



DAYTON NEWSLETTER

STAMP CLUB

Vol. 55 No. 9 September 2026

Philatelic Dead Countries

By Doug Files

Among stamp collectors, countries which no longer issue stamps are called "dead countries". Some wiggle room exists in this definition because some nations stop issuing new stamps but they continue to use old stamps for several more years. Other countries cease to exist and their stamps are devalued immediately, such as nations that lose a war and are occupied by the enemy. The date used by stamp collectors for when a country becomes "dead" is usually the date when new stamps stop being issued rather than when they stop using old stamps.

One interesting aspect of stamp collecting is tracing how the history of the postage stamps of a nation follow the history of how that political body and its culture evolved (and maybe died out). For example in the 1800s colonial powers issued stamps separately for nearly every small colony they controlled. Later on, many of these colonies were consolidated into other nations. For example, "Straits

Settlements" is now mostly part of Malaysia.

The Russian revolution of 1917 initially led to 17 new stamp issuing entities. But over the years many of these were absorbed into the USSR, whether or not their people wanted to join the larger nation. Many nations changed names and borders after World War I as well. All these historical events led to some stamp-issuing nations becoming dead countries.

Collectors are often familiar with some countries which no longer exist such as the Belgian Congo, Zanzibar, Sarawak and the Papal States. In recent times however many thriving nations have struggled to make delivering mail to their citizens affordable. For example the United States Postal Service has logged losses of \$120 billion over the past 20 years. Several factors have been blamed, such as the way the USPS has to fund its pension fund and the dwindling number of letters sent. Generally fewer letters are carried now than in the past. E mail and texting have

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Meetings / Activities

Meetings are held on 1st and 3rd Mondays (adjusted for holidays) at Christ Church 3440 Shroyer Rd Kettering OH 45429

For the Zoom invitation and link, please email daytonstampclub@gmail.com

Member's Socializing and Silent Auctions begin at 7:00 PM - Club Meeting & Programs begin at 7:30 PM Board Meetings begin at 7:00 PM.

2026

SEPTEMBER

Sep 7, NO MEETING, LABOR DAY HOLIDAY—CHURCH CLOSED

Sep 12, TUSCOPEX 2026, Tuscora Stamp Club, Tuscora Park Pavilion, q61 Tuscora Ave, NW, New Philadelphia email: slwors-ham@frontier.com.

Sep 18-20, INDYPEX 2026. Indiana Stamp Club, Hendricks County Fairgrounds & Exhibition Center, 1900 E. Main St., Danville IN, website: indianastampclu.org.

Sep 21, ****SILENT AUCTION 7:00-7:20PM**** and Club Meeting & Program—In Person & Zoom — TBD

Sep 25-26, - Ohio Precancel Club Gathering, McKinley FOE, HRS: Fri 9-9, Sat 9-3pm, 5024 Monticello NW Ave., Canton, OH

OCTOBER

Oct 5, Club Meeting & Program—In Person & Zoom **AUCTION #6—Regular Member Auction**

Oct 12. 7:00 pm Board Meeting

Oct 19, Club Meeting & Program— In Person & Zoom — Member Bourse & Club Open House—[Buy. Sell. Trade](#)

NOVEMBER

Nov 2, **>>Club CASH Auction Preview 7:00-7:25 pm<<** Club Meeting & Program— In Person & Zoom — Santa Claus on Stamps and Seals, DSC Member—Susan Kolze

Nov 7, Dutch Study Group in The Netherlands, for more info contact Mike Molle (mickeymolle@hotmail.com)

Nov 6-7, AAPEX 2026 Stamp Show, Ann Arbor Stamp Club sponsors over 20 dealers from 10 states selling US and Worldwide Stamps, Covers, Postal History and Supplies. Washtenaw Community College, Morris Lawrence Building, 4800 E. Huton River

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DSC NEWSLETTER

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A New Chapter Begins To Print with October Issue

"There are moments in philately that reminds us why preserving traditions matters." quotes President and CEO Jay Bigalke. October 5, 2026 is a remarkable moment for return of *Linn's Stamp News* being printed.

Bigalke made promises to collectors that "we had to stabilize operations, restore confidence, invest in our editorial team, and ensure we could produce publications worthy of the *Linn's* brand. Beginning with the Oct. 5 issue — appropriately timed to kick off National Stamp Collecting Month — *Linn's* will again arrive in collectors' mailboxes each week.

