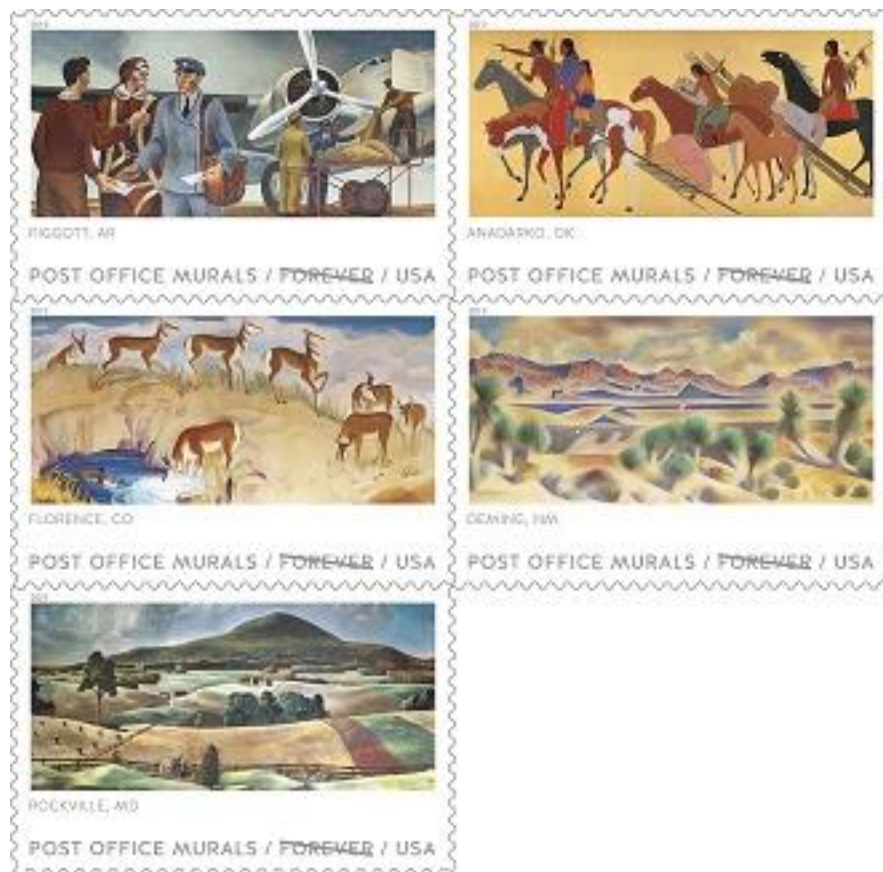


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U.S. Postal Service Honors Post Office Lobby Artwork with Stamps

Stamps Highlight Five Post Office Murals

PIGGOTT, AR — Post Office lobby artwork painted in the 1930s and 1940s was celebrated today with the issuance of the Post Office Murals Forever stamps. The U.S. Postal Service dedicated the stamps today during a first-day-of-issue ceremony at the Piggott Main Post Office in Piggott, AR. The public is asked to share the news on social media using the hashtags **#PostOfficeMurals** and **#MuralStamps**.

“Scores of wonderful murals illuminate Post Office lobbies across the nation and these

stamps help celebrate them as American treasures,” said Pat Mendonca, U.S. Postal Service Senior Director, Office of the Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer, who dedicated the stamps.

“The magnificent Air Mail mural, by Daniel Rhodes, located here at the Piggott Post Office, shows a local letter carrier helping pilots load bags of mail onto their plane. The mural represents postal employees’ commitment to serving our customers and communities across the United States. And that commitment to service continues today,” added Mendonca.

The origin of Post Office murals can be traced back to 1933. That year, in a letter to longtime acquaintance President Franklin D. Roosevelt, artist George Biddle suggested that the U.S. government should commission artists in need of work to enliven the walls of public buildings. Later that year, perhaps spurred by Biddle’s plea, the Roosevelt administration established the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP). Funded by the Civil Works Administration and overseen by the Department of the Treasury, the New Deal program led to the hiring of more than 3,700 artists.

Under PWAP leader Edward Bruce, the artists were encouraged to depict an American scene, a style of painting that eschewed modern trends and focused on the idealized portrayal of daily life in America. In less than a year, the artists created thousands of murals, stand-alone paintings, and sculptures.

