

New stamp commemorates invention of the telephone

Postmaster General André Ouellet has announced the issue of an 8-cent stamp commemorating the centenary of the invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell.

The stamp, which was released on July 26, depicts three models of telephone: the Gallows Frame, the Pedestal or Daffodil, and the Contempra.



One hundred years ago this July, Alexander Graham Bell spent a holiday in Brantford in southwestern Ontario, visiting his parents, and while there he invented an apparatus for transmitting and receiving speech and other sounds over long distances through the medium of electric waves. That apparatus was the telephone.

Because of his invention Brantford became known as the "Telephone City". And today, the Bell homestead has been converted into a museum containing many exhibits relating to Bell's invention.

While inventing the telephone Bell drew heavily upon previous scientific knowledge and indeed, all the basic principles embodied in the device had been known for at least 40 years. Bell's contribution was to reveal an unappreciated relationship between these principles, which were found in the seemingly unrelated fields of physiology, electricity and acoustics.

Bell died on August 2, 1922, at his summer home near Baddeck, Nova Scotia.

Each of the telephones portrayed in Canada's newest postage stamp has a place in history. The Gallows Frame was the world's first telephone. Speaking of it in 1915, Bell said that "The instrument, just as you see it here, was invented in the summer of 1874, during a visit I paid to my father and mother in Brantford,..." The Pedestal or "Daffodil" model was very popular



Colin McMichael, of Bell Canada, and Keith Geddes, of the London Science Museum, holds the ivory telephones used by Alexander Graham Bell to demonstrate his invention to Queen Victoria in 1878.

The telephones are part of an exhibition that opened July 25 in Canada House, London, England, to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the invention of the telephone in Canada.



Telephone linemen became the heroes to small boys and bustle-clad women at the turn of the century and sometimes they liked to show off, as shown in the above photograph, by climbing up a telephone pole. They used horses and wagon to carry equipment and often walked miles for repairs and for stringing new lines across the country.