To celebrate this milestone *Linn's* staff are offering collectors an opportunity to become part of *Linn's* history. For \$99 collectors can reserve one year of the returning weekly print edition beginning with the Oct. 5, 2026, issue. The first 2,500 print subscribers will also receive a numbered Commemorative Founding Subscriber Certificate, recognizing their role in helping bring *Linn's Stamp News* back to print after its hiatus that began in August 2024.

The return of *Linn's* to print is a visible reminder that stamp collecting remains a hobby worth investing in. President and CEO Bigalke proudly says, "I can't wait to welcome *Linn's* back to your mailbox."



Preliminary design shown. The first 2,500 collectors who subscribe to the returning weekly print edition of *Linn's Stamp News* for \$99. will receive a numbered Founding Subscriber certified recognizing their role in bringing *Linn's* back to print with the Oct. 5, 2026 issue. The certificate commemorates the readers whose early support helped to make this historic return possible. Final design subject to change.

gained popularity around the world and many people now pay their bills electronically instead of mailing a check. All of these factors probably play a role in why many postal services are losing money.

Denmark

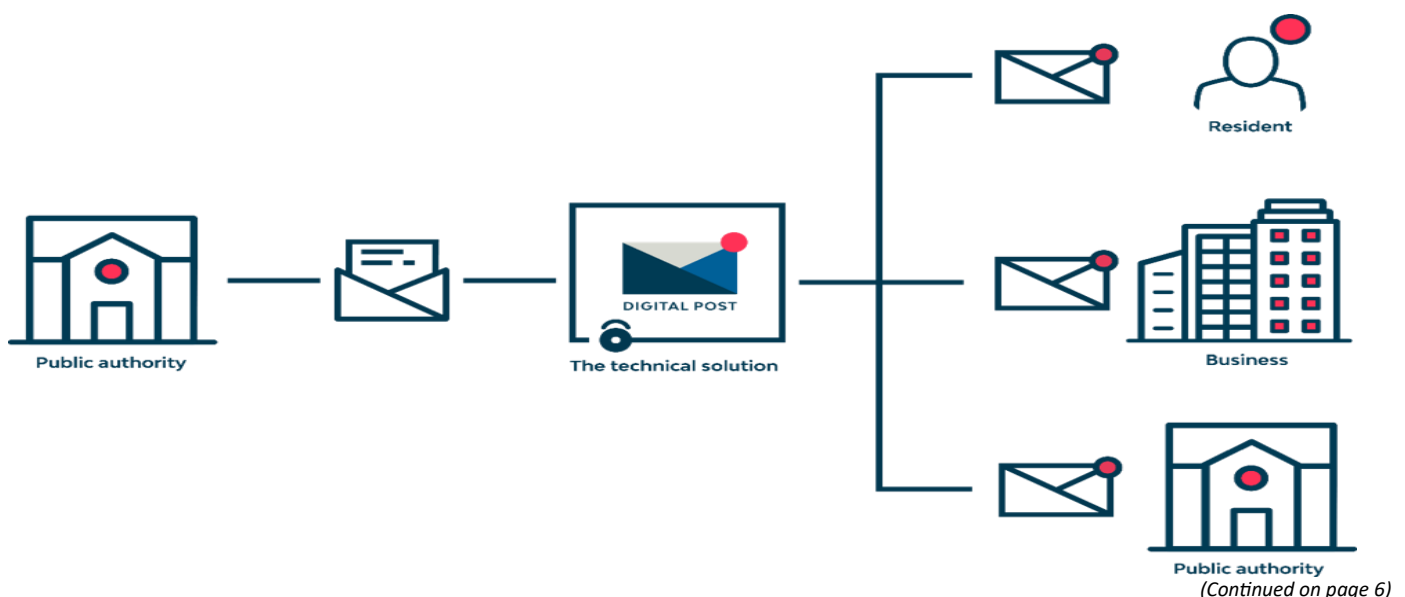
A prime example is Denmark, a small, Scandinavian nation. As of the 30th of December 2026 their postal service, called Postnord, stopped letter delivery completely. The company's statistics showed a 90% decrease in letters mailed, such that letter delivery became unprofitable. Many Danes were only receiving one letter each month. As fewer and fewer letters were sent, the price of mailing a first class letter rose to \$4.20 each. The company lost money for several years then took action. It stopped home mail delivery, cut one-third of its workers and removed 1500 red mailboxes. The mailboxes are being sold to the public for about \$300.00 each. Postnord is re-funding the price of unused 2024 and 2025 stamps if customers hand them in.

