

# behind the MASC

NEWSLETTER OF THE MEDALLIC ART SOCIETY OF CANADA

Fall 2011, Issue 30

## President's Message



First of all, welcome everyone to the start of a new year for MASC. Many thanks to Doug Taylor for taking on the Interim President role at a challenging time – your efforts are greatly appreciated!

Since the AGM, we have been playing catch-up, getting out the minutes for the AGM, and Newsletter #28. In addition, the Student Special Recognition program show ran from May to August, and a special newsletter, #29, was issued to commemorate it. Thanks to those who helped make this show a success.

“My Favourite Medal” show is in progress and will run until May 31, 2012. Thanks to everyone who submitted work for this show.

For the next Council meeting, I aim to have a strategic plan ready. While we already have shows planned for next year, we need to think about where we want MASC to be positioned for the future. This will include things like student outreach, membership growth, liaison with other similar organizations, future shows, web presence, and so on. I will be looking for input from our members in this regard.

But who am I? In 2010, I graduated from the Three-Year Adult Art Program at Central Technical School (CTS), with a special interest in ceramic sculpture and digital imagery. I learned about MASC in my first year when I was able to submit a medal to the student competition. Prior to my attendance at CTS, I didn't know there was a medallic art form. With school behind me, I was ready to give some of my time to MASC, an organization that I had grown to respect and enjoy.

Prior to this, I had a successful career in the financial business world. For many years, I was a manager in the information technology (IT) field, my last role being Managing Director of Product Development for The Canadian Depository of Securities Ltd. But I yearned to pursue my love of art, and gave this up to go back to school in 2007. There is no looking back! You are welcome to check out my website at [www.tohill.ca](http://www.tohill.ca).

I am honoured to be the new president of MASC, and look forward to serving our membership. I look forward to making a positive contribution to this organization.

Sincerely,

Sarah Tohill

[info@medallicart.ca](mailto:info@medallicart.ca)

## Inside MASC this issue

Royal Canadian Mint Crafts the Rick Hansen Medal.....	pg 2
Interview with John Carolan.....	pg 3,4
Exhibitions, Workshops & Events / Council Matters.....	pg 5
Techniques with Art Ellis.....	pg 6,7

## Royal Canadian Mint crafts the Rick Hansen Medal

### RCM is Official Supplier of the 5th Man in Motion World Tour

The Royal Canadian Mint was selected to craft the sterling silver Rick Hansen Medal. The medal is a part of the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Man In Motion Tour. The medal was unveiled on April 5, 2011, by Rick Hansen at a ceremony hosted by Rick Hansen Secondary School in Mississauga, Ontario.

This unique example of medallic art and engineering will travel to China, the United States and Canada as it is carried by medal bearers walking, running or wheeling through the anniversary relay commemorating Rick Hansen's historical achievement and inspiring others to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

"The art of medal making has been a distinguished tradition of the Royal Canadian Mint for over 80 years and its employees have once again applied their craftsmanship and engineering talents to creating the Rick Hansen Medal in celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Man In Motion World Tour," said James B. Love, Chair of the Royal Canadian Mint Board of Directors. "Rick Hansen has inspired millions in the 25 years since his historic journey and we are honoured to commemorate his legacy by crafting the Rick Hansen Medal, as well as supplying the participant medals to be awarded to up to 7,000 relay Medal Bearers."

"As the Relay will connect the country from coast to coast, the Rick Hansen Medal will be the symbol which links each participant to the next. We are extremely grateful to the Royal Canadian Mint for their beautiful design and world-class craftsmanship," said Rick Hansen, President and CEO of the Rick Hansen Foundation. "I believe every participant across the nation will be proud to walk, run, or wheel in the 25th Anniversary Relay with the Rick Hansen Medal around their neck."

#### The Rick Hansen Medal

The Royal Canadian Mint applied its medal manufacturing and engineering skills to the crafting of the Rick Hansen Medal. This historic medal hails from the Royal Canadian Mint's Ottawa, Ontario facility, which has also crafted medals for the Canadian Forces, the RCMP and the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games.

