



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 22, 2013

Contact: Mark Saunders
202-268-6524

mark.r.saunders@usps.gov

Release No. 013-074

usps.com/news



Rarest Stamp Error in U.S. History, Inverted Jenny, Flies Again

\$2 Upside-Down Jenny Reprint Celebrates

Opening of World's Largest Stamp Gallery, National Stamp Collecting Month

A high-resolution image of the stamp is available for media use only by emailing mark.r.saunders@usps.gov.

WASHINGTON — In a move to celebrate the grand opening of the [William H. Gross Gallery](#) at the [Smithsonian National Postal Museum](#) and promote October as National Stamp Collecting Month, the Postal Service dedicated a new \$2 version of the most publicized stamp error in U.S. history today — the 24-cent 1918 Curtiss Jenny Inverted airmail stamp.

The \$12 Stamp Collecting: Inverted Jenny souvenir sheet is available nationwide today by visiting usps.com/stamps, calling 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724) or by visiting Post Offices.

Two eerie occurrences took place surrounding the nation's first airmail flight. The pilot got [lost](#),

flew in the wrong direction and crashed. And due to a printing error of the stamp created to commemorate this historic event, the biplane depicted on the 24-cent Curtiss Jenny airmail stamp was upside down. A sheet of 100 stamps bearing this error was sold to the public. One stamp sold at auction in 2007 for \$977,500.

"The stamp is much more than a misprint," said Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe in dedicating the stamp. "It also symbolizes the Postal Service's pioneering role in American history. Air mail turned out to be one of our most successful innovations. By showing that air travel could be safe and useful, we helped create the entire American aviation industry, which went on to reshape the world."

Pan Am, TWA, American, United, Northwest and other airlines originated as air mail contractors before passenger service began. Additionally to help commercial aviation get off the ground and to speed the mail, the Post Office Department helped develop navigational aids such as beacons and air-to-ground radio. Today the Postal Service continues as the commercial aviation industry's largest freight customer. Mail also flies on FedEx and UPS cargo aircraft.

Visit this [link](#) at the National Postal Museum to see examples of Postal Service innovations.

Joining Donahoe in dedicating the souvenir sheet were NASA Mission Operations and Data Analysis Program Executive Dr. Jeffrey Hayes; Smithsonian's National Postal Museum Director Allen Kane; National Postal Museum William H. Gross Gallery Lead Curator Dr. Cheryl Ganz; and William H. Gross Gallery Curator Daniel Piazza.



Jenny's Story

In 1918, in a rush to celebrate the first airmail flight, the Post Office department issued the 24-cent Curtiss Jenny stamp. Because the design required two colors, sheets were placed on the printing press twice — first to apply red ink and a second time to apply blue ink. This process was given to human error — as stamp collectors at the time well knew.

A Washington, DC, Post Office clerk — who had never seen an airplane — sold a sheet of 100 stamps mistakenly showing the biplane upside down. For nearly a century, stamp collectors have chased the Inverted Jennys and have accounted for nearly all 100 of them.

Customers may view the Stamp Collecting: Inverted Jenny stamps, as well as many of this year's other stamps, on Facebook at [facebook.com/USPSStamps](https://www.facebook.com/USPSStamps), on Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or on the website *Beyond the Perf* at beyondtheparf.com/2013-preview. Beyond the Perf is the Postal Service's online site for information on upcoming stamp subjects, first-day-of-issue events and other philatelic news.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at local Post Offices, at usps.com/stamps or by calling 800-STAMP-24. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in larger envelopes addressed to:

Stamp Collecting: Inverted Jenny Stamp

Special Cancellations
PO Box 92282
Washington, DC 20090-2282

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, there is a 5-cent charge per postmark. All orders must be postmarked by Nov. 22, 2013.

Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog online at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-782-6724 or writing to:

U.S. Postal Service
Catalog Request
PO Box 219014
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

Nine philatelic products are available:



- 580006, [Press Sheet with Die Cuts](#), \$72 (print quantity of 2,500).
- 580008, [Press Sheet without Die Cuts](#), \$72 (print quantity of 3,000).



- 580010, [Keepsake \(Souvenir Sheet & Digital Color Postmark Set\)](#), \$15.95.



- 580016, [First-Day Cover](#), \$2.44.



- 580018, [First-Day Cover \(Full Sheet\)](#), \$14.50.



- 580019, [First-Day Cancelled \(Full Sheet\)](#), \$14.50.



- 580021, [Digital Color Postmark](#), \$3.15.



- 580030, [Ceremony Program](#), \$6.95.



- 580027, [Inverted Jenny Limited Edition](#), \$200 (Limited to 10 per customer). This limited-quantity offering pays tribute to the beloved stamp, taking collectors up close to the intaglio printing process behind the 2013 *Stamp Collecting: Inverted Jenny* stamps.

The set includes: a series of collectible proofs pulled during the time of the 2013 production, showing each intaglio color in isolation; an authentic section of the die wipe used during the press run; one mint and one cancelled sheet of *Stamp Collecting: Inverted Jenny* Forever stamps; a 48-page booklet that reveals the story of the stamp, from how the initial error occurred, to why the Postal Service is issuing the new version; and a protective box that bears an ornamental seal showing the stamp name and biplane in hand-drawn lettering.

Up to 5,000 will be sold. Preorders will be accepted through Oct. 15, 2013, while supplies last, via usps.com/shop or 1 800 STAMP-24 for December delivery.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

###

Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at about.usps.com/news/welcome.htm.

For reporters interested in speaking with a regional Postal Service public relations professional,

please go to about.usps.com/news/media-contacts/usps-local-media-contacts.pdf.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation — 151 million residences, businesses and Post Office™ Boxes. The Postal Service™ receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, *usps.com*®, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500. In 2011, Oxford Strategic Consulting ranked the U.S. Postal Service number one in overall service performance of the posts in the top 20 wealthiest nations in the world. *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic Business* magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for six years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

Follow the Postal Service on twitter.com/USPS and at facebook.com/USPS.