The mostly state-owned Postnord will still deliver parcels since on-line shopping is increasing. Also, Postnord also offers mail service in Sweden and the larger nation's mail delivery is continuing. Denmark delivered letters to all citizens for over 400 years but it can no longer afford to do so universally and at a reasonable price.

Alternatives to Postnord

Danish people can still send letters through the private courier service DAO (Dansk Avis Omdeling). This is fortunate because Danish law mandates that some mail delivery service be available in their nation. Given the changes in Postnord policy DAO expects to more than double its mail delivery this year. Senders can either mail their letter at a DAO store or they can pay extra to have it picked up. Currently letter writing is trendy among young people who hearken back to a pre-digital age. Receiving a handwritten letter demonstrates that the sender cares for you and they have spent extra time and money to send you something. So some people are still sending letters

Denmark's digital post system



President Washington Free Frank

By Doug Files

Franking is the ability to send mail for free just by signing it. High U.S. government officials have had this privilege for most of the history of our nation.

This includes the President and Vice President, members of Congress and Supreme Court Justices. The Continental Congress passed a law in 1775 allowing free franking of mail and it got written again into U.S. law in 1789. That is, it was one of the first laws passed by Congress after the U.S. Constitution was adopted.

Whole books have been written about free franking – in the U.S. and other countries - but for now let's just focus on one example. The envelope pictured here was sent by President George Washington in 1796. At the lower left he wrote "President U.S" in his own handwriting. Most presidents have signed their names to send letters but Washington did not; he only used his job title. Of course, at that time there was no need to distinguish between different presidents; until 1797 Washington was the only one. The word "Free" in the upper right of the envelope was probably written by the mail clerk in Alexandria, Virginia where the letter was sent from. The clerk also wrote "Alex. Aug.t" for Alexandria, August.

George Washington was a wealthy man whose family had extensive business dealings. The letter has been separated (and lost) from this cover but this correspondence was probably related to a financial matter with Anne Louise DuBarry. Washington's nephew owed her late husband money and she asked the president to help her collect the debt. After some negotiation the president's nephew paid \$100.00 to the widow.

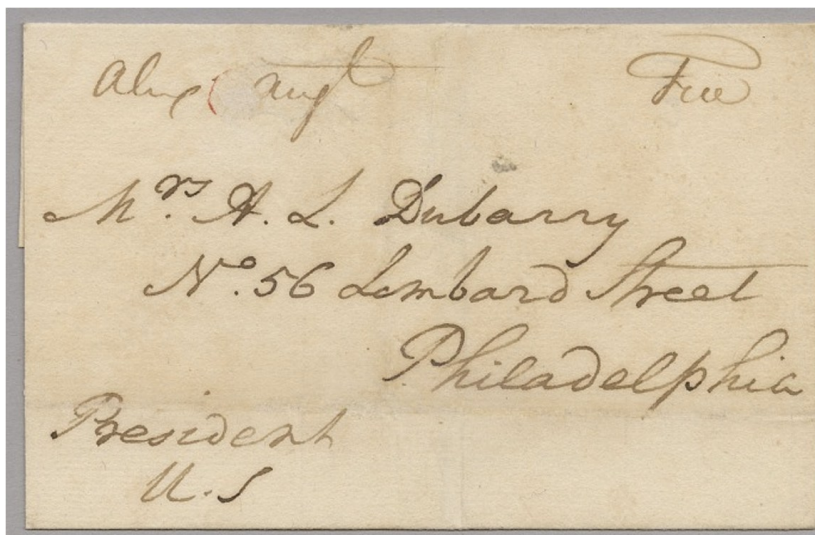
One other feature of this cover is noteworthy to postal historians (those who study how the mail moved). That is that a street number appears. Prior to the late 1700s no one used street numbers in the United

States. Philadelphia – which had 42,000 people - had implemented a system created by Clement Biddle for a 1791 city directory. Odd numbers were used for the north and east sides of streets and even numbers were used for the south and west sides. As cities

grew, street numbering became more and more useful and the practice spread through the country.

Overall there are many interesting features of this cover. It demonstrates that government officials do not have to pay for postage, it shows us something of Washington the man, and it exemplifies how mail traveled from Virginia to Pennsylvania in the

early republic. The advent of street numbers serves as an intriguing bonus for postal hobbyists.