Senior Engraver (and fellow MASC member) Susan Taylor and a team of Mint engineers accepted the challenge of turning Rick Hansen's latest vision into reality. The result is a medal steeped in the imagery of a great Canadian achievement brought to life through skill and innovation.

Composed of sterling silver (92.5% silver and 7.5% copper), it measures 85 mm in diameter and weighs 400 grams. The Participant Medals, to be awarded to up to 7,000 Medal Bearers who will walk, run or wheel through the anniversary relay, will be composed of base metal and will feature a reduced diameter reproduction of the Rick Hansen Medal design.

The design of the *obverse* of the medal consists of a series of uniquely textured ribbons intersecting each other, implying motion, excitement and celebration. The bilingual motto of the 25th Anniversary: "MANY IN MOTION —UNIS EN MOUVEMENT" is engraved on one ribbon curving in a circular pattern.



This feature is surrounded by three other interlaced ribbons textured with raised dots of varying diameters, symbolizing the long trails of the Man in Motion World Tour and the waves of energy and inspiration Rick Hansen left in his wake. The patterns of raised dots represent the many who have been inspired by Rick and his story and the many more who will be motivated to make a difference over the course of the 25th Anniversary Relay.

Hinting at the opening of possibilities when obstacles are overcome, parts of these bands extend beyond the circumference of the medal. On the bottom left quarter are boldly engraved the words: "25 Years—Rick Hansen" in bilingual format. Engraved along the plain edge of the medal are the compelling words "Anything is Possible—Tout est possible."

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## Royal Canadian Mint crafts the Rick Hansen Medal (cont'd)



The *reverse* of the medal features mirror images of the motion ribbons found on its obverse. The forward angle of these ribbons evokes the journey ahead, as Rick Hansen and the many in motion continue to pursue their goals. The reverse design is completed by the official logo of the 25th Anniversary Man in Motion World Tour, which shows the enduring and inspiring silhouette of Rick Hansen on the original Man in Motion World Tour.

On August 24, 2011, in Cape Spear, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Rick Hansen 25th Anniversary Relay began retracing the Canadian segment of the original Man In Motion World Tour, travelling 12,000 kilometres through 600 communities, concluding in Vancouver, British Columbia on May 22, 2012.

For more information, visit the Web site at [www.RickHansenRelay.com](http://www.RickHansenRelay.com)

Submitted by Paul Petch ([p.petch@rogers.com](mailto:p.petch@rogers.com))  
and Susan Taylor ([susan.taylor@sympatico.ca](mailto:susan.taylor@sympatico.ca))

## Interview with John Carolan, Outgoing Newsletter Editor for MASC

Words and imagery formatted into a medium that successfully conveys a message is the thread that connects us to one another. The MASC membership gives their heartfelt thanks to John Carolan for his steadfast work as editor of the newsletter "*behind the MASC*". Indeed this newsletter was the medium that carried MASC through its formative years to maturity, while encouraging members to produce, become active and most importantly, enabled the membership to stay in touch.

As our featured guest interview, John answers questions about the challenges of publishing "*behind the MASC*".

We're sure there were many challenges as we prepare to launch this newsletter into the next chapter, the least of which is to find articles to print, images to organize and then format all this into something legible, coherent and a pleasure to read. John how did you manage all these years!



1. *What prompted you to become involved in MASC and to take on the challenge of being the newsletter editor?*

After the Society was formed, first President and Founder, Del Newbigging, thought a newsletter was needed to keep the membership informed of what was going on. I volunteered to put the first issue together, not realizing that I'd still be at it nine years later! Of course, over the years Del wrote and collected most of the articles for the newsletter.

2. *Your newsletters were always polished and professional looking. Did you have any previous experience as a newsletter editor?*

I really wasn't very computer literate at all when I tackled the first issue. I was supervisor of a design studio for a textile company at the time and although my job didn't require me to have any computer skills, I did start learning from the other designers who were creating designs using Adobe Illustrator. The skills I learned then really helped me with the layout of the newsletter.

