



THE DECLASSIFIED REPORT

INTRODUCTION by Chris "Werecat" Chung

Hi everyone, welcome back! I hope you're having a good summer, and I wish you luck in hunting down all the new Pursuit of Cobra toys that are starting to trickle out. To help kick off the Canadian G.I. Joe convention, we have a special all-Canadian issue of *The Declassified Report* made just for you!

Founder and organizer of the Canadian G.I. Joe Convention, Michael Heddle, takes time from his busy schedule to give us an inside look at the how the Canadian convention started from a simple gathering of friends, to an international convention. He also explains what they'd done, and some of their notable guests and exclusives.

Shane Turgeon chronicles all the Hasbro licensed Canadian-exclusive G.I. Joe items released over the years, and details how the line evolved past just a regional U.S. toy, but into a global powerhouse. He also pulls double duty as the focus of our Collector Spotlight, where he showcases some of his one-of-a kind items not often seen by the general public.

Drew Haggerty goes in-depth with descriptions and photographs of all the Canadian convention-produced toys released by the ConJoeCon since its inception.

Terry Dizard, Administrator of YoJoe.com, gives us the official word on the status of CanJoeCon items in terms of archival identification and category, and their place within the pages of YoJoe.com's famous website.

Roger Taft explains the diverse range of Canadian G.I. Joe comic books and gives us an exposé on their history, publishers, and why they are some of the most confusing comics in the world to collect.

And last but certainly not least, a special thanks goes to our project team: Mike Irizarry, Todd Weinzierl, James Kavanaugh Jr., and Jason Wells. This project was completed in record time for us---less than a month from start to finish, and I could not have done it alone. These guys busted their butts and burned the midnight oil to meet deadlines or count pennies, and without them, we wouldn't have this issue in front of you. Thanks for all your hard work!

So without further ado, for all you at the CanJoeCon, I hope you have a great time!



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Behind the Scenes of The Canadian JoeCon

By Founder/Organizer Michael "BHT2" Heddle

<http://www.canadianjoecon.com>

Tell us about yourself.

My name is Mike Heddle. I was born in 1973 to a wealthy family. After exiting a movie, my parents were gunned down in Crime Alley. For years I perfected hand-to-hand combat training before returning home and fighting crime. In truth, I collect toys of all kinds – mainly from the 70's and 80's. I've been married for 10 wonderful years to a woman that I've known for 15 years. I can be very opinionated, stubborn, and extremely helpful all in the same day. I've been a toy dealer for nearly 19 years. I'm an "Uncharted 2", and "Mario Kart" junkie. My favorite movie is 'Shaun of the Dead', my favorite trilogy is the original 'Star Wars' trilogy, followed closely by 'Back To The Future'. Favorite TV show ever is 'Scrubs'. My favorite bands growing up were 'The Northern Pikes' & 'The Beatles' – they still are. I watch, and like wrestling – and I admit it. I have a collection of Rowdy Roddy Piper items that some would say look like a shrine. I enjoy putting on the Canadian Joe Conventions, but will complain about it every step of the way. Oh, and I collect Joker items.

How long have you been into G.I. Joe?

Since the start. In 1982, I got my first two figures: Rock 'N Roll and a Cobra Soldier. Since the thumb broke off my Cobra within an hour of opening it, my grandmother and I went back to the store to get another one. They didn't have any, so she bought me the R.A.M. instead. In 1983, my parents spoiled me as I got every item that came out for the line – except the U.S.S. Flag. I stopped in 1987 when I entered high school, then started collecting them again when I turned 20.

When did you decide to host Canadian conventions and what was the catalyst that transformed simple Joe meets to something much larger?

The CanJoeCon started out as a yearly "Joe Meet" for people from southern Ontario. A couple of years in, and people were coming from Kentucky, Montreal, and other places not from around here. A fellow collector put me in touch with Larry Hama for our 2008 Joe Meet, and the turnout was much larger than we expected. So, that ended the smaller "Joe Meets" and made this a full blown convention. While I do drive the ship, it can't be done without the friends and volunteers that help me out each year.

Each year you have exclusives. Do you have a running theme? If so, what is it?

At first, I didn't have a theme. Originally it was just one figure – good guy or bad guy that was made to "fit in" with the G.I. Joe Universe. After a couple of years, I did have a "story" in my head that these guys were the Canadian Joes, battling the Canadian Cobras. The Wiki at JoeCanuck.com goes into great detail about all the past characters, battles, and history between them. This story would of never come to light had it not been for Hasbro Canada helping us out with our 2009 convention sets, where we were given permission to create the second version of Back-Stop; the only official Canadian G.I. Joe team member.





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<http://www.canadianjoecon.com>

How do you go about selecting figures and/or vehicles for exclusives?

It changes each year. Originally, with JoeCanuck it was more a matter of what was available to me (us). The figures after that (Black Ice, Shiver) were more of a "what can we make now" thing. Snowbank was mostly Ed "Stealth Viper" Dam's thing, as he made a custom years before that resembled how Snowbank looked. Timbit was a joke figure – mainly for Canadians that are addicted to Tim Hortons. The 2009 Con set was simply a "This is what Hasbro Canada can offer you, what do you want to use?" thing. The 2010 set was planned out in September of 2009. The items were purchased back then, and sat in my basement.

Is there a group effort for your exclusives, or do you come up with everything yourself? Who does the visual designs, and how do you select the final versions?

