

North American MAXIMAPHILY

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QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MACSU

The Maximum Card Study Unit of America



Postcard: Thor E Gyger, #286, Printed in Switzerland
Stamp: 22 cent Season's Greetings, Poinsettia, Scott # 2166
Postmark: Brooklet Grand Opening Station (pictorial)
Brooklet, GA December 20, 2000

Table of Contents

Letter From the President	2
Vintage Swiss Floral Post Cards as Base for Maximum Cards	3
Fun with Maxicards	9
Card Critique	10
Butchered Cancellations	11
Travel and Maximum Cards	12
Recent Realizations.....	15
MACSU Membership	19

Message from the President

Welcome to our fourth “free” edition of North American Maximaphily, the quarterly journal of the Maximum Card Study Unit (MACSU). With the Thor E. Gyger poinsettia card on the cover, I want to wish you a Happy Holiday Season! Our first article takes a look at collecting maximum cards with a specific postcard publisher as the postcard base. The vintage floral postcards of the Swiss postcard publisher, Thor E. Gyger, are featured. In our 2011 journals we have begun several regular features and they are again included in this publication. “Fun with Maxi Cards” looks at postmark strikes whose positioning will make you smile. “Card Critique” will let you decide which of two very similar cards correctly adheres to the FIP standards of maximum cards. “Butchered Cancellations” will once again look at another one of the numerous ways that your cancellation requests can be messed up by inattentive postal clerks. “Travel and Maximum Cards” again highlights how a maximaphilist can add to his/her collection while on vacation.

In last quarter's journal, I mentioned the need for growing the number of maximum card collectors. With this goal in mind, MACSU will have a presence at the upcoming AmeriStamp & Southeastern Stamp Expo which will be held in Atlanta on January 27-29. MACSU will host a booth that will help to spread the philatelic fun of collecting maximum cards. If you come to this expo, please be sure to come by our booth (#R). The AmeriStamp Expo will have over 70 dealers and 250 exhibit frames. There will be at least one maximum card exhibit, a four frame exhibit entitled, “Celebrate the Century with Maximum Cards”.

Our journal is looking for your help and input. We are always looking for articles for the journal. We would like to see scans of your recent realizations. Your ideas and feedback would also be much appreciated. Please write or email us.

This MACSU Journal is again being offered to you at no cost. However, this “deal” won't last much longer. Please consider joining MACSU. An annual cost of \$12 can't be beat. Please check out the last page of this journal for membership information.

MAXIMUM CARD STUDY UNIT OF NORTH AMERICA

The Maximum Card Study Unit (MACSU) is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the creation, collection, exchange, enjoyment, display, and study of Maximum Cards, by spreading the knowledge of Maximaphily among its members. The activities of MACSU are planned and carried on entirely by the volunteer services of its officers and members. MACSU is Affiliate # 106 of the American Philatelic Society, and Chapter # 67 of the American First Day Society.

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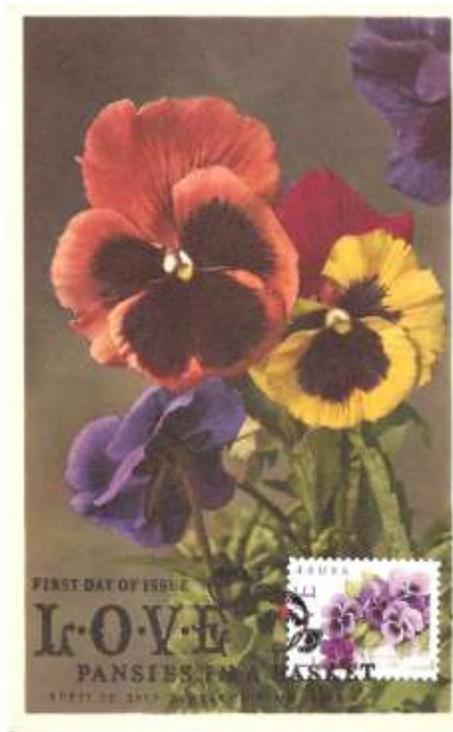
Vintage Swiss Floral Postcards
As Base for Maximum Cards
By Terry Watson

Thor E. Gyger was the son of an early Alpine photographer and publisher of many fine Alpine view postcards. Thor took up his father's trade and also produced many postcards with views of the Alps. He is also noted for a very large set of flower postcards. These postcards presented colorful images of flowers on a dark background. This article will explore their use as the postcard base for maximum cards.

Some maximaphilists prefer vintage postcards for their realizations. This may be because of the fact that older cards are perceived as having a greater monetary value and thus somehow make the card more valuable. Other creators of Maximum Cards prefer vintage cards for the fact that their matte stock printing is more likely to accept a postal cancellation strike than a glossy modern card. While my preference is for the use of modern postcards with modern stamps, Thor Gyger florals are an exception. I relish the opportunity to realize maximum cards using his 70 year old postcards. Two 2010 USPS floral stamp issues that were realized on vintage Swiss Thor Gyger postcards are pictured below.

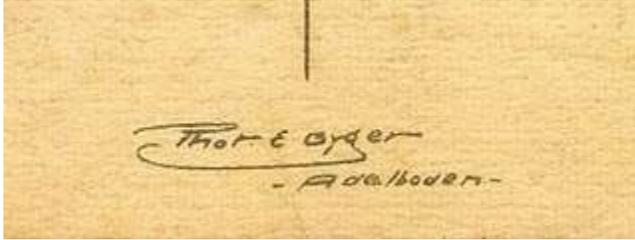


Postcard: Gyger & Klopfenstein #1005
Stamp: Year of the Tiger Scott # 4435
Postmark: Lunar New Year Bazaar Station
Oakland, CA 94612 2/7/2010



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #3127
Stamp: Love: Pansies in a Basket
Scott #4450
Postmark: Official FDC (pictorial)
Kansas City, MO 64108 4/22/2010

In my research, I have not been able to find the exact number of floral cards that were published by Mr. Gyger, but I did find a website that had 62 different floral cards of his for sale. There could quite well be many more botanical cards that were published by him. In my collection of flora realizations using Gyger postcards, I have found four different backings, suggesting at least four different publication series. All four backings contain his signature and the Swiss town of Adelboden.



