Birmingham – Ferndale Stamp Club Newsletter



October 2026

October brings crisp air, bright maples, and a perfect moment to celebrate one of Michigan's greatest natural treasures. On October 15, 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the legislation that created Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, the first national lakeshore in the United States. Stretching along the wild southern shore of Lake Superior—still the world's largest freshwater lake by surface area—Pictured Rocks remains one of the most dramatic landscapes in the Upper Peninsula.



Scott #4047

This month, we highlight the beauty and heritage of that lakeshore through Scott #4047, the 2006 Lake Superior "Wonders of America" postage stamp. It reminds us how philately captures not only images, but the stories and landscapes that define Michigan's identity. Here's to an October filled with good conversation, colorful covers, and the enduring spirit of our Great Lakes.

Our September meetings were lively with very good auction lots offered. Most business issues dealt with plans for our upcoming stamp show at St. Ronald's and our banquet at Infinity Hall.

Club Meetings –

October 6th, 6:00 p.m. at the NEXT Senior Center, Birmingham. October 20th is our annual club banquet at Infinity Hall & Sidebar in Fraser, 6 p.m.

Upcoming Events –

October 2nd and 3rd, FERNPEX 2026, St. Ronald's Catholic Church Hall, 17701 Fifteen Mile Road, Clinton Township, 48035. Opens 10 am on Fri/Sat.

October 9th & 10th, Kalamazoo Stamp Club Show at Kalamazoo Expo Center, 2900 Lake Street, Kalamazoo, 49048.

October 16th &17th, Motor City Stamp Club Show at Sokol Cultural Center, 23600 W. Warren, Dearborn Heights, 48127

October 24th, Modern Stamps Public Auction #541 at their Oak Park facility, Saturday at 12N.

In This Issue

Page 2 – Smoky Mountain Stamp, Pat Hensley
Page 3 – Children's Free Hospital, Michael Swope

Great Smoky Mountains Postage Stamp

Pat Hensley



Scott 749

October is a fitting time to revisit one of the highlights of the 1934 National Parks Year Issue: the ten-cent Great Smoky Mountains postage stamp (Scott 749), issued on October 8, 1934, in Washington, D.C. It was the highest denomination in the series and marked a milestone in U.S. stamp design.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park had only recently been established, with President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing the legislation on June 15, 1934. The park's creation was part of a much longer story that began in 1908, when President Theodore Roosevelt called for federal stewardship of America's natural resources. Stephen Mather and Horace Albright championed the idea of a unified national-park agency, building support from railroads, automobile companies, conservation groups, and other influential figures. Their efforts led to the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916, establishing the NPS under the Department of the Interior.

Mather understood the value of publicity and encouraged the Post Office to feature national parks on stamps. Roosevelt, an enthusiastic collector, supported the idea. With Interior Secretary Harold Ickes declaring 1934 National Park Year, Roosevelt, Ickes, and Postmaster General James Farley approved a ten-stamp series showcasing Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Mount Rainier, Mesa Verde, Yellowstone, Crater Lake, Acadia, Zion, Glacier, and the Great Smoky Mountains.

NPS Director Arno B. Cammerer asked chief photographer George Grant to select images for the engravers, and in just six months the full set was completed. Each stamp used a single color, with white lettering, and all engravings were produced by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Scott 749 holds a special distinction as the first U.S. stamp designed by a woman, Esther Richards. A special one-sheet edition was later sold in Asheville, North Carolina, in 1937, adding another point of interest for collectors.

This October, as we celebrate National Stamp Collecting Month, Scott 749 offers a reminder of how philately and America's natural heritage have long been intertwined.

Ref: Reprinted in part from Cresthaven Stamp Club News, Vol. 9, No.9, September 2022
https://www.whitehousehistory.org/stamps-parks-and-a-president
https://www.mysticstamp.com/Products/United-States/749/USA/

Children's Free Hospital

Michael Swope



Featured here is a (c.) 1905 Excelsior (Berlin) postcard, published by the Detroit News Company, that captures the original Detroit Children's Free Hospital, once located at the northeast corner of Farnsworth and St. Antoine streets. Founded in 1886 through the leadership of Mary L'Hommedieu Ledyard, the hospital was created to care for Detroit's poorest children "absolutely without cost," as the *Detroit Free Press* wrote at the time.

The hospital first operated inside Harper Hospital, with volunteer doctors and student nurses. As demand grew, philanthropist Hiram Walker donated $125,000—over $4 million today—to build a dedicated facility. Designed by the Boston firm Rantoul & Andrews, the new Roman-brick, five-story hospital opened on June 16, 1896. Its wings housed boys and girls separately, and its many windows reflected the era's belief in fresh air as a cure.

For decades, the building stood as a symbol of Detroit's commitment to children's health. But by the 1960s, medical advances outpaced the old structure. A new Children's Hospital was built nearby, and the original building was demolished in 1971.

Today, postcards like this example preserve the memory of a landmark that shaped pediatric care in Detroit and remains a meaningful piece of Michigan postal history. The postcard bears the 1¢ blue-green Franklin postage stamp, Scott #300 and was cancelled at Detroit on October 9, 1907.



Ref: Postcard from Author's collection; Historic Detroit.org