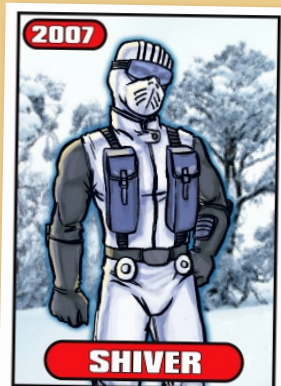
In 2009 there was a group of us that each had an assigned task to work on. We had a section at JoeCanuck.com where we'd bounce ideas off each other, and eventually when something would work, we'd run with it. This year I had a vision for the set, and while I didn't use the majority of input people offered, I did store it in my brain, and think those ideas will be great to use in 2011. Next year I plan on having zero involvement in the set. I'll help with it, fund it, and do all the "paperwork" items for it, but I would like to see these guys that have helped me out the last few years and offered suggestions even longer than that – do one themselves from start to finish. I always get all the credit for the con sets and the convention, when I really don't deserve it all. There's staff, friends, and volunteers that help each year and they deserve some of that credit as well. So, next year – I want them to get it all, they deserve it.

How do you go about the physical creation of your exclusives?

It would take too long for me to answer.

Please tell us what you've had as exclusives so far.

- 2004 : Joe Canuck Figure : Limited to 20
- 2005 : Joe Canuck Trading Card Game "card" : Limited to 50
- 2006 : Black Ice : Limited to 30
- 2007 : Shiver : Limited to 30
- 2008 : Snowbank : Limited to 30 (Bio by Larry Hama)
Timbit : Limited to 25
- 2009 : Our first CON set : Dead Eye Tank : H.A.T.E. Tank, Back-Stop, Frostback Trooper, Chacal Noir (bio by Larry Hama), and Comic Book : Limited to 100





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Behind the Scenes of **The Canadian JoeCon**

By Founder/Organizer Michael "BHT2" Heddle
<http://www.canadianjoecon.com>

What is the likelihood of seeing the previous Canadian JoeCon figures re-released in the newer modern era construction?

It's something that I would LOVE to do. I would like to have all our ARAH styled figures released in the more current style, but it's parts, costs, and such that's making it impossible right now.

Who have you had as guests to your conventions (including this year)?

- Hasbro Canada representatives
- Mark Bellomo (Author) The Ultimate Guide to G.I. Joe : 1982-1994
- David Willis (www.shortpacked.com)
- Jason Loo (CanJoeCon artist, The3SecondRule webcomic)
- Mary McDonald-Lewis (Voice of Lady Jaye)
- Zach Hoffman (Voice of Zartan)
- Larry Hama (Writer, Artist, G.I. Joe "Grandfather")

How many people typically attend?

Average seems to be around 500 people, but in truth, we haven't kept track in the last two years. We'll have a solid number after our 2010 Convention as all guests now have to register to attend.

What do you see as the ultimate goal of the Canadian Joe Convention?

Our main goal is for people to attend, and have a good time. The second goal is to ensure we break even and aren't out any money! Eventually, I'd love to have Hasbro produce our sets, or at the very least, a figure just for us. I don't see that happening anytime soon, but I would have to that is hand down our ultimate goal.

Any thoughts of extending the convention into two days instead of one in the future?

Yes. After doing the days events for this year, I think two days is do-able. We have a day and a half structure this year, but two days is something I would like to eventually do. I just don't think we're at that point yet.





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A Real American Hero, eh?

By Shane "Tattoo Shane" Turgeon

If you were a G.I. Joe-enthused Canadian youth growing up in the 1980s, there's a pretty good chance that the phrase "A Real American Hero" might not have made a whole lot of sense to you. Oh sure, most of us understood that it was a toy line from an American company based on the American military and all, but, let's face it, even then it was obvious that there were some distinctly Canadian attributes to our G.I. Joe toys that seemed somewhat contradictory to the tag line of our favourite 3 3/4" military toy.

As those of us who grew into adulthood with an enduring enthusiasm for G.I. Joe would later come to discover as collectors, G.I. Joe wasn't solely "A Real American Hero" at all. The brand was a worldwide phenomenon with countries as varied as the U.K., Australia, Japan, Russia, Egypt, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, India and many others put their own exclusive spin on the G.I. Joe toys we all grew up with. Canada was no exception, and the Canadian flag decals on our vehicles and playsets were only the tip of the iceberg, as some of the most interesting, sought-after, and rarest items produced under the G.I. Joe banner were originally available only in the Great White North.

Based in the Greater Montreal city of Longueuil, Quebec, Hasbro Canada rolled the G.I. Joe line out to retailers throughout the country on a timeline that coincided with the product's release in the United States. However, Canadian production numbers were about 15% that of their U.S. counterparts based on the differences in each country's population. To adhere to bilingualism laws, the G.I. Joe toys released in Canada featured both English and French on the packages and this led to the most obvious and not-so-obvious differences between the two releases; the latter being that the character bios on each file card only featured the second portion of the bios featured on the U.S. cards. That's right, we Canadians only got half of the story, and consequently knowing became only a quarter of the battle.

Like most of the major toy companies operating with Canadian divisions in the 1980s, Hasbro Canada had arrangements with the catalogue and retail powerhouses of the time, which helped grow the brand across the country. By utilizing their existing relationship with Sears Canada, Hasbro Canada was further able to bring G.I. Joe into the households of virtually every Canadian towards the end of 1982 by including the brand in their Christmas Wishbook catalogue. While Reader's Digest may have been big with our parents at the time, for every kid in Canada, the Wishbook was easily the most anticipated publication of the year and it was the 1982 edition of this catalogue that introduced us to the first available Canadian exclusives.



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Page 237 of this Wishbook featured a full-page spread of G.I. Joe toys where all of the vehicles and playsets, including the elusive Sears exclusive COBRA Missile Command Headquarters, and each of the nine straight-arm G.I. Joe characters were offered. (Interestingly enough, no individual COBRA figures were available, likely due to their inclusion in the aforementioned Missile Command HQ.) The G.I. Joe characters were sold in three sets of three figures. Unfortunately, to date, no sealed sets of these figures are known to exist; however, over the years, blank back file cards noting Canadian birthplaces for each character have surfaced leading collectors to speculate that these were the cards that were included in the Sears three packs.

