

Palm Beach Stamp Club

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NEWSLETTER

January 2026



Palm Beach Stamp Club
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As we turn the page to a new year, our shared passion for stamps continues to connect us across time, place, and history. Each issue, cancellation, and cover tells a story — and 2026 promises to bring many more stories worth preserving.

Philately is more than collecting, it is a way of keeping history alive. Whether you're chasing the latest issue or uncovering forgotten postal gems, may this year bring discoveries that inspire curiosity and joy. Here's to a year of stamps, stories, and shared enthusiasm. Happy New Year, and happy collecting!

On a sad note, we just learned of the passing of Palm Beach Stamp Club contributing author, Walter Koster. Wally was an enthusiastic collector and published author on Canadian philately. His perspective will be missed, and our condolences go out to his family.

Stamp of the Month - On January 3, 1911, America issued its first Postal Savings stamps. The Postal Savings System was established to serve small investors living in rural communities. Under the program, lower and middle-income individuals were able to deposit funds at their local post office.



Scott # PS1

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January 2026

2025 was a year of challenge, change and growth. We changed our club's name, our meeting location (twice); created a Facebook page; added several new members; started a public library outreach program; established a relationship with the United States Postal Service in West Palm Beach; and had a successful Fall stamp show at a new location - the Embassy Suites Hotel.

In 2026, because of popular demand, we are changing our monthly meeting days to the second and fourth Thursdays. Meetings will continue to be held at 1:00 p.m. in the Kingdom Buffet Restaurant on Lake Worth Road, just east of Military Trail. We also plan to continue our library outreach presentations – we are scheduled at the Mandel Public Library, 411 Clematis Street, West Palm Beach on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 12 Noon.

At our December 23rd meeting, Keith Lichtman presented information on stamp catalogues and stamp valuing, and Fritz Angst will make a presentation on Canadian Revenue stamps at our first Thursday meeting on January 8th. In January, you will

be asked to vote for the best 2025 philatelic articles that appeared in our newsletter.

The annual luncheon will also be held at the Kingdom Buffet on Thursday, January 22nd from 12 Noon to 2:00 p.m., where the "Articles of Distinction" awards will be presented.

There are no changes in club officers for 2026. Our Treasurer, Harry Clifford, is collecting dues for next year. President Richard Kaye and Finance Director Robert Mendelsohn will be calling everyone on the club roster to remind them to pay their dues and that we're changing our meeting day. We look forward to another good year for the club! Our Spring stamp show is March 21st



Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition at the Sarasota Sahib Shrine Center, 600 North Beneva Road, Sarasota., 34232. January 16th - 18th, 2026, Friday - Sunday 10A - 5:30P. An American Philatelic Society "World Series of Philately" event.

January 11th, Second Sunday Stamp & Coin Show at the Azan Shrine Center, Sunday 9:30-3:00, Melbourne, 32935.

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Mailomat

Keith Lichtman

At a recent club meeting I bought a small lot of metered mail. This is not something I usually collect but there was a postcard in the lot that caught my eye. The back of the card, in red ink, read 'mailed via the Mailomat, U.S. Post Office Department Exhibit, World Trade Fair, New York Coliseum May 4 - 14' shown in Figure 1. The front of the advertising card (Figure 2) shows a man either putting coins in the machine or setting the machine and putting an envelope into it.