Gyger's signature is located in the lower center portion of the address side of his cards.

All of the Thor Gyger postcards were printed in Switzerland, but some seem to have been distributed in the United States by Alfred Mainzer in New York as his name, address and logo (ALMA) appear on the left edge of the card's address side in one edition of these postcards. Two of the ALMA distributed postcards are featured below.



Postcard: T Gyger - Alfred Mainzer (ALMA) #1005
Stamp: Spring Garden Flowers bklt. Scott #2761 Daffodil
Postmark: Rhode Island Convention Station Providence, RI 2/24/1994

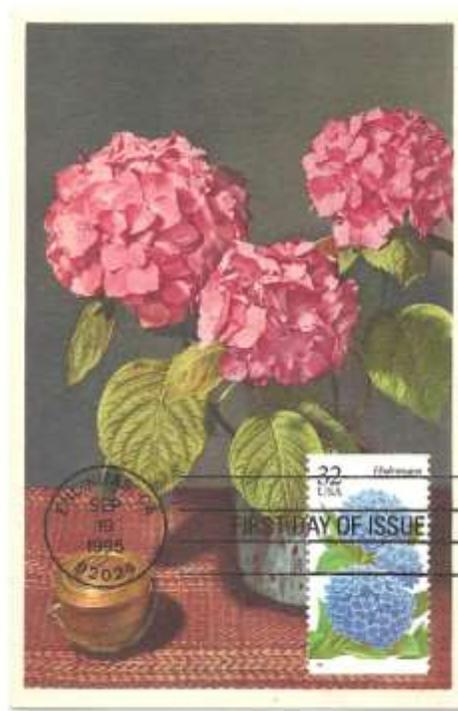


Postcard: T Gyger - Alfred Mainzer (ALMA) #258
Stamp: Spring Garden Flowers bklt. Scott #2763 Iris
Postmark: Iris Festival Station (pictorial) Ponca City, OK 4/29/1994

Thor E. Gyger postcards serve as a great maximum card base for the U.S. Postal Services' Garden Flower booklet series. Five Spring Garden Flowers were featured in 1993 (Scott 20064a). Five Summer Garden Flowers were featured in 1994 (Scott #2833a). In 1995 stamps of Fall Garden Flowers were issued (Scott #2997a), while the Winter Garden Flowers booklet (Scott #3029a) was issued in 1996.



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #950
Stamp: Summer Garden Flowers (bkt)
 Scott #2995 Gladiola
Postmark: Official 4 bar FDC
 Cincinnati, OH 4/28/1994



Postcard: Gyger & Klopfenstein #1473
Stamp: Fall Garden Flowers (bkt)
 Scott #2996 Hydrangea
Postmark: Official 4 bar FDC
 Encinitas, CA 9/19/1995



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #786
Stamp: Spring Garden Flowers Scott #2764, Iris
Postmark: Official 4 bar FDC Spokane, WA May 15, 1993

Poor cancellation strikes are the bane of maximaphilists. Dark backgrounds usually make postmark strikes even more problematic. However, the matt stock of these cards usually leads to legible cancellations. The two Thor Gyger Tulip postcards pictured below both have very crisp cancellations, despite one of them being in red ink and the other one using black ink on a black postcard background. Both cards have used the 29 cent Tulip stamp from the 1993 Spring Garden Flowers issue.



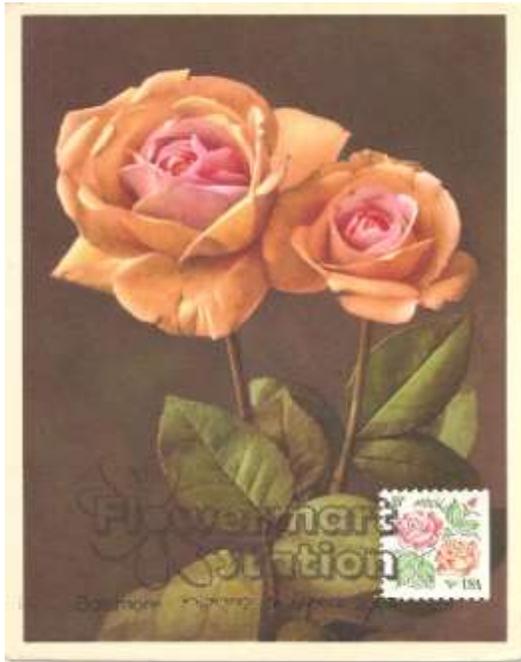
Postcard: Thor E. Gyger – ALMA #1065
Stamp: Spring Garden Flowers bklt.
 Scott # 2762, Tulip
Postmark: Tulip Station (pictorial)
 McDermott, OH 4/14/1994



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #3240
Stamp: Spring Garden Flowers bklt.
 Scott # 2762, Tulip
Postmark: Towsontown Spring Festival Station
 Towson, MD 5/4/2003

Not being a serious deltiologist or a graphics authority, I can not give accurate information on the printing process of Thor E. Gyger cards. Several internet sites offered differing printing processes for these cards. One site stated, “The printing process seems to be a blend of lithography and photography and may be a process called photochromie, used in the past by some European printers to create high quality postcards”. Another site stated that the cards were printed using the color gravure” process. I would welcome authoritative feedback on the printing process of these cards.