(cont'd next page)

## Interview with John Carolan (cont'd)

3. *Was there a particular software program you used to create the layout for the newsletter?*

We had just bought a new computer and looking through the programs that came with it I discovered one called Microsoft Publisher which had a template for a newsletter. After a lot of trial and error I learned to use Publisher and produced the first and subsequent issues of the newsletter with it.

4. *The newsletter was augmented with wonderful photographs. Did you also take on the role as the MASC photographer?!!*

Yes, I learned how to photograph medals by trial and error. Early on I realized that the newsletter needed photographs to make each issue more visually interesting. I also learned to never go anywhere without my camera.

5. *Are there any tips or tricks in photographing medals you could share with the membership?*

Art medals are particularly difficult to photograph. I found that lighting and background is the key to achieving a decent image. I nearly always used a black background, which I found created a good contrast for bronze medals, and I learned to use Adobe Photoshop to edit my photos. I also found that the images looked best if cropped from the background on which they were photographed. I experimented with different lighting conditions (photographing outdoors seldom ever worked well for me) and finally found the conditions that gave me results that I was happy with.

6. *Photographing people can be equally challenging, how did you get everyone to look so good?!!*

Adobe Photoshop - it's truly an amazing program! It allows you to brighten, darken, sharpen, crop and lots of other good stuff that helps to enhance any photo.

7. *Which issue or article was your favourite?*

I always enjoyed attending MASC exhibitions and photographing and reporting on them for the newsletter. The issue featuring our first show at the War Museum in Ottawa is probably my favourite because it was such an amazing show, in a wonderful location and I think the

article and photographs really capture the excitement of the event.

8. *What did you like the most about being a newsletter editor?*

I really enjoyed the feeling of accomplishment I got when I stuffed the envelopes with the latest edition of the newsletter and got them into the mail.

9. *Conversely, what did you find the most challenging about your role as newsletter editor?*

Although the newsletter is only produced three times each year, the deadline always seemed to be at hand and there never seemed to be enough articles or photographs to fill it out. I learned early on to stockpile interesting medal-related articles and use them to fill in the empty spaces when it was time to go to print.

10. *Do you have any advice to offer to the incoming newsletter editor?*

The format of the newsletter has been established and it is well liked by the majority of our members. Eight pages seems to be big enough to keep the newsletter interesting without being overwhelming. Always use as many photographs as possible.

If the budget can handle it, colour would be a big improvement for future issues. I think that a new page that reports on the activities of the Council would help all of our members to know what is happening in the planning stages.

I hope the new editor has much success and enjoyment in this exciting job.

Submitted by Susan Taylor ([susan.taylor@sympatico.ca](mailto:susan.taylor@sympatico.ca))

## Exhibitions, Workshops & Events

**11th International Symposium of Medals**  
*October 17th through November 13th 2011,*  
National Bank of Slovakia - Museum of Coins and Medals  
<http://www.muzeumkremnica.sk/>  
or by calling Erika Grniakova 00421-45-6780314  
[eria.grniakova@nbs.sk](mailto:eria.grniakova@nbs.sk)

**Watch** - "The War of 1812" online at WNED.org  
<http://www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812/>

**Opening** - "My Favourite Medal"  
Watch for future announcements.  
Show running September 2011 to May 31, 2012  
Rodman Hall, St. Catharines

**Winterstone Workshop in Toronto - November 6, 2011**  
Minimum of 5 participants required; maximum of 15  
Registration form on [www.medallicart.ca](http://www.medallicart.ca)  
**Registration and payment due by October 30, 2011**

**Call for Entry** - Ontario Numismatic Society Open Design  
Competition 2012  
<http://www.nunet.ca/cmns.htm>

Entries must be received by the committee no later than  
*midnight of November 14th, 2011*

**Call for Entry** - "Commemorating War & Peace, 1812"  
More information to follow shortly.  
**Last day for submissions - April 30, 2012**  
Show at Rodman Hall from June 1 to August 31, 2012

**FIDEM 2012**  
10th - 14th of July 2012, Glasgow, Scotland  
Details to follow as the program is finalized  
<http://www.fidem-medals.org/congress%20next.html>

Feel free to email the Newsletter Editor at  
[info@medallicart.ca](mailto:info@medallicart.ca) with any information and details of  
upcoming events that would be of interest.

