

The 2024 RCNA Convention medal

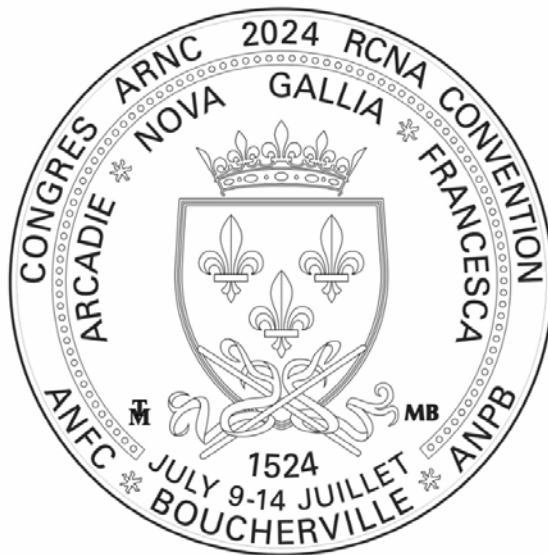
The theme of the 2024 RCNA Convention, to be held in Boucherville (Qc) in July is: WELCOME TO NEW FRANCE.

Why this theme? Simply because the year 2024 marks the quincentenary (1524-2024) of the toponymic paternity of Acadia (originally Arcadie, 1524) and New France (originally Francesca).

The origin of the name "New France" is attributed to the explorers and brothers Giovanni and Girolamo da Verrazano. In 1524, while exploring the coasts of North America on behalf of the King of France, Francis I, the Verrazanos used the words Francesca (in homage to Francis I) and Nova Gallia ("New Gaul") to designate the region stretching from Newfoundland to South Carolina. Other explorers used the terms Nova Francia, Nova Franza, Nouvelle-France or New France. Girolamo used it on a map as early as 1529, but it was Samuel de Champlain who definitively inscribed "New France" on a map drawn in 1607 depicting Arcadie (Acadia) from La Have to south of Cape Coude (Cape Cod). Thereafter, all maps used the term "New France". Marc Lescarbot, Champlain's companion at Port-Royal in Acadia, also used the term in the title of his 1609 work *Histoire de la Nouvelle-France*.

Today, we can't claim that New France is just Quebec... The term "New France" has always been applied to all of France's North American colonies: Canada (initially the St. Lawrence Valley to the Great Lakes) was one such colony. The early French called their native-born children "Canadiens", while those in the Maritimes were called "Acadiens".

New France was much more than just a period in history, much more than just an immense territory, much more than just a French colony, it was, in a way, a true region of France: it was the "France of America". The year 1524 marks the beginning of the French epic in America, half a millennium ago. Welcome to New France!



This is a draft of the 2024 convention medal

The central motif of the medal features a shield surmounted by the royal crown of France. In the centre of the shield are 3 fleurs-de-lys, the emblem of the French monarchy, with the date 1524 at the bottom. At the top are the various names that appeared in 1524: ARCADIE - NOVA GALLIA - FRANCESCA. The small six-pointed suns (between the names of the territories making up New France and those of the host clubs and Convention location) represent the sun shield, which had a special meaning compared with other shields in circulation, since the sun would appear on all coins issued during the reign of Francis I.

The central motif, conceptualised and designed by Marc Thériault (MT), refers to the motif found on

French coins at the time. The initials MB stand for Matt Bowan, who created the 3D-sculpt for the production die.

Yvon Marquis for the

2024 Boucherville Organizing Committee