaments held in Canada, a ritual that started when a Loonie was secretly placed beneath the ice surface by Canadian ice-makers during the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, where both the men’s and women’s hockey teams won gold.

As we look back over the decades, the evolution of the Loonie mirrors the evolution of Canada itself—from its economic strategies and technological advancements to its cultural symbols and international accolades. The Loonie is not just a coin; it is a narrative in metal, capturing the spirit of a nation that values tradition while embracing change. This cherished coin continues to play a vital role in Canadian life, symbolizing stability and innovation as it circulates through the hands of millions, weaving a shared story of national pride.

As Canada continues to evolve, so too will the Loonie, carrying with it the legacy of the past and the promise of the future, ensuring that this beloved dollar remains a cornerstone of Canadian identity and economic life.





# Mining Excellence: Canadian Coin Production

By The Royal Canadian Mint

The production of Canadian coins is a symphony of precision engineering and artistic expression, where state-of-the-art technology meets centuries-old craftsmanship. At the heart of this process is the Royal Canadian Mint, known globally for its innovative approaches to minting. This feature delves into the meticulous art and science behind creating some of the world’s most beautiful and technologically advanced coins.

The journey of a Canadian coin begins with design. Artists and engravers work together to encapsulate Canada’s heritage, values, and identity into tangible forms. Each design must pass through rigorous aesthetic and technical evaluations to ensure it is suitable for minting. This includes consideration of how the coin’s artistry will translate into dies that can consistently strike millions of coins without degradation, and how it will function in everyday use.

Innovation at the Royal Canadian Mint is most apparent in its approach to materials and minting technology. Canadian coins are made from a variety of materials, including nickel, copper, and multi-ply plated steel. Each material is chosen for its durability, cost-effectiveness, and the ability to achieve intricate designs with high precision. The Mint was also one of the first to adopt colorization, holography, and bi-metallic coin technologies, enhancing both the aesthetic appeal and the security features of the coins. In addition, these pioneering techniques allow for



the production of commemorative and collector coins that capture significant national stories and milestones in striking detail. This is essential for overall success in the coin process. Quality control ensures perfection. Precision matters.

The striking process is where raw materials are transformed into coins. Here, the Mint employs a blend of traditional practices and cutting-edge technology. High-speed coining presses exert tons of pressure to imprint detailed designs onto blank coins, known as planchets. This process not only requires mechanical precision but also careful monitoring to ensure each coin meets the Mint’s exacting standards for quality and detail. Very important and critical.

One of the most critical aspects of coin production is ensuring their authenticity and preventing counterfeiting. The Mint incorporates advanced security features such as micro-engravings and laser-marking techniques. These make Canadian coins some of the

most secure in the world, a testament to the Mint’s commitment to innovation and security. It was well respected by everyone.

Environmental sustainability is also a key part of the Mint’s operation. It employs several initiatives to reduce its environmental impact, including using recycled materials for coin production and advanced water treatment systems to minimize ecological footprints. This dedication to sustainability reflects a modern approach to minting that respects both tradition and the environment. Balance achieved.

The Mint’s commitment to excellence and innovation has earned it numerous accolades and the trust of other nations. Many countries contract the Royal Canadian Mint to produce their own national currencies, further solidifying its reputation as a leader in the global minting industry. This global reach not only showcases Canadian expertise but also fosters international collaborations that enrich the Mint’s diversity of designs and technological advancements.

As we explore the art and science of Canadian coin production, it becomes clear that each coin is not just a piece of legal tender but a small work of art, embodying the spirit of innovation that Canada is known for. Through a combination of artistic expression, technological advancement, and a commitment to quality and sustainability, the Royal Canadian Mint continues to set the gold standard in coin production. Such craftsmanship ensures that each coin not only serves its monetary purpose but also stands as a cultural icon, cherished by collectors and everyday users. A well spoken true story.