***Student Recognition Newsletter 2011 - please note that  
regrettably there were some errors, such as misspelled  
names and missing images. A corrected copy is now  
available on our website, [www.medallicart.ca](http://www.medallicart.ca). Our  
sincere apologies to the students affected.***

## Council Matters - meeting held September 17, 2011



Paul Petch was very pleased to accept "Canada Rhapsody", a beautiful medal made by Geert Maas as a thank you for being the Past President.

The "My Favourite Medal" exhibition has been installed by Art Ellis.

Council decided to keep

this show running until the end of May, 2012, as there is much to do to prepare for the War of 1812 show.

Council planned to have an opening of this show on October 22, 2011, but there is a conflict. A new date is being negotiated with Rodman Hall.

The Student Recognition Show was a great success. A special edition newsletter was published and a copy given to each participating student and their teachers. The 2012 show will be held from September 1 to

*Actors in period dress at the premiere of WNED's production of "The War of 1812" in September 2011.*

December 31. MASC is looking at advertising in art school newspapers to encourage submissions.

Council has named the next show, "Commemorating War and Peace, 1812", which will be shown from June 1 to August 31, 2012 at Rodman Hall. Many celebrations are planned to commemorate the 200th anniversary across Canada. The *Globe & Mail* reported on September 28, 2011, that Steven Harper is creating an \$11.5 million fund for the celebrations. Art Ellis has kept in close contact with the committee in St. Catharines with the intention of obtaining some of these funds for our show. More details to follow shortly.

The next Council meeting will be held on November 19, 2011.



## Studio Techniques - My First Cast Bronze Medal

My interest in medals grew out of my hobby of building a large scale live steam model railway running and pulling people around in my back yard using real coal to make real steam to power the locomotives.

These models are hand built and it was not long until night school courses were in order to learn how to operate the metal working machinery to make the parts for these giant models.

As life went on and interests changed I became interested in restoring antique machinery having a nicely equipped machine shop to make replacement parts and do the precision repairs so often required. This led to my joining the Board of Directors of the Mackenzie Printery and Newspaper Museum at Queenston, Ontario and soon repairing many of their 100-year-old-plus presses and returning them to operating condition.

Hand engraving soon caught my attention, which led to courses for the last five years at one of America's few hand engraving schools in Emporia, Kansas. Soon I was turning out engraved medallions and love tokens (look them up on Google, they were very popular in the early last century and trade for good dollars today).

Of course it was not long until I discovered MASC at their annual convention in Niagara Falls four or five years ago. I longed to make a medal and the call for the competition last year got me inspired to get off my butt and make one.

I had become aware that there was no commemorative presentation for the past presidents of MASC and thought this would make an appropriate idea for a medal, in recognition of the many hours of hard work they have devoted to the survival of the Society.

What follows is a photo description of my effort to make that medal from the knowledge I had gained from my machine shop and restoration work. Not being a great writer, I decided to do it with photos and a description of what you see in each photo. It was possible that MASC should have a standard logo to identify itself, and the logo should tell the world what MASC is in some way.

To give the medal in the logo a size perspective, two hands holding it would achieve that size relationship. A photo was taken of two hands holding a four inch can

lid representing a normal size medal to be used as a guide for sculpting the wax.



The layout of the medal was done by computer using the Adobe Illustrator program. Shown here is a print out of the reverse side of the medal on a homemade light table holding an ancient 4" x 5" sheet film Graflex press camera. As it was necessary to have high contrast process negatives for the steps to follow, this did the job well as the image size could be measured on the ground viewing glass for accurate sizing of the medal components.



