

(From the Past: Article by Bob Davidson from the December, 2002 Newsletter)

The First US Postage Stamps by Bob Davidson

Our fledgling nation saw vast changes in the 1840s. Through conquest and negotiation new continental boundaries were established: Texas was annexed; the western border with Canada was fixed; and the treaty ending the war with Mexico added large western areas as territorial boundaries. Americans were singing *Columbia, Gem of the Ocean* and Longfellow published *Evangeline*. Gold was discovered in California, and the telegraph and railroad resulted in a staggering jump in communication. When the 1840s opened stamps were unknown as a means for paying postage. Even provisionals and locals were not to make the scene until later in the decade.

In 1840, one month after the 'Penny Black' stamp made its appearance in Great Britain, Daniel Webster introduced two resolutions in Congress: one calling for a reduction in postal rates and another to provide for the use of stamps in payment of postage. It was not until five years later that new postal rates were fixed at 5 cents for a 'single letter' traveling less than 300 miles and 10 cents for 300 miles and further; and later, in 1847, the first US postage stamps were seen. The premier issues bore the likeness of Franklin on the 5c and that of Washington on the 10c. These were available at some post offices in July of that year.

Designed by Ashland Durand the 1847 issue was printed by line engraving, a process that was state-of-the-art at the time. Distribution of the first stamps to post offices was extremely limited, with about one half of the known printing going to New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore. Smaller post offices and many in the western areas never had these first issues available. In numerous locations that had distribution, it is said that stamps were not offered by the postmasters because of fear they might loose 'credit' for postal volume or that they simply did not understand the process.

In the preceding stampless period *paid* or *due* handstamps were the practice. Postage could either be prepaid or collected from the recipient. In fact it was not until 1855 that prepayment of postage was required. The first stamps ushered in a new era in which one could mail a letter *without having to go to the post office!* As viewed today this may not seem noteworthy, but in 1847 it was a giant step forward in progress. In the words of Wilson Hulme, curator of the Smithsonian Postal Museum, "At this moment in time the year 1847 marked a clear turning point for US postal history. Stamps became miniature pieces of art."

There were about 4-1/2 million of the 5 cent stamps produced, but almost 1 million were believed destroyed when the

issue was withdrawn from use. By today's standards this may seem small, but for a relatively new concept in postage payment in the late 1840s it was quite large, in an era when a days earnings were a dollar, and newspapers cost a penny, 5 cents to mail a letter was expensive. From today's perspective, the issue is in itself scarce but not rare. However, of the estimated 9000 surviving covers, those bearing postmarks from smaller or from western post offices are quite rare and sought-after.

The 1847 issue was invalidated for use as postage on June 30, 1851. This reportedly resulted from the practice by some of using the stamps in trade in lieu of money.

This article was inspired by a piece in the Chattanooga Times Free Press reporting on the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum exhibit of the 1847 issue. You will want to make a trip to the Museum a must on your next trip to the Washington D.C. area.

POST OFFICE LOGOS



Aland Post Office Logo



Albania Post Office Logo



Algeria Post Office Logo

Anguilla Post office logo



Argentina Post Office Logo

OCTOBER NEW ISSUES



Endangered Bird Species, Liechtenstein - WWF stamps

To mark the "50 years of the WWF" anniversary Philatelic Liechtenstein is bringing out the issue entitled "Endangered bird species in Liechtenstein". It has been created by the Liechtenstein artist Jacques Sonderer and depicts on each of eight individual stamps (face value CHF 1.00) in a stylized natural environment a bird species endangered in Liechtenstein.

As well as the bird species threatened with extinction in Liechtenstein such as the nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) and wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*) the set illustrates the seriously endangered hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), the common redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*), the pygmy owl (*Glaucidium passerinum*), the red-backed shrike (*Lanius collurio*), the golden oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*) and the whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*).

The issue is being produced as an eight-stamp sheetlet in which all eight face designs feature in a coherent pictorial composition. The individual stamps are hexagonal and self-adhesive. The WWF panda logo is moreover printed on each stamp.



October 13 - Madonna and Child by Raphael, Christmas

October 13 - Holiday Baubles, Contemporary Christmas

October 14 - Hanukkah

October 14 - Kwanzaa

Consider the postage stamp: its usefulness consists in the ability to stick to one thing till it gets there.
-- Josh Billings

TAJIKISTAN - Looney Tunes Cartoons





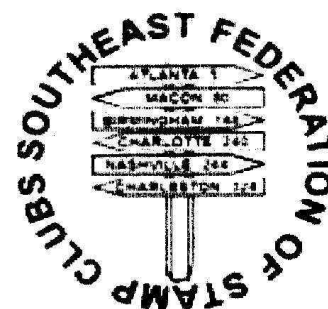
South Georgia is the largest of a group of remote and inhospitable islands, midway between the tip of South America and the South Pole. Captain Cook made the first landing in 1775 and claimed it for Great Britain, naming it the Isle of Georgia in honor of King George III.

During the 19th and early 20th Century, the island was used extensively as a base for 'Sealing' and later 'Whaling' Industries, including the re-provisioning of ships and the processing of oil. A Norwegian, Carl Anton Larsen, established the first land-based whaling station and first permanent habitation at Grytviken in 1904, which operated until 1965. In total there were 7 stations in the sheltered north coast harbours, all administered by the Governor of the Falkland Islands. But with the end of commercial whaling in the 1960s, all the stations were abandoned.

In 1909 an administrative centre and residence were established at King Edward Point on South Georgia, near the whaling station of Grytviken. A permanent local British administration, including a deputy post-master and resident Magistrate, exercised the enforcement of British law, and regulation of all economic, scientific and other activities in the territory, which was then governed as the Falkland Islands Dependencies.

At several times between 1920 and 1930, a shortage of lower value denomination stamps occurred, and was usually dealt with by the Magistrate authorising the bisecting of other values (2½d to make the 1d rate, 6d to make the 2½d rate). In 1928 however, because the stock of ½d and 2½d stamps was exhausted, authority was given by Port Stanley to surcharge the current 2d stamp to 2½d to meet demand for overseas postage. Very few covers to overseas destinations are known.

(Courtesy Sandafayre Stamps)



APS Chapter # 0731

The Chattanooga Stamp Club

The Chattanooga Stamp Club is affiliated with the American Philatelic Society and the Southeasten Federation of Stamp Clubs. The club has been dedicated to the study, preservation, and promotion of the philatelic hobby since 1932.

- CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2011 -

President: Jim Hogue
Secretary: Open

Vice-President: Jo King
Treasurer: Carl Anderson

MEETINGS: Club meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at EASTRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST located at 915 McBrien Rd in Eastridge, TN. Meetings begin at 7.30 PM. Doors open at 7:00. Come early and enjoy meeting the members as well as talking about stamps.

MEMBERSHIP: Chattanooga Stamp Club memberships are on a calendar year basis. Yearly dues are \$20.00. Send all monetary donations and membership dues to the club's Treasurer, Mr. Carl Anderson, 919 Dunsinane Rd., Signal Mountain, TN 37377.