With the exception of Scarlett, the regular retail versions of the '82 straight-arm figures all feature the U.S. birthplaces of each character. Scarlett's regular issue file card features her Grande Prairie, Alberta birthplace through to her swivel-arm release in 1983.

Not to be outdone by Sears, Canada's other major catalogue retailer, Consumers Distributing, also had a selection of G.I. Joe toys available in their 1982/83 "Brand Name Catalogue." While not quite as impressive as Sears' offerings, Consumers did offer six of the seven available G.I. Joe vehicles and six of the eleven total figures that were released at retail in 1982, including the Cobra Officer and Cobra Soldier figures. Consumers' figure offerings this year were available only in two different three packs. Again, no known sealed examples of these sets exist so it's possible that the file cards included were also blank backed with Canadian birthplaces.

Abruptly ending as quickly as it started, 1982 would be the last year Sears offered G.I. Joe in its Wishbook until 1985; however it was certainly not the last that G.I. Joe would see of Sears or of Consumers Distributing.

In 1983 Sears Canada offered an in-store exclusive that is arguably the most well-known of all the Canadian exclusives, the M.S.V.--- a Cobra vehicle two-pack featuring the V.A.M.P. and M.M.S. toys remolded in all black. A loose M.S.V. is a very difficult set to find today, and known examples with the box number fewer than five.

A Real American Hero, eh?

By Shane "Tattoo Shane" Turgeon

Everyone's favourite hero, with his strongest lineup ever!

G.I. JOE

11 to 19 G.I. Joe Figures. Pose them in any position for any task. Select arm battle grip. Each about 4" tall.

(1) Snowjolt, the arctic figure. \$3.70
(2) Gung Ho, rough, tough marine. \$3.70
(3) Airborne, helicopter assault trooper. \$3.70
(4) Destro, the evil enemy. \$3.70
(5) Major Bludd, the evil enemy. \$3.70
(6) Tripwire, explosives expert. \$3.70
(7) Topdogg, underwater marine. \$3.70
(8) Cobra Soldier, evil enemy. \$3.70
(9) Rock 'n Roll, infantry specialist. \$3.70
(10) Zap, bazooka soldier. \$3.70
(11) Doc, medical doctor. \$3.70
(12) Cobra Commander, evil leader. \$3.70
(13) G.I. Joe Command Centre. Walls and weapons guard the important headquarters. About 31" long. \$34.88
(14) G.I. Joe Skystriker XP-MF. 6 removable weapons, wheels raise and lower, wings swing in and out. Includes all A.C.E. and parachute. 22" wing span. About 23 1/2" long. \$19.99
(15) G.I. Joe Motorized Battle Tank (MOBAT). 4-directional, with cannon, search, beam, "Strobel" command figure included. 2 "D" batteries not incl. \$22.99
(16) G.I. Joe Amphibious Personnel Carrier. Rolls on land, floats on water. Holds 28 G.I. Joe figures (not incl.). \$15.88
(17) G.I. Joe Dragway Assault Cooper. Features a working winch to rescue team members. "Wild Bill" figure incl. \$14.88
(18) G.I. Joe Cobra H.I.S.S. Double cannons devastate and swivel. Includes driver. \$9.99
(19) G.I. Joe Wolverine Missile Vehicle. 12 removable "Stinger" missiles plus steel rocket launcher. Driver incl. \$9.99
(20) G.I. Joe Attack Vehicle. Swivel machine guns, driver figure. \$15.88
(21) G.I. Joe Twin Whirling Gun. Swivel command seat. \$15.88
(22) G.I. Joe Rapid Fire Cycle with double the Vulcan Gatling cannon. \$15.88
(23) G.I. Joe Winter Vehicle. Carries up to 3 figures. \$15.88
(24) G.I. Joe Cobra F.A.N.G. Helicopter. Removable rockets, driver figure. \$15.88
(25) Bolt Action Machine Gun. Features realistic sound and cycling. \$9.99
(26) Bolt Action Machine Gun. \$9.99

Heavily protected headquarters command centre. \$34.88

Skystriker is feature-loaded. \$19.99

22.99 15.88 14.88

YOUR CHOICE 9.99 each

286 "Consumers" YOUR CHOICE 4.99 each

TRADE MARK

The 1983/84 edition of the Consumers Distributing catalogue upped their G.I. Joe offerings considerably from the previous year. That year a full-page spread showcased most of the new product available in 1983, as well as a few holdovers from 1982. It's interesting to note that this page shows mock-up packages for the Skystriker and G.I. Joe Headquarters toys. Additional pages in the catalogue also feature some incredible non-toy items such as the G.I. Joe bicycle, the pedal-powered motorcycle, and the rarely seen snowmobile ride-on toy. Electronic toys such as the Communications Set, Communications Centre and the walkie-talkie set were also available on a third page.

In 1984, three more Canadian exclusive sets were issued as well as a unique name change on a regular issue figure. Through its 1984/85 catalogue, Consumers Distributing offered up its own unique Cobra repaint of a G.I. Joe vehicle: The Cobra Motorized Tank, more commonly referred to by collectors as the Consumers Cobra Tank or black M.O.B.A.T. (for obvious reasons). Like the M.S.V., the Cobra Motorized Tank is very difficult to find and known examples with a box also number in quantities less than five.

While Sears did not have any G.I. Joe offerings in its Wishbook in 1984, it did advertise through newspaper flyers another in-store exclusive: The Cobra Combat Set. A departure from a recoloured vehicle set like the M.S.V. or Cobra Motorized Tank, the Cobra Combat Set consisted of the Stinger and A.S.P. toys released in unique packaging that showcased both toys on the front. To date, only three known examples of the Cobra Combat Set box are known to still exist.

Another exclusive multi-pack was released in 1984, this time from an as-of-yet unidentified retailer. The Battle Station Assortment issued three of that year's Battle Station toys together in one box: the Bivouac, Watchtower, and Mountain Howitzer. Only one known example of this set is currently known to exist, and it's entirely conceivable that the other three Battle Stations were also offered in a similar set through the same retailer.



