

The Postscript



Tallahassee Stamp & Cover Club

VOL. 5 No. 1

January - March 1995

150th Anniversary

FLORIDA

Statehood 1845 - 1995



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Tallahassee Stamp and Cover Club
March 3, 1995



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Tallahassee Official First Day City for Florida Stamp

By Larry Benson

The Bull 'Gator viciously lashed out with his tail in an attempt to break away from his handler causing the children encircling the reptile to scream and scatter. But the alligator was soon caught up again and the youngsters' shouts quickly turned to laughter.

The politicians puffed out their chests and orated while the crowd listened. Performers sang and a Florida story was read and the audience enjoyed the words they heard.

There was sweet cake with white icing, crunchy buttered popcorn, juicy chili dogs with gobs of mustard and onions and the hungry ate.

Nearly a thousand spectators, a third of them seated in folding metal chairs, watched the ceremony unfold before them and celebrated a birthday. The State of

Florida, it seems, reached 150 years of Statehood on March 3, 1995, and its citizens paused for 50 minutes to acknowledge and celebrate its Sesquicentennial.

And, true to form, the warm Florida sun bathed the entire scene as it unfolded on the brick courtyard sandwiched between the two Capitols, the old one bedecked with red striped awnings and the other the newer high-rise 22 story modern structure.

Amid the celebration, Florida Governor Lawton Chiles and Robert Harris, Vice President of Diversity Development U.S.P.S. and a native Floridian, unveiled and dedicated to the citizens of the State the postage stamp commemorating Florida's 150th Anniversary of Statehood. The first stamp to be issued since the postal increase on January 1 which

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"The Philately Phenomenon"

I have just finished reading a letter from a collector published in *Linn's Stamp News* asking a question about the perforations on the U. S. John Paul Jones stamp (Sc# 1789 b) issued in September 1979. Apparently, the perforation equipment used by the American Bank Note Co. (ABN) got a little tired and perf 12 became perf 11, or something in between. The recently issued Hank Williams stamp experienced much the same fate. These are the complexities of stamp collecting!

Who discovers these rarities? I haven't got the time to check perforations on every stamp which comes my way, especially with the number of issues available today. When we add dye colors to the complexity, different papers, a dot that shouldn't be where it is, an airplane flying upside down, and it is a wonder we philatelists are able to keep our sanity.

The letter in *Linn's* stimulated my thought process. First, the perforation slip-up was caused by ABN, a private stamp contractor, but we aim our criticism at the U.S. Postal Service (USPS.) The USPS must have trouble maintaining its sanity, too, as it tries to keep on top of production problems.

Secondly, there are a lot of errors which are not classified as such. For example, some errors are

called by other classifications, such as, "uninked" or "plate flaw" or "misregistration." So, why are we looking for something that doesn't mean much in the philatelic marketplace, anyway? Well, we may miss seeing an "inverted Jenny" or the upside down "Hammarskjold" which didn't make any difference, anyhow.

There may not be an answer to this dilemma. I can only conclude our hobby is complex for those collectors who enjoy finding philatelic treasures and have the time to search for them. I expect I have about as much chance winning the Lottery as I do finding an error.

For those of us who simply enjoy accumulating, or zeroing in on a pet topic, the hobby is there for the asking. Our hobby is a "Philatelic Phenomenon" and one which allows us to devote as much time as we want to spend and as much money as we can afford while still giving each of us the excitement of amassing a collection according to our own interests. Truly, stamp collecting can be as complex or as basic as we want to make it.

Now, let's see, where is that blemish on the Canada Henry Hudson explorer issue of 1986?

Don Plaskett, President

1995 Officers Elected

The slate of officers for 1995, presented by the Nominations Committee, was unanimously elected during the December Club Meeting. Elected to serve again this year were **President Don Plaskett, Vice President Ken Miller, Treasurer, Pat McDonald and Secretary, Shirley Widd.**

Pay Your Annual Club Dues

Now is the time to pay your annual TS&CC Club dues. You may pay beginning this month, at our April Club meeting or you can mail your check (no cash) to our Treasurer, Pat McDonald, at 606 Terrace St., Tallahassee, FL, 32308, or to our post office box 653, zip code 32302.