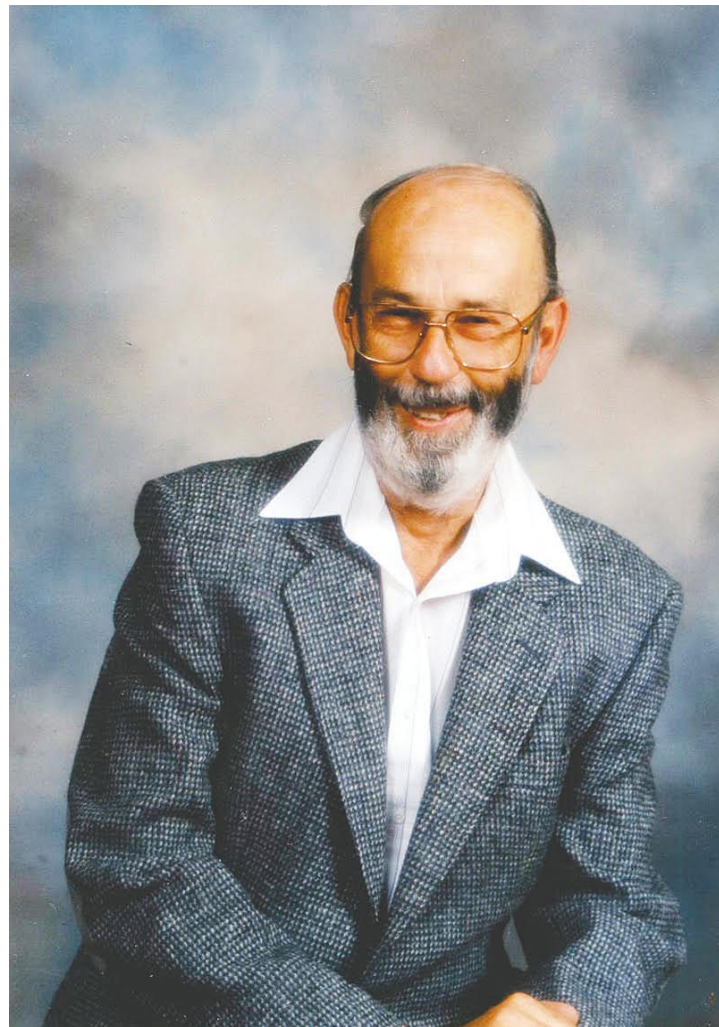
The journey of a coin from concept to circulation is a testament to the harmonious blend of history and technology inherent in minting. Each release, whether a standard issue or a special commemorative, is steeped in a narrative that resonates with the Canadian ethos. The Royal Canadian Mint’s dedication to reflecting the country’s vast landscape in its coin designs helps bridge the gap between diverse communities, promoting unity and national pride. This pursuit of excellence has positioned the Royal Canadian Mint a custodian of national heritage. The Mint has become a symbol of craftsmanship and innovation, ensuring that each coin produced is a testament to Canada’s rich cultural history.





# Profiles in Collecting: Canada's Top Coin Collectors

By Canadian Coin News



**E**rnest George Watson, fondly remembered as Ernie Watson, was a significant figure in Canadian numismatics. His journey in the coin business began in 1964 when he and his father, Albert Watson, co-founded Albern Coins in Calgary. This venture marked the beginning of what would become one of Canada's largest and most renowned coin dealing establishments.

## Early Life and Career

Ernie Watson was born in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and moved to Alberta in 1950. He started his career working for Burns and Company, quickly rising to become one of the company's youngest salesmen by 1954. His early career showcased his knack for business and sales, traits that would later greatly benefit him in the numismatic field.

