

This Day in History... July 7, 2000

World Stamp Expo 2000

World Stamp Expo 2000 opened on July 7, 2000. Several US postal firsts were issued during the show, including the first round, pentagonal, and holographic stamps. Held at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California, the show ran from July 7 to 16, 2000. A total of 26 postal administrations and 107 vendors participated in the show, which planners said would “be one of the most extensive and exciting events of the new millennium.”

The theme of the show was Space Exploration, and the USPS issued a series of stamps along this theme over the course of the show. The first stamp, issued on opening day, was an \$11.75 Express Mail stamp picturing the Earth as a hologram. This issue was America’s first hologram stamp, first round stamp, and first round souvenir sheet. The hologram technique used allows the viewer to see the planet rotate 25 degrees east and west.

A second hologram souvenir sheet was issued the following day. The \$11.75 Landing on the Moon stamp shows the US lunar lander above the Moon’s surface. The Moon is shown twice on the sheet – as the base for the lander and rising behind the horizon. It’s a relatively large stamp – measuring nearly two inches wide. The sheet’s selvage pictures a 1972 photo of the Apollo 16 mission collecting lunar samples near Plum crater.



The first US stamp that was round and had a hologram.

On July 9, the USPS issued the Escaping the Gravity of the Earth hologram stamps paying the \$3.20 Priority Mail rate. One stamp features a computer-generated NASA image, while the other pictures an artist’s depiction of the station. The selvage pictures members of the *Challenger* crew during an October 1984 mission.

On July 10, the Probing the Vastness of Space sheet was issued. Its 60¢ stamps paid the international rate at the time. The sheet’s selvage shows a digitally enhanced image of the Eagle Nebula taken by the Hubble telescope. Each stamp features a different telescope or device used by astronomers to observe our solar system and deep space. These include the Hubble Telescope, the National Science Foundation’s 27-dish Very Large Array radio telescope, the twin domes in Mauna Kea, Hawaii, the white domes at the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory in Chile, the Mount Wilson Observatory in California, and the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico.

The final sheet in the set was issued on July 11. The sheet of five \$1 Exploring the Solar System stamps includes another first – the first pentagon-shaped US stamps. Special perforating dies were molded to give these five stamps their unique look. The selvage shows Saturn with its distinctive rings, and a few of its moons, including Dione. Each of the five stamps features a different representation of the sun. Clockwise, from the top, the stamps show the sun’s corona at the peak of an eclipse, an artist’s representation of the cross-section of the sun’s interior, a computer-enhanced NASA photograph taken from space of a sunrise over Earth, an image recorded from the Skylab space station of a solar eruption, and an Earth-based photograph of the sun shining through a cloud-dotted sky.

On July 11, all of these space stamps were also issued in a special uncut press sheet, giving collectors a chance to own the stamps as they looked when they came off the printing press. If you look closely, you’ll see there’s more selvage area on the press sheet that was cut off the souvenir sheets.

Another special event held in conjunction with World Stamp Expo 2000 was the USPS’s World Kids Congress. About 100 young artists from two-dozen countries attended the show as part of this congress. The Stampin’ the Future stamps were issued at the Congress on July 11, during the expo.

Prior to the stamp show, the USPS announced it’s Stampin the Future design contest for children ages 8-12. Children from the US, Canada, China, Israel, and other countries submitted over 120,000 entries. The children were encouraged to design stamps with their vision of the 21st century. From 110 finalists, four winning illustrations were chosen to be featured on the set of stamps. The winners were Zachary Canter (age 9) of Hawaii, Ashley Young (age 11) of Utah, Morgan Hill (age 9) of New Jersey, and Sarah Lipsey (age 11) of Tennessee.

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