

Palm Beach Stamp Club

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Palm Beach Stamp Club
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American Philatelic Society
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NEWSLETTER

June 2026

June arrives in Florida with its familiar mix of bright mornings, warm breezes, and the first rumblings of the rainy season. It's the month when stamp albums are safest indoors, air-conditioners become our closest friends, and collectors across the state settle in for some quality time with their latest finds.

This June our club turns the spotlight toward one of the most recognizable faces ever to grace a U.S. postage stamp, Marilyn Monroe (1926-1962). When the Postal Service released her 32¢ Legends of Hollywood stamp on June 1, 1995, it became an instant favorite - not just for film buffs, but for collectors who appreciate the artistry and cultural resonance behind a truly iconic issue. Monroe's stamp, with its soft pastel tones and classic glamour, remains one of the most widely saved commemoratives of the decade.

As we move into the heart of summer, it feels fitting to celebrate a figure who embodied brightness, charisma, and timeless charm. June offers the perfect moment to revisit her place in philately. Here's to a month of discovery, conversation, and a little Hollywood sparkle in the Sunshine State.



Stamp of the Month

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June 2026

Father's Day arrives each June with a quiet kind of significance. It doesn't have the fireworks of July or pageantry of December, but it carries something deeper: the steady, everyday presence of the men who shaped our lives. For many of us in the stamp world, our earliest philatelic memories are tied to a father-figure who handed us a small envelope, a packet of hinges, or a shoebox filled with "duplicates" that felt like buried treasure.

Florida's postal history is full of these quiet fatherly moments. In the early 20th century, rural carriers in the Panhandle and central counties often knew every family on their route by name and collectors today still feel that thread. Many of us inherited albums that bear the handwriting of long-gone fathers. Others among us became the fathers who passed the hobby forward, teaching children and grandchildren how to spot a watermark or why a Florida territorial cover is worth getting excited about. To all - Happy Father's Day. May your albums be full, your covers well-preserved, and your stories passed on to the next generation of collectors.

This month we welcome new club member Donald Myers and returning member Steve Kennedy. Please make them feel welcome at our next meeting.

At our May 14th meeting Steve Kennedy made a phenomenal presentation with his album on stampless postal history; Richard Kaye announced our Fall stamp show at the Embassy Suites on October 31st; and Ms. Michelle Inman of USPS promised a mailing to improve turnout at the Fall show.

The American Philatelic Society's 2026 Boston show was attended by club member Richard Goildberg, who provided an overview at our May 28th meeting. Also, president Kaye announced that Steve Kennedy and Noel Vassallo will have philatelic displays at our Fall show. Keith Lichtman gave an interesting presentation on Washington / Franklin stamps.



June 6, Florida Stamp Dealers Assoc., Orlando Summer Stamp Show, Maitland Civic Center, 641 Maitland Ave. South. Maitland 32757, Saturday 10-3:30.

June 14, Second Sunday Stamp & Coin Show, Azan Shrine Center, Sunday 9:30-3:00, Melbourne 32935.

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Collecting Postwar Japan

Michael Rogers

Many collectors in the United States have long taken a keen interest in Japanese stamps and postal history. That interest began in earnest after World War II, when American servicemen stationed in Japan brought home vivid memories of the country and translated those experiences into philatelic collections.

During the U.S. occupation, Japan needed a functioning civilian postal system, yet its printing facilities had been largely destroyed. As a result, the first occupation-era stamps were produced under difficult conditions and often appeared crude by comparison with earlier issues. Specialists today enjoy studying these stamps, particularly the many minor plate varieties that exist. Broken characters, recut areas, and other subtle differences—especially noticeable to those who read Japanese—reward collectors who take the time to examine these issues closely.



A major symbolic change came in 1947, when the chrysanthemum imperial crest was removed from Japanese postage stamps. In the years that followed, designs shifted away from the military themes that had dominated prewar issues and instead began to highlight Japanese culture, natural beauty, and national aspirations.

