

EXHIBIT SYNOPSIS

Baseball Centennial – Every Boy a Cover

Ten frame traditional first day cover (FDC) exhibit. The purpose of the exhibit is to examine the stamp, first day covers, and postal uses for the 1939 commemorative stamp honoring the 100th anniversary of baseball. The exhibit examines the stamp design and printing; first day activities at Cooperstown, NY; the wide-range of first day covers that were produced by hobbyists and commercial vendors; and both domestic and international uses.

The 2006 *Planty Photo Encyclopedia of Cacheted FDCs* for the Scott 855 3-cent baseball centennial stamp catalogues over 1200 different covers, enough covers for over 30 frames. However, over 800 of the covers have add-on cachets or are simple general purpose cachets/corner cards. All of the covers in the exhibit are of-the-period except for an add-on hand painted cachet made by Dorothy Knapp on the title page. The exhibit has matured over 7 years of exhibiting and has earned Gold (including one Reserve Grand) at ten different National World Series of Philately Shows. Exhibit highlights include:

Stamp Production. The exhibit has the only known **large die proof** outside BEP archives; signed FDC by stamp designer, picture designer, and lettering engraver; and a block of 14 stamps signed by PMG Farley and Cooperstown PM James Bundy.



First Day Activities. The exhibit has the Official Centennial of Baseball Program (there was no First Day Program) that describes the June 12 Cavalcade of Baseball events; a **first day cover signed by the 11 living original hall of fame inductees**; an FDC postcard of the Hall of Fame that officially opened on June 12; a **ticket from the first Hall of Fame Game played on June 12 with a first day cancel on the reverse**; a study of first day cancellations; and selected unofficial cancels including 5 examples of the only known unofficial cancels from Massachusetts.



First Cachets. The exhibit has 18 of the 20 documented first cachets including the rare newspaper cartoonist **Dick Calkin** first (and only) cachet. Less than five examples exist for the two missing first cachets and are in the hands of private collectors. To the best of my knowledge, none have been auctioned over the past 15 years.



First Day Covers. FDCs are presented in 4 sections. More than 30 of the cachets in this part of the exhibit are not in the Planty-855 Baseball catalogue.

- ***Handcrafted Cachets*** – While a few hand painted covers were produced by commercial cachet makers, **most of the covers in this section are unique**. At the end of this section there are seven covers made by the youth that President Roosevelt was speaking to in his “every boy a cover” quote. The ages of these young cachet makers were verified through the 1940 census.
- ***Printed Cachets*** – Most of the cachets in this section were produced for commercial purposes. This section includes a sampling of **team corner cards for Major, Minor, and Amateur Leagues**; FDCs used to mail advertisements; and post and favor cards. **Quantities of 10 or less are known for 14 cachets in the printed cachet section**. All commercially sold printed cachets are exhibited in alphabetic order by cachet maker. When there are multiple varieties of a cachet, an example is shown and a brief explanation of the varieties not exhibited is provided.
- ***General Purpose*** – Examples of General Purpose cachets are displayed including general purpose covers with a first day theme, other event cachets, and corner cards.
- ***First Day Nationwide Sales*** – The popularity of the stamp generated many covers cancelled June 13; the first day the stamp was available nationwide. The most popular location for second day cancels was Washington DC. Also included are second day cancels from events commemorating baseball and covers made by hobbyists. Eight June 13 covers are shown.



Postal Uses: The Baseball Centennial stamp was issued to pay the 3-cent rate for first class domestic mail. Other domestic and international uses are difficult to find. When used to pay higher domestic and international rates it is almost always in combination with other stamps. There are examples of 22 different rates that are either fully or partially paid using the 3-cent Baseball Centennial stamp.

Epilogue: The exhibit ends with a tribute to the 1939 World Champion Yankees, highlighted with a **team signed stamp album page** that has been authenticated by James Spence Authentication (JSA).



References:

- *Planty Photo Encyclopedia of Cachet First Day Covers 855 – Baseball Edition*
- *Baseball...Stamps...Autographs* by Elton Schiller
- *Mellone's First Day Cover Photo Encyclopedia of First Cachets 1923-1950*
- *AFDCS First Day Journal, Volume 28, Number 7, October 1, 1983*
- *AFDCS First Day Journal, Volume 35, Number 5, July 15, 1990*