While the vast majority of these Swiss flora postcards are of the standard (3 ½” x 5 ½”) size, some Continental size cards were manufactured. The two scans on the next page picture the two different sized rose postcards, both cards using a 1978 issued Rose definitive.



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger Gr. 1067
Continental-sized (4" x 6")
Stamp: Rose definitive from booklet
Scott # 1737
Postmark: Flowermart Station (pictorial)
Baltimore, MD 5/4/2007



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #1998
Standard-sized (3 1/2" x 5 1/2")
Stamp: Rose definitive from booklet
Scott # 1737
Postmark: Texas Rose Festival (pictorial)
Tyler, TX 10/16/1993

My most recent realization using a Thor Gyger postcard was the strawberry stamp from this past summer's Garden of Love issue.



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #706 **Stamp:** Strawberry from Garden of Love issue, Scott # 4539
Postmark: official, 4 bar FDC, Crestwood, KY, May 23, 2011

Others have seen the maximum card potential of Thor Gyger postcards. I have obtained maximum card realizations using Thor Gyger botanical postcards from several countries, including Belgium, the United Nations, and an eight card set from Austria that affixed a set of 1954 semi-postal stamps to Gyger postcards. Scans of a few of these can be found below.



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger # 2967
wheat, corn-flower & corn-poppy
Stamp: Scott # 23
Postmark: UN, FDC, New York 2/11/1954



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #1795 Edelweiss
Stamp: Scott # B244
Postmark: Graz, Austria 11/22/1054



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger #2362
Rhododendron, Edelweiss & Gentiana
Stamp: Scott # B240
Postmark: Graz, Austria 11/22/1954



Postcard: Thor E. Gyger # 614
Blue Thistle
Stamp: Scott # 469
Postmark: Gent, Belgium 4/22/1950 ?

Fun with Maxicards

Maximum card collectors are at the mercy of postal clerks hundreds of miles away when we send off cards requesting that special cancellation that will tie the stamp to the card. We pray that these public servants will give thoughtful deliberation to the strike location, placing the cancellation in the exact location that will be most visually appealing. What we get is sometimes not exactly what we were hoping for; cancellations over a dark portion of the card or a cancel that completely misses the stamp. Occasionally we are surprised to receive an entertaining strike, if not that perfect cancellation we had envisioned. Below are three cancellation strikes that turn out to be fun.



Figure 1 Scott # 1886 Elk 10/1/08 Pringle, SD



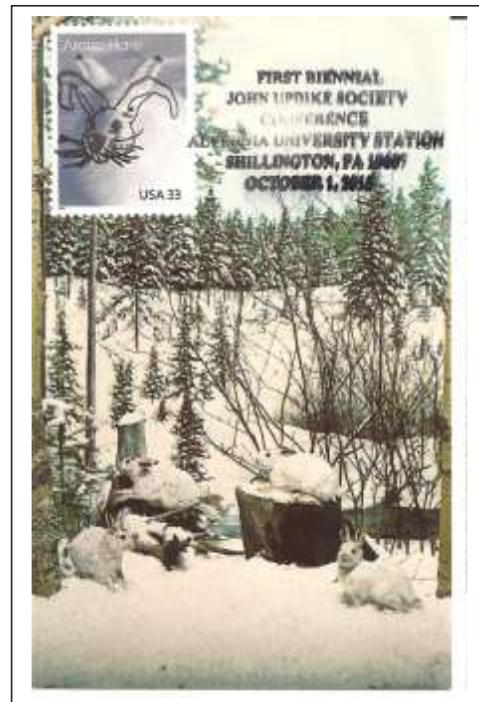
Figure 2 Scott # 3910b Chrysler Bldg 5/27/05 NY, NY

The elk maximum card (Figure 1) has received a pictorial, “Elk Capital Station” cancellation of an elk head that has been “strategically” placed on the shoulders of the elk pictured on this Nature Press postcard. In Figure 2, the “Chrysler Building 75th Anniversary Station” has tied this Modern Architecture stamp with the pictorial image of the Chrysler Building placed almost exactly in the position of the building on the postcard.

The Arctic Hare maximum card (Figure 3) has a stamp from the 1999 Arctic Animals issue affixed to a postcard of a diorama in Michigan’s Call of the Wild Museum. The lengthy “First Biennial John Updike Society Conference Alvernia University Station” cancellation nevertheless includes a pictorial rendition of a rabbit that has been squarely placed over the hare’s face on the stamp.

The more I think about these cards, the more I think that maybe mischievous postal clerks did give considerable thought to the placement of these cancellations.

Figure 3
Scott # 3288 Arctic Hare
10/1/10 Schillington, PA



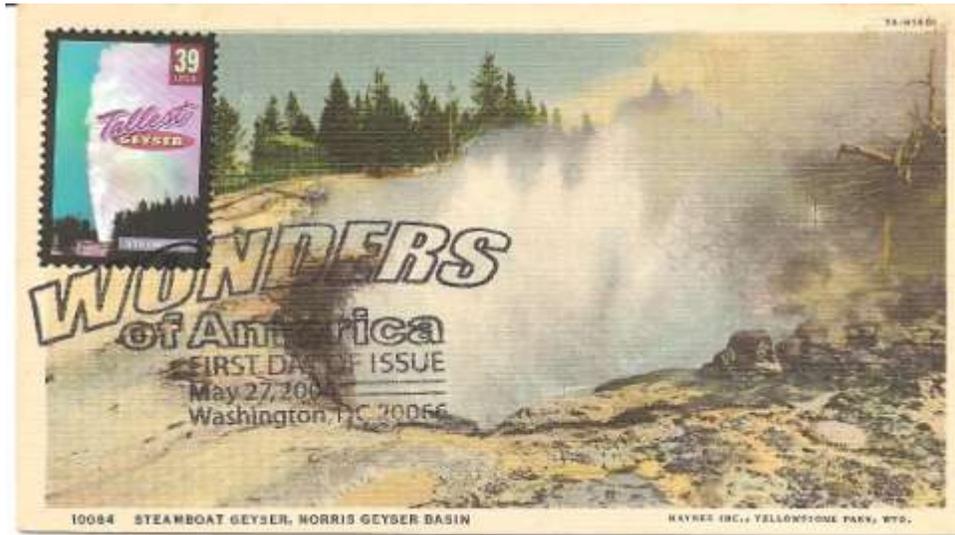
Card Critique

Which card do you want?

