

Crescent Heights Sidewalk Stamp Collection



In 2008, residents on our block received notification that our street had been scheduled for sidewalk replacement. We discussed this with our neighbours and the possibility of removing a souvenir sidewalk section came up. And so, when the sidewalk removal contractors appeared on our street later in the spring, a concrete saw was rented to handle the chore of removing the sections. Moving the slabs was a bit trickier, since the neighbour who had taken the initiative to rent the saw had opted for a piece that included the entire street name plus the 1912 contractor stamp. It probably weighed 500 lb/227 kg., and the section we chose was tiny by comparison. Once we (more properly, "I") had afterward become hooked on adding to our "stamp" collection, we had decided on a more manageable slab size. Our target was 22" by 22", which would include the contractor stamp plus a bit of the street name. But even the smaller slab size is still plenty heavy, given that old sidewalks were thicker than contemporary ones.

Collecting pieces of old Calgary sidewalks is a daunting task, and the stars must be aligned before a choice section can be obtained. Timing is everything, but we'll save our discussion of stamp collecting logistics for a future post. More recently however, the City has begun collecting old stamped sections for its own display purposes, and since other old sections are now cut out and preserved in place, it would be even more difficult for anyone wishing to begin assembling their own collection these days.

The stamps in this collection have come from many of Calgary's inner-city communities: Inglewood, Westmont, Balmoral, Tuxedo Park, Mount Pleasant, Rideau Park, Roxboro, Bridgeland, and of course Crescent Heights. The collection also includes a few whimsical pieces, like footprints of both the human and canine sort.

And there have been a few that got away. The King Edward Hotel stamp shown below is a great example of that.



In closing, we should also mention that a Facebook page called "Old Calgary Sidewalk Stamps" was established by us in 2011. In recent years, the site has been used not only for old sidewalk/construction info, but as a platform for local historical posts as well.