For the Japanese people themselves, the immediate postwar years were consumed with rebuilding their country. Few had the time or resources to pursue stamp collecting, and even fewer could afford to set aside mint definitives that remained on sale for years. American servicemen, however, purchased these stamps in quantity and were later rewarded for their foresight. By 1956, the Japanese economy had strengthened significantly, and the occupation formally ended.

With rare exceptions, modern postwar Japanese stamps remain affordable. Collectors can expand their holdings in countless ways by going beyond a single mint stamp or souvenir sheet for each issue. Used examples are often more challenging to locate than mint ones, especially those bearing clear town cancellations rather than parcel-post roller marks. Building a collection of Japanese first-day covers can also be demanding. While covers from 1956 onward are readily available, earlier FDCs can be surprisingly elusive. Except for issues produced before 1890, Japanese philately is generally straightforward, and relatively few forgeries exist. For anyone interested in deepening their knowledge, membership in the International Society for Japanese Philately offers a wealth of resources and insight.

Reference: Reprinted in part from Linn's Stamp News, September 18, 2000

Covers from the Ill-Fated U.S.S. Sturtevant

Juan L. Riera



The U.S.S. *Sturtevant* (DD-240), a Clemson-class destroyer named for naval aviator Albert D. Sturtevant, entered the world of naval service in the quiet that followed World War I. Laid down less than two weeks after the Armistice, she was launched on 29 July 1920 and commissioned that September.

In her first years, the *Sturtevant* operated in the Adriatic, the eastern Mediterranean, and the

Black Sea. Her duties ranged from routine patrols to scouting Russian ports for the American Relief Administration, which was coordinating humanitarian aid during the Russian famine. After returning home, she became flagship of Division 41, Squadron 14 of the Scouting Fleet. This assignment carried her up and down the U.S. East Coast, into the Caribbean, and across the Pacific for fleet exercises near Oahu. By late 1930 she was based in Charleston, and in January 1931 she steamed to Philadelphia to be decommissioned.

The *Sturtevant* returned to service on 9 March 1932 and soon reported to Coco Solo in the Panama Canal Zone. As part of the Special Service Squadron, she patrolled the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, frequently supporting U.S. Marine operations in Nicaragua, Haiti, Cuba, and elsewhere in Latin America. She shifted to Norfolk in 1934, then briefly joined the Pacific Battle Force in early 1935 before being decommissioned once again.

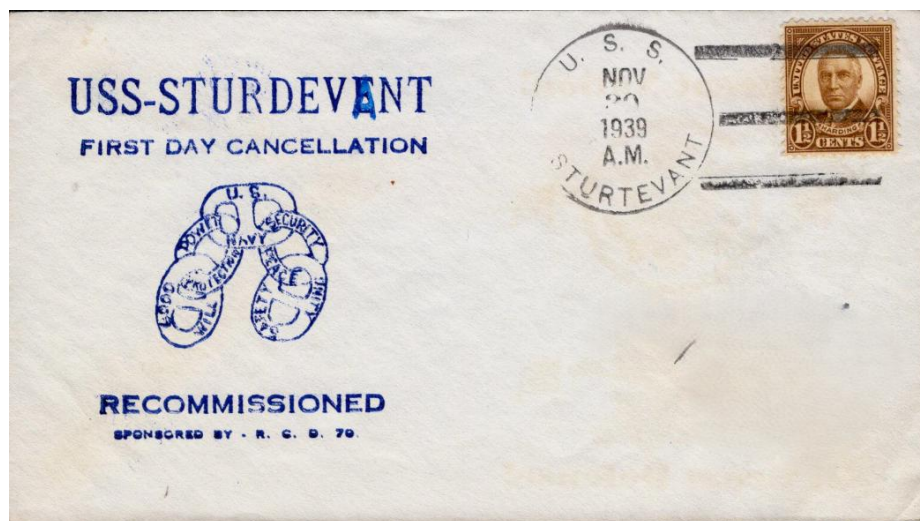
War clouds in Europe brought her back a third time. Recommissioned on 26 September 1939, the destroyer was assigned to Neutrality Patrols and convoy escort duty. After shepherding a convoy from New York to the Canal Zone, she joined the Caribbean Sea Frontier, screening merchant ships moving between the region's ports.