The two linen postcards used to realize the two below cards are almost identical. The identical stamp was used. Only the postmark is different.

Stamp: Steamboat, Tallest Geyser; from the Wonders of America issue; Scott # 4059

Postcards: C.T. Art-Colortone, Curteich & Co. (linen era)



Postmark: Official FDC, Washington, DC, May 27, 2006

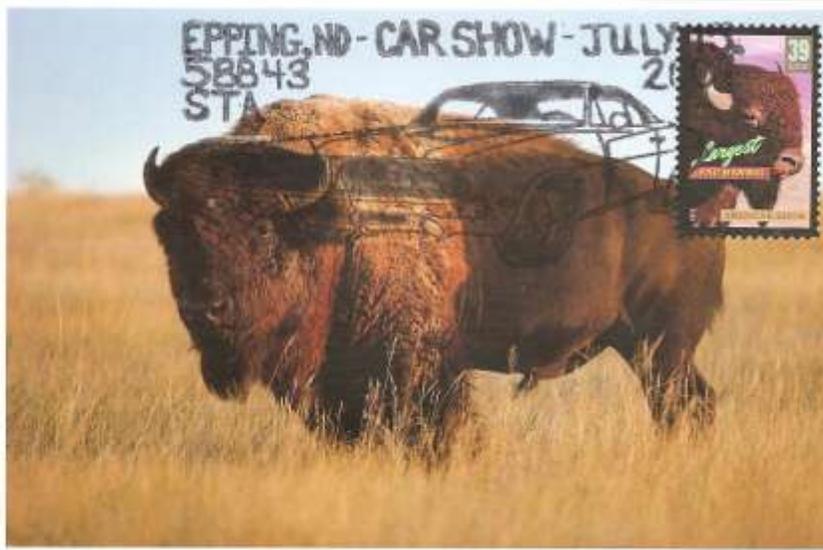


Postmark: Regular, four-bar hand cancel; Yellowstone National Park, WY, August 11, 2008

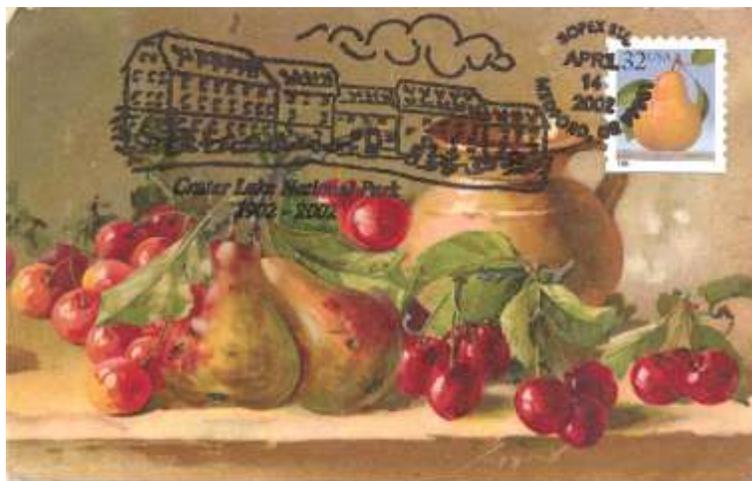
Which one do you want in your collection? It depends. If you are a First Day of Issue collector, you obviously want the first card with its crisp official FDC cancel. However, if you are a maximum card collector, you would want the second card. Although its postmark is a standard, four-bar hand cancel that was franked more than two years after the stamp was issued, its place concordance of Yellowstone National Park renders it correct according to the International Federation of Philately (FIP).

Butchered Cancellations

In our last three journals we have addressed three ways in which our requests for cancellations can be “butchered”. Multiple cancellation strikes, strikes that completely miss the stamp, and cancellations that are so large and “busy” that they virtually obliterate the stamp and card, are three frustrating events that maximaphilists face as they realize cards. This quarter we will look at a fourth frustration—postal clerks giving you a cancellation other than the one your requested. In the first example below, I sent off for the pictorial “Buffalo Trails Day” cancellation that is depicted to the right of the card. This would have been a very nice “triple” with a buffalo depicted on the stamp, the card, and the cancellation. What I received was a “Car Day Station” that pictured a muscle car of some description. I do not know why a postal employee would think this to be appropriate.

