

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2003

Contact: Media Relations
202-268-2155
Stamp Release No. 032
www.usps.com

NEW POSTAGE STAMPS FEATURE HISTORIC LIGHTHOUSES ALONG SOUTHEAST COAST

TYBEE ISLAND, Ga. — Five new commemorative postage stamps that pay tribute to southeastern lighthouses located between Virginia and southern Florida were dedicated today by the U.S. Postal Service. These five historic structures — Old Cape Henry, Va.; Cape Lookout, N.C.; Morris Island, S.C.; Tybee Island, Ga. and Hillsboro Inlet, Fla. — were selected because they exemplify the beauty and colorful history of the nation's lighthouses. The first day of issue ceremony was held at the Tybee Island Lighthouse, Tybee Island, Ga.



The Southeastern Lighthouses stamps are available today only at the Tybee Island Post Office. Beginning tomorrow, the stamps will be available at post offices across the country.

“Stamps have always celebrated important events and themes,” said the Postal Service’s Senior Vice President for Government Relations who dedicated the stamps, Ralph J. Moden. “Stamps remind us of what is unique about our nation — our people, our innovation, our heritage. With these stamps we commemorate five symbols of our maritime heritage, the Southeastern Lighthouses.”

Joining Moden at the ceremony were Postal Service South Georgia District Manager Lizbeth J. Dobbins; City of Tybee Island Mayor Walter W. Parker; Southeastern Lighthouses stamps artist Howard Koslow; and Tybee Island Historical Society President Jim Kluttz. Special guests included the last surviving resident of the Tybee Island Lighthouse, and daughter of the last lighthouse keeper while managed by the U.S. Lighthouse Service, Grace Jackson-Weaver.

"My father would be extremely proud to know that the Tybee Island Lighthouse will be immortalized through a beautiful postage stamp," explained Jackson-Weaver, who lived in the lighthouse until 1945 and whose father, George B. Jackson, was keeper until 1947. Tybee Island Postmaster Patti Smith also participated in the ceremony.

The Tybee Island Lighthouse was built in 1773 on a small island east of Savannah. Today, this lighthouse continues to guide ships safely into Savannah Harbor. On Oct. 1, 2002, the U.S. Coast Guard transferred ownership of the lighthouse and its grounds to the Tybee Island Historical Society.

Another of the featured lighthouses is on the grounds of Fort Story in Virginia Beach, Va. The Old Cape Henry Lighthouse was the first lighthouse constructed by the U.S. Government. It began alerting mariners charting the southern mouth of the Chesapeake Bay in 1792. Today, open to the public, it is owned by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

Cape Lookout Lighthouse, on the Core Banks along Cape Lookout National Seashore near Beaufort, N.C., was first activated in 1859. Automated in the 1950s, the lighthouse is owned and operated by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Morris Island Lighthouse, situated at the entrance to the Charleston, S.C., harbor, began operating in 1876 on the site of an earlier lighthouse that was established in 1767 but was later destroyed during the Civil War.

Located near Pompano Beach, Fla., the Hillsboro Inlet Lighthouse was built in Detroit, Mich., and then shipped in parts to its present location.

The images for each of the five stamps are based on the original acrylic paintings by Toms River, N.J., artist Howard Koslow and mirror recent photographs of the lighthouses. Designed by Howard E. Paine of Delaplane, Va., the stamps contain Scrambled Indicia® hidden images that — when viewed through the official U.S. Postal Service STAMP DECODER™ — reveal the year each lighthouse was built.

To see the Southeastern Lighthouses stamps, visit the Postal Service Web site at www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm, and open the press release announcing the stamp. Current U.S. stamps, the STAMP DECODER™, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available toll free by calling 1 800 STAMP-24. In addition, a selection of stamps and other philatelic items are available at The Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 141 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$66 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume—some 203 billion letters, advertisements, newspapers, magazines and packages a year—and serves 7 million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.