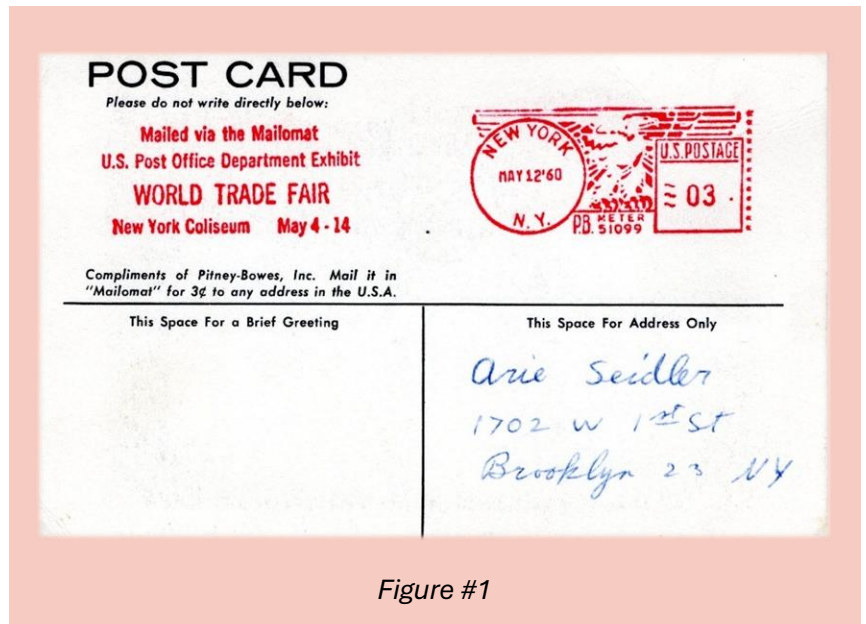


Figure #1



Figure #2

I wanted to know more about Mailomat, so I did some digging on the internet. In the late 1930's the Post Office Department gave Pitney-Bowes approval to test and develop a coin operated, self-service postage meter for use in post office lobbies, railroad stations and other areas where postal customers could easily mail their letters. The self-standing Mailomats were an enclosed coin operated postage meter mounted on a U.S. mailbox.

Unveiled in Manhattan, New York's General Post Office on May 17, 1939, a First Day envelope is shown in Figure 3. The Mailomat is about the size of a telephone booth (for those too young to know what a telephone booth is, see Figure 4). You put money in one slot, dial in the postage value and insert your letter. Mailomat stamped, postmarked and deposited your mail in its mailbox to await collection. For different sized

envelopes there was a dial to indicate the size and Mailomat displayed the correct amount needed to pay. These machines were available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, saving people from waiting in long lines, especially during rush times.

