

Hinges & Tongs

In this Issue:

August - October, 2021

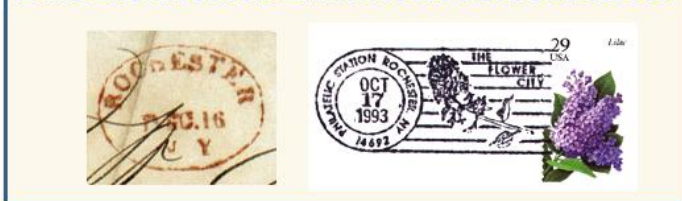


Welcome Back
RPA Meeting News • Local Shows • Lighthouse Stamps
Opinion Column: The Stamp Show That Never Was
New US Acquisitions • ROTO-GAGE • Samuel Randall
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The Rochester Philatelic Association, PO Box 10206 Brighton Station, Rochester, NY 14610 <http://www.rpastamps.org>

The Rochester Philatelic Association



.. welcomes back its members!

It is time to meet again in person! As of the time of this publication we plan to begin meeting in-person at the JCC on our regular schedule, the second and fourth Thursdays of each month from September through June, except for November and December when we only meet the first Thursday. Doors open at 7 PM with the meeting beginning around 7:30 PM.

Masks will be required to enter the building and wear during the meetings. You will need to sign in at the main entrance in the back of the building per usual, mentioning you are visiting the stamp club. We expect to be able to use Room A as before where our storage cabinets are located, but we may be bumped to Room B next door as needed because right now the room is filled with the JCC's excess gym equipment! Confirm our room location when you check in. If social distancing is mandated by the facility, the room will be configured with all chairs in the middle of the room with tables on the outer perimeter for our silent auctions. Hand sanitizer should be available in our room.

You should expect that meeting plans may change and the JCC's situation could also change. Consult the RPA web site before heading to a meeting. The main page marquee will note if the night's meeting has been cancelled. You can call a fellow RPA member who has web access if you do not.

On a trial basis we will broadcast RPA meetings live via Zoom beginning ~7:30 PM each meeting night for those unable to attend in person. Our club computer should be able to pull this off as long as the JCC Wi-Fi connection works. Log in details can be found on

the Meeting Schedule page of our web site at <http://www.rpastamps.org/rpa-meetingschedule.html> .

The RPA Board has waived dues for the 2020-2021 season, which were not requested last September. For those that did pay those monies will be credited ahead. By the time you read this you should have received a letter asking you to update your membership information on file and pay 2021-2022 dues. Send the form and check payment as early as possible, as we would like to update as much as possible before our first meeting takes place. Please note that we are transitioning to a new treasurer and it may take a bit longer to process club payments.

Last season was to be a full club officer election year, but the pandemic made that impossible. The RPA Board has asked that members approve a resolution by majority vote to extend all existing terms to cover this upcoming season. Your vote can be cast using the form to be returned with dues. Any open positions will be appointed by the Board. The Board has also approved a change to the membership year that will now run Jan-Dec instead of July-June. How this will effect elections and dues will be discussed during our first in-person meeting. This revision allows the Board to call new elections this December or later in June as they decide, and also consider whether dues paid for our former 2021-22 season will be extended past July through to December 2022. Both of these would get us on track for calendar-year run dues and elections.

Regards to all, your RPA Officers

RPA Officers (July 2019-June 2021)

President- Jack Rosenstein
Vice President- John Flannery III
Treasurer- Dave Robinson
Recording Secretary- John Kellas III

Board of Governors

Chuck Schultz (to June 30, 2021)
Paul Brach (to June 30, 2022)
TBA (to June 30, 2023)
Larry Rausch (Immediate Past President)

RPA Meeting News

As noted on page 1, we are expecting to host our full slate of meetings this fall and we hope to do this both in person at the JCC in Brighton and via Zoom. The links to join our meetings are posted on our [meetings website page](#).

Upcoming RPA meetings:

Sept 9th Program: Member Self-Confessions: How I Philatelically Survived the Pandemic

Sept 23rd Program: Minerals on Stamps
Presenter: Fred Haynes

Oct 14th Program: Eagles on United States Covers
Presenter: Luis Greiff Jr.

Oct 28th Program: Stamps and Color
Presenter: Tom Fortunato

Nov.11th Program: Manchukuo in Philately, A Personal Perspective
Presenter: John Kellas III

Dec 9th Program: Philatelic Strip Search Sound Intriguing? Come find out!