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While most of the Canadian exclusives released to that point had all been retailer exclusives, 1984 also brought us a unique name variation for a character released the same year---Spirit. The earliest versions of Spirit released in Canadian packaging had his code name listed not as Spirit, but as "Shaman." It's not known how long this figure was on the market before the name was changed to Spirit proper, but it likely wasn't long. Much like each of the store exclusives issued in Canada, Shaman is an incredibly rare item and only one known MOC example is currently known to exist.

By the time 1985 rolled around, Sears Canada was back to offering G.I. Joe through their Wishbook and they were clearly making up for lost time. That year, the G.I. Joe selection was offered up over a two-page spread and featured the year's best toys including the incredible U.S.S. Flagg and both of the Sears U.S. exclusives offered that year: The C.A.T. Tank and H.I.S.S. and S.M.S. set. Both of these exclusive items were sold in Canadian packaging are also very difficult to find.

Sadly, 1985 was the last year Canadian retailers offered any of their U.S. counterpart's exclusives or unique exclusives of any kind. Canada never saw the release of the 1986 Dreadnok Air and Ground Assault exclusives or the 1989 Toys 'R Us-exclusive Night Force toys, making them very difficult for Canadian collectors to find in the days before the internet. The line chugged quietly along with few articles of note until 1993 when Hasbro Canada's direct mail-in division issued a new "Premium Offer" booklet offering up thirty previously discontinued figures; many of which were vehicle drivers, as well as seven different discontinued vehicles. Many Canadian and U.S. collectors took advantage of this offer and ordered dozens of figures and vehicles, which were quickly swallowed up into collections or dealer inventory.

While regular issue Canadian G.I. Joe toys are sometimes looked at with disdain by U.S. and even Canadian collectors due to their bilingual packaging or Canadian flags, many collectors around the world have taken note of the difficulty in finding not only the exclusives, but the standard release items in Canadian packaging as well. Canadian items have started to increase in interest and collectibility, and if studying the collecting history of other toy lines is any sort of benchmark, it's likely only a matter of time before Canadian G.I. Joe collectibles start to become a hot commodity. After all, besides all the toys, there's plenty more exclusive G.I. Joe Canadiana out there, from calendars to toiletries, and posters, to paperwork and everything in between!

Yo Joe, eh!



A Timeline of G.I. Joe Exclusives:

- 1982: Sears Canada 3-Packs (3 different sets)
- 1982: Sears Canada Cobra Missile Command Headquarters in Canadian packaging
- 1982: Consumers Distributing 3-Packs (2 different sets)
- 1983: Sears Canada M.S.V.
- 1984: Sears Canada Cobra Combat Set
- 1984: Consumers Distributing Cobra Motorized Tank
- 1984: Unidentified retailer Battle Station Assortment
- 1984: Shaman variant of Spirit
- 1985: Sears Canada C.A.T. Tank in Canadian packaging
- 1985: Sears Canada H.I.S.S. and S.M.S. in Canadian packaging



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Canadian Joe Con Exclusives

By Drew "Dryhawk" Haggerty

Hockey? Check. Beer? Yep. Snow? A ton. Awesome G.I. Joe exclusives? You betcha! For several years, the Canadian Joe Convention (CJC) Team has produced some of the most highly sought-after exclusive G.I. Joe and Cobra figures to date. These new characters have now been etched into G.I. Joe history and are very desirable additions to the collections of those fortunate enough to have been able to purchase them. These pieces are limited to as few as 20 per run, and they have become extremely hard to find and command very high prices on the secondary market. From the artwork, to the back-stories, to the newly-cast parts, these fantastic "north of the border" toys are not just custom figures, but are accepted now as part of the G.I. Joe lore to many collectors.

In 2004, the CJC Team produced their first exclusive figure, Joe Canuck. Joe Canuck is a Canadian Ranger who acts as a guide for the Joes in the Northern regions of Canada in up to minus-50 degree weather! Joe Canuck came with a personalized filecard that listed his "real name" as the purchaser of the figure, and his "alias" as that buyer's screen name at JoeCanuck.com. The result of the tireless efforts of Peter Delong, Mike Heddle, Jason Loo, and Peter Sarganis, the Joe Canuck figure was limited to 21 pieces, and it quickly sold out at the show. This figure would become the convention's signature character, with his likeness and artwork appearing on literature, the JoeCanuck.com website and other flyers used to promote future events. One sealed Joe Canuck was raffled off at the end of the show, but has made its way back into the hands of the CJC Team and is displayed at the conventions. This Canadian hero is now very much apart of the G.I. Joe team, and has been featured in Canadian G.I. Joe comics (written by the Canadian Joe Convention) and has been the face of the organization since 2004. In 2005, there was a G.I. Joe trading card game exclusive featuring Joe Canuck that was limited to 50 cards. Finding a Joe Canuck figure or card for sale is as rare as spotting Elvis and Big Foot having coffee together at Tim Horton's. Locating and purchasing one of these items would be quite a rare opportunity, but it'd be a great addition to any collection.

Continuing with the success of the Joe Canuck exclusive figure in 2004, the CJC team produced a figure that would push their success into the mainstream. Limited to 31 pieces, Black Ice was a Cobra figure released at the 2006 Convention held at the Sherwood Banquet Hall in Hamilton, Ontario. Black Ice was the first Cobra exclusive in the series, and is Cobra's Arctic Specialist. Utilizing both newly-cast vintage parts and others dyed black, Black Ice was a fan favorite from the start. Unlike Joe Canuck, one Black Ice figure was held back and put on eBay to collect funds for the next year's show. After a week of fast and furious bidding, the final Black Ice was shockingly sold at over \$300.00 USD. A few months later a one-of-a-kind, red-trimmed 32nd Black Ice, sealed on a blister card, was also auctioned off on eBay. After the never-ending discussions about the final ending prices of these figures, collectors definitely had the Canadian Joe Convention on their radars... but the CJC Team was just getting started.