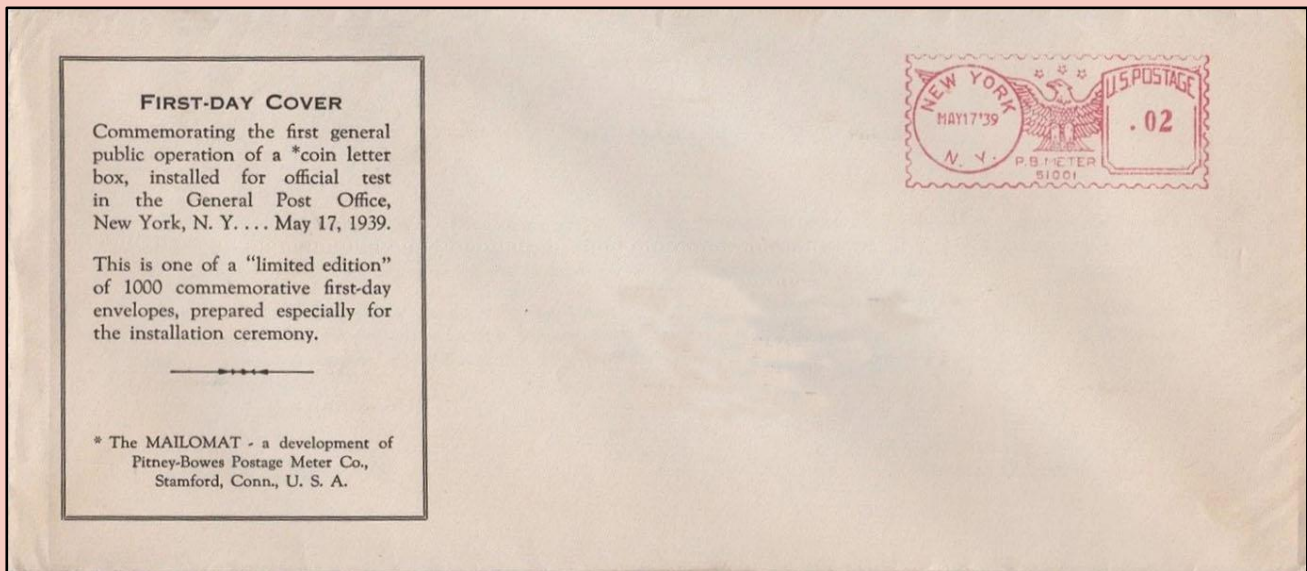


Figure #3

Mailomat was introduced to Canada in 1938, in the lobby of the Toronto Post Office, but was not successful. Pitney-Bowes promoted the Mailomat to the Canada Post Office again in 1944, after overcoming the previously encountered difficulties. Pitney-Bowes advertised it as a replacement for scarce manpower during the war. Canada installed the test machine in Ottawa on February 3, 1944, and a limited edition of 1,000 commemorative, first day covers were produced for the installation ceremony.

The Canadian Post Office was dissatisfied with Mailomat because of high maintenance costs and low sales (accounting for less than 2% of revenue). Mailomat was removed from Canadian service in August 1953. Mailomat machines were gradually removed from service in the United States between 1960 and 1970 due to diminished demand.



Figure #4

References

- James Steckley. *The Mailomat*, Nevada Stamp Study Group https://renostamp.org/post_boy/articles/2022/10-The-20Mailomat%20-%20James%20Steckley.pdf
- Time, *Manufacturing: Mailomat*, May 25, 1939, <https://time.com/archive/6864513/manufacturing-mailomat/>
- Postal History Corner, *Canadian Postal and Philatelic History, The Mailomat, The Story of the Mailomat*, July 5, 2014, www.postalhistorycorner.blogspot.com
- Wikibooks, *United States Postage Meter Stamp Catalog/GROUP PV – Self-service variable-rate stamp vending machine* franks, *GROUP PV – Self-service variable-rate stamp vending machine* franks, https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/United_States_Postage_Meter_Stamp_Catalog/GROUP_PV_%E2%80%93_Self-service_variable-rate_stamp_vending_machine_franks
- Black Diamond History, *A Step Back in Time: A Penny for Your Thoughts*, JoAnne Matsumura Maple Valley Historical Society, March 2024
- [HTTPS://BLACKDIAMONDHISTORY.WORDPRESS.COM/2024/03/25/A-STEP-BACK-IN-TIME-A-PENNY-FOR-YOUR-THOUGHTS/](https://blackdiamondhistory.wordpress.com/2024/03/25/a-step-back-in-time-a-penny-for-your-thoughts/)
- Canadian Meter Stamp Newsletter, *The “Mailomat” An Early Mechanized Mailing System 1944 – 1953* https://www.postalhistorycanada.net/php/StudyGroups/Meter/Journal/1998_55.pdf

End Note: Figures 5 and 6 are the front and back of another Mailomat first day advertising card for the Chicago post office, dated April 23, 1942.