Following the expiration of the PWAP in 1934, the U.S. Treasury formed the Section of Painting and Sculpture. Eventually renamed the Section of Fine Arts, the Bruce-helmed initiative sought to brighten newly built Post Office locations and federal buildings. From 1934 through 1943, the Section commissioned more than 1,000 murals. From 1935 through 1939, the Treasury Relief Art Project also funded a small number of murals at existing Post Offices. The buildings were some of the country’s most widely trafficked public spaces, which meant many people could enjoy the murals.

The Section of Fine Arts folded during World War II, but not before commissioning murals for Post Office locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Joining Mendonca in the ceremony was Piggott Postmaster Stephanie N. Jett, Piggott Mayor Travis Williams, Arkansas Parks and Recreation Chairman John Gill and Piggott Elementary School student Brooklyn Harmon.

Also joining in the ceremony was Aaron Rhodes, the son of Daniel Rhodes, the artist who painted the “Air Mail” mural inside the Piggott Post Office.

“My father’s artistic energies found expression in a variety of forms over the course of his career and his Works Progress Administration sponsored murals were his foundation,” said Aaron Rhodes. “His murals depict people like those he knew and identified with growing up in a small midwestern community and were a bridge to his future as a ceramic artist, teacher and author.”

Each of the pane's 10 stamps features a detail of one of five unique murals:

**“Kiowas Moving Camp” (1936)
Anadarko, Oklahoma**

One of the Kiowa Six, a group of 20th-century Native-American artists hailing from Oklahoma, Stephen Mopope (1899–1974) designed a multi-part mural depicting Plains Indian life. Mopope and Kiowa Six artists James Auchiah (1906–1974) and Spencer Asah (ca. 1906–1954) painted 16 murals with tempera paint directly to the plaster walls in the lobby, including “Kiowas Moving Camp.” They can be seen at the Anadarko Post Office in Oklahoma.

**“Mountains and Yucca” (1937)
Deming, New Mexico**

Painted in oil on canvas by Kenneth Miller Adams (1897–1966), “Mountains and Yucca” depicts Cookes Range, located in southwestern New Mexico just north of the Deming Post Office where the mural is displayed. This landscape is rendered in soft colors and features yucca shrubs and trees and other plant life.

**“Antelope” (1939)
Florence, Colorado**

The Section of Fine Arts commissioned artist Olive Rush (1873–1966) to create murals displayed at public buildings in Oklahoma, Colorado, and New Mexico, where she lived. Painted with tempera, “Antelope” features a herd of pronghorn, which are sometimes referred to as American antelope. The mural hangs in the lobby of the Florence Post Office in Colorado.

**“Sugarloaf Mountain” (1940)
Rockville, Maryland**

The work of Judson Smith (1880–1962) appears in Post Office locations in Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. Painted in oil on canvas, “Sugarloaf Mountain” depicts the small peak located near Frederick, Maryland. The Post Office in Rockville, Maryland, where the mural was initially installed is now a police station.

**“Air Mail” (1941)
Piggott, Arkansas**

Daniel Rhodes (1911–1989) created murals that adorn public buildings and Post Office walls in the Midwest. Painted in oil on canvas, “Air Mail” depicts a letter carrier helping pilots load bags of mail onto their plane. The mural, which hangs in the lobby of the Piggott Post Office in Arkansas, is an ode to postal workers’ commitment to serving communities across the United States and beyond.

The Postal Service has committed to the upkeep of these classic paintings and currently has a federal preservation officer and historian to help maintain the beauty of the murals and also educate the public about their place in postal lore. Today, many of these works have been restored and remain on display for the public to enjoy.

Printed underneath each mural is the town or city and state in which the work of art is located. The words “Post Office Murals,” “Forever” and “USA” run along the bottom of the stamps. The stamp issuance includes two of each design. Art director Antonio Alcalá designed the stamps.

Postal Products

Many of this year’s other stamps may be viewed on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or via [Twitter](#). A video of the ceremony will be available on [Facebook.com/usps](#).

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through the Postal Store at [usps.com/shop](#), by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724), by mail through *USA Philatelic*, or at Post Office locations nationwide. Forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

Information on ordering first-day-of-issue postmarks and covers is found at [usps.com/shop](#) under “Collectors.”

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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