In 2007, a new Cobra exclusive was released. Shiver is a master of infiltration who has gathers and transmits information related to the national defense of Canada. Limited to 30 pieces, Shiver was released at the 2007 Canadian Joe Convention, held at the Barton Stone United Church in Hamilton, Ontario. Shiver was the apprentice of Black Ice and did not disappoint the fans. Wearing an arctic-themed uniform, and armed with a survival knife, NVR automatic rifle, a silenced MAC-10, and a pair of grenades, Shiver was a very impressive exclusive and was just as sought-after as the exclusives from years before. The blue and black highlights on his white snow suit made Shiver look like he is ready for arctic battle against the Joes at any time!



Canadian Joe Con Exclusives

By Drew "Dryhawk" Haggerty



The Villians



The Heroes

Snowbank and Timbit were two G.I. Joe characters that were released in 2008 at the Canadian Joe Convention, at the Marriott Courtyard Hotel in Hamilton, Ontario. Another crowd favorite, Snowbank, is an Arctic Tracker who can track just about anything in the dead of night during a whiteout. Dressed in a white and silver uniform with the Canadian Maple leaf on his chest and a red-visored helmet, this figure compares favorably to the majority of figures released during the '80s and '90s. Snowbank's filecard was written by legendary "G.I. Joe" scribe, Larry Hama, who made his first appearance at the CJC that year. Timbit was the second character released in 2008. Named for the delicious donut holes served free at every Canadian Joe Convention, he is the official delivery driver for the Joes in their Canadian HQ. He was accompanied by his pet beaver Snack Pack, and came with an axe accessory and even a box of Timbits!

Soaring into 2009, the CJC Team spread some viral videos around the internet containing the most highly-coveted trophy in Cobra's arsenal. At first, the collecting community was clueless as to what the image of a shiny silver H.I.S.S. tank could mean. After a few weeks of torture, it was revealed that the 2009 exclusive would be that same chrome H.I.S.S. tank! Branded the H.A.T.E. (H.I.S.S. Assault Tank Elite), there were 100 attendee sets produced and was a boxed set including two vehicles, three figures, blueprints, sticker sheets, and even a limited edition comic book featuring the set. The H.A.T.E. tank is an experimental Cobra weapon created using stolen Sky Patrol technology. Cobra was represented with two figures in the set: Chacal Noir (Black Jackal), the cunning reverse-engineering specialist who played a major part in the creation of the H.A.T.E., and a Frostback, one of Cobra's elite vehicle drivers who are both commanded by Black Ice himself. Frostbacks are black-and-silver-clad H.I.S.S. Drivers who have logged over 100 hours of tank maneuvering each and are the only Cobra drivers qualified to drive the H.A.T.E.. The Joes countered with Backstop, the only Canadian-born G.I. Joe team member, and his personal tank the Dead Eye. The Dead Eye tank is a refitted Armadillo and was taken by Backstop after the destruction of his Persuader. It's got more firepower, including two cluster cannons mounted on a central turret while



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two auto-loading 7.62mm attack guns have been mounted on each side. This boxed set included separate filecards for each character, instruction books and sticker sheets for each vehicle, a comic book featuring all of the characters and vehicles, and a very nice-looking custom box with foam inserts. This boxed set really put the Canadian Joe Convention on the map, and is a very highly sought after item on the secondary market.

Joe Canuck trading cards have also been produced and given out free at the CJC. This 21-card set features artwork and dioramas of the exclusive figures and vehicles produced by the CJC over the years. Each trading card is numbered, and has information on the back giving the reader a look into how these figures and vehicles were made, the ins and outs of how they were conceived and where they were originally debuted. Another nice addition to the exclusives are the full cardbacks that were available for sale in late 2008, just before the G.I. Joe Collectors' Club Convention. Each of the first five exclusives had full cardbacks with custom artwork and bubbles attached on the front, and filecards on the back. These were not sold for long, but are great pieces to display with the figures.



All in all, the CJC Team has done a fantastic job creating new G.I. Joe and Cobra characters and vehicles to add to G.I. Joe folklore. With the 2010 Canadian Joe Convention right around the corner, there will certainly be more amazing new exclusives to discuss in a future article. Until then, enjoy the fantastic limited edition figures and vehicles they have offered from the past, and remember that G.I. Joe is not just an American hero, but a Canadian hero as well.



Archiving Canadian G.I. Joe Convention Collectibles

By Terry "RedClaw" Dizard, Admin YoJoe.com

Deciding what is an actual collectible G.I. Joe figure, vehicle, or toy---and what is simply a terrific fan-produced but unofficial toy is difficult; especially when you run the premier G.I. Joe archive.

YoJoe.com has always had an eye on the CanJoeCon (CJC) for years, and we have always been impressed by the quality of the items the team is capable of producing. Such fan efforts far eclipse those from the DeSimone era official conventions in the United States, as well as other less ambitious projects. (King Rat, I'm looking at you.)

My first real hands-on introduction to the mythos and character concept from the CJC was Black Ice. Using some official Hasbro produced parts and fan custom cast items, I received an incredible and fun figure with a great back story, file card, and accessories. But what could we do to showcase such terrific work on YoJoe, when we only archive official, sanctioned figures?

Well, that all changed when the CJC received official endorsement from Hasbro this past year. After talking with Mike Heddle (the CanJoeCon HMFVIC), it was the opinion of YoJoe that all CJC items should be retroactively accepted into the official G.I. Joe product line for Canada within the YoJoe International Archives. But, besides official endorsement, other factors went into this decision.

First and foremost, Hasbro Canada actively participated in the creation of the 2009 CJC Convention set and let the CJC do the physical labor in assembling the figures, painting, and other details. This gives Hasbro input into the ways their brand is represented and reflects the desires of the parent company. That's a big deal right there, because it allows Hasbro's protected intellectual property to be used with consent by the CJC.

