

Let's Talk Exhibiting

Book review by Joel Weiner [May 2022]

For nearly a decade Dr. David Piercey, FRPSC has authored a very popular series of articles in *The Canadian Philatelist* (TCP) entitled *Let's Talk Exhibiting*. Now, to promote exhibiting and CAPEX22, Piercey has updated and organized all 46 articles into a new publication from The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada (RPSC) that will be of great interest to novice and experienced exhibitors and those collectors thinking about entering the exciting sphere of philatelic exhibitions.

Let's Talk Exhibiting is organized into six logical parts: Getting Started in Exhibiting, Understanding the Basics, Understanding the Evaluation Criteria, Deepening Understanding, Exhibit Classes and Types, Exhibiting Around Us. Piercey, in a very clear and readable style, covers just about everything a novice, intermediate or experienced exhibitor needs to get started or to improve their exhibit. The initial part of the book covers the essential basics of exhibiting including Getting Started, the Anatomy of the Exhibit Page, the Title Page and Synopsis and the Exhibit Plan. This is followed by detailed chapters allowing the exhibitor to tackle more complex issues such as following the story line, research, importance, presentation and technical issues including cover placement, double sized pages and minimizing white space. Exhibits are awarded points for treatment, importance, philatelic knowledge and research, rarity and condition of the material on display and presentation. Points awarded are reflected in the medal level achieved by the exhibit: from bronze to large gold in eight levels. The score is provided to the exhibitor in the Exhibitor Feedback Form (EFF). Piercey was instrumental in developing the point system and the EFF and he describes each category in detail along with suggestions to help the exhibitor maximize their score in each category.

Piercey describes all the exhibiting classes including popular ones such as traditional stamp exhibits, postal history, aerophilately, thematics and One Frame exhibits. Piercey also provides guidance on exhibiting Cinderellas, topicals, modern subjects, preparing display exhibits and literature. Postcard exhibiting, which is growing in popularity, is thoroughly covered. Most chapters are accompanied by selected pages from award-winning Canadian exhibits that help to illustrate the messages conveyed in each chapter. Further, green highlighted boxes summarize the "take-home" lessons of the chapter and yellow highlighted boxes identify key points that help an exhibitor improve a competitive exhibit. For those who have never organized their collection into a regional or national exhibit, the book provides clear directions. In total, these articles provide an outstanding handbook that will be useful to beginning, intermediate and advanced exhibitors. The book is accompanied by a bibliography of useful handbooks on exhibiting for those who want to read further.

The book is 174 pages and measures 8.5 x 11 inches. This allows sample exhibit pages to be reproduced with only a slight reduction, so they are clear and readable. Even double-sized pages reproduce well. Robin Harris, editor of *TCP*, has done the layout resulting in a high-quality publication. On some pages, photos from the exhibition floor are used to fill some white space. Unfortunately, some of the photos are a bit too dark and fuzzy, but overall the production is great.



The book begins with a forward by Ed Kroft, FRPSC, President of RPSC who explains the role of RPSC in Canadian philately and the impetus for the publication. Piercey has written a preface describing his role in leading The RPSC Exhibit and Judging Committee for over 12 years and the important role he played in developing the EFF and its implementation in Canada and the US. This extensive experience led to the initiation of *Let's Talk Exhibiting* in TCP.

Thanks to the financial support of major Canadian auction houses, Trajan Publishing, the V.G. Greene Foundation and the British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS) the book is being made available at a very reasonable cost, ensuring wide availability. To entice non-members of RPSC to join Canada's national philatelic organization, the book contains information on obtaining a discounted digital membership. In recent years, Piercey's TCP articles have been published in TCP in both English and French and it is hoped that a full translation of all the articles will be available soon.