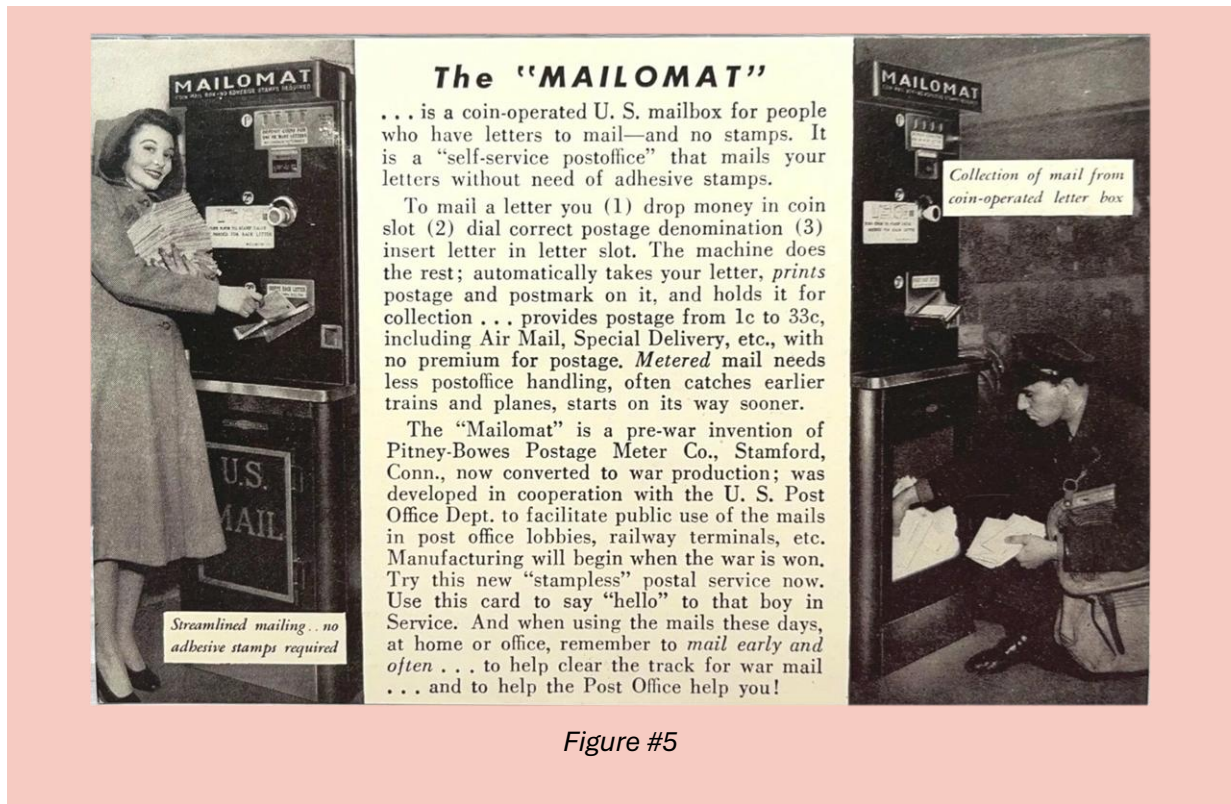


Figure #5

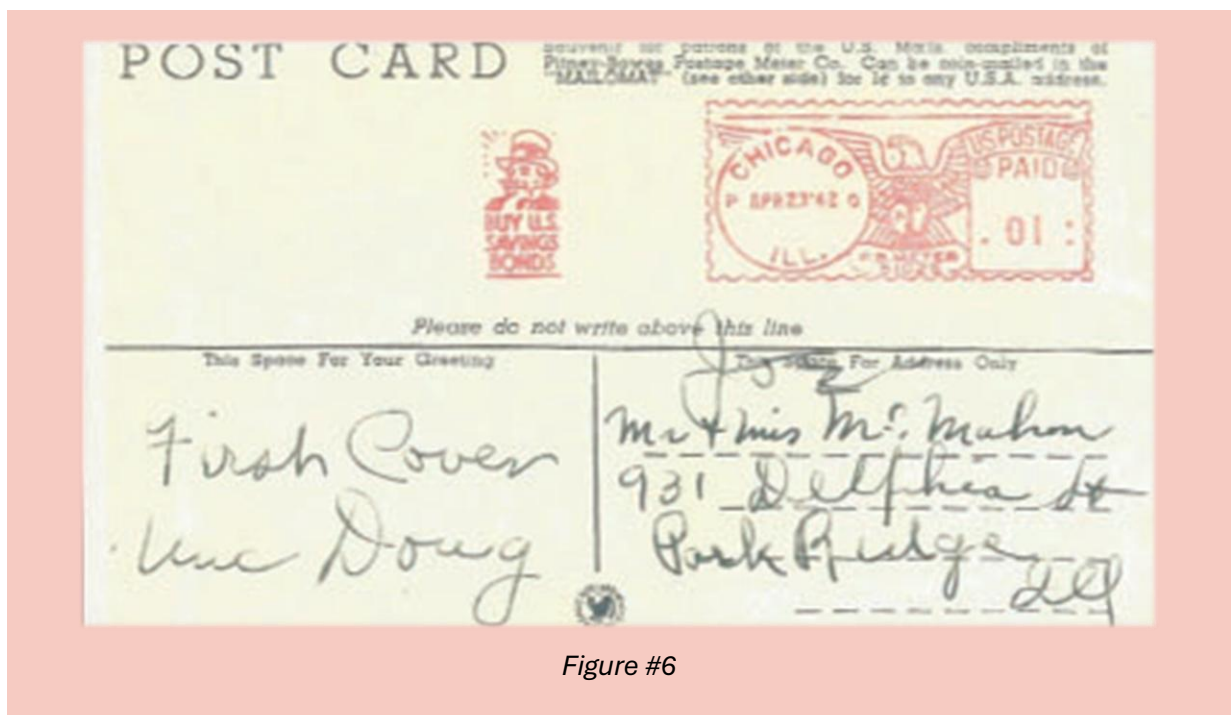


Figure #6

Prohibition Enforcement

Pat Hensley

Every year, on January 16th, Prohibition Day is remembered.

The Prohibition Enforced postage stamp (Scott #3184c) was released on May 28, 1998, in Chicago as part of the “Celebrate the Century” series. This series highlighted important events from each decade of the 1900s. This “Roaring Twenties” sub-series postage stamp shows a police officer pouring alcohol down a drain. The picture represents the start of Prohibition, a time when making or selling alcohol was illegal in the United States.



Prohibition began on January 17, 1920, after the 18th Amendment was passed. Many people believed banning alcohol would help reduce crime and improve families' lives. But instead, it created new problems. Illegal bars called “speakeasies” became common, and people found secret ways to make and buy alcohol. Organized crime groups also grew stronger by selling alcohol illegally. Prohibition ended on December 5, 1933.

The Prohibition Enforced postage stamp helps remind us of this unusual time in American history. By showing law enforcement in action, the stamp teaches us how the government tried to control alcohol use. Today, the stamp is popular with collectors because it captures an important moment from the 1920s and is part of a well-known stamp series.



References:

United States Postal Service, *Celebrate the Century: 1920s Stamp Series*

National Archives, “Prohibition: The 18th Amendment”

Smithsonian National Postal Museum, *Celebrate the Century Collection*

<https://nationaltoday.com/prohibition-remembrance-day/>

The Straw Post Office

Keith Lichtman / Michael Swope