Upcoming Collecting Events in Our Region

We strongly encourage you to check with the named contacts before attending any of the shows listed here. COVID concerns have forced cancellation of other events and may affect some of these events also.

Sep 12 Syracuse Stamp Show
Holiday Inn & Suites (formerly the Maplewood Inn), 400 7th North Street, Liverpool, NY (NY Thruway Exit 36, Route I-81 South to Exit 25) Hours: 10-4:30. Bourse.
Contact: David Houseman, 315-437-4901,
cnydarthgrandpa1916@twcny.rr.com

Sep 26 Depew 4th Sunday Stamp Show
Polish Falcon Hall, 445 Columbia Avenue.
Hours: 10–3. Bourse.
Contact: Bill Witschard, 716-826-1242,
billwits@aol.com

Oct 2 Olean OLEPEX Stamp Show
Sponsored by the Olean Stamp Club. Bethany Lutheran Church, 6 Leo Moss Drive.
Hours: 10-4. Bourse. 7 dealers.
Contact: Ron Yeager, 814-362-4471, cry@atlanticbb.net

Oct 14-17 Virtual Show Royal 2021 Royale
Sponsored by the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada and hosted by CANPEX. Website: <http://www.canpex.ca>
Contact: info@canpex.ca

Oct 24 Depew 4th Sunday Stamp Show, Polish Falcon Hall, 445 Columbia Avenue. Hours: 10–3. Bourse.
Contact: Bill Witschard, 716-826-1242, billwits@aol.com

Nov 12-13 Big Flats Stamp and Coin Show
Sponsored by the Elmira Stamp Club and Corning Coin Club. American Legion Post, 45 South Olcott Rd, I-86 at exit 49. Hours: 10-6, 10-5. Bourse.
Contact: Don Dolan, 607-962-4701, ddolanjr@stny.rr.com

Nov 14 Syracuse Stamp Show
Holiday Inn & Suites (formerly the Maplewood Inn), 400 7th North Street, Liverpool, NY (NY Thruway Exit 36, Route I-81 South to Exit 25) Hours: 10-4:30. Bourse.
Contact: David Houseman, 315-437-4901,
cnydarthgrandpa1916@twcny.rr.com

Nov 28 Depew 4th Sunday Stamp Show
Polish Falcon Hall, 445 Columbia Avenue.
Hours: 10–3. Bourse.
Contact: Bill Witschard, 716-826-1242, billwits@aol.com



Yup, another set of US lighthouse stamps. This set of Mid-Atlantic lighthouses was issued on August 6th. Do you know how many sets with five lighthouses the USPS has issued? The first one was in 1990, and they were 25 cents each.

Answer: This is the 7th set of US lighthouses. After the first set in 1990, the others featured regional sets of lighthouses (1995 – Great Lakes, 2003 – Southeastern US, 2007 - Pacific states, 2009 - Gulf Coast, 2013 - New England

All were based on paintings by Howard Koslov, who is widely recognized as one of the premier US stamp artists of the last 40 years. Koslov died at age 91 in 2016 and these are the final lighthouse paintings that he prepared for the USPS.

Opinion Column

The Stamp Show That Never Was by Steve Eisinger

It is hard to say what the future of stamp shows might be. Everyone knows that stamp collectors and stamp dealers are “aging out.” It almost seems that dealers are quitting at rates even higher than the customers. I, and my partner in the coin and stamp business, John Lighthouse decided to buck the trend and a couple of years ago we started to show and sell stamps at local shows. We had modest success, and in the four or five shows that we participated in, our stamp material increased in quantity and quality, and we attracted customers. Our sales went up in each successive show.

Covid did not help the Philatelic world. The annual ROPEX stamp show scheduled for May of 2020 was canceled; and then the May 2021 show as well.

About six or eight months ago, John Lighthouse and I thought we would participate as dealers at the Rochester Numismatic Association Coin Show in November. The RNA Show has been an annual event for many years, held in the Rochester Museum and Science Center, and is by consensus one of the better regional coin shows around. Of course in November of 2020 Covid was rampant, and the vaccine was still pending. The show was canceled. But another show was scheduled for November of 2021.

