

Building A Valentine's Day Collection

Early Valentine Covers



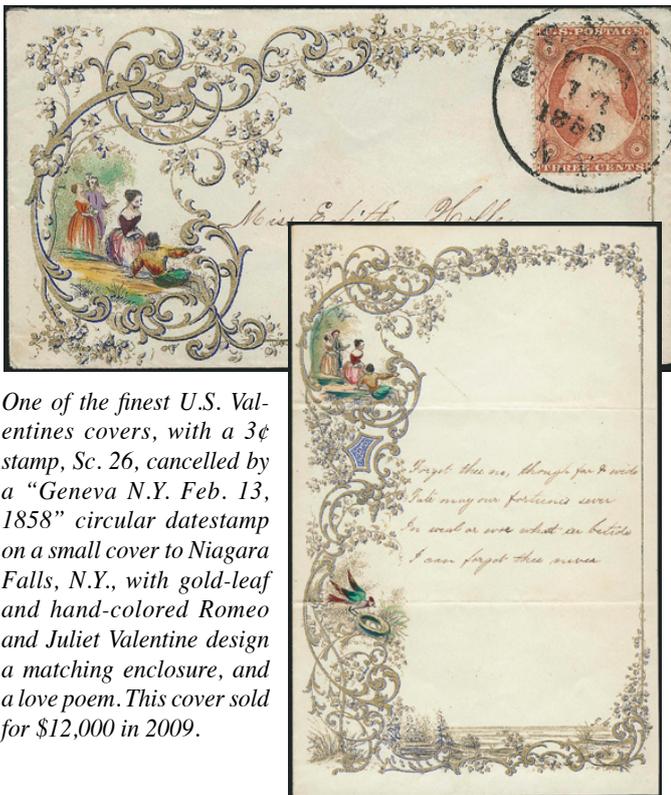
A large Valentine cover with a small Blood's City Despatch of Philadelphia local stamp (Sc. 15L17) acid tied at the top left corner, also with the original multicolored enclosure. The local delivery houses often were used for sending Valentines day greetings.



Another cover delivered locally, this one with a Cummings' City Post, New York, N.Y., 2¢ (Sc. 55L3) "Letter & Heart" stamp on the back of a blue and gold illustrated Valentine cover.



A multicolored Romeo & Juliet Valentine cover with a 1¢ blue (Sc. 63) tied by "Paid" in oval handstamp, also with a red "Boston Mass. Feb. 24" double-circle datestamp.



One of the finest U.S. Valentine covers, with a 3¢ stamp, Sc. 26, cancelled by a "Geneva N.Y. Feb. 13, 1858" circular datestamp on a small cover to Niagara Falls, N.Y., with gold-leaf and hand-colored Romeo and Juliet Valentine design, a matching enclosure, and a love poem. This cover sold for \$12,000 in 2009.



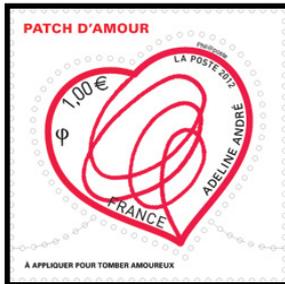
A Civil War era cover with a U.S. 3¢ rose (Sc. 65) tied by a "Washington City D.C. Feb. 10" circular datestamp to a large all-over orange Romeo and Juliet Valentine with a soldier and his lady parting.

Recent Worldwide Valentines Stamps

As reviewed in *Mekeel's & STAMPS* by Associate Editor David A. Kent

Valentines

February 24, 2012



Over in Paris, the stamp department at La Poste headquarters has once again enlisted the talents of one of France's Haute Couture fashion designers to develop a new "love" stamp. This year's artist is Adeline Andre, who calls her creation a "patch of love." The stamps are made of transparent plastic with transparent adhesive on the back. "The idea of a

transparent stamp immediately came to me because it will take on the background color of the envelope or the parcel on which it will be pasted. The heart is the symbol of love," she observed. Adeline Andre joined the Christian Dior studios in 1970, and in 1981 she created her own label.



It's hearts and flowers on Taiwan, as the country's post office encourages people to mail Valentines rather than texting a love message. In explaining the two single stamps, the post office reports "Pink roses symbolize first love and courting, as well as friendliness and a graceful upbringing. An orange rose bud reveals the reticence of first love. The vignette of this stamp brings warmth and joy to one's heart." The two stamps are designed as a se-tenant gutter pair. Embossing and spot varnish techniques are employed in



printing. The gutter, featuring two hearts shot through with Cupid's arrow, symbolizes mutual love.

