



Hispanic People and Events on U.S. Postage Stamps

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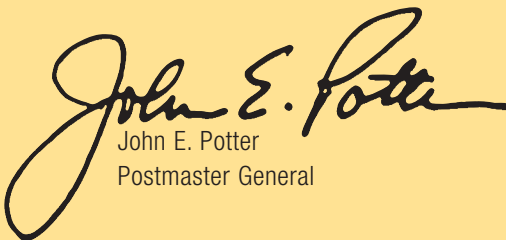
Postage stamps do much more than just make it possible for your mail to be delivered. For over 150 years, the U.S. Postal Service®, through its stamp program, has celebrated the people, events, and cultural milestones that form our unique American experience. United States postage stamps help tell the story of our shared heritage, one that is immensely rich because of its diversity.

This booklet celebrates many of the Hispanic people, places, and achievements that have been honored on our postage stamps. They include explorers, pioneers, statesmen, athletes, entertainers, artists, and educators — people who have made a difference to our culture and to our history.

Since precolonial times, Hispanic people have contributed to the history and development of the Americas. When the Pilgrims were disembarking from the Mayflower at Plymouth Rock, established cities were expanding in Florida, the Southwest, and the Caribbean. Today, Hispanic people continue to influence every aspect of our society.

In the years since 1869, when the Postal Service™ issued the first of the 60 stamps pictured in this booklet, the U.S. Postal Service has told their story with our postage stamps. It is a story we will continue to tell in the years to come.

Like our nation, the Postal Service has evolved and grown over time. The process of transformation is a part of our history and of our future. We will continue to transform to meet the challenges of the 21st century, so that we can provide affordable, dependable mail service to everyone in America — no matter who, no matter where.



John E. Potter
Postmaster General



Desi Arnaz

Desi Arnaz, born Desiderio Alberto Arnaz III, fled his native Santiago, Cuba, with his family after a revolution in 1933. After working briefly for Xavier Cugat in New York, Arnaz returned to Miami, where he introduced the Conga Line. It was such a hit that Arnaz returned to New York to start his own band. He was offered a role in the 1939 Broadway musical *Too Many Girls* and later starred in the film version. He met his future wife Lucille Ball there. During his two years of Army service during World War II, he entertained the troops. After that, he served as orchestra leader on Bob Hope's radio show from 1946 to 1947. In 1949, Ball and Arnaz co-founded Desilu Productions to run *I Love Lucy*, which ran for six years on CBS and became the most successful television program in history.

Stamp issued: 1999

Simón Bolívar

The South American general known as El Libertador (the Liberator), Simón Bolívar, brought independence to six present-day nations, and he is considered one of the greatest military figures in South American history. His victories helped Bolivia (named in his honor), Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela win independence from Spain. Two stamps honor Bolívar — an 8-cent stamp and a 4-cent — stamp in the Champions of Liberty series.



Stamps issued: 1958



Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo

In 1542, soldier, navigator, and explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo led the first European expedition to the shores of what is now the state of California. Little is known about Cabrillo's early years. Some biographies describe him as being born in Portugal, but living most of his life in Spain. Other biographers write that he was born in Spain. For many years, Cabrillo's discoveries went unrecognized and unappreciated. Spain didn't make any claims to California until the late 18th century, when colonization started. The Postal Service issued a 29-cent stamp honoring Cabrillo.

Stamp issued: 1992



Cesar E. Chavez

Cesar E. Chavez is best known for founding the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO in 1962. He remained its president and continued to work for human rights causes until the time of his death. His experiences as a migrant farmworker since age 10 fueled his efforts to help others achieve fair wages, medical coverage, pension benefits, and other rights and protections. According to Paul Chavez, Cesar's son and Chairman of the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation, "The Cesar E. Chavez commemorative stamp is a powerful vehicle to introduce new generations of Americans to his vital legacy, teaching them that through determination and hard work they can improve their own lives and communities."

Stamp issued: 2003

Dennis Chavez

As a United States senator, Dennis Chavez fought for the rights of Hispanic residents and Native Americans in his home state of New Mexico. Chavez served as a senator for 27 years, from 1935 to 1962. He was a strong defender of civil rights, and he paved the way for subsequent legislation. While others avoided the subject or denied the existence of discrimination against Hispanics, Senator Chavez was not afraid to bring the issue into elections and politics. Chavez is honored on a 35-cent stamp in the *Great Americans* series.

Stamp issued: 1991



Roberto Clemente



Proud of his Hispanic and African-American roots, Roberto Clemente relied on his upbringing to weather incidents of racial prejudice that occurred early in his baseball career. He said, "I don't believe in color, I believe in people. My mother and father taught me never to hate someone because of their color." He was known for his zeal and passion for his sport, his inclusive attitude, and his devotion to serving the poor. He was not just a great baseball player but a great humanitarian too. He died tragically in an airplane crash while attempting to deliver supplies to earthquake victims in Nicaragua on December 31, 1972. A 20-cent stamp and a 33-cent stamp were issued in his honor.

Stamps issued: 1984 and 2000



David G. Farragut

Admiral David G. Farragut was a naval commander for the North during the Civil War. His success at capturing New Orleans in the Battle of Mobile Bay earned him a place in history as one of America's most celebrated civil war heroes. The Postal Service issued three stamps featuring Farragut — a \$1 stamp, a 3-cent stamp, and a 32-cent stamp in the Civil War series.

