



The Century of Progress International Exposition was held in Chicago, Illinois beginning June 1, 1933. Later that summer, from August 21 to 26, the American Philatelic Society held its annual convention in Chicago's Medinah Michigan Avenue Club. Both events received philatelic recognition on Special Collector stamp sheets issued on August 25.

The first sheet, representing old Chicago, featured 25 specimens of the 1¢ Fort Dearborn stamp originally issued in May 1933. The sheet was printed on a stamp press in the U.S. government exhibit at the Century of Progress International Exposition. It was first placed on sale at the special philatelic station operated in connection with the American Philatelic Society convention.

Fort Dearborn was built in 1803 on the south bank of the Chicago River, on land ceded by Indians to the federal government. The military post afforded protection from tribes who had been fighting U.S. troops since the late 1700s. With-

in a few years, settlers began to accumulate nearby.

The fort was abandoned during the War of 1812 and, on August 15, 1812, it was burned by Indians. No further settlement of Chicago took place until 1816, when American soldiers rebuilt Fort Dearborn. The post was occupied until the 1830s and, once again, a small cluster of traders' shacks and log cabins grew up around it. The settlement became part of the newly created state of Illinois in 1818.

The 1830s brought mushrooming growth to Chicago. With the opening of the Erie Canal, the pattern of westward migration shifted. Chicago was the main beneficiary, quickly becoming the principal water gateway to the West. The "Century of Progress" began in 1833 when the tiny community became the seat of Cook County, the federal government established its regional land office there, and numerous retail stores opened in the area. Within four years, the local population grew from about 150 to more than 4,000. On March 4, 1837, Chicago was incorporated as a city.



The Federal Building Special Collector stamp sheet was one of two sheets printed at the U.S. government exhibit at Chicago's 1933 Century of Progress Exposition. Symbolizing the contemporary city, it was made up of 25 previously issued 3¢ stamps showing the distinctive three-towered federal building. The sheet was first placed on sale on August 25, 1933 at the philatelic station set up at the convention of the American Philatelic Society, which was also hosted by Chicago in the summer of 1933.

The Century of Progress Exposition celebrated the centennial of Chicago, which was originally established as a village in 1833. The fair was held on a strip of reclaimed land about 6 miles long and 600 feet wide along the shores of Lake Michigan.

Exhibits of science, technology, and industry at the exposition were widely regarded as the best ever assembled in the

United States. They dramatically portrayed the progress of civilization during the 100 years of Chicago's existence.

The fair also had a profound influence on the future course of American architecture and design. Many public buildings of the late 1800s and early 1900s were built in the classical Beaux-Arts style. But the federal building shown on the stamp, with its three massive towers, marked the start of a new trend. Constructed on the exposition grounds, it underscored Chicago's standing as a showcase of architectural innovation, and helped to popularize modern architecture.

At the time of the Century of Progress Exposition, the United States was in the throes of the Great Depression. Yet the fair proved to be an enormous financial success. It was held over until the summer of 1934, and returned a surplus after its underwriters were paid in full. In addition, the construction and operation of the exhibits and the influx of tourists provided a strong boost to Chicago's economy.



## The 1934 Mount Rainier Stamp Sheet



The National Parks stamp series of 1934 had a dual purpose. The commemorative issues were designed to promote America's natural and scenic resources. And they were issued to reinforce American pride in their nation during the grips of the Depression.

A special Collector stamp sheet issued on August 28, the day of the annual convention of the American Philatelic Society, focused attention on the National Parks. It included six of the 3¢ stamps showing the majestic Mount Rainier; the sheet was printed and issued at the exhibition in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Located in the Cascade Range of northwestern Washington, Mount Rainier was set aside as a national park in 1899. The 612 acres house the greatest single-peak glacial mountain in the lower 48 states. It is 40 square miles in breadth and is covered by "ice" originating at or near its summit.

The center of the park is the 14,410-ft Mount Rainier volcano, the highest mountain in Washington. Local Indians referred to the peak as "Mountain that was God." Gaseous fumes still rise from its cone, although it has been dormant for more than 2,000 years.

English explorer George Vancouver sighted the summit in 1792 and named it in honor of fellow navigator Peter Rainier. Hazard Stevens and P.B. Van Trump were the first explorers to scale the mountain, in 1870.

The stamp design featured on the sheet shows some of the premier attractions of the park. Among them are the magnificent forests of Douglas fir, western hemlock, and western red cedar that cover the lower slopes. Abundant wildlife and wildflowers can also be seen, along with scenic alpine meadows and lakes such as Mirror Lake. All of this spectacular scenery can best be seen from the park's many hiking and horseback riding trails.