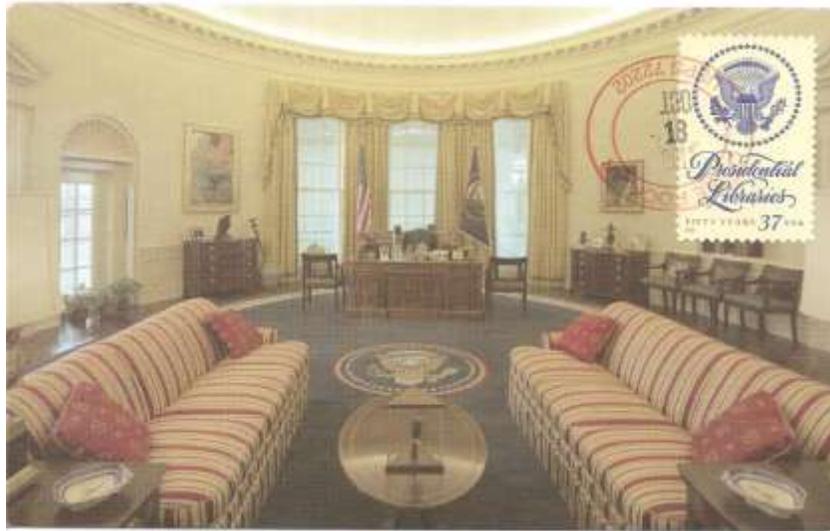


In the second example, I requested a “Pear Blossom” machine cancel which would have been another very nice “triple” with a pear featured on the stamp, card, and cancellation. For some inexplicable reason, the postal clerk of Medford, Oregon instead decided to give me a nice, but not so concordant SOPEX Station postmark commemorating the centenary of Crater Lake National Park.



Travel and Maximum Cards

A camping trip to the Ozarks this past summer provided opportunities to add to my collection of maximum cards of places that I have visited. On the drive to the Ozarks we stopped and spent a day in Little Rock. A visit to the Clinton Presidential Center was very interesting and a postcard of the mock Oval Office in the museum reminded me that I had a few mint Presidential Libraries stamps from 2005 that would be quite concordant. Upon my return home, I affixed this stamp to the Oval Office card and sent it to the Little Rock postmaster for a postmark.

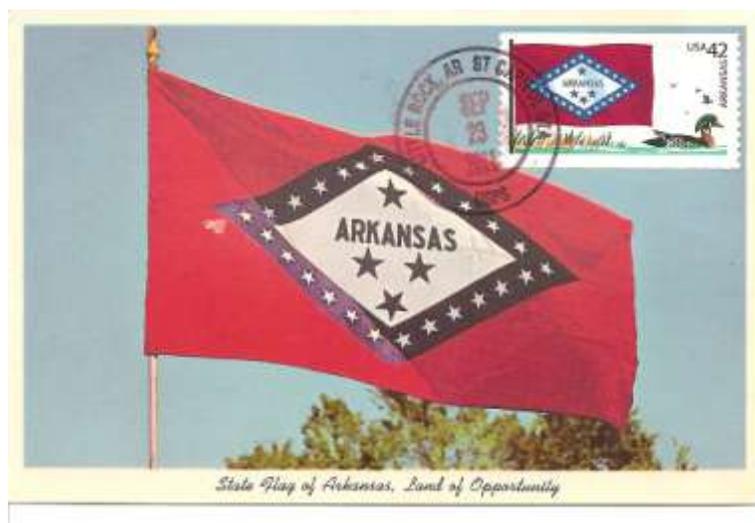


Stamp: Presidential Libraries, Scott # 3930

Postmark: red, double circle-date hand killer, Little Rock, AR 10/18/2011

Postcard: Clinton Presidential Center, Clinton Foundation

While in Little Rock, we also visited the Arkansas Capital building. In the basement of the rotunda there was the State Capital Station post office. I made a mental note of this and when I returned home, I realized an Arkansas flag card using this post office's highly concordant cancel.

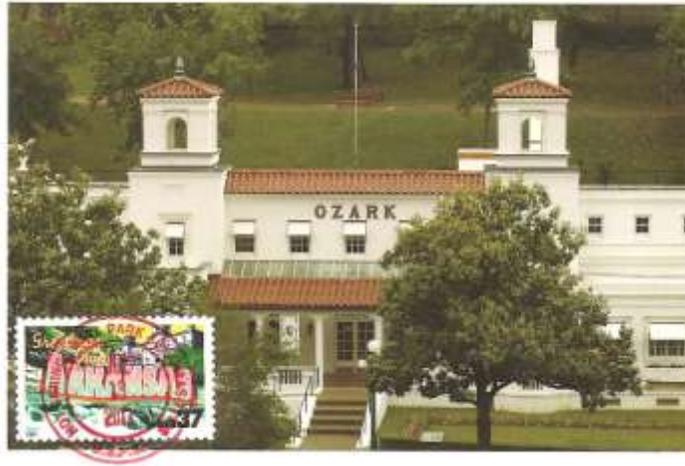


Stamp: Arkansas Flag from the Flags of our Nation issue; Scott # 4278

Postmark: red, circle-date hand killer, Little Rock, Ar State Capital Station, 9/23/2011

Postcard: State Flag of Arkansas; C.B.S. Card Service

Although it was over 100 degrees on the day we visited Hot Springs National Park, I was able to realize a “cool” maximum card of the Ozark Bathhouse. It is always more enjoyable to realize a card on location than to send off for a cancellation at a later date. Anticipating a realization, I brought one Greetings from Arkansas stamp along with me on the trip. I spent a half hour trying to find the nearest post office. Imagine my surprise when I finally found the Hot Springs National Park Post Office less than 100 yards from this bathhouse. With only one stamp on one very glossy postcard, I asked the postal clerk for a bulls eye postmark, ensuring that there would be no smudges. Not quite as attractive, but...