President George Washington free frank cover Image from the National Postal Museum website, https://postalmuseum.si.edu/object/npm_2005.2027.6



Betsy Ross' first iteration of American flag

REFERENCE

Heidelbaugh, Lynn, George Washington to Anne Louise DuBarry franked "President U.S." folded letter, National Postal Museum website, July 24, 2025, https://postalmuseum.si.edu/object/npm_2005.2027.6

U.S. Congress. Senate. "Franking" Included in Furber, George P., compiler. Precedents Relating to the Privileges of the Senate of the United States. Washington, D.C. GPO. 1893.

September Dayton Stamp Club Meeting

September 7—No Meeting Labor Day Holiday—Church Closed

September 14 — 7:00 pm — Board Meeting — AIRPEX 2026 Preview

September 21—**SILENT AUCTION 7:00-7:20PM**

Club Meeting & Program—In Person & Zoom

August USPS 2026 New Issues

Sarah Orne Jewett Joins the USPS Literary Arts Series



Aug. 21, Sara Orne
Jewett, single (\$1.40) 3-
oz rate stamp, pane of
20, Literary Arts series.

The U.S. Postal Service will honor acclaimed author **Sarah Orne Jewett** with the 35th stamp in its **Literary Arts Series**, to be issued on **August 21 in South Berwick, Maine**.

Best known for *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, Jewett's writings captured the people, landscapes, and traditions of coastal Maine, helping establish American literary regionalism and earning a lasting place in American literature.



New Zealand Stamps were Withdrawn Days Before the Issue Date

Philatelic assessor of Mowbray Collectables in New Zealand reported the discovery of a series of self-adhesive booklet stamps from an unissued Traditional Maori Performing Arts set of stamps.

The planned issue are comprised of five gummed stamps available in booklets of 10. The *New Zealand Post* reported that the stated stamps were withdrawn from being issued before the issue date. According to the *Post*, nearly all stock was recalled and destroyed, although eight orders were erroneously shipped to customers.

The discovered stamps are printed on phosphor-coated paper and was found without backing paper. The press release suggests that the stamp came from a roll of stamps to be used in production of first-day covers.

Mowbray Collectables says the stamp will be offered for sale of an estimate of NZ\$5,000, or about \$2,885 U.S. at the time of publication.



The 90c stamp from New Zealand's unissued 2006 Traditional Maori Performing Arts set.



Dayton Stamp Club 2025 Summer Picnic

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Image from the website of the Agency for Digital Government, <https://en.digst.dk/systems/digital-post/about-the-national-digital-post/>

Denmark is a highly digitized society and it sponsors a national digital mail service, called Digital Post. Each citizen has a national ID issued by the government and they use that to establish a digital mail account which 97% of the population participate in. The percentage is high because registration in the program was mandated by law in 2014 for everyone over age 15. Online banking, electronically signing documents and booking a doctor appointment are all accomplished through this national electronic mail system. Drivers licenses and health cards also exist electronically on this secure system and it is used for all official government communications. Citizens can opt out but only 5% of Danes choose to receive their letters on paper. Many of these are elderly people, who up to this point have relied on regular mail for their health care appointments. Some will probably opt for e mail now since prices will likely be higher for delivery by the private company DAO.

Norway

Mail delivery in Norway is handled by Posten Norge, which delivers letters and parcels to homes every other weekday. One week mail carriers deliver on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and the next week on Tuesday and Thursday. Post office leaders have considered only delivering parcels to pick-up points and not to individual homes, but this policy has not been implemented. Like Denmark, Norway has a digital mailbox service for official government communications to citizens. Businesses can also send and receive digital mail through the Norwegian system.

Germany

Another example of a European nation struggling to decrease costs is Germany, where Deutsche Post recently laid off 8,000 of its 187,000 workers. However Deutsche Post still issues stamps and delivers mail so Germany is not a dead country. Note that Germany is much larger than many of the other nations described in this article. With 83 million people it has nearly 10 times the number of residents as Finland or Denmark. For the time being Germany will remain an “alive country”.

Iceland

Iceland offers another example of a struggling postal service, and this island nation only has 400,000 people. Thus not too much mail is sent. Íslandspóstur is wholly owned by the government and it dates back 250 years. Its first stamps were issued in 1873, and in 2020 Iceland announced that it would stop printing new stamps. The commemorative stamp printing operation was costing tens of millions more dollars a year than it was generating, despite collectors saving new issues. The postal service may continue to reprint old stamp designs from time to time, and its stock of stamps is expected to last for many years. Over the past few years Iceland began decreasing the number of post offices it operates and laying off many workers. So Iceland is not a dead country but it may be slowly “dying” postally.