Secondly, the items needed to be manufactured in a quantity that allowed a collector from the general public access to purchase the items. While the items are exceptionally rare and have small production runs, any avid collector could attend and purchase the items before they sold out.

Thirdly, the items needed to be made with quality. A G.I. Joe figure is defined by its durability and attention to detail. Looking at items such as the H.A.T.E. and file cards with original artwork, the CJC has gone well above even some mass-retail items in terms of quality and craftsmanship.

All of these factors allowed YoJoe to lay the foundation to add all past, present, and future Official Canadian G.I. Joe Convention items to our archives for years to come.

Canada is fortunate to experience all that the CanJoeCon team has to offer, and we at YoJoe.com are excited to see all that will be offered at this year's 2010 convention. Expect to see archival updates with these items (and more) in the months ahead, as YoJoe is committed to showcasing all the terrific work and dedication from the Official Canadian G.I. Joe Convention.

Yo Joe!





G.I. Joe Comics: Canada

By Roger "Goofateer" Taft

Canada has a surprisingly diverse range of G.I. Joe comic books. Unlike most countries, in Canada, G.I. Joe was released in two languages, by two companies, and in multiple formats. This adds Canadian G.I. Joe comics to the list of some of the most confusing G.I. Joe comics to collect throughout the world!

Though this article will focus on the Canadian editions of G.I. Joe comics, there are certain things that apply to all international comics---primarily the fact that comic book collecting is very much an American hobby. With the exceptions of France and Japan where comics are considered to be an adult art form, most of the remaining countries of the world view them as child's play. And that's only if said country even has comic books at all. Of course you will find comic collectors and even comic shops in many parts of the world, but that doesn't change the general mainstream public perception. This even applies to countries like Great Britain, Germany, and yes, even Canada.

This has two distinct effects on collecting international (non-American) comics. First, it makes them very hard to find in most countries. They were not generally taken care of, and rarely kept. So if there are even any around, they are not seen as being valuable. Second, if you can find them, they are rarely in good condition. You will even get reactions of surprise from fellow G.I. Joe collectors in other countries when you ask for comics in their language. Most of the time, if they collect comics themselves, they often want the original Marvel comics in English. The editions in their own languages seem to be viewed the same way many collectors look at reprints--they are just not the originals, and therefore not worth the paper they are printed on. They're great for a read, but not much else.

So, with that said, if you decide to collect international G.I. Joe comics, keep those facts in mind. The road is a hard one, and it is not paved in mint condition comics. However, today's topic is Canadian G.I. Joe comics.

In the 1980's, two companies were known to publish G.I. Joe comics for the Canadian market. They were largely similar, using the same stories, art, and covers. The most obvious difference was the language, but that certainly wasn't the only one. Most collectors, even many Canadian collectors, didn't realize that Marvel published Canadian editions of G.I. Joe in English. What would be the point? Why not just import American editions?

Well, the point was money. The Canadian dollar was weaker than the American dollar at the time; the sixty-cent American cover price was only worth about forty-eight cents in Canada, a drop of twenty percent. So Marvel published the exact same comics for the Canadian market, with a seventy-five-cent cover price. These are often mistaken as reprints, since American reprints were usually seventy-five cents at this time as well. So how does one tell the difference? If it's a seventy-five-cent cover, a Canadian edition would have had a bar code at the bottom. An American edition generally had a black masked Spider-Man instead. This is generally true (with a few exceptions) until issue #34, when the Canadian cover price skyrocketed to one dollar. With issue #44, the cover price dropped slightly to ninety-five cents, where it remained until the final Canadian edition, #50, which had a cover price of \$1.50. After that, American, Canadian, and U.K. pricing appeared on the covers of all



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with a short backup story. G.I. Joe issues #1 through #47 were published in French, but there are only forty-four actual comics, regardless of the number on the cover. From issue #11 to #16, they published three issues as double-sized issues, with two full G.I. Joe stories in each. With issue #15/16, it seems that Marvel took over the publication of the title. It's hard to tell what happened. Did the companies merge? Did contracts change? The end result was it appeared that Editions Heritage was no longer in the comic-publishing business as of 1987, which happened to be the same year in which the final French-language issue (#47) of "G.I. Joe" was printed.

The fun and confusion do not end there!

Probably due to its considerably smaller market, Editions Heritage would bind overstocked back issues into one larger, trade paperback-like book. They were not reprints. They would literally take entire issues (cover and all), bind them into one book; add a new cover made of card stock; then trim the edges off so they would be nice and neat. The final dimensions of the book would be slightly smaller than a regular comic. They didn't even seem to care what issues were used in each book, as it was basically just whatever was on hand for that month. The only distinction they seemed to have made, was that Marvel issues and DC issues would not be bound together. But after that, anything went.

American comics. Collecting resources cite that all of the first fifty issues were published with a Canadian price. However, a copy of issue #1 has yet to be found, or even a collector that actually has one. It is possible that an English version of Canadian #1 does not exist.

Meanwhile, another company; Editions Heritage, was publishing more or less the same comics in French. Even in Canada, it is rare to find any Editions Heritage comics outside of Quebec (the specific market they were originally published for). Though other parts of Canada speak and read French, it seems most Editions Heritage comics were sold in just the one province.

Editions Heritage took a very different approach to comics than Marvel did. Each Editions Heritage issue of G.I. Joe tended to be a little thicker than an American issue. This was because they almost always included a back-up story, and it was almost never a G.I. Joe back-up story. It could have been any Marvel character. Daredevil was the most common, but Spider-Man, Captain America, and Thor made appearances, among others. To make it even more interesting (and confusing), Editions Heritage didn't just reprint Marvel comics in French, they reprinted other publishers as well. Issue #4 has The Fly from Archie Comics. The back-up story was rarely complete either. They would publish a single back-up story over the course of two issues or more; the thought process was probably that it would keep the reader coming back for more.