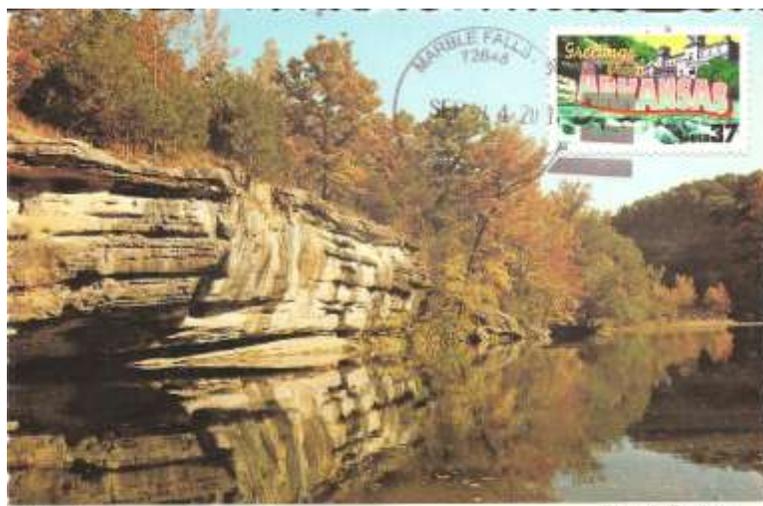


Stamp: Greetings from Arkansas, Scott # 3699

Postmark: red, circle-date killer, Hot Springs National Park, AR; July 13, 2011

Postcard: Ozark Bathhouse, Klass Photography Publishing

Our primary focus of this trip was to canoe down the Buffalo River which has been designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. Unfortunately, upon our arrival we found that the river was too low for a float trip. But a postcard that pictures the same spot on the river as is featured on the left portion of the stamp was purchased and upon my return home I sent off for a cancellation from a nearby town.



Stamp: Greetings from Arkansas, Scott # 3699

Postmark: four bar, circle-date killer; Marble Falls, AR Sept. 14, 2011

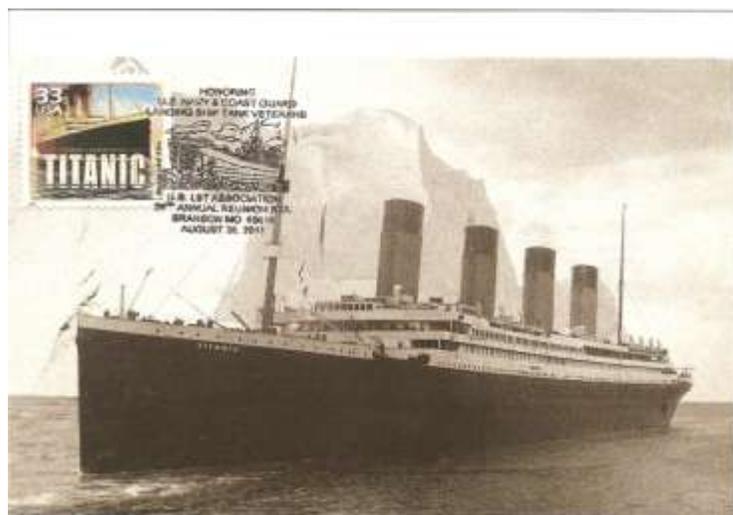
Postcard: Reflections in an Ozark River, Ozark Postcard Publishers

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, located a few miles outside of Eureka Springs, Arkansas is a 459 acre facility dedicated to the rescue of abused, neglected or unwanted Big Cats. On our visit to this facility we saw lions, tigers, ligers, cougars, lynx, servals and other animals. Knowing that the Saving Endangered Species stamp which would feature a tiger would be issued soon, I purchased tiger postcards from Turpentine Creek's gift shop. Once the stamp was issued, I affixed it to these postcards and sent them off for cancellations from the Eureka Springs Post Office.



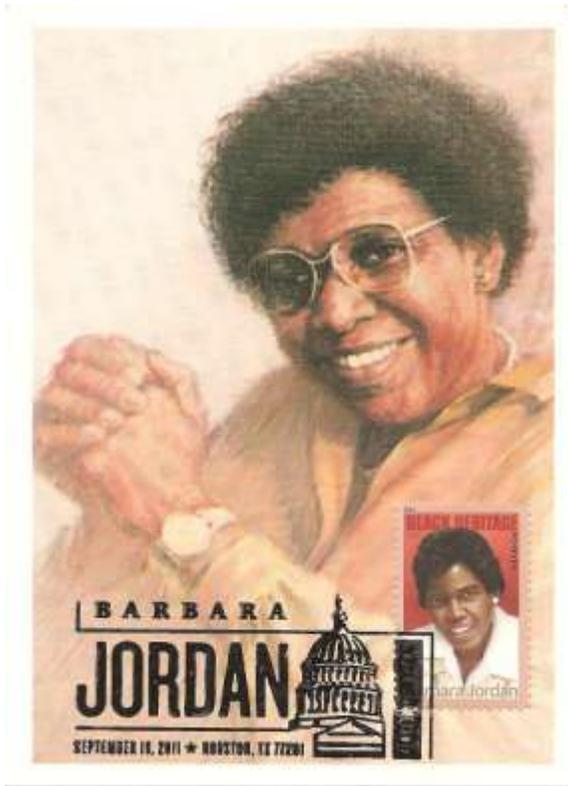
Stamp: Saving Endangered Species, semi-postal of Tiger; Scott # B4
Postmark: four bar, circle-date killer; Eureka Springs, AR Oct. 28, 2011
Postcard: TCWR

Prior to my departure on trips, I have made plans to visit specific sites in which I know there will be good possibilities for the realization of maximum cards. Very frequently, however, my travels will give me unanticipated opportunities for realizing cards. One such occasion occurred when we crossed the border into Missouri and visited Branson. Who would know that in land-locked Missouri one would find a museum dedicated to the Titanic. Advertised as “the worlds largest Titanic Museum Attraction”, the museum gave me the another maximum card souvenir of my Ozark vacation.