The idea came up that in order to fill dealer tables, and to attract customers, the RNA Show would include stamps as well as coins. The Rochester Philatelic Association was polled, and there was no objection. That was fine with John and me—we had lots of stamps. We reserved three tables for the RNA Show, with the idea of filling the tables with coins and stamps.

But something went wrong, and the show was canceled for 2021. What went wrong? Well, in short, everything. The Museum restricted the space, and hinted at difficult rules designed to prevent Covid transmission. These involved limiting the number of customers, wiping down the tables, not

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having food available, and other onerous restrictions, which, although well-intentioned from the standpoint of Covid, were big obstacles for a good show. The basement in the Museum building—long our staging area and meeting place—was cut off.

Dealers were leery. Coin dealers signed up at half the normal number. Stamp dealers were informally invited but none (other than us) came forward. Normally dealers’ fees for tables constituted the main source of income for the RNA Show, and therefore with the low number of dealers the Show was badly under water. In addition Security at the Show was an issue. The two guys who provided professional security for previous shows quit, and replacements could not be found. I am not sure how much security is required at stamp shows, but coin dealers have a valuable inventory of gold, silver, and numismatic material that would be easier to fence than stamps. Charlatans are known to operate at coin shows, and tables cannot be left unguarded at night.

Running a show is a complicated business. Producing and directing a show begins the day a previous show ends, a long and complicated schedule of tasks leads up to the next show. The core activity of Show Director is interfacing with dealers. Aside—coin dealers can be ornery. I do not know about stamp dealers. The Director has to negotiate with the venue and perhaps even the police (for parking).

There is advertising, recruiting of volunteers for carry-in, set-up, and break-down, managing side activities like door prizes, educational talks, exhibits, food, etc. The long-time Director of the Coin Show, Bill Coe, was distracted by personal issues. He had been phasing out his involvement as Directorship of the Coin Show anyway; his collecting interest may give one a clue as to his reasons to do less. His main collection is items dated 1933. Bill’s heir-apparent, Chip Scoppa, had trouble recruiting volunteers to do essential tasks.

Nothing was getting done. Nothing was certain, including whether the show would go ahead or not. Stamp and coin dealers did not come forward to rent tables. Absence of live club meetings was a big obstacle for planning and recruiting volunteers.

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All this was discussed in a frenzy of e-mails. Finally a live meeting of the RNA Officers and Board of Directors was called (with ZOOM participation by some). With only three months to go, the situation was deemed hopeless, and the Coin Show was canceled by a split vote. The date of the next Coin Show was left undetermined, but it now seems likely not to be before the regular date of early November, 2022.

Rumors fly that the May RPA show is in jeopardy. The long-time club treasurer and show dealer chairman is moving away, with no obvious replacement in the wings.

So sadly, no coin show; no stamp show: The two crown collecting hobbies, philately and numismatics, cannot muster a show in Rochester, despite excellent and active clubs and a metropolitan area of a million people. This is disappointing for all, but possibly a warning of larger issues within the philatelic and numismatic world. Will we learn from the human actions (or in-actions) and the natural events that prevented us from having our shows? Can we adjust to the new normal and the prevailing circumstances, and produce a show in the future? Will we ever see stamp shows and coin shows again?

Tom Fortunato's Response:

Steve's statements are accurate and outline just a few of the current and future challenges for shows by the RNA and the RPA.

Speaking for the RPA, we certainly need more assistance/volunteers to pull off the show. Bourse chair and treasurer are important positions that need to be filled. We also need to ensure we have enough dealers to pay our expenses. The same is true with exhibits if we continue to be a WSP national show. We will also need to find and pay for new security staff, and they do not come cheap, or get members to volunteer to stay overnight. We need to have greater attendance and buyers to keep the dealers coming back. Unless these stars align we may not have a ROPEX in 2022.

My Recent Acquisitions

by Rich Spinelli

During this Covid period, I decided to enhance my personal stamp collection by purchasing some Professional Stamp Experts (PSE) certified stamps from Ebay. You will note from the pictures below, the stamps that I purchased.



Upper left: #351 Unused, Never Hinged, Scott Value (2016) \$325 – Blue

Upper Right: #388 Two Cent Unused, Never Hinged, Scott Value \$3100 - Carmine

Lower Left: #17 Unused, 3 Cents, Never Hinged, Scott Value \$6250 (Gray-Black)

Lower Right: #315 Used, 5 Cents, Hinged, Scott Value \$1250

The total Scott Catalogue Value of these four stamps is about \$11,000. Do you know why I paid less than 1% of that value? Because, according to PSE, each of these stamps is a FORGERY!!!!!! They were created by adding or subtracting perforations to one or more sides of similar, inexpensive stamps. I would doubt that many collectors could identify the #388 as a forgery by the perfs, which look pretty darn real to this collector.