Stamps issued: 1903, 1937, and 1995

General Bernardo de Gálvez

The Spanish governor of the Louisiana territory (which encompassed 13 of our present states), Bernardo de Gálvez is an unsung hero who greatly contributed to the winning of the American Revolution. General Gálvez launched brilliant campaigns against the British in Louisiana and West Florida by organizing a military force of regular troops, militia, volunteers, and a few Americans. His victories during the revolution contributed significantly to the struggle for American independence because he prevented the British from gaining access to the strategically located Mississippi River Valley. The city of Galveston, Texas, is named in honor of his contributions during the American Revolution, and he is honored on a 15-cent stamp.

Stamp issued: 1980



Hispanic Americans

Hispanic Americans have contributed to national security and the overall development of the United States. Deeply committed to the principles of freedom, courageous Hispanic people have served with valor on the battlefield and with distinction on the home front for more than two centuries. Over three dozen Hispanic Americans have received the highest decoration our nation can bestow on its heroes — the Medal of Honor. Hispanic men and women have also made significant contributions to the arts and sciences, music, athletics, philosophy, and numerous other areas. The legacy and achievements of the Hispanic community are an important part of the heritage we all share as American citizens. To honor the contributions of Hispanic Americans, a 20-cent stamp was issued. The stamp depicts several Hispanic men and women in uniform representing each branch of the military. A young boy and girl appear in the background as symbols of a promising future.

Stamp issued: 1984



Frida Kahlo

Best known for her striking self-portraits, Mexican painter Frida Kahlo was influenced by pre-Columbian art and Mexican folk art. Her works embody the pride of Mexico's national patriotic movement, called Mexicanidad, which pulsed throughout the country following the Mexican Revolution of the early 20th century. This sense of Mexican patriotism in Kahlo's work has significantly influenced Chicana artists in the United States. While a teenager, Kahlo sustained serious injuries in a bus accident, which would affect her health for the rest of her life. Triumph and suffering in her own life and in the lives of women in general are recurrent themes in Kahlo's paintings. Since the mid-1970s, she has been a role model for women in the Mexican-American and feminist communities. Frida Kahlo is honored on a 34-cent stamp.

Stamp issued: 2001

Ponce de León

Juan Ponce de León began his career of exploration in 1493 as a member of Christopher Columbus's second expedition to the New World. Nine years later, he traveled to the West Indies. In 1508 and 1509, he explored and settled Puerto Rico, founding the island's oldest settlement, Caparra, near what is now San Juan. Ponce de León served as the island's first governor. Royal orders to colonize new lands and to acquire additional sources of gold, combined with the desire to discover the legendary Fountain of Youth, led to his discovery of Florida in 1513. A 20-cent stamp was issued to honor Ponce de León.

Stamp issued: 1982



Luis Muñoz Marín

After holding many offices in Puerto Rico and improving ties with the United States, Luis Muñoz Marín was the first governor elected by the people of Puerto Rico in 1947. He helped draft Puerto Rico's constitution, and he helped Puerto Rico to become a self-governing Commonwealth of the United States in 1952. Marín fought hard for the interests of Puerto Rico's poor people. He is honored on a 5-cent stamp issued as part of the *Great Americans* series.

Stamp issued: 1990





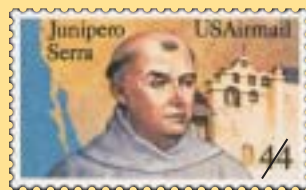
José de San Martín

Soldier and statesman General José de San Martín played a major role in winning independence from Spain and bringing freedom to his native Argentina. He also won independence for Chile and Peru. To honor Martín's accomplishments, 4-cent and 8-cent stamps were issued in the *Champions of Liberty* series.

Stamps issued: 1959

Father Junípero Serra

Spanish Franciscan priest Miguel Serra y Abram was born in Petra, Majorca (i.e., Mallorca), a farming village. In 1730, at the age of 16, Miguel entered the Franciscan order and took the name Junípero, the name of Saint Francis's close, extroverted friend. He founded nine missions of California (including San Diego and San Francisco) and was responsible for the baptism of over 6,000 Native Americans. Pope John Paul II of the Roman Catholic Church beatified him in September of 1988. Serra is honored on a 44-cent airmail stamp.



Stamp issued: 1985



John Philip Sousa

Famous American composer and bandmaster John Philip Sousa was born in Washington, D.C., on November 6, 1854. Sousa, also known as the "March King," ranks among the most famous American composers and conductors. At the age of six, he studied several musical instruments, including violin and trombone. His father Antonio Sousa, played trombone in the United States Marine Band. In 1867, Sousa's father enlisted him in the Marines as an apprentice at age 13. Sousa was discharged from the Marines in 1875, but in 1880 he returned to lead the Marine Band. After two successful tours with the Marine Band in 1891 and 1892, promoter David Blakely convinced Sousa to resign and organize a civilian concert band. Sousa took his advice and formed his own band, which toured Europe several times and was the first American band to make a tour around the world. On December 25, 1896, he composed *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, the official march of the United States. Sousa was honored on a 2-cent stamp.

Stamp issued: 1940

Ritchie Valens

In an all-too-brief career, Latin rock and rhythm composer and singer Ritchie Valens was the first Chicano rock and roll star. Valens was born Richie Valenzuela in 1941 in Pacoima, California, an area north of Los Angeles where he lived his entire life. He learned to play the guitar and joined a band in high school. Valens later met Del-Fi Records producer Bob Keane and recorded *Come On, Let's Go*. He also wrote