The souvenir sheet includes a heart-shaped stamp with two pale orange roses to signify mutual love and affection. The pink background along with the wording "Happy Valentine's Day" offers blessings to all of the world's lovers. The souvenir sheet is printed in scented ink—a first for Taiwan.

Ireland's seasonal stamp illustrates the end result of all these love messages, the wedding. Designer Steve Simpson



used a photograph by Harry Weir for the stamps, which were produced in booklets of ten.



Finland's Valentine's Day stamps were designed by Paivi Unenge, a Finnish illustrator living in Sweden. The booklet, called "I Heart You!" contains six self-adhesive stamps with designs including little girls, birds, pets, and, naturally, hearts. "The heart symbolizes friendship—be it between friends or lovers. Friendship is vital, and friends carry all joys and sorrows. I hope that these cheerful and colorful stamps bring joy to people in the middle of the darkest winter," says the artist.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Love, Friendship and Beyond

February 18, 2011

There was a time, not that long ago, when the heart-shaped Love stamp represented the latest in philatelic artistic design. Now it seems humdrum, almost boring.



Over in Paris, at La Poste headquarters, they seem to have run out of French haute couture fashion designers and have called on Italian artist Maurizio Galante to create this year's Love stamps. Galante, however, apparently believes in the do-it-yourself movement and has prepared a design that you can color any way you want (the pen down in the corner encourages you to do so). The heart-shaped stamp is sold in a miniature sheet of five stamps and seven "suggestions" on how you may wish to color your own stamps. La Poste does not comment on

whether a box of crayons is included with each sheet.

If you are the old-fashioned “carve your initials in a tree” type, you may prefer Galante’s other design, a metallic red heart that you can actually carve with your initials. It brings up the question of whether a romantically-carved used copy is more desirable than a never-carved mint copy.

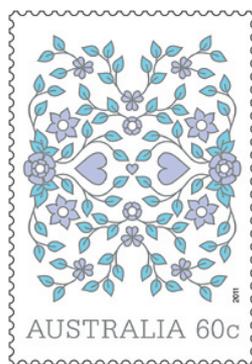


The Finnish post office goes out on a limb with their stamps. The miniature sheet is titled “Branches of Friendship,” since Valentine’s Day is known as Friendship Day in Finland. The stamps, designed by Janne Harju, show happy bird-like characters in their colorful nests at the ends of tree branches. The open design of the five die-cut stamps in the miniature sheet stands out from traditional stamps. The widest stamp in the miniature sheet is more than 4 inches long.



These exotic designs make Jan Konarzewski’s “I Love You” acrobatic airplane from Poland seem tame by comparison. The print run, says the Polish post office, is “millions, repeatable.”

After all this, the hearts and flowers on Rachelle Flynn’s Australian stamps offer a retreat to a welcome old tradition. Red roses spell out “Love,” while ribbons, paper lace, cut-out flowers, doves and cupids are all popular holdovers from the Victorian era.



So many creative choices for sending greetings to your loved ones this year.

Valentines and Fairies

February 19, 2010



In Finland, Valentines are brought to you by fairies, and this year’s stamps are the creations of artist Minni Havas. Among the fairies cavorting about the sheet of self-adhesive stamps, amid butterflies and flower blossoms, are the Heart Fairy, Violin Fairy and Star Fairy.

Havas also designed Valentine postcards and illustrated stationery for the Finnish post office.

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of heart-shaped Valentine stamps, the French post office turned to Paris’ oldest “haute couture” fashion house, Lanvin, for new designs. The firm’s artistic director, Alber Elbaz, created two versions of a Valentine heart.



The “Red Lanvin Heart” pictures a woman lost in a crowd of bow ties, while the “Purple Lanvin Heart” features the sun and a rather strange sketch of a woman. Both are sold in highly-decorative sheetlets of five self-adhesive stamps.

Jeanne Lanvin (1867-1946) began selling women's and children's clothing in 1889, and opened her first boutique in Paris in 1909. She soon expanded into home decor, men's wear, furs and lingerie. Her most significant expansion was the creation of the line of Lanvin perfumes in 1924.

The introduction of her signature fragrance, Arpege, in 1927 was inspired by the sound of her daughter's practicing scales—an arpeggio—on the piano. A later perfume, My Sin, is even better known.

The Lanvin line gained some attention in this country last year when Michelle Obama was photographed wearing a pair of expensive Lanvin sneakers.