Not that I don't already have enough stamp subjects to collect, I now collect forgeries and fakes.

My Dad's Roto-Gage by Gail Ellsworth



The ROTO-GAGE is a tool produced for stamp collectors in the 1930's by the Imperial Molded Products Corporation of Chicago, Illinois. It was sold to make stamp collecting easier and more convenient. There is a ruler marked in both inches and millimeters for measuring a stamp and a rotary gauge for determining the perforation count. At the front is a tray to use for watermark detection. There is a magnifying glass attached that can be positioned by the user to make all these features easier to see.



I found this Roto-Gage in the stamp collection that my father left me.

Even though I worked with my father on his collection when I was young, I do not recall ever seeing the Roto-Gage, so I went to the internet to find out about it. I found a forum with a discussion thread about the Roto-Gage:

<https://thestampforum.boards.net/thread/3801/roto-gage>

There were a wide range of opinions about how well the Roto-Gage lived up to its advertised goal. There were people who thought it looked "cool" and expressed a desire to have one. There did not seem to be many who actually had one, though. Several people did seem to like their Roto-Gage, especially the magnifier. I also found the magnifying glass helpful. However, there was one person who found combining the three functions to be cumbersome

and preferred using his separate tools. This Roto-Gage had belonged to my grandfather. I think my father never needed to use it because all he had to do to see the finest detail on any stamp was to take off his glasses.

There actually was quite a bit of information about the Roto-Gage on the internet. It seems that it is currently a desirable collectible for two reasons. First, because Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was a famous stamp collector in addition to being our 32nd President, kept one on his desk in the Oval Office from 1937 to 1945. His has been displayed in the Smithsonian Institute and even Disney World. Apparently, the one FDR had is missing the magnifying glass, though. It is said that FDR received his ROTO-GAGE from a 15 year old stamp collector from Illinois and it was on his desk in the Oval Office from 1937-1945.

The second reason is because the Roto-Gage is made of Bakelite. According to Wikipedia, "in recent years the 'retro' appeal of old Bakelite items has made them quite collectible". As with stamps these days, "collectible" does not necessarily mean worth a lot of money. There is currently one for sale on e-bay for \$100.00 or best offer. However, it seems that Roto-Gages are not really rare; many have sold for quite a bit less than \$100.00. The person on the forum who did not like using his Roto-Gage theorized that there are so many available today because the "granddads" who bought it thought that it was not really easy to use and just put it right back in the box!



The base of the Roto-Gage highlights the Imperial Molded Products Corporation of Chicago, Illinois, who apparently had a patent pending on the device.

Most Roto-Gages were produced and sold in the 1930's. The parent company continued making molded products for various applications until the company was dissolved in 1992.



Samuel J. Randall

by Larry Rausch



This 1887 cover was postmarked from Holland Patent, NY and addressed to The Honorable Samuel J. Randall in Washington D.C.

Samuel Randall was a lifetime politician first elected to the Philadelphia City Council in 1852. He then served in the Pennsylvania State Senate in 1858-59, before joining the Union Army during the Civil War. Elected to his first U.S. House term in 1862, Randall was re-elected in every term until his death in 1890.

Serving as the House Speaker, Representative Randall's most notable event occurred in the 1876 United States Presidential election of Samuel J. Tilden vs. Rutherford B. Hayes. Democratic Tilden of New York had 184 electoral votes-- just shy of the 185 needed for victory. His opponent, Republican Hayes, had 163, the remaining 22 votes were in doubt.

The counts of the disputed ballots were inconclusive, with each of the states in question producing two sets of returns: one signed by Democratic officials, the other by Republicans, each claiming victory for their man. By January 1877, with the question still unresolved, Congress and President Grant agreed to submit the matter to a bipartisan Electoral Commission, which would be authorized to determine the fate of the disputed electoral votes.

The commission consisted of five representatives, five senators, and five Supreme Court justices. To ensure partisan balance, there would be seven

Democrats and seven Republicans; the fifteenth member was to be a Supreme Court justice chosen by the other four judges on the commission.