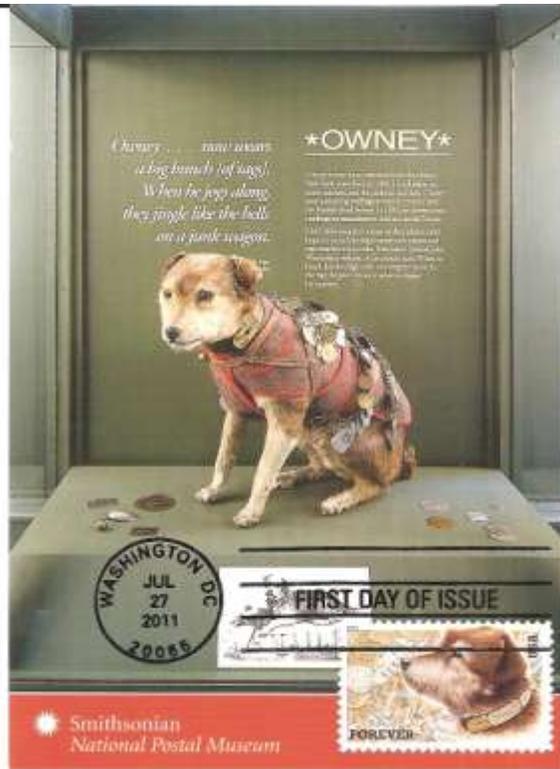


Stamp: Titanic, from the Celebrate the Century series, Scott # 31911
Postmark: pictorial, U.S. LST Ass'n Reunion Station, Branson, MO 8/28/11
Postcard: Titanic, Tushita GmbH

Recent Realizations



Stamp: Barbara Jordan, Black Heritage, Scott # 4565
Postmark: official FDC, pictorial cancellation
 Houston, TX 9/16/11
Postcard: Melrose Square Publishing Co.



Stamp: Owey, the Postal Dog, Scott # 4547
Postmark: official 4 bar, FDC, Washington, DC
 7/27/11
Postcard: National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Inst.



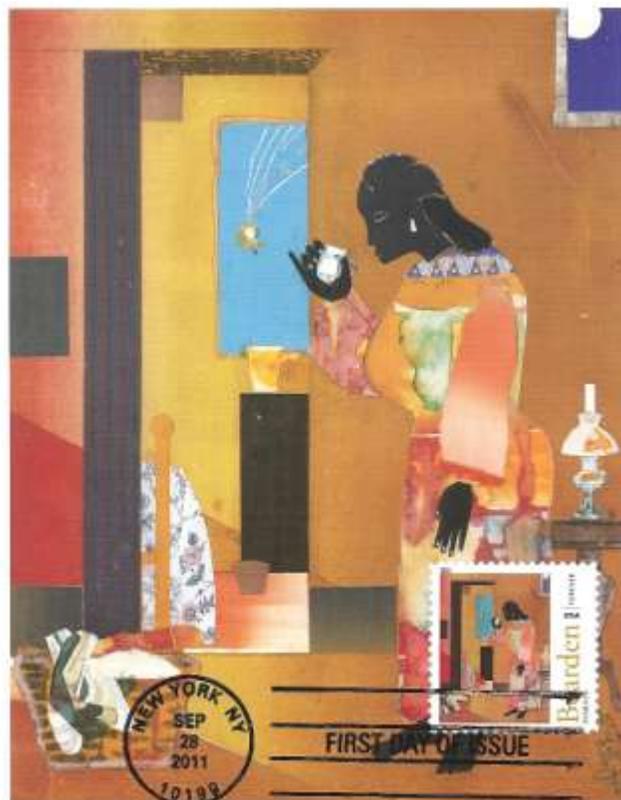
Stamp: Saving Endangered Species (tiger), Scott # B4
Postmark: Tiger Station, Blanket, TX 9/22/11
Postcard: Running Press Book Publishers



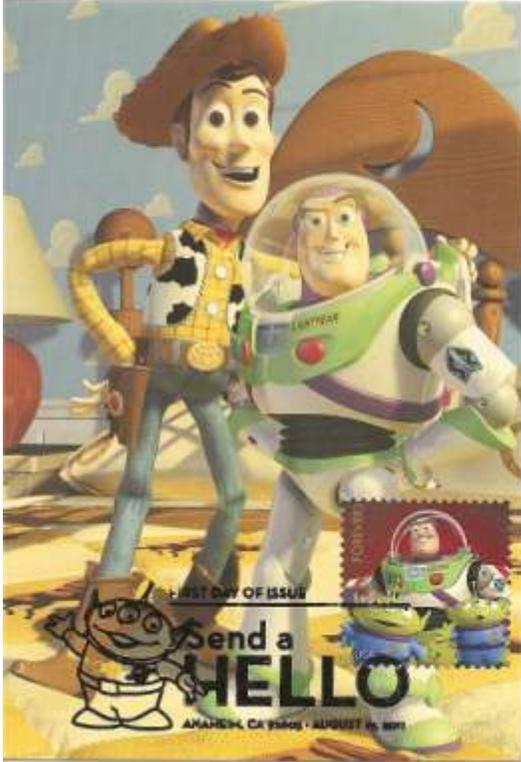
Stamp: Edward Hopper's "The Long Leg", Scott # 4558
Postmark: unofficial pictorial First Day Cancellation, San Marino, CA 8/24/11
Postcard: "The Long Leg", The Huntington Library Art Collections