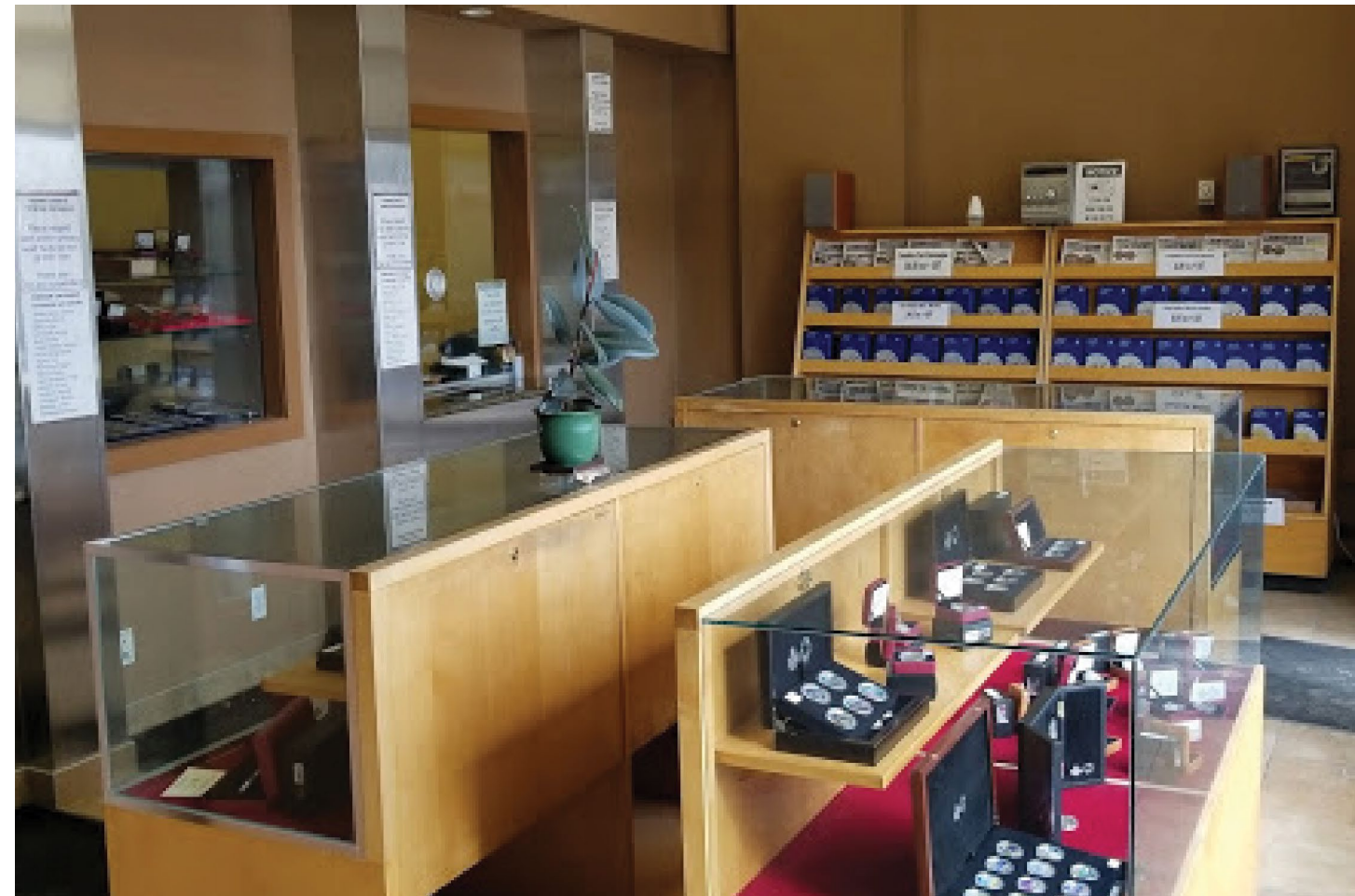
## Family and Personal Life

**Family and Personal Life** In 1956, Ernie married Isabella Masciangelo, and the couple moved to Lethbridge a year later, where they started their family. Their daughter, Roxanne, was born in 1957, followed by their son, Rick, in 1958. The family relocated to Calgary in 1964, which coincided with the start of Ernie's venture into the coin business alongside his father.

## Albern Coins and Its Legacy

Albern Coins, named by combining "Albert" and "Ernie," began as a small operation but quickly grew into a landmark business known throughout Canada. The company expanded its services to include foreign exchange, reflecting Ernie's vision to cater to a broader market. Under his leadership, Albern Coins became synonymous with trust and quality in the Canadian coin community.

Ernie Watson was pivotal in popularizing coin collecting in Canada. His entry into the coin business coincided with the first modern coin collecting boom in the country. Ian Laing of Winnipeg's Gatewest Coins highlighted Ernie's role during this pivotal time, noting that Ernie was among the dealers who helped shape the hobby into what it is today.



## Retirement and Business Transition

In 1990, Ernie semi-retired, passing the reins of Albern Coins and Foreign Exchange to his son, Rick Watson, and son-in-law, Don Carlson. This transition ensured that the business continued to operate under the family's guiding principles until it was sold to Gatewest Coins in 2001. Under Rick and Don's leadership, Albern Coins continued to thrive, expanding its clientele and maintaining its reputation as a trusted source for rare and collectible coins.

## Reputation and Impact

Ernie Watson was highly regarded for his integrity and gentlemanly conduct. His professional demeanor and ethical business practices set a standard in the industry, earning him respect and admiration from peers and customers alike. Sandy Campbell, owner of Proof Positive Coins, noted Ernie's influence on making coin collecting appealing and accessible to the Canadian public.

## Legacy and Contribution to Numismatics

Ernie Watson passed away in 2016 at the age of 80 after a battle with cancer, leaving behind a legacy that extended beyond his immediate family and business. His contributions to the numismatic community are enduring, influencing collectors and dealers alike. Ernie is remembered not just for his business acumen but also for his role in fostering a vibrant coin collecting culture in Canada. Ernie Watson's life and career in numismatics showcase a blend of entrepreneurial spirit, dedication to family, and a commitment to the highest standards of professionalism, making him a celebrated figure in the history of Canadian numismatics.



