The U.S. Postal Service will issue this souvenir card in mint condition only honoring LONDON 1980, May 6-14, London, England.

ROCHESTER PO.
The Philatelic Window at the Main Rochester Post Office (the General Mailing Facility, on Jefferson Rd. in Henrietta) is open additional hours every Second & Fourth Wednesdays from 6:00pm-8:00pm in the evenings.

May Meetings
May 8 - Andy Hale will present an evening program dealing with stamp investment potentials in today's fast-moving philatelic market. 8:00pm
May 22 - Walter Orten's program concerns the 3% green and plating it out

NOTES
Please remember to return borrowed RPA books to the Library... Nominations are still open for all RPA offices. Please submit nominations during the meetings..... Iranian stamps are now on the U.S. official change list, along with stamps from N. Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) can now be imported.

The United States Postal Service is now officially asking for increases in most of the postal rates. For the public-at-large this means a 20% first class rate to take effect early in 1981. This will also affect the RPA in 1981, the cost of monthly mailing will increase dramatically. The yearly dues of $3.50 per member will be insufficient to cover the cost of printing and mailing the "H & T" along with all the other RPA costs of operation. For the first time in many years the RPA should consider an increase in the yearly dues of members. The club has managed to hold down the cost of dues, but inflation has caught-up and the time is fast approaching for action. A motion will be made at the first May meeting to form a committee to study this problem and present a plan sometime in the fall of '80 after the summer break.

May 6 CANADA, Endangered Wildlife, two 17% stamps, Atlantic Whitefish & Greater Prairie Chicken
May 16 U.S., Bicycling 15% embossed envelope
May 20 U.S., Dolly Madison 15% regular diminutive size
May 29 CANADA, Rehabilitation & Gardening 17% stamps
May 31 U.S., Emily Bissell 15% stamp

RPA member, Larry Mortarini won the Grand Award at POLKAFEX'80 for his exhibit of Hungary Postal History.
Write on

Just for today, let’s say the “P.S.” above stands for Postal Service. The U.S. postal people would like to see you write more personal letters and have even issued a new postage stamp with the words “P.S. Write Soon” scraped on it.

Don’t laugh. Considered historically, the 15-cent stamp is a better bargain than you might think. When Abelard Reynolds became Rochester’s first postmaster in 1812, rates were based on how far letters traveled: 6 cents up to 30 miles, 10 cents for 80 miles, 18 cents for 150 miles, and 25 cents for anything over that. Back then, 50 cents was a full day’s pay for the average worker.

Reynolds, who doubled “as an innkeeper, was postmaster for a record 17 years. He kept all incoming and outgoing mail in a pigeon-hole desk; during the first six months, receipts totaled $3.42.

Business improved. In 1829, Reynolds built the largest office building west of Albany — an arcade with indoor shops, a meeting hall and, of course, a post office, which faced Main Street East. He no sooner opened for business than he lost his job because of the spoils system.

Almost 30 years later, a group of men gathered in his arcade and founded Western Union, the revolutionary telegraph company that sent messages at a speed no postal system could match.

Rochester's most important contribution to the Postal Service was the Cutler Mail Chute, which first appeared in 1884 in the Elwood Building. (The Elwood, at the Four Corners, has been replaced by the Security Trust building.) No matter how tall the building; a letter dropped in the chute lands in a main collection box on the ground floor. By 1910, thousands of Cutler Chutes were in buildings throughout the world. Rochester showed its gratitude by electing inventor James G. Cutler mayor of the city.

On Sept. 16, 1875, the first specially made postal railroad car was loaded with mail and attached to a train. Letters were sorted and distributed in transit.

The Railway Mail Service worked so well that it was adapted to streetcars, or trolleys. Rochester’s Trolley Post Offices (1896-1908) ran along some routes; mail collected from letter boxes along the way was sorted and routed to the main post office. The rolling P.O.’s lost speed as automobiles and traffic jams multiplied, and finally were eliminated.

In 1934, a new main post office on Cumberland Street was built and declared “unsurpassed in efficiency.” A tunnel connected it to the railroad station so mail could be rushed to the trains. It was expected to meet Rochester’s postal needs for the rest of the century.

It missed the mark by 23 years. The building was demoted to substation in 1977. The tunnel became outdated, and the fast mail train, like the Pony Express, faded into the sunset.

Today, most first-class mail goes by air, a circumstance foreshadowed on Oct. 21, 1911. To demonstrate air delivery, a plane was loaded with mail near the site of Strong Memorial Hospital, and flown to Genesee Valley Park. Mail sacks were dropped to a roadside, picked up by postal officials, and rushed to the post office for processing.

Even faster mail is on the way. A mixed bag of electronic devices, still being developed, may someday flash letters on a screen in your living room the same day they are written. We’ve come a long way from Abelard Reynolds and his pigeon-hole desk.

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Philately Fever

The U.S. Postal Service has finally caught on to something that Liechtenstein knew long ago: There’s money in postage stamps. Not the stamps people stick on letters, but the ones they stick in albums.