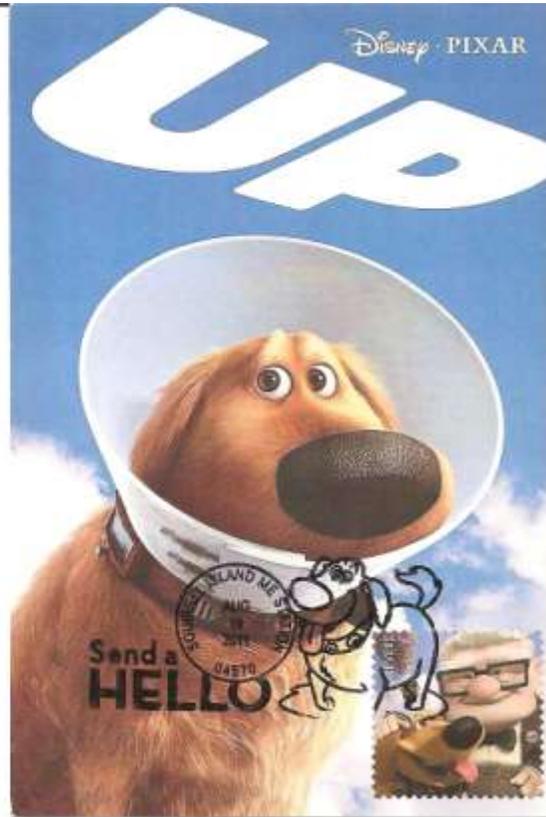
Stamp: Project Mercury, Alan Shepard, Scott # 4527
Postmark: pictorial, Project Mercury CinWisPex Station, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 11/5/11
Postcard: Alan Shepard, Curteichcolor CK.425



Stamp: Romaine Bearden's "Falling Star" Scott # 4569
Postmark: official, 4 bar FDC New York, NY 9/28/11
Postcard: "Falling Star", Pomegranate



Stamp: "Toy Story" from Disney Pixar issue, Scott # 4555
Postmark: official, pictorial FDC Anaheim, CA 8/19/11
Postcard: Toy Story Film Image, Disney Enterprises



Stamp: "Up", Scott # 4556
Postmark: unofficial, pictorial FDC Squirrel Island, ME 8/19/11
Postcard: blank back

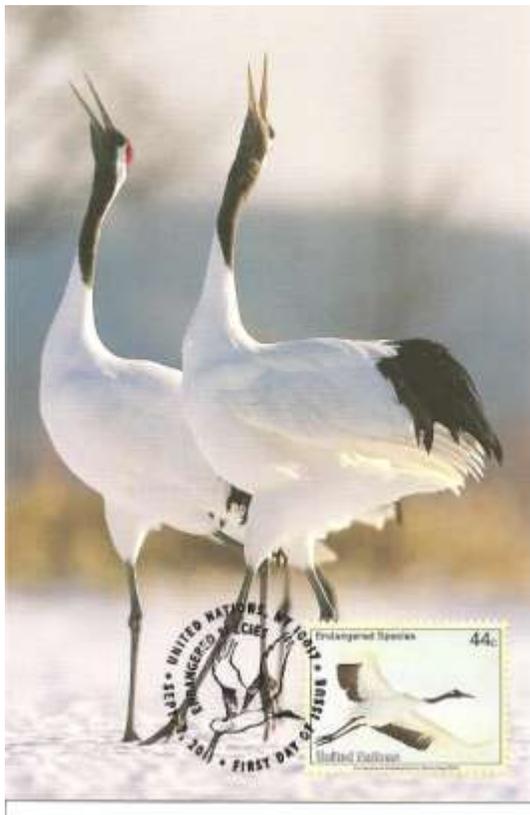


Stamp: "Cars" from Disney Pixar issue, Scott # 4553
Postmark: unofficial, pictorial FDC, Lubbock, TX 8/19/11
Postcard: Cars Film Image, Disney Enterprises



Stamp: Desk Telephone by Henry Dreyfuss from Industrial Design issue, Scott # 4546f
Postmark: official 4 bar FDC, New York, NY 6/29/11
Postcard: Zazzle

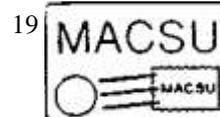
Recent Issues from the United Nations



Stamp: Japanese Crane from Endangered Species
Postmark: official, pictorial FDC, NY 9/7/11
Postcard: Red-crowned Cranes, Natural History NZ



Stamp: California Condor, Endangered Species
Postmark: official, pictorial FDC, NY 9/7/11
Postcard: Captive Cal. Condor, RGA Pub. Grp.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For The

MAXIMUM CARD STUDY UNIT of AMERICA

Founded in 1978, the Maximum Card Study Unit (MACSU) is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the creation, collection, exchange, enjoyment, display, and study of Maximum Cards, by spreading the knowledge of Maximaphily among its members

Membership includes a subscription to Maximaphily USA, a quarterly journal featuring news of the maximum card world and articles by members and experts in the field.

Articles featuring topical collecting typically are richly illustrated with maximum cards and share the author's insightful knowledge of the subject and his own personal and helpful experience.

The pages providing information regarding activities of individual members allows members to place free advertising for trading, buying, selling and exchanging information. Here the opportunity to make contacts with members in other countries is provided.

There are articles evaluating maximum cards according to accepted standards, pointing out good qualities and making suggestions for improvement.

Mail bid auctions are held on occasion, featuring inexpensive cards donated by members.

Every issue provides a page or two of illustrations of the most recent maximum card creations by our members. Every member gets a chance to show his cards and write an article about them.

MACSU Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____ Country: _____

Email Address: _____

Collecting Interests (Topics, countries, etc.) _____

(Indicate if you want your name and interests listed in an upcoming issue: YES: NO)

Club membership is only \$12 per year and includes a quarterly journal emailed to you. Please send your dues to our Treasurer. Checks should be made out to the Maximum Card Study Unit.

Gerard Marandino, Treasurer
5105 Skyline Village Ct.
Alexandria, VA 22302

OR, you can pay your dues through PayPal
Send dues to: MAXICARDS@gmail.com