Your **1995 DUES STATEMENT** is enclosed in this issue of *The Postscript* to help remind you that it is dues payment time. The amount of dues has not changed and is listed in the STATEMENT. Dues not paid by May 1 are considered delinquent.

Do you know...



What the five numbers in Zip Codes designate? The first digit designates a broad geographical area of the United States ranging from zero for the Northeast to nine for the far West. The next two numbers more closely pinpoint population concentrations and those sectional centers accessible to common transportation networks. The final two digits designate small post offices or postal zones in larger zoned cities.

In The "POST ROAD" Ahead

Meetings are at 7:30 p.m. in the Art Annex of the Senior Citizen Center at corner of N. Monroe and 7th Avenue.

April 11 - "Stamp Printing Methods" APS
Slide Show - Don Plaskett

MAY 9 - "Swapin' 'N Sellin'" - No Meeting
Bring stamps to swap 'n sell.

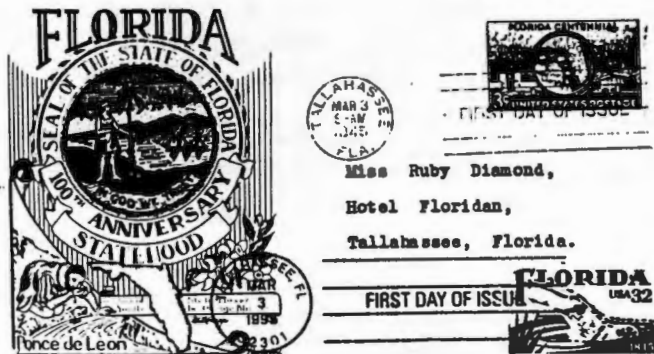
June 13 - "The Confederate Postal System"
Ken Miller

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bears the new 32 cent denomination, it is simply inscribed "FLORIDA 1845" as if we proud Floridians expect others to know and appreciate the significance of that meager inscription.

The United States Postal Service opened its kiosk at 9:45 in the morning to sell the first stamps which were available no place else in Florida nor in the whole wide world except in the Official First Day City and the Capital of Florida - Tallahassee. Philatelists and those who don't even know the meaning of the word, stood patiently in long lines to buy the colorful stamp.

Some stamp purchases were carried away in their original 20 stamp sheets while others were dismembered and stuck on covers which were then struck with the official "First Day of Issue" cancel applied by hard working members of the **Tallahassee Stamp and Cover Club: Ken Collier, Barbara Judd, King Reynolds, Rick Jenks and Ken Miller.**



Cover above displays 100th Anniversary stamp with First Day of Issue Cancel on March 3, 1945 and the 150th Anniversary stamp canceled 50 years later on its First Day of Issue, March 3, 1995.

Ushers circulated throughout the crowd dispensing First Day Ceremony Programs "one to a customer, please." The program pictures a view of the St. Marks Lighthouse on the cover and has a stamp adorning the inside with a First Day of Issue cancel dated March 3, 1995. Serving as ushers were **Tallahassee Stamp and Cover Club members Annabel Horward, Bert Davis, Walter Levy, Homer Black, Steve Walsh, Bill DeGrove and Mike Francis.**

Governor Chiles read a letter from President Bill Clinton who wrote that "Floridians should take unique pride in our rich history...we should look forward to the future with optimism." And we are, Mr. President, we are.

Happy Birthday, Dear Florida, Happy Birthday to You!

Regrettably, A Lost Opportunity...

Misinformation Limits Cover Sales

It's a shame our Club was told we could **not** sell our cacheted covers on March 3rd during the First Day Ceremony for the new Florida Statehood stamp. Had the USPS told us in early February to contact the Florida Department of State when our request to sell covers was made we would have let our original order of 1,000 covers stand.

Instead, when we were told we couldn't sell our covers and, as of February 27 we had only about 44 orders by mail, the printers were told to cut our order down to 500 covers. Even counting those covers that members had signed up to buy, it seemed only about 230 envelopes would be needed to fill all the confirmed orders we had in hand on the first of March.