## The 1934 Byrd Antarctic Expedition Stamp Sheet



The National Stamp Exhibition of 1934 was held in New York's Rockefeller Center from February 10 to 18. America's best known stamp collector, President Franklin Roosevelt, suggested that a Special Collector stamp sheet be issued on the opening day of the show. He even prepared a pencil sketch of the design. The sheets were then printed on a postage stamp press at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and first placed on sale at the special exhibition branch Philatelic Agency.

The sheet contained six 1933 3¢ stamps honoring the second Antarctic Expedition of Admiral Richard Byrd (1888-1957), which was then underway. On his previous journey, between 1928 and 1930, Byrd had established his Little America base on the Ross Ice Shelf at the Bay of Whales. From there, he and his chief pilot flew to the South Pole on November 28-29, 1928.

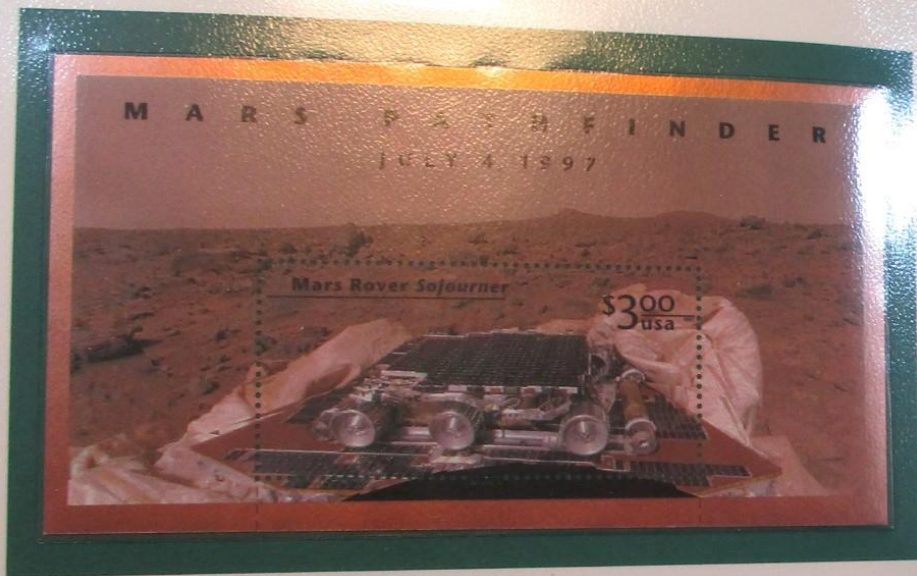
Over the next three decades, Byrd did more than any man to further the exploration and study of the bleak, frozen

continent at the bottom of the world. He used modern technical resources such as radio for polar exploration. His second expedition took place from 1933 to 1935. It was the first expedition that included studies of meteorology, geography, earth's magnetism, and photographic data about Antarctica's icecap. Byrd's experiences in manning his remote

Byrd made three additional trips to Antarctica. He built the Little America III base and led exploring parties. When he returned in 1946-47, he discovered vast new land, mapped it, and made his second flight to the South Pole.

As head of the U.S. Antarctic Research Expedition of 1955-56, Byrd oversaw the core of the continent and flew over the heartland of Antarctica over the South Pole for a third time.





The Mars Pathfinder Special Collector stamp sheet was issued December 10, 1997 in Pasadena, California, home of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory for NASA's Office of Space Science. It commemorated the historic Pathfinder mission, which landed on Independence Day, July 4, 1997. Over the next months, Pathfinder's cameras sent back 16,500 spectacular images of the "red planet" to Earth.

A team of scientists and engineers headed by Dr. J. T. Alton of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory worked on the Mars Pathfinder mission. It took just three years to test, and launch the spacecraft on December 4, 1996. It landed on Mars at 10:07 a.m. the following July 4, the first U.S. lander to set down at 23 miles per hour, with its impact cushioned by air bags. It delivered a semi-autonomous lander to the surface. The wheeled

vehicle was a thinking robot capable of performing numerous scientific experiments.

Sojourner returned 2.6 billion bits of information to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The data included chemical analyses of rocks, extensive information on winds and other weather phenomena, and the identification of pebbles suggesting the ancient presence of water on Mars.

The \$3.00 stamp in the Special Collector stamp sheet was intended for use on priority mail. Its design, created by Terry McCaffrey of the U.S. Postal Service, features Sojourner resting on the Pathfinder. In the background is a panoramic view of Mars' Arax Vallis region, where the spacecraft landed. The design also incorporates hidden images, not visible to the naked eye, to prevent counterfeiting.