On 26 April 1942, the *Sturtevant* departed Key West with a convoy. Only hours later, a violent explosion lifted her stern out of the water. Believing they were under submarine attack, the crew launched depth-charge countermeasures. Tragically, these detonations triggered a second and then a third explosion.

The final blast tore the keel apart. The destroyer broke in two. Her stern sank almost immediately; the bow remained afloat for several hours before slipping beneath the surface. The wreck came to rest in 60 feet of water, roughly eight miles north of the Marquesas Keys. Fifteen sailors were lost.

Investigators later determined that the *Sturtevant* had unknowingly entered an American-laid minefield, one her crew had never been warned about. The destroyer was officially struck from the Naval Vessel Register on 8 May 1942. Today, the remains of the *Sturtevant* lie in two pieces on the seabed, a quiet memorial to a ship that served across two oceans, three decades, and three commissions — only to be claimed by a tragic error in the fog of war.

Cover attachments: A 1933 cover; and a 1939 cover (with misspelled cachet), both cancelled onboard the USS *Sturtevant*.



The Barefoot Mailman

Keith Lichtman

Before 1884, the stretch of coastline between what is now Palm Beach County and Miami—sixty-eight miles of scrub, sand, and wilderness—had no direct mail service. This was still untamed country: Florida panthers and black bears roamed the hammocks, and the inlets were thick with alligators. Yet South Florida was beginning to attract a steady stream of pioneers, homesteaders, and settlers who needed reliable communication with the outside world.

To serve them, the United States Post Office Department extended Star Route 6451 southward from Jupiter to Miami in 1884. Star Routes, created in 1845, were mail routes operated by private contractors rather than postal employees. Along this new coastal route, the contractors became known as “beach walkists”—and eventually, more famously, as the Barefoot Mailmen. The round trip from Palm Beach to Miami covered 136 miles—about 80 on foot and 56 by boat—and took six days to complete:

Monday: The carrier left Palm Beach by boat, crossing the Lake Worth Lagoon and walked the beach to the Orange Grove House of Refuge in today’s Delray Beach.

Tuesday: He continued down the beach to the Fort Lauderdale House of Refuge.

Wednesday: He traveled by boat down the New River to its inlet, then walked the beach to Baker’s Haulover and continued by boat down Biscayne Bay to Miami.

Thursday-Saturday: The return trip north, arriving back in Palm Beach on Saturday.

Sunday: A day of rest before starting again.

The first contract was awarded in January 1885 to retired Chicago newspaper--man Edward Ruthven Bradley, who alternated weekly trips with his son Louie for nearly two years.

The legendary third carrier was James Ed Hamilton. But, on October 11, 1887, he disappeared while trying to cross the Hillsboro Inlet.



The small skiff normally hidden on the north bank was missing, so Hamilton left his mail sack and clothing behind and swam across to retrieve it. He was never seen again. Given the inlet's heavy alligator population, it is widely believed he drowned or was taken by alligators.

At least fifteen men served along this route, and it was here—walking mile after mile of open beach—that the image of the Barefoot Mailman was born. Carriers often removed their shoes and shirts, stuffing them into their haversacks alongside the canvas mail sack, to make the long sandy trek more bearable.

The era of the Barefoot Mailmen ended in January 1893 with the construction of a rock road from Lantana (eight miles south of Palm Beach) to Lemon City (six miles north of Miami), finally providing a land route for mail service.

A bronze statue at the Hillsboro Lighthouse now commemorates James Hamilton and the Barefoot Mailmen, and additional markers along the route preserve their story. The term “Barefoot Mailman” itself did not appear until 1939, when former carrier Charles William Pierce used it in correspondence with artist Stevan Dohanos, who was painting murals of Hamilton for the West Palm Beach Post Office. The phrase first appeared in print in *The Palm Beach Post* in 1940.