Over time, it seems that Editions Heritage may have started to fall behind Marvel's publishing pace, or else G.I. Joe was catching up to theirs. The standard Editions Heritage format was to publish two complete issues in each comic, but most G.I. Joe comics just had the corresponding American issue



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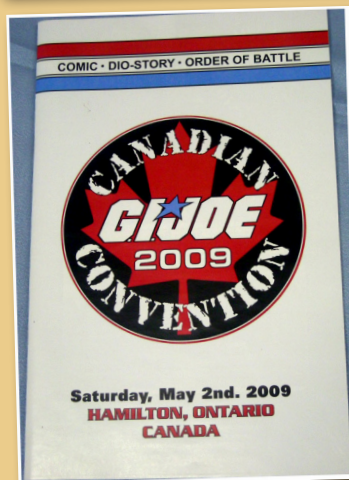
They used this format for no less than three series: "ComicO-rama" typically bound two issues; "ComicOrama Jumbo" was rarely fewer than six issues and sometimes as many as eight; and "Les Meilleures Aventures des Super-Héros" ("The Best Adventures of Super Heroes"), which would bind three. "Les Meilleures" had more consistency when it came to content, and the title would change each month to reflect that. If the three comics inside the cover of an issue were randomly chosen, the cover title would simply be "Super-Héros." If all three were from the same series, then it would bear the title of that series. Therefore, an issue containing three Spider-Man comics would be called "Les Meilleures Aventures des Spider-Man." G.I. Joe did appear in several "Best Adventures" books, but so far only one issue of "Les Meilleures Aventures des G.I. Joe" has been found stateside by the author. G.I. Joe most likely appeared in all three formats, but issues of "ComicO-rama" that included G.I. Joe seem to be the most rare.

Many collectors treat "ComicOrama," and "ComicOrama Jumbo" as one series, but they don't seem to be. The two titles appear to have run concurrently with each other, and the issue numbers don't mesh. Incidentally, most of the G.I. Joe issues of "Jumbo" appear in the #280s. "Les Meilleures," on the other hand, has a four-digit issue number that does not appear to be consecutive. Photos of "Les Meilleures" issues show issue numbers like #7008, #7088, and #8008. A comic running monthly for that many issues wouldn't be possible, not to mention that that's a lot of '8's! The rarity of these books, the fact that multiple character franchises appear in each issue, and the irregularity of their publishing schedule makes it difficult to understand their numbering. It's not known exactly how many G.I. Joe-filled issues exist between the three.

All three publications also seem to share the same idiosyncrasies. Two issues in a row usually don't have the same series bound into them, as a reader might a copy featuring issues of The Incredible Hulk, The Fantastic Four, and G.I. Joe in one issue, followed the next month by The Amazing Spider-Man, Captain America, and The Mighty Thor the next. Some months, the covers didn't even reflect what was inside the book. Sometimes it would match a cover to a comic that was actually in that issue of the book, but other times it wouldn't. On rare occasions, it would even be from a series that wasn't featured in the book at all! Editions Heritage put a lot of stock into the old saying, "You can't judge a book by it's cover."

Finally, there is one entry on the Canadian market worth noting here. On May 2, 2009, a new Canadian-exclusive G.I. Joe comic was released at that year's Canadian G.I. Joe Convention. This issue was very limited, and can fetch a pretty penny on the secondary market. As of this writing, it's the only new Canadian G.I. Joe comic in over twenty years. Odds are, though, that anyone reading this article has gotten the second issue from the 2010 Canadian G.I. Joe Convention in his or her duffle bag right now. Enjoy the convention!

Roger Taft
Lexington, Kentucky, U.S.A.
Owner and Operator, Captain Cosmos Collectibles





DECLASSIFIED

Collector Spotlight: Shane "Tattoo Shane" Turgeon

Who are you?

My name is Shane Turgeon. I go by that or "Tattoo Shane" on the message boards that I participate on.

Please tell us a little about yourself:

I'm 32 years old and live in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. I recently opened an upscale tattoo, toy and comic book shop and I'm the promoter of the Edmonton Collectible Toy and Comic Show; which is one of the largest shows in Western Canada. I'm a staff member for Dan Moore's incredible www.joeintel.com and have written a number of feature articles for the site. In addition to collecting G.I. Joe toys, I also collect original comic art and a variety of other vintage toy lines, most notably Star Wars, where I'm quite active in the community. I run www.tattoosandtoys.com and am the author of a coffee table book on Star Wars tattoos entitled The Force in the Flesh.

How long have you been collecting?

I'm one of those collectors who feels there's a big difference between collecting toys and playing with them. I certainly enjoyed playing with G.I. Joes as a kid, but I was by no means a "collector" as I am now. That said, it seems like I've been collecting something for as long as I can remember. I started with comics around 1987, began collecting the Toy Biz Marvel figure line in 1990, Star Wars memorabilia in 1991, and G.I. Joe around 1993. So I'd say around 17 years for G.I. Joe.

What's your favourite piece in your collection?

My favourite is one of my most recent acquisitions: the original packaging art for Night-Viper followed closely by the packaging art for Hydro-Viper. Original packaging art is the end-all, be-all in terms of G.I. Joe collecting in my opinion, and having art for one of my favourite figures (Night-Viper) is really a collecting milestone. Some other favourites include the original Hama dossier for Firefly, the unproduced packaging painting for 1995 Arctic Assault Set, the dynacast hardcopy for the Night Raven, the Cobra Combat Set... Boy, I could go on and on!



Collector Spotlight: Shane "Tattoo Shane" Turgeon

What was your first Joe figure?

Torpedo, which was purchased at The Bay in the Lloydminster Mall. I distinctly remember a HUGE bin of G.I. Joe toys at the front of the store, convincing my parents to buy me Torpedo, and then spending the rest of the time in the Mall playing with the figure while sitting in the shopping cart. Such a great figure. I'm still in the market for a mint Canadian carded example if anyone has any leads.

