

**The NEECO Self-Adhesive Stamp Sheetlet  
based on the  
1987 Second Stamp Issue of the Exploration of Canada Series  
designed by  
Frederick Hagan for Canada Post (Unitrade #1126-1129)**

Researched for the Committee by Charles J. G. Verge, FRPSC, FRPSL

The Expert Committee of the Vincent Graves Greene Philatelic Research Foundation (Greene Foundation) was asked to give an opinion on the attached sheetlet produced by NEECO Inc, a Division of CCL Industries.

Based on our knowledge we have surmised that this was not prepared as an essay for Canada Post's Exploration of Canada series as Neeco Industries was not a supplier for the Canada Post Corporation and that Canada Post, at the time of the Exploration series (1986-1989), was just beginning with self-adhesive stamps and was concentrating on self-adhesive definitive stamps (1989).

Jim Phillips, Director Stamp Products of Canada Post, has indicated that Canada Post has no knowledge of this item.

What we have been able to discover is that NEECO was a division of CCL Industries after 1980 and that CCL Industries did purchase Avery-Dennison in 1995, a company that did print stamps for Canada Post in 1996 and for the US Post Office for many years. CCL, NEECO and Avery-Dennison are well-known label manufacturers

The Committee continued to do research and found out about an exhibition of Frederick Hagan<sup>1</sup> and Kent Monkman's *Explorers and Dandies in an Open Letter to Canada Post* at the Art Gallery of Mississauga (July 17 - September 7, 2008). The Committee obtained preliminary information from the Art Gallery staff but it is when perusing the catalogue of the exhibition<sup>2</sup> that it was discovered that Mr. Hagan had made more than one version of his paintings on which the stamps were based. Additionally the foreword to the catalogue was penned by Annemarie Hagan, Director of the Museums of Mississauga and Frederick Hagan's daughter.

After many weeks of trying to contact Ms. Hagan – she was on leave/sabbatical from her position – a phone conversation ensued and she indicated that she had no knowledge of the sheetlet but indicated that her brother, Karl, might be more aware of the material as he was heavily involved with their father on the stamp project as well as being his father's literary and artistic executor.

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Hagan (1918-2003) designed sixteen stamps in four sets of the Exploration of Canada Series issued between 1986 and 1989 (Unitrade # 1104-1107 (1986), 1126-1129 (1987), 199-1202 (1988) and 12233-1236 (1989).

<sup>2</sup> The catalogue of the exhibition can be viewed at the Harry Sutherland Philatelic Library of the Greene Foundation.

By email, the following questions were asked of Karl Hagan:

1. What is this sheetlet? Its purpose?
2. Is it something authorized by Frederick Hagan?
3. How did it come into being?
4. Do others exist for the other years of the series? The one attached matches the second series of 1987.
5. Is there any relationship between these labels and the "Preliminary Concept Proposal", the issued stamps and/or the "third print" of Frederick Hagan's work on Explorers?
6. How did NEECO get involved? Where they trying to get a contract for self-adhesive stamps from Canada Post?
7. What do the initials SK represent in the selvedge?
8. Did Frederick Hagan include the denomination letters "W", "X", "Y" and "Z", the words "TEST/TEST" and "Not Valid for postage/ Ne peut servir à l'affranchissement", in his artwork or was this done by NEECO.

His response was that he and the family had no knowledge of the sheetlet or of any art project that his father might have been involved with with NEECO.

Based on the information above,

1. *It is the Committee's view that the sheetlet produced by NEECO submitted for expertisation is not an item authorized by Canada Post nor the designer of the original artwork, Frederick Hagan;*
2. *However, the Committee believes that since Canada Post was at the beginning of its endeavours in the production of self-adhesive stamps in the late 1980s and early 1990s, that it may have approached a number of companies for proposals. One of these could have been NEECO. Another possibility is that NEECO, learning of Canada Post's interest in self-adhesive labels, may have submitted an unsolicited proposal. This belief is based on the cost and time required to produce such an item as that which was sent to the Committee for expertisation and that no company would have attempted such a project without reason;*
3. *Finally, the Committee believes that further research could provide a more definitive answer to the question of whether this item is a collateral item to the Exploration of Canada Series designed by Frederick Hagan. Two areas of research which might provide additional information. One would be contacting CCL and finding out if they have archives for NEECO and if these can be consulted. Another would be to consult the RG-3 Archives of Canada Post at Library and Archives Canada and particularly the files related to the production of self-adhesive stamps. The Committee feels this kind of research is beyond the scope of a normal expertization examination.*