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# Global Journeys: How Canadian Currency Travels The World

By Canadian Coin News

## The Journey Begins

At the Royal Canadian Mint, craftsmanship and artistry converge to create some of the world’s most intricate and technologically advanced currency. The Mint is known for its pioneering techniques, such as multi-ply plated steel technology and the use of color on metal, which make Canadian coins particularly appealing to collectors. “The innovation doesn’t just stop at the technical aspects,” says James Goodwin, a numismatist and author based in Ontario. “Each coin tells a story, whether it’s celebrating a piece of Canadian history, an anniversary, or our stunning wildlife. That’s what captivates collectors.” Martin Hélène’s apartment in the heart of Paris houses one of the most exquisite collections of Canadian coins outside of North America. A retired history teacher, Hélène’s fascination with Canadian currency began during a trip to Quebec. “I was charmed by the 2001 issue of the Canadian 10-cent piece, depicting the Bluenose schooner,” he recalls. “It wasn’t just the boat; it was the story of Canadian resilience and ingenuity it represented.” Halfway across the world in Tokyo, Hiroto Fujimoto prides himself on his collection of Canadian polymer banknotes. Introduced in 2011, these banknotes are not only more durable and secure but are also striking in

design. “The transparency feature and the holograms are revolutionary,” Fujimoto explains. “But it’s the depiction of important Canadian figures and landmarks that really draws you in.”

## Cultural Exchange

Currency often serves as a cultural ambassador, and Canadian coins and banknotes are no exception. The imagery and symbols on Canadian currency—such as the loon on the one-dollar coin or the Vimy Ridge memorial on the twenty-dollar note—share pieces of Canadian culture and history with the world.

These icons not only symbolize the nation’s identity but also resonate with universal themes of nature, heroism, and resilience. Dr. Lisa Chung, a professor of cultural studies at the University of British Columbia, notes, “When these pieces of currency find their way into collections globally, they carry with them narratives of Canada. Collectors not only seek the aesthetic or the rarity but the story behind the coin or note.” She further explains that through these symbols, stories of Canadian indigenous heritage, technological advancements, and the natural beauty of its landscapes are told, making each coin a small ambassador of Canadian values and achievements. This broader representation allows collectors and non-collectors alike to gain insights into Canada’s multifaceted identity and the country’s rich history.

## Economic Journeys

The circulation of Canadian currency is not confined to trade within its borders; it traverses globally through tourists, business transactions, and exchanges. Each traveled coin adds a layer to its history, sometimes ending up in unexpected places. “We’ve tracked Canadian coins showing up in markets in Southeast Asia and small shops in Eastern Europe,” shares Gregor Ivanov, an economist specializing in global currency flows. “It’s fascinating how far a simple coin can travel from its point of origin and the economic interactions it witnesses.”

## Collecting as a Preservation

For collectors, acquiring and preserving currency is also about safeguarding history. Alex Ramirez, a curator at the Currency Museum of Canada in Ottawa, emphasizes the importance of these collections. “Every collector is a custodian of history. Through their collections, they help preserve the material culture that would otherwise be lost to time and

wear,” he says.

The digital age has introduced new dimensions to collecting, with online forums and auctions making it easier for collectors to acquire rare pieces and share their collections with a global audience. “The internet has democratized collecting,” Ramirez adds. “Now, anyone with an interest can participate, learn, and even start their own collection.”

## The Future of Collecting

As technology advances, so too does the nature of collecting. The Royal Canadian Mint has already begun exploring digital collectibles and non-fungible tokens (NFTs), representing traditional designs in digital form. This move not only caters to a younger generation of collectors but also responds to the growing interest in digital art and assets.

Yet, for traditional collectors like Hélène and Fujimoto, the tactile experience of holding a coin or banknote, feeling its weight, and examining its details up close remains irreplaceable. “There’s something magical about the physicality of currency,” Hélène muses. “It connects you to people and places in a way digital cannot.” As Canadian currency continues its journey across continents, bridging histories and cultures, it underscores the timeless human fascination with collecting. Whether for their beauty, their innovation, or the stories they tell, these pieces of metal and paper currency remind us of our shared desire to connect with the world and preserve pieces of our past.

## The Practice in Currency Production

In response to growing environmental concerns, the Royal Canadian Mint has also been a leader in adopting sustainable practices in its currency production. The process of minting coins, which historically has been resource-intensive, now incorporates recycled materials and aims to minimize environmental impact. “Our goal is to reduce the ecological footprint of our production processes,” says Sarah LeBlanc, Director of Sustainability at the Mint. “Using less water, reducing energy consumption, and recycling metal waste are all part of our commitment to the environment.”

These efforts extend beyond the production floor. The Mint also engages in community initiatives that promote sustainability and environmental awareness. “We believe it’s important to act as stewards of the environment, not just within our operations but also within the community,” LeBlanc adds. This approach to sustainability resonates with collectors.



Cover Story

Looking Ahead

As Canadian currency continues to evolve, both in design and technology, its journey around the world is unlikely to slow down. For collectors, each new issue presents an opportunity to add a unique piece to their collections, while for onlookers, it offers a glimpse into the innovative spirit of Canada’s monetary history. Through the intricate art of numismatics, collectors worldwide are connected by their appreciation of Canadian currency. It’s not just about the physical coins and notes, but about the stories they tell as we yet to see more in the future.



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