What kind of Joe items do you collect?

I tend to gravitate primarily to collecting preproduction items (art and figural prototypes), but I also focus on Canadian packaged items, Mexican boxed figures, and original comic art. I'm still slowly working on my 82 - 89 loose figure set, I love foreign items including Japanese packaged items and loose international variants. I also have one of the largest known collections of Polish G.I. Joe bootlegs. In addition, I tend to pick up a lot of odds and ends that strike my fancy at the time.

What's the primary focus of your collection?

Preproduction and Canadian items would likely be my primary focuses. Within my preproduction collection I have character specific focuses or "runs" on Night-Viper, Dojo, Dusty and Sandstorm, Firefly V1 and V2, and the Night Raven.

What piece was the most difficult to acquire?

That's easy! The ones I haven't gotten yet! Honestly, I can't say any one piece has been more of a challenge than any other. When the things you tend to collect are one-of-a-kind or exist in very small quantities, it's more of a matter of patiently waiting for them to turn up and hoping you have the funds when they do. If you need a real answer, I would say that completing a set of Mexican boxed figures has proven the most challenging goal I've set out on. I'm currently six shy of finishing the set.



Collector Spotlight: **Shane “Tattoo Shane” Turgeon**

What is your favourite Joe related memory?

Again, one of my favourite memories is something that happened fairly recently. This past March I had Bob McLeod attend my show; The Edmonton Collectible Toy and Comic Show, as a special guest. Bob is, hands down, one of the best inkers in the comic business and he worked extensively on the Marvel G.I. Joe comic series'. A couple of weeks before the show I acquired the original cover art for Special Missions #20, a wintery tale I loved as a kid growing up in the Great White North, and it just happened to be inked by Bob. Bob is a big fan of the medium and an art collector himself, however, he was quite busy at the show wasn't able to tour around and see the exhibit of comic art we had on display. Fortunately on our way out to the airport the following morning, we had a little extra time so we popped back to my place so he could check out my art collection. Its one thing to have the original cover art for a comic you loved as a kid, it's quite another to have the original artist for said cover standing in your dining room, holding the original art again, and telling stories about it some 20+ years after it's publication!





DECLASSIFIED



O Canada!

This issue is dedicated to Darren Howlett. For those who've never had the pleasure or honor of meeting Darren, he is a tremendous Joe fan, good friend, and the co-ordinator of the idea that became *Joe Declassified*. Darren's a Canadian Joe collector, who at one time boasted not only one of the larger G.I. Joe collections out there, but one of the most unique. Over the last two years, and due to several circumstances beyond control, he was forced to sell his entire Joe collection.

In 2007, Darren and I sat down during the G.I. Joe Convention, and both pitched each other on remarkably similar ideas on what we wanted to do with, and for, the collector community. That idea became *Joe Declassified*, and wouldn't exist today without Darren. Thanks, brother. This one's for you.

I would also like to thank our donors. Since making the option available in May, we received more help than ever expected. Thank you.

If you enjoy the magazine, please take time to find us online at www.JoeDeclassified.com, or follow us on Facebook. The forums at the website will be open in the immediate future.

Next: The Comic Issue!

Special thanks for this issue go to:

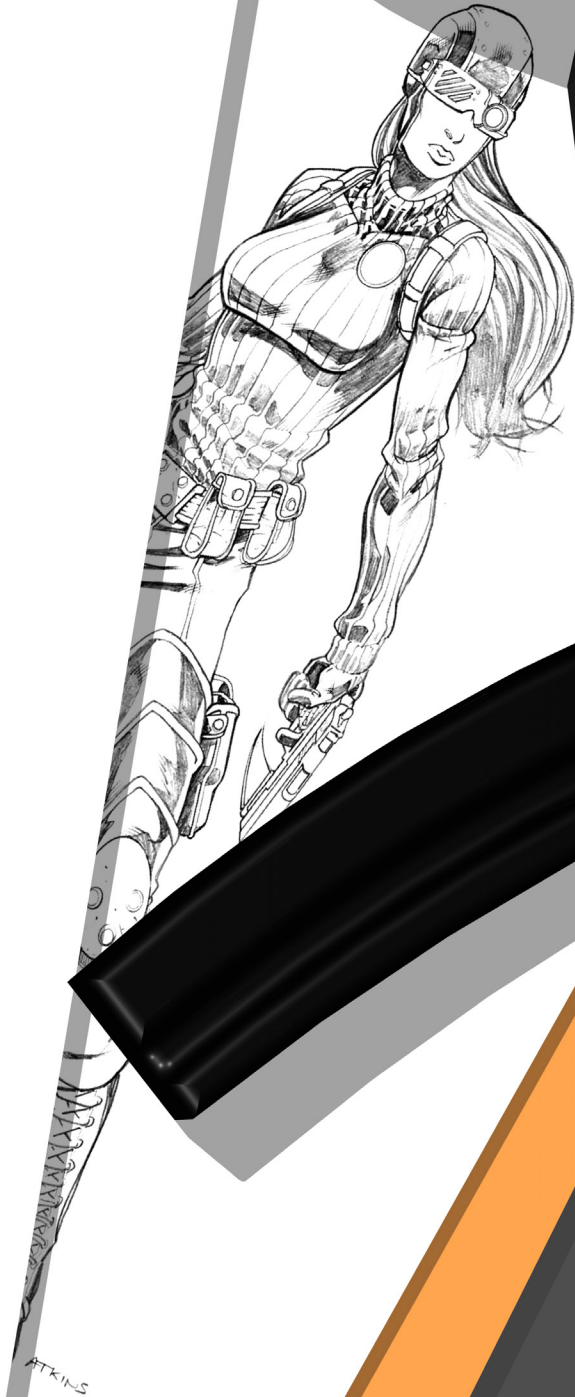
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