References:

- <https://www.westpalmbeach.com/the-barefoot-mailman/>
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Tyrannosaurus rex

Pat Hensley



In 2019, the United States Postal Service issued a striking set of First-Class (55¢) Forever stamps celebrating *Tyrannosaurus rex* (Scott #5410–13). Released alongside the opening of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History’s new T. rex exhibit, the four-stamp set showcases dynamic illustrations by scientist and paleo-artist Julius T. Csotonyi. What makes these stamps truly stand out is their lenticular printing. When tilted, each image shifts—revealing the dinosaur’s skeleton beneath its skin.

This holographic effect was a first for a U.S. stamp issue and immediately caught the attention of collectors and dinosaur fans alike. The Postal Service designed the set to spark interest in dinosaurs, science, and museum learning. Because T. rex appeals to both children and adults, the stamps brought a sense of fun and discovery to everyday mail.

Tyrannosaurus rex itself remains one of the most iconic dinosaurs ever discovered. Living about 66 million years ago during the Late Cretaceous Period, T. rex was among the largest carnivores to walk the earth—stretching up to 40 feet long and weighing several tons. With massive legs, bone-crushing jaws, and serrated teeth, it was built for power, even if its famously tiny arms added a touch of mystery to its anatomy.

The first T. rex fossils were uncovered in the early 1900s by legendary fossil hunter Barnum Brown in Montana and other western states. In 1905, paleontologist Henry Fairfield Osborn officially named the species *Tyrannosaurus rex*, or “king of the tyrant lizards.” The discovery transformed scientific understanding of large predatory dinosaurs and cemented T. rex as a cultural icon.

Each year, dinosaur enthusiasts celebrate Dinosaur Day on June 1st. Museums, schools, and libraries host exhibits, activities, and science programs that highlight prehistoric life. Unsurprisingly, T. rex remains the star attraction—its size, power, and enduring mystique continue to fascinate audiences of all ages. Do you have these dinosaur stamps in your collection?

References:

United States Postal Service; Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History; National Geographic Kids – Tyrannosaurus Rex Facts; <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2019/0829-fearsome-dinosaur-immortalized-on-forever-stamps.htm>; <https://www.mysticstamp.com/5410-13-2019-first-class-forever-stamps-tyrannosaurus-rex/>; <https://nationaltoday.com/dinosaur-day/>

Benjamin Franklin

Michael Swope

Few figures in American history have left a deeper imprint on the nation's postal system than Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790). Long before his signature adorned the Declaration of Independence, Franklin was shaping the communications network that would bind the colonies together — a legacy that philatelists continue to celebrate through the many stamps bearing his image.

Franklin's postal career began early. In 1737, the city of Philadelphia appointed him postmaster, a role that helped expand the reach of his newspaper and sharpened his understanding of the colonial mail system. His administrative talent soon propelled him to higher office: in 1753 he became joint deputy postmaster for the colonies, a position he held for more than two decades.

When the Revolutionary crisis erupted, Franklin's expertise became indispensable. In July 1775, the Second Continental Congress created the position of Postmaster General, electing Franklin as the first to hold the office. Under his leadership, the wartime postal system carried critical intelligence between Congress and the Continental Army. This system — improvised under the pressures of war — became the foundation of the modern United States Postal Service. Franklin served until November 1776, when he departed for France on a diplomatic mission.



Shown at left is an Art Craft cacheted First Day cover affixed with the 13¢ Franklin Centennial stamp, Scott #1690. Also affixed are the 1/2¢ Franklin Liberty stamp, Scott #1030 and the 4¢ American Credo Issue with Benjamin Franklin's quote "Fear to do ill, and you need not fear nought else", Scott #1140. The commemorative cover was cancelled 50 years ago on June 1, 1976.

Ref: Cover from Author's collection; National Postal Museum