We did stay with 500 covers because we want some on hand to sell at Springtime Tallahassee on April 1. On March 1, four members met at the Main Post Office to "service" 300 covers including the 70 extras for Springtime sales.

As it turned out, we did sell 200 covers to the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives during the morning of March 3rd and we were able to fill his order "on the spot" while the actual First Day Ceremony was going on. The bottom line is we sold, or will sell, all of the 500 we had printed and we made a profit for the Club but not as much as we could have.

Upon arriving at the ceremony on Wednesday morning, we found several other cachet makers busily buying stamps and servicing their first day covers. When we inquired about why out-of-town venders were allowed to sell covers when our hometown Tallahassee Stamp and Cover Club wasn't, we were then told it was "the Florida Department of State who had responsibility for setting up the venders, not the USPS."

It was a little late to find out we had been misinformed and those of us who were aware of the "snafu" were disappointed and upset to say the least. It was a lost opportunity for our Club which is regrettable, indeed. LB

Happy Birthday TS&CC

Tallahassee Stamp & Cover Club is seven years old in March 1995 so Happy Birthday to all of us, too!



Old "Letter Scale" An Interesting Artifact of Earlier Postal Days

Pictured nearby (Fig. 1) is an illustration of an old Presto "Letter Scale" manufactured by Metal Spec. (ialists) Mfg. Co. of Chicago, Illinois who had applied for a patent. The shape is rather unusual and best guess is it was made sometime in 1932 when the cost of mailing a first class letter weighing one ounce was raised to three cents.

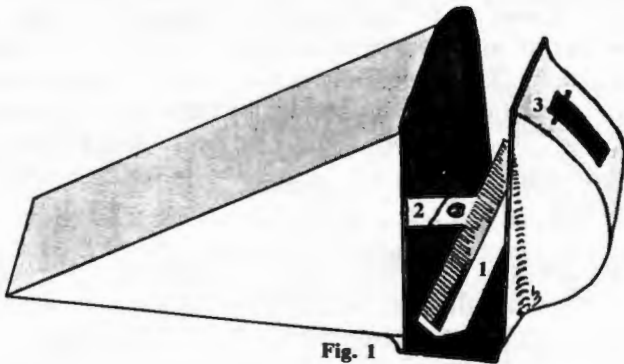


Fig. 1

Mail was stood up vertically in the "tray" (1) which was depressed by the weight of the letters or small envelopes resting on it. The spring lever (2) attached to the trays arm determined how far down the tray

would go. An arm running up from the tray with an indicator on the end (3) "read" the postal rate chart glued to the scale.

The scale measures 5 1/2 inches long by 3 1/4 inches high. The tray is only one half inch wide which restricted how much mail could be weighed at one time. When manufactured, the chart on the scale showed the postal rates to be those in Fig. 2.

LETTER SCALE			
OZ	1ST	AIR	3RD
1	3	5	1 1/2
2	6	10	1 1/2
3	9	15	3
4	12	20	3
5	15	25	4 1/2
		30(?)	(?)

Fig. 2

TS&CC CLUB OFFICERS

President - Don Plaskett - 385-5296
 Vice-President - Ken Miller - 386-4157
 Secretary - Shirley Widd - 997-4385
 Treasurer - Pat McDonald - 224-6590

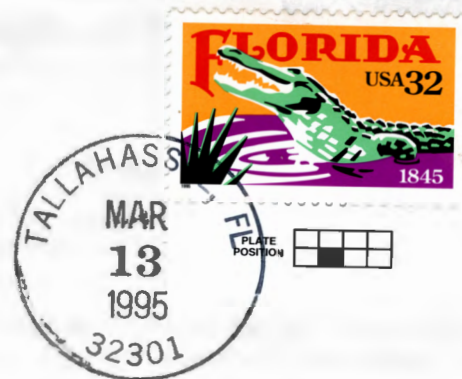
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Philatelic Pheature



Above is another stamp (Sc# 1271) honoring the State of Florida. It is the "Florida Settlement" issue of August 28, 1965, showing a Spanish explorer, Royal flag and ships.. It marked the 400th Anniversary of the settlement of Florida and the first permanent European settlement in the continental U.S. in St. Augustine.



FIRST CLASS MAIL