



POSTAL NEWS

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Henry David Thoreau Commemorated on a Forever Stamp Today

CONCORD, MA — The U.S. Postal Service celebrated writer, philosopher and naturalist Henry David Thoreau during the bicentennial year of his birth with a [Forever stamp](#) today. The public is asked to share the news on Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag [#ThoreauStamps](#).

The first-day-issue stamp dedication ceremony took place at the [Walden Pond State Reservation Visitors Center](#). Thoreau, born July 12, 1817, lived at Walden Pond from 1845-1847. His experience there served as the inspiration for his book *Walden*.

The stamp art is an oil-on-panel painting of Thoreau's face based on a famous 1856 daguerreotype by Benjamin Maxham. On the right side of the stamp is Thoreau's signature of his last name. Below the signature is a branch of sumac leaves. [Sam Weber](#) Brooklyn, NY, was the stamp artist. Art director [Greg Breeding](#) of Charlottesville, VA, designed the stamp.

"Thoreau was one of the great thinkers in this country's history on a wide variety of subjects, and the expression on his face in the stamp image captures his introspective and inquisitive nature," said U.S. Postal Service General Counsel and Executive Vice President Thomas J. Marshall. "Thoreau encouraged

everyone to lead more thoughtful and considered lives. Given the pace of today's world, the many demands on our time, and sometimes conflicting priorities, I am sure we could all benefit from his advice.”

Joining Marshall in the dedication were Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary [Matthew Beaton](#); Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner [Leo Roy](#); Select Board Town of Concord Chair [Michael Lawson](#); and [Ed Begley Jr.](#), a board member of the [Walden Woods Project](#), an environmentalist and actor.

“The Walden Woods Project is very pleased by this special Postal Service recognition afforded to Henry David Thoreau for his multi-faceted contributions toward the preservation of nature and the furtherance of human rights,” said Begley. “Thoreau holds a significant place in the history of our country. The commemorative stamp not only celebrates the 200th anniversary of his birth, but reminds us of his continuing influence regarding 21st century global environmental and social reform challenges. It is fitting that the first-day-of-issue for the Thoreau stamp takes place at Walden Pond — the place that inspired him — and the birthplace of the American conservation movement.”

Thoreau's Legacy

With his personal example of simple living, his criticism of materialism, and the questions he raises about the place of the individual in society and humanity's role in the natural world, Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) continues to inspire readers to assert their independence, reinterpret his legacy, and ask challenging questions of their own.

Walden Pond

For two years, two months and two days, Thoreau lived in a one-room house on a pond on the edge of his hometown of Concord, MA, writing prolifically while farming, reading, thinking, taking long walks, and observing the natural world around him. *Walden*, the 1854 book he wrote about his experience, still holds the attention of readers by blending elements of numerous genres to create something complex, eclectic, and unique. Condensing his 26 months at Walden Pond into the events of one year, Thoreau ponders the problems that result from materialism and promotes simplicity as a viable alternative, exhorting people from all walks of life — including himself — to re-examine their misplaced priorities. Adopting a subtly humorous persona to lighten the tone of his social criticism, Thoreau asks timeless questions about balancing the material with the spiritual and the practical against the ideal.

Thoreau's essays, journals, and books offer a rich trove for the thoughtful reader, and every generation finds its own touchstones in his work. His writings about politics and civil disobedience influenced major 20th century activists, his observations about nature anticipated ecology and other sciences, and he has been hailed as a founding father of the environmental movement. As attuned to inward-looking individualism as he was to the tiniest details of the thriving world around him, Thoreau put down hardy roots — and his life still yields its perennial blooms.

With Thoreau's personal example of simple living, his criticism of materialism, and the timeless questions he raises about the place of the individual in society and humanity's role in the natural world, he continues to inspire new generations to assert their independence, reinterpret his legacy, and ask challenging questions of their own.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain first-day-of-issue postmarks by mail. They may purchase new stamps at Post Office locations, at the Postal Store usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in envelopes addressed to:

FDOI – Henry David Thoreau Stamp
USPS Stamp Fulfillment Services
8300 NE Underground Drive, Suite 300
Kansas City, MO 64144-9900

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for postmarks up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, customers are charged 5 cents each. All orders must be postmarked by July 23, 2017.

Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamps and 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

There are seven philatelic products for this stamp issue:

- 475106, Press Sheet with Die-Cut, \$88.20.
- 475110, Digital Color Postmark Keepsake, \$11.95.
- 475116, First-Day Cover, 93-cents.
- 475121, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.64.
- 475124, Framed Art, \$39.95.
- 475130, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.
- 475133, Panel, \$10.95.

Many of this year's other stamps may be viewed on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps or via Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps).

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

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