## THE WORLD OF DINOSAURS





# 1997 Pacific World Philatelic Exhibition – Benjamin Franklin Stamp Sheet



The Pacific 97 World Philatelic Exhibition was held May 29 to June 8, 1997 at the Moscone Center in San Francisco, California. One of the events of the event occurred on opening day. A special stamp sheet of Benjamin Franklin stamps was issued to commemorate the sesquicentennial of U.S. postage.

The 50-cent Franklin stamps on the Special Collector stamp sheet feature the same design as the original stamp issued in 1847. However, the design is rendered in the international postcard rate denomination. It also contains an offset print reproduction of the original 1847 stamp design.

the Postmaster of New York. In 1847, his idea was approved by U.S. Postmaster General Cave Johnson. James Parsons Major designed U.S. #1 based on a portrait of Benjamin Franklin by James B. Longacre. The New York firm of Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson, which was known for the engraving of bank notes, first engraved it on steel plates.

Issued July 1, 1847, the 5-cent Franklin stamp was replaced on July 1, 1851 when a new schedule of rates lowered the cost of domestic postage. The 1997 issue is the fourth version of the stamp. It was re-engraved and reissued in 1875, and again in 1947.

The Special Collector stamp sheet was available for only 11 days. It was withdrawn from sale on the last day of Pacific 97, when all remaining sheets were destroyed.

# The 1997 Pacific World Philatelic Exhibition – George Washington Stamp Sheet



The George Washington Special Collector stamp sheet was one of two important stamp sheets issued to mark the 150th anniversary of U.S. postage stamps during the Pacific 97 World Philatelic Exhibition. The giant stamp show took place in San Francisco, California from May 29 to June 8, 1997.

The stamp sheet is comprised of 12 stamps having the same basic design as U.S. #2, issued in 1847. They feature the famous Athenaeum portrait of George Washington painted in 1796 by Gilbert Stuart. However, the denomination has been re-engraved to reflect the 60-cent international letter rate denomination.

On the left side of the sheet is an offset print reproduction of an enlarged die proof of the original stamp design rendered by James Parsons Major. Engraved on steel plates

by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson, also engraved bank notes, the 10-cent stamp was issued July 1, 1847.

U.S. #2 was replaced July 1, 1851 when a new schedule lowered the cost of domestic postage. The 1997 issue is the fourth version of the stamp. It was re-engraved and reissued in 1875, and again in 1947.

The 1997 version was a limited edition that was available for purchase only during the Pacific 97. On June 8, the final day of sale, the stamp sheet was withdrawn from sale.



## The 1992 Columbus Claiming a New World Stamp Sheet



The Columbus Claiming a New World Special Collector stamp sheet was issued in conjunction with the World Columbian Stamp Expo '92 in Chicago, Illinois, on May 22, 1992. The \$4 stamp sheet includes 2¢, 3¢, and 4¢ stamps. The \$4 stamp depicts Columbus and Isabella, the Spanish monarch who sponsored his voyages. All the stamps featured on this series of stamps were originally issued in 1893 and depict classic works of art in honor of Columbus' unique place in history.

Columbus went ashore at San Salvador on September 14, 1492, he had no idea where he was. The first thing he was to find a route to the Indies, and he spoke of the possibility of a route to the Indies.

However, nothing he witnessed in the New World matched descriptions he had read of the East. Marco Polo and other travelers had written of golden-roofed temples and fabulous cities filled with spices, silks, and gold — but Columbus found only villages of naked inhabitants.

The four voyages of Columbus across the Atlantic Ocean provoked great excitement in Europe and paved the way for other explorers to make lasting links between the Old World and the New. The sudden availability of New World gold and silver began to alter the economic climate almost immediately, yet decades would pass before there was any real understanding of the magnitude of Columbus' initial discoveries.

## The 1992 Christopher Columbus Stamp Sheet



The Christopher Columbus Special Collector stamp sheet was issued May 22, 1992 in Chicago, Illinois, as the centerpiece of a series of commemorative sheets honoring the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of the New World. It features the legendary \$5 stamp that was originally issued in 1893 for the 400th anniversary celebrations. The bust of Columbus on the stamp was created by Charles Barber of the U.S. Mint and was also used on the 1892-1893 commemorative half-dollar coin; the portrait of Columbus on the stamp sheet was painted by Lorenzo Lotto.

Columbus's fourth and last voyage to the New World started in 1502 when he was 51 years old and determined to restore his fame and fortune. He reached Martinique in just 21 days and proceeded to explore the

uncharted western Caribbean. He could find a route to India, Jamaica — only to find his American nations from Ho

After spending more time in Jamaica, Columbus eventually returned to Spain in November 1504. At this time, King Ferdinand was dying and King Ferdinand was an audience until the spring that the explorer claimed brought home a fortune.

For the remaining years of his life, Columbus lived in obscurity in Spain. However, his most important in history was his vast, far-flung continent.