Liechtenstein’s main export is postage stamps. Eighty years ago, the country began churning them out in a variety of colors and sizes, strictly for sale to stamp collectors. Today, Liechtenstein is one of the main suppliers of stamps in the country. As such it sells stamp collecting kits, mint sets of commemorative and special stamps, plus philatelic books and collectors’ paraphernalia.

It promotes stamp collecting as a hobby right down to the primary grades. Just McCartney, a customer service representative at the Rochester center, establishes Benjamin Franklin Clubs for area schools. This year the center has issued a competition for the best stamp collections at the local school level. The winner gets a specially printed, hand-stamped set of stamp cards.

Today, our own postal people cater to stamp collectors as never before. Dazzling new issues flow off the presses in a steady, colorful stream. Everything and anything that can justify being commemorated may appear on a stamp, sooner or later.

The Rochester General Mailing Facility on Jefferson Road in Henrietta is one of 150 Philatelic Centers in the country. As such it sells stamp collecting kits, mint sets of commemorative and special stamps, plus philatelic books and collectors’ paraphernalia.

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Continued on 3
New York Times  
WASHINGTON — The United States Postal Service proposed raising its rates on average of 29 percent yesterday. Under the plan, first class letter rates would go from 15 cents to 20 cents, the biggest increase ever. Postage rates, which have not been increased since May 1978, are subject to approval by the independent Postal Rate Commission.

Even though the Postal Service applied yesterday for approval of the rates, Postmaster General William F. Bolger said he expects that the new rates would be cleared no sooner than next year. The Postal Rate Commission has never turned down a package of requested rate increases. But it has occasionally modified some rates.

Yesterday's rate proposals are based on expectations that federal subsidies will continue at present levels — rather than undergo cuts being discussed now at Capitol Hill. It also presumes that weekly postal service would continue to function Monday through Saturday.

Federal budget cuts that could eliminate more than $700 million in public service payments, even with the increases approved, could require cutting service back to five days a week.

Bolger said he would choose service cuts rather than ask still another increase in postage rates.

Largely because of inflation, and particularly a series of wage increases triggered by the climbing Consumer Price Index and increases in fuel prices, the Postal Service projects a deficit this year of $503 million. Only last year the agency had its first revenue surplus since the 1940s.

Bolger said that in some respects the new rate proposal is unique. It contains many increases in various rates, such as for letters, parcels and advertising leaflets, but it also includes some rate reductions and some incentives for mailers to pre-sort their mail in exchange for reduced charges.

Highlights of the proposal include:

- First class letters would cost 20 cents for the first ounce, and 17 cents for each subsequent ounce of weight in the same letter, compared to 15 cents for the first ounce and 13 cents for each subsequent ounce now.

- Third class bulk mail, which includes such commercial items as catalogs, advertising circulars and leaflets, would increase 17.7 percent.

- Parcel post rates, which vary according to the distance a parcel is being sent, would increase an average of 8.4 percent; and second class items, including newspapers and magazines, would increase only 1.9 percent.

- Among items that would have reduced rates under the proposal are "in-county" rates for newspapers, down 13.2 percent; nonprofit rates for publications of nonprofit organizations, down 6.2 percent; educational materials, down 5.2 percent; nonprofit third class material, such as newsletters and fundraising appeals, down 5.7 percent.

Bolger also said the Postal Service is considering a proposal to offer a holiday season discount, possibly to begin at Christmas time in 1981.

"A reduced rate would be justified on the basis that it would generate additional volume and revenues and at the same time allow us to make more efficient use of our work force during the peak mailing season," Bolger said.

The new rates are expected to generate about $5 billion in new revenues, Bolger said, with letters contributing more than half of the increase.

This year the postal service has been stung twice by mandated wage increases.

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Radio Quiz ans.

The Rochester Philatelic Association meeting of January 24, 1980, consisted of a series of quizzes. A tape was played from a recent transmission/broadcast of a program from Radio Sweden called Stamp Corner. Radio Sweden’s Stamp Corner Program had a Stamp Contest called Swedish Stamps of the Past. The answers to the contest were presented on the program of March 3, 1980. However, receiving conditions were poor on that night, and though I taped the program for use at a future meeting, I came to the conclusion that it would be better to give the answers in an article in the Hinges and Tongues. Any members who may have participated, and sent Radio Sweden their answers to the Stamp Contest, should receive in the mail from Radio Sweden a consolation prize if your answers were correct. However, if your answers were not sent in, you can not participate any more as the contest is closed.

The questions were the following:

Question 1 - In March, 50 years ago, Sweden issued a 55 ore stamp in its running series with the King’s Portrait, who was the king? Name and Number.

Answer 1 - King Gustav 5.

Question 2 - In May, 50 years ago, Sweden issued its first stamps of a very special kind, what kind was that?

Answer 2 - Night Airmail or Airmail.

Question 3 - In May, 25 years ago, Sweden issued a set of stamps to commemorate a very special event, what was that? It was not the big International Philatelic Exhibition held in Stockholm that year, that issue came in July.

Answer 3 - 1955 marked the 100th Anniversary of the issuance of the 1st Swedish Stamp.

I would be interested in hearing about any member who participated in Radio Sweden’s Stamp Corner Contest, and received a prize from them, Jim Trenton.