Finland

Finland may be dying philatelically too. As of 2026 it is still issuing new postage stamps, but Posti

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USPS Exciting Holiday New Issues for Season



Sep. 12, U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Single (82c) forever commemorative stamp; pane of 20.



Sep. 18, Winter Wreath. Single (\$1.75) global forever stamp; pane of 10.



Sep. 25. Squirrels & Chipmunks in Winter. Four (82c) forever stamps; double-sided pane of 20.



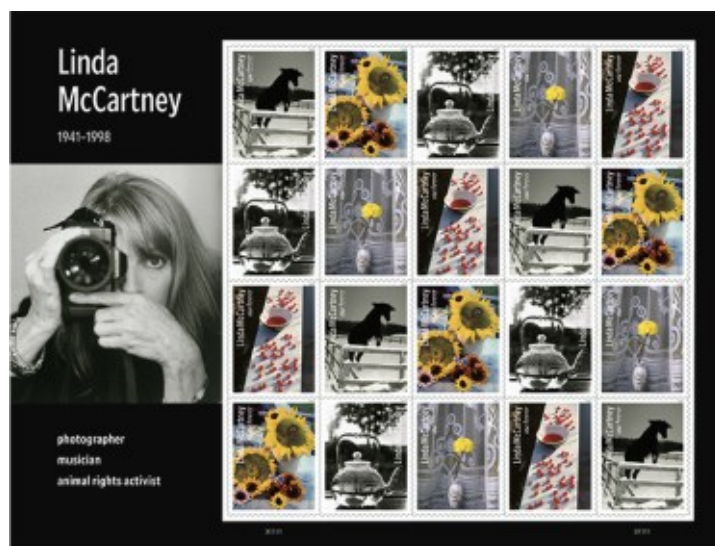
Sep. 19. Christmas Cookies. Four (82c) special forever stamps; double-sided pane of 20.



Sep. 23, Kwanzaa. Single (8 (82c) forever stamp; pane of 20.



Sep. 29 Hanukkah. Single (82c) forever stamp; pane of 20.



Sep 25; Linda McCartney, forever (82c) commemorative stamps, pane of 20

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is discussing stopping doing so. Like in other European nations, a 75% decrease in the number of letters sent has led to repeated price increases for mail delivery. And the trend is accelerating; Finland delivered 20% less mail in 2025 than it had the year before. Accordingly price increases occurred in late 2025 and again in early 2026. First class letters now cost about \$3.50 each, but the average customer spends less than \$25.00 a year on mailing and receives only one letter a month.

The Finnish government has proposed decreasing mail delivery to 3 days a week like Norway does, although this measure has not yet been implemented. For now mail delivery is universal within the nation; that is, delivery occurs to every Finnish address. Like Iceland and Denmark, many customers are switching to digital mail and e mail rather than physical letters. The digital mail system in Finland is called OmaPosti and people receive government notifications and bills in their e mail inbox.

Singapore

It is not only Europe which is afflicted with diminishing demand for mail delivery. Singapore in Asia is also decreasing services. Like its European counterparts Singpost is advocating more digitalization of mail as a cost-saving measure. And stamps are no longer available at every local post office; some use only machine-issued labels to send mail. As of this year Singapore is still issuing new stamps, such as new commemoratives for the year of the Horse. Thus Singapore is not a dead country.

Israel

Israel is another non-European nation which may be phasing out the issuance of new postage stamps. The Israel Postal Company, however, is still putting out both definitives and commemoratives as of 2026. Recent stamps celebrated Memorial Day, local plants and Hebrew University. Still, Israeli postage stamps are used less and less and the nation is using machine labels on most mail. Using postage stamps on international mail has even been prohibited since December 1, 2024. This policy may be due to security concerns, since international letters and parcels now must be sent from a post office counter. But it is interesting because historically nations have used international rate commemoratives to advertise their nation's landmarks and encourage tourism. Israel shares with many other nations an emphasis on digital mail over physical letters.