Here you will see a ring of dark sculpturing wax that will be carved to the shape of the fingers holding the round MASC logo which is shown in the front of the photo. This is a piece of photo sensitive polymer that has been made from the negative previously described. It is a three dimensional image with about a 0.062" depth of relief. This product is ideal and simple to use for the process of medal making and rather than describe it now, it could be the subject of a full article to follow. The piece of polymer to the right is the border and the space to mount the wax fingers when carved.



Here we see the three components mounted together to form the obverse of the medal. It is 3 3/4" in diameter and about 3/8" thick upon completion.



## Studio Techniques - My First Cast Bronze Medal (cont'd)

A wooden molding box was made to hold the master polymer/wax master while silicon molding rubber was poured into the molding box. Silicon rubber is a two part mix by accurate weighing of the components and must be degassed in the vacuum chamber shown on the right side. It was made from a piece of heavy plastic drain pipe with a cap on the bottom and a threaded cap on the top with a clear plastic viewing window. It worked well.



The molding box is now laid open showing the two halves of the silicon mold. Note the Robertson screw

heads used for alignment buttons to accurately assemble the mold. You will also see the gate for forming the pouring entry on the wax mold to be cast.

The finished wax pattern with its fine detail is shown. The silicon molds will make hundreds of these wax patterns with the same detail before failing.



The wax patterns have been mounted on the base of the investment flask with the small vents installed on each side of the gating to allow for air escape when the metal is poured into the investment.

The home made steel flasks are made to fit the typical medal size. The normal cylindrical ones would take too much investment that would be wasted. Note the square base on the flasks to take the square bases with the waxes mounted on them. The holes are used for degassing in the vacuum chamber after the investment is poured into the flasks. Temporary rubber seals are

mounted on each side to hold the investment in during the first few minutes of pouring.



This is the casting bench on which you will see the melting crucible furnace on the left. It holds 1,000 gm of bronze and takes about one hour to get the first melt to pouring temperature of 1,900 degree F. On the right is a steel pipe with a welded bottom and a sealed removable top used as a degassing chamber. Note the silicon rubber seal on which the square bases of the flask sit with the gate facing up. The vacuum pump in the rear is turned on to assist degassing during the pour.



This photo shows the cast medal right out of the flask as found in the bottom of the cooling bucket. Virtually all of the investment had fallen off and the piece was very clean and ready to be trimmed. Note the gate and vents are still in place along with a bit of flash that will be trimmed off.



And here is the finished medal. I was very happy with the outcome of my first pour of bronze for a commemorative medal.

by Art Ellis ([artell@vaxxine.com](mailto:artell@vaxxine.com))



# behind the MASC

## MASC Mission Statement

*The Medallion Art Society of Canada is dedicated to the creation, promotion, appreciation, and education of the fine art of the medal*

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## Meet the MASC Council

**President:** Sarah Tohill  
**Vice-President:** Presently open  
**Recording Secretary:** Hilary Quigley  
**Treasurer:** Ray Scott  
**Membership Secretary:** Andrea Yermy  
**Newsletter Editor:** Presently open  
**Webmaster:** Paul Petch  
**Honorary Directors:** Dora de Pédery-Hunt  
2000-2008  
Anne Lazare-Mirvish

**Directors:**  
Pauline Dalby  
Eric Knoespel  
Eleanor Konkle  
Antonio Louvado  
Geert Maas  
Del Newbigging

**Rodman Hall Liaison:**  
Art Ellis

**Past Presidents:**  
2010-2011: Doug Taylor (interim)  
2008-2010: Paul Petch  
2006-2008: Saulius Jaskus  
2003-2006: Susan Taylor  
2000-2003: Del Newbigging

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*Obverse*



*Reverse*

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medallion by  
**Antonio Louvado**  
MASC Member