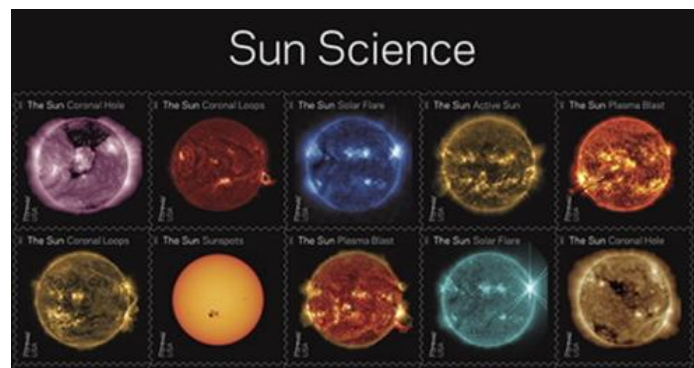
Justice David Davis, an independent, was expected to be their choice, but he upset their careful planning by accepting election to the Senate by the state of Illinois and refusing to serve on the commission. The remaining Supreme Court justices were all Republicans and, with the addition of Justice Joseph P. Bradley to take the place intended for Davis, the commission had an 8-7 Republican majority. The commission met and awarded all the disputed ballots to Hayes by an 8-7 party-line vote. Democrats were outraged, and many demanded that they filibuster the final count in the House. As the March 4 inauguration day approached, leaders of both parties met and negotiated a compromise.

Does this sound a little familiar to our 2020 Election results? Some things change, but others remain the same.

Did you purchase your FOREVER stamps before the rate increase effective on August 29th, 2021? The first class postage rate is increasing from 55¢ to 58¢. Some other rates are changing also:

Summarized Price Changes		
First-Class Mail	Current Prices	Planned Prices
First-Class Mail Single-Piece Letters (1 oz.)	\$0.55	\$0.58
First-Class Mail Single-Piece Letters additional ounce	\$0.20	\$0.20 (unchanged)
First-Class Mail Letters (metered 1 oz.)	\$0.51	\$0.53
First-Class Mail Domestic Postcards	\$0.36	\$0.40
First-Class Mail Single-Piece Flats (1 oz.)	\$1.00	\$1.16
International	Current Prices	Planned Prices
Outbound International Letters (1 oz.)	\$1.20	\$1.30

Your editor decided to stash away some of the Sun Science Forever stamps for future use. This set of 10 different solar images, sold in sheets of 20, was issued on June 18, 2021.



Enchanted Places by Paul Brach

Romania, Russia, St. Kitts, Spain, Switzerland and Yugoslavia. Not only are the natural areas enchanted places, but my stamp album brings joy and remembrances and as such is also an enchanted place.

=====

Taking a respite from the sweltering heat of an August afternoon in my comfortable den, I turned a page in a stamp album and spied a familiar sight: *Cantherellus cinnabarinus*, the red chanterelle, illustrated so beautifully on a Canadian stamp (Scott 1247). Only a couple of hours earlier, I had been walking in the woods with fellow stamp collector Fred Haynes, whose eagle eyes spotted this same exquisite mushroom.

Editor's Note: It has been a lot of fun "collecting" fungi (well photographing them and learning them) with Paul. Sometimes learning them from Paul is like drinking from a fire hose; there are so many species in our area. And yes, it has inspired a new thematic topic for my stamp collecting, a perfect complement to minerals. The countries of Europe and Africa seem to appreciate mushrooms as much as Paul and I do and many of those we see and photograph are on their stamps. Below are just two boletes that we have seen this summer in the field and that I also have in my stamp collection. Boletes are summer mushrooms that have pores on their underside instead of gills. Many are edible, but Paul and I leave them alone in their enchanted places.



***Cantherellus cinnabarinus*, red chanterelle:** On the left, as spotted on Frost Hill in South Bristol, New York. On the right, on a 1989 stamp from Canada



The golden chanterelle is a similar mushroom found throughout North & Central America, Europe, Asia and Africa. On our walks in the woods, we have found it several times at enchanted places like the Hogback and Lower Falls areas of Letchworth State Park, on Frost Hill in the Bristol Hills, and in the hills above Canandaigua Lake. The picture to the right below, from Frost Hill, is just one such example.



