

THE U.S. PREVENT DRUG ABUSE STAMP AND ITS FIRST DAY COVERS

Purpose: This exhibit is intended to showcase the U.S. Prevent Drug Abuse stamp of 1971 (Scott #1438) and its first day covers.

Plan of Exhibit

Stamp Design
Stamp Production
Distribution
Publicity
First Day Ceremony
First Day Cancellations
First Day Covers
Non-First Day Usage
Late Uses

For synopsis and additional information



Background: As the psychedelic 1960's came to a close, many viewed drug abuse as a significant national problem. The Post Office Department, soon to become the United States Postal Service, did its part in the anti-drug campaign, authorizing a commemorative stamp designed to draw attention to the devastating effect of abusing illegal drugs.

The chairman of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee approached Miggs Burroughs, an amateur artist with no formal training, explaining that they were looking for a young artist to create a design that would appeal to young people. They wanted a despondent-looking teenager and expressed that the colors needed to be very flat.

Using his then-girlfriend as a model, Burroughs responded with a simple but dramatic design emphasizing light and shadow. Burroughs' medium of choice was paper. He used one color for the background, one for the silhouette, and yet another for the shadow.

*Red frame or type:
unique or especially unusual item*



Ralph Dyer Hand-Drawn and Hand-Painted First Day Cover

Dyer produced cachets from the 1928 Molly Pitcher issue through the 1970's