Overview

Thus many nations are struggling to respond to a great decrease in letters sent. This has caused large deficits and a need to lay off clerks and mail carriers. Several countries' responses have been considered in this article, but the number of letters sent and delivered continues to decrease in many nations. Over time this phenomenon will result in smaller postal systems and some nations are apt to become "dead countries" which do not issue new stamps. Sometimes they do not even deliver mail. We will have to see what occurs eventually but for now it appears that postal revenues will continue to decrease in many nations, especially smaller, more developed ones.

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Sep 25-26, - Ohio Precancel Club Gathering,
McKinley FOE, HRS: Fri 9-9, Sat 9-3pm
.5024 Monticello NW Ave., Canton, OH

Early Colonial Postal Service

In early colonial times, people depended on friends, merchants, and Native Americans to carry messages between colonies. Most correspondence ran between the colonies and their mother countries. The first official notice of mail service in the new colonies appeared in 1673. In keeping with the European practice of using coffee houses and taverns.

Local authorities operated post routes within the colonies with a monthly post between New York and Boston. The service was short-lived, but a post rider's trail became known as the Old Boston Post Road, established by Governor William Penn's first Post Office in Pennsylvania in 1683. In the South, private messengers, usually slaves, connected the huge plantations. A barrel of tobacco was the penalty for failing to relay mail to the next plantation. As plantations expanded inland from port regions, so did the communications network.

Central postal organization came to the colonies only after 1692, when Thomas Neale received a 21-year patent from the British Crown for North American postal system. Neale never visited America. Instead, he appointed Governor Andrew Hamilton of New Jersey as his deputy postmaster general. Neale's franchise cost him only six shillings and eight pence a year but was no bargain. He died, heavily, in debt in 1699 after assigning his interests in America to Andrew Hamilton and another Englishman, Robert West.

In 1707, the British government bought the rights to the North American postal system from Hamilton's widow and West. The government appointed Hamilton's son John as deputy postmaster general for the American colonies. He served until 1721. In 1730, the former lieutenant governor of Virginia became deputy postmaster general. The appointment of Benjamin Franklin became postmaster of Philadelphia in 1737. Franklin, only 31 years old at the time, was a successful printer and civic leader.

As deputy Franklin made important and lasting improvements to the colonial posts. To reorganize the service, he set out on an inspection tour of Post Offices from Virginia northward. New

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Dr., Ann Arbor, MI. Hrs: Fri 10-5 and Sat 10-4. Free admission and parking.

Nov 9, 7:00 pm Board Meeting - Set 2026 Calendar & Budget Review

Nov 16, Club Meeting & Program— In Person & Zoom -Club Election for 2026

DECEMBER

Dec 7, HolidayPEX Party Starts at 6:30pm at Church, Dinner Party at Church

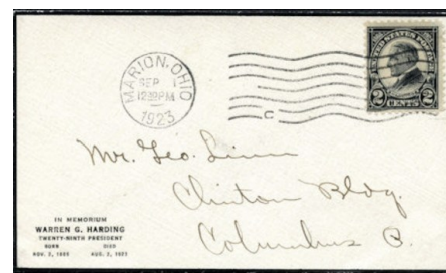
Dec 14, Board Meeting

Dec 21, NO MEETING.

ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS



On September 1, 1853, the Cape of Good Hope, a British colony at the southern tip of Africa, issued the world's first triangle stamps. These were also the first adhesive postage stamps issued in Africa.



This cover is considered to be America's first cacheted first day cover. It was produced by George W. Linn, the founder of *Linn's Stamp News*. A cachet in philately is any kind of illustration or printed information on a cover (envelope) that is not related to the cancellation. The 1923 2 cent Warren G. Harding stamp which was issued by the USPOD on September 1, 1923.

Philatelic articles wanted for
publication in
Dayton Stamp Club Newsletter.
Send articles to
Newsletter editor.

surveys were made, milestones were placed on principal roads, and new and shorter routes were laid out. For the first time, post riders carried mail at night to speed service between Philadelphia and New York. Mail between the colonies and Britain operated on a regular schedule with posted times. Due largely to Franklin's innovations and economizing, the North American post became self-sustaining and by 1760 generated a surplus.

In January 1765, the administration of British post offices in North America was divided into Northern and Southern Districts. A postage chart published in 1765 showed the number of post offices in the Northern District alone had increased to 64. Despite the extension of mail routes to Canada, service in the north continued to improve. In the Southern District, between bad roads and no roads at all, service lagged. In the absence of reliable overland routes a letter sent from New York to Charlestown or to the West Indies had to travel across to London and back again.