In 1999, the village of Corrales, New Mexico, made a bold choice. Instead of building its new Post Office with the usual concrete blocks and steel beams, the community embraced an ancient yet unconventional material: straw. More than 900 bales were stacked, plastered, and sealed into the walls, creating one of the few federal buildings in the country insulated by nature itself. At the time, the idea raised eyebrows. Straw-bale construction had been used in homes and experimental projects, but a Post Office — a symbol of permanence and federal authority — was something else entirely.

Born of a vision, the project was part of a growing movement in the Southwest to explore sustainable architecture. Straw-bale walls, often two feet thick, provide exceptional insulation. In the desert climate of New Mexico, where summer heat can be relentless and winter nights dip below freezing, the Post Office became a model of energy efficiency. Its walls kept the interior cool in July and warm in January, reducing the need for costly heating and cooling. Beyond practicality, the building carried symbolism. Corrales has long been a community that values tradition, land, and innovation. By choosing straw, the town demonstrated that sustainability wasn't just a buzzword — it was a way of life.

More than two decades later, the Corrales Post Office still stands strong. Customers line up for stamps and packages beneath walls that quietly defy expectations. The building has weathered storms, heat waves, and the passage of time, proving that natural materials can be as durable as their industrial counterparts. The Post Office's success also helped legitimize straw-bale construction in the eyes of skeptics. Architects and builders point to Corrales as evidence that alternative materials can meet federal standards and serve communities reliably.

Today, the Corrales Post Office is more than a place to send mail. It's a living landmark — a proud testament to ingenuity, resilience, and the power of thinking differently. For locals, it's a reminder that their town once dared to innovate. For visitors, it's a story worth telling - that in a small New Mexico village, a federal building was built from straw, and it worked.