Upper row, Paul is taking a picture of a bitter bolete (*Tyropilus felleus*) which Russia featured in a set of 5 mushroom stamps in 1986.. In the lower row, I am photographing a chesnut bolete (*Gyroporus castaneus*) similar to that depicted by Ghana on a 1993 stamp.



The golden chanterelle is illustrated in my collection on stamps from many countries including Åland and Jersey shown above and also Antigua, Burkino Faso, Germany, Hungary, Jersey, Lithuania, Mongolia, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland,

Ghana has been particularly prolific placing mushrooms on 65 of their stamps between 1989 and 2004. Both these local bolete mushrooms were spotted in the Byron-Bergen Swamp Preserve in early August.

First Day Ceremony Covers

by Kelly Armstrong

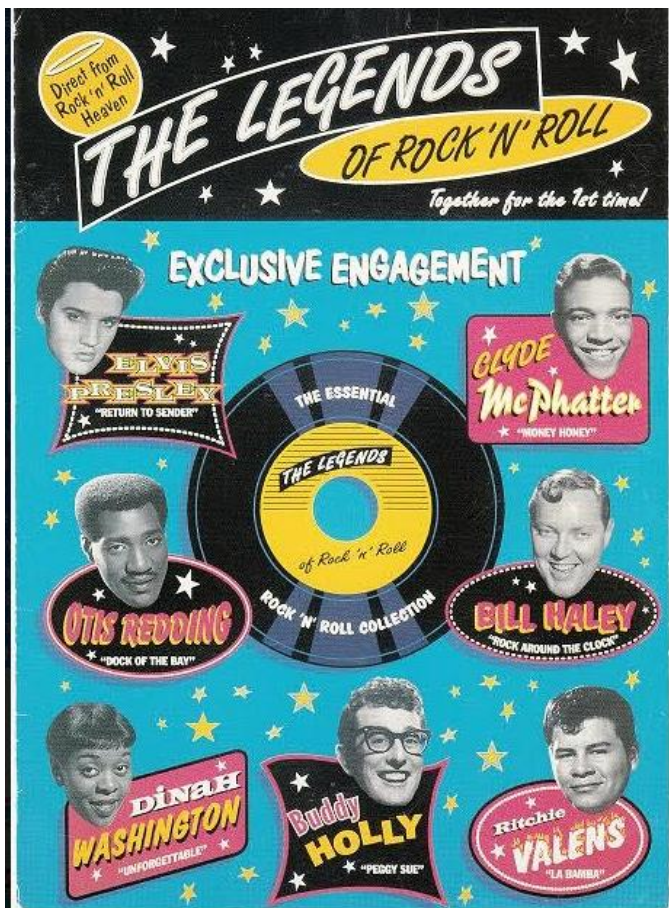
A couple of years ago I started buying US First Day Ceremony programs. Some I bought from dealers (such as my old friend John Stoltz) and some current issues I bought from the USPS online store. This past week I purchased a bunch of these programs from the APS website. These are all from the 1990's to 2000. Now having seen programs from the 1970's to current, I was able to make some unique observations.

(1) Programs from the 1970's were printed a heavy off white card stock, with minimal colored ink. They are fairly generic and usually included all the stamps of a multiple issue.

(2) Looking at the programs from the 1980's to the 1990's is a sight to behold. I include a scan of the 1993 Rock Legends as an example. The printing on the front of this program is a work of art, and all 7 of the stamps are in the program, cancelled. The other programs I bought in this date range also have vivid colors and complete stamp sets.

(3) Now we come to the programs of 2000 to current. The programs of the early 2000s were printed on a heavy stock beige paper with a glossy beige cover. No point in showing a scan as it would blend in with the background. A couple of years ago the USPS changed the style of the programs to that of a large envelope with the program card tucked inside. A little more attractive than the older beige one's but still very generic. By not printing in color and affixing only 1 stamp per program, the USPS was able to save some revenue. Whenever I see programs from the 80's-90's, I try to buy them due to the awesome graphics. When I add a cachet to them, it just enhances the artistic value.

Editor's Note: Most stamp issues come and go with fleeting popularity or with interest restricted to a small subset of topical/thematic collectors. This set seems to be an exception. It has been 28 years since this set was issued. Whether it is the design or the popularity of the artists on the stamps, this set of 7 stamps continues to capture the interest of stamp collectors and non-stamp collectors alike.



1993 Rock Legend First Day Ceremony Cover

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