In 1764, Franklin sailed for England to serve as agent for Pennsylvania and several other colonies. He lived abroad for eleven years and left day-to-day management of postal affairs in the colonies to his deputy. Officials in London thought the expanding scope of the North American post demanded a greater degree of supervision. In 1772 on a new position was created as surveyor of post roads.

Hugh Finlay served as postmaster general of Quebec. He found a marked decline in service since Franklin's inspection 10 years earlier. The most glaring problem was flagrant evasion of the postal law. Late postage was to avoid payment of postage. He was dismayed to discover many American colonists bypassing the royal post by having their letters carried privately.

In 1774, after unrest in Boston, Franklin was dismissed for being too much of an American postal system. Goddard, a newspaperman and former postmaster, was organizing an American postal system and completely outside British control. The Constitutional Post required postmasters to hire reputable post riders. Each post rider swore an oath to secure the mail under lock and key.

By 1775, the network of Constitutional post offices rivaled the Crown's, with nearly 50 post offices stretching from Maine to Virginia. When George Washington took command of the Continental Army, a fully functional, alternative communications infrastructure was already in place. The Constitutional Post afforded security to colonial messages and provided a communication line that played a vital role in winning American independence.

- excerpts from U.S. Postal Service's Publication 100: History, The United States Postal Service; An American History, 250th Anniversary Edition
- Excerpts from West Suburban Stamp Club; Mayflower Minutes, July 2026.

POTATO TAX STAMPS OF 1935

On August 24, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Potato Control Law, which led to the creation of short-lived Potato stamps.

The Potato Control Act was an amendment of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA). The AAA had been passed in 1933 by President Roosevelt to help boost agricultural prices by decreasing surpluses.

The law went into effect on December 1, 1935. All the potatoes that were sold under the allotments were tax-free. On January 6, 1936, the US Supreme Court declared that the AAA was unconstitutional. The Potato Act was repealed on February 10. Few farmers used the stamps because they were only on sale for less than two months. Potato stamps were the only US stamps valued in an edible commodity.

- other higher denomination stamps were issued only in 1935-6



Plan Now: The Fourteenth Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposium



AMERICAN
PHILATELIC
SOCIETY



Smithsonian
National Postal Museum



AMERICAN PHILATELIC
RESEARCH LIBRARY

Join fellow researchers, collectors, and postal historians for the **Fourteenth Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposium**, taking place **December 10-11, 2026**, at the **Smithsonian National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C.**, with a virtual attendance option available via Zoom. Presented by the **American Philatelic Society, the American Philatelic Research Library, and the Smithsonian National Postal Museum**, this year's theme, "**Revisiting American Postal History**," will explore fascinating topics ranging from airship mail and the Railway Mail Service to territorial post offices, community development, and the movement for affordable postage.

In addition to presentations by leading researchers, attendees can enjoy workshops, museum tours, and opportunities to engage with fellow postal history enthusiasts. **Registration is free but required.**

To attend in person: Email NPMResearchChair@si.edu.

To attend online: Separate Zoom registration is required for each day:

Thursday, December 10: [Register via Zoom](#)

Friday, December 11: [Register via Zoom](#)

Also from the USPS: *Mailin' It!*: The Official USPS Podcast



Looking for a deeper look into the world of mail? Check out ***Mailin' It!***, the official podcast of the United States Postal Service. Released every two weeks, the podcast explores the history of the Postal Service, takes listeners behind the scenes of current innovations and fascinating investigations by Postal Inspectors, and offers a glimpse into the future of mail delivery in America.

Whether you're interested in postal operations, USPS products and services, or the stories that keep the nation's mail moving, *Mailin' It!* offers a unique perspective from inside one of America's most enduring institutions.

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Traditional Red Mailboxes in Denmark

e by <https://www.flickr.com/photos/txberiu/7875325192/in/faves-abaransk/> Tiberiu Ana - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/txberiu/7875325192/in/faves-abaransk/>, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=23291758>



Logo of Post Nord which has handled mail service in Denmark

postnord

Image by PostNord - Own work using: <http://www.postnord.com/sv/media/bildarkiv/logotyper/>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=95473853>

Prior central post office in Reykjavik, Iceland

mage from TommyBee - Own work, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2302323>



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Iceland mailbox



Image from Filias - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=21636422>

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Dayton Stamp Club Summer Picnic 2026



Thanks to Picnic Chair Rick Clark

Photographer Greg Brown