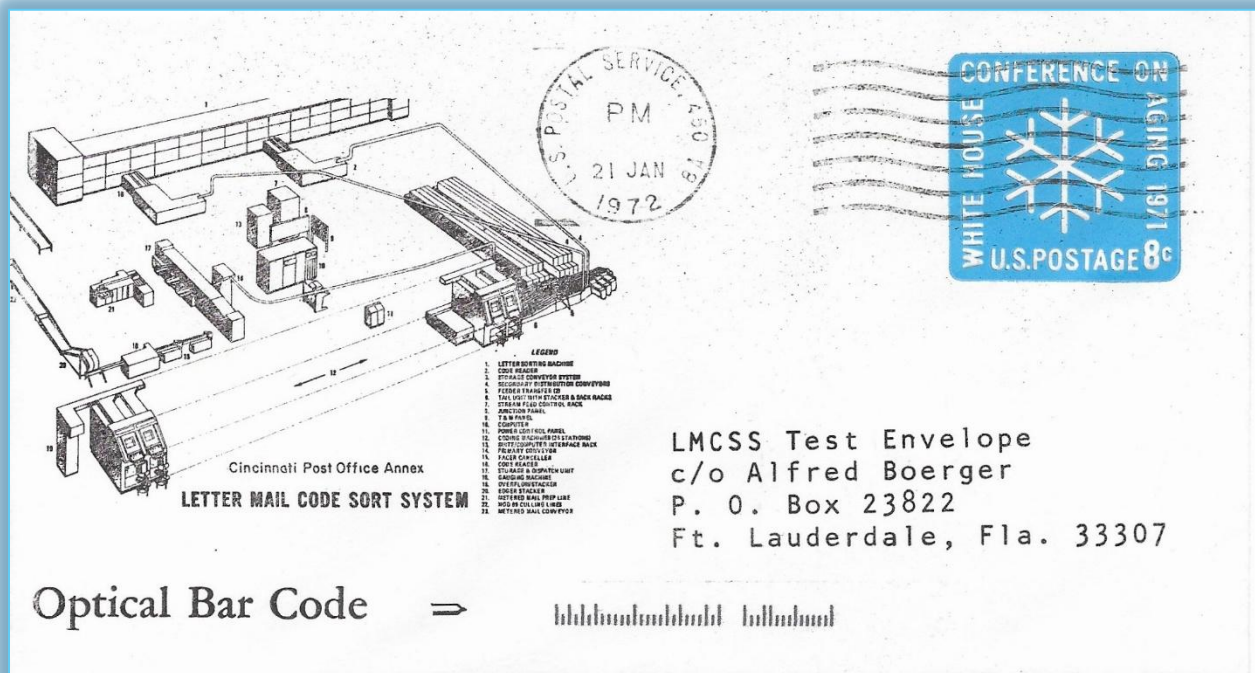
*United States Post Office
Corrales, New Mexico*

*Interior "Peek Window"
See the Straw*



Test Envelope

Michael Swope



Featured above is a “test envelope” that was used in the 1972 United States Postal Service’s evaluation of the “Letter Mail Code Sort System” (LMCSS) prototype, which had been installed in the Cincinnati Post Office Annex. The envelope (Scott #U564) is the 8¢, light blue, 1971 White House Aging Conference Issue and is imprinted with the Cincinnati, Ohio, Post Office Annex cachet. The cancellation is “U.S. Postal Service, 450, 21 JAN 1972”, mailed to Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

On November 8, 1972, the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) provided a preliminary evaluation of the LMCSS, reading in part: “Current mail-processing systems rely on the read-sort method, which may be either a manual or a combination manual-machine system. In either operation, the address on the envelope is read each time the letter is sorted until final distribution. The number of times an address is read is 3.5 times per letter. LMCSS uses a code-sort method, in which addresses are translated into machine-readable code that is printed on the envelope by the first reader, thus eliminating the need to be read again.” The GAO review was blunt, finding that (1) A complete LMCSS system had not been installed by promised date; (2) The partial LMCSS system did not meet Postal Performance Standards; and (3) The partial LMCSS system was more costly than the existing letter mail-sorting system.

Current optical reader-sorters are much improved over this early version.

Ref: Cover from Author’s Collection; Government Accounting Office, Report # B114874, Nov. 8, 1972