To celebrate the firm's 120th anniversary, Elbaz has also designed a limited-edition collection of pencils and notebooks, all embossed with the classic Lanvin logo, along with a set of three ceramic hearts. These were first placed on sale at the post office on the Rue des Mathurins in Paris, and are offered in the online store at La Poste's website.

Love, American Style

The United States Postal Service issued its first Love stamp in 1973, Scott 1475, using the block letter "LOVE" design of

Robert Indiana. Since then a variety of themes and designs have been used to portray Love.



1973, Sc. 11475



1982, Sc. 1951



"Puppy Love"
1986, Sc. 2202



1988, Sc. 2378 & 2379—for Wedding Invitations and reply envelopes, before separate Wedding stamps were produced by the USPS.



1990, Sc. 2440



1992, Sc. 2618



1995, Sc. 2957 & 2958, Cherubs by Raphael, from the Sistine Chapel



2001, Left, Sc. 3496 (a love letter from John Adams to Abigail Smith) and right, Sc. 3499 (a love letter by Abigail Smith, later Abigail Adams to John Adams)



“Spread the Love” With Valentine’s Postmarks

Each year *Mekeel’s & STAMPS Magazine* alerts our readers to the availability of Valentines Day cancellations from post offices

across the United States, and how to obtain them. Here’s a sampling from a March 23, 2009 *Mekeel’s & Stamps* article.

Have Your Valentine Cards Play Post Office

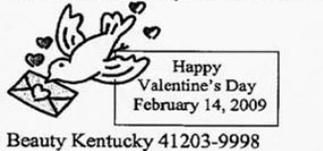
More than a dozen Post Offices in communities with love-themed names across America are offering special postmarks for Valentine’s Day that will make the envelope just as much of a treasured keepsake as its contents.

Customers should enclose stamped, pre-addressed valentines into a Priority Mail or Express Mail envelope or box addressed to: Postmaster, Valentine Remailing, City, State ZIP Code (see listing below)

cluding Argentina, Australia, Italy, England, Ethiopia, China, Zimbabwe and Kenya.

For the 15th consecutive year, the Romeo, MI, and Juliette, GA, Post Offices continued their alliance, which offers a Valentine’s Day pictorial postmark featuring the theme of Romeo and Juliet. To receive this identical-dual cancellation, enclose your stamped, addressed valentines in a larger envelope, and mail to Romeo and Juliette Valentine Cancellation, Postmaster, 356 Bowdoin, Juliette GA 31046-9998.

Celebrate the Beauty of Love Station



Beauty Kentucky 41203-9998



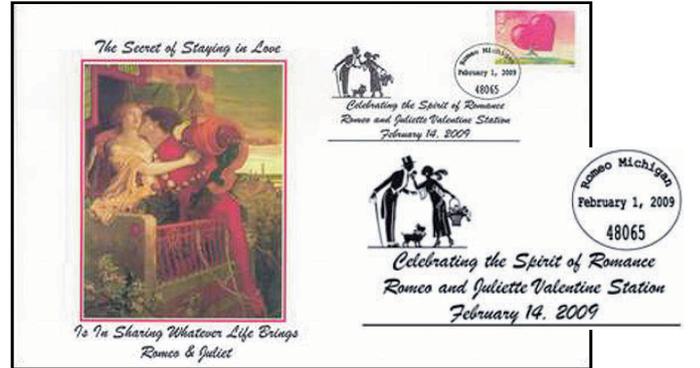
Bliss, NY 14024
Not shown, Bliss, ID 83314



Deary ID 83823



Eros, LA 71238



Romeo, MI 48065



Hartville, WY 82215



Heart Butte, MT 59448



Loving, NM 88256



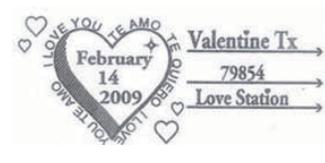
Loveville, MD 20656



Loving, TX 76460



Romance, AR 72136



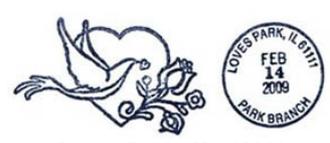
Valentine, TX 79854



Valentines, VA 23887



Loveland CO 80538



Loves Park, IL 61111



Valentine, NE 69201



Honey Grove, PA 17035

Loveland postmarks more than 200,000 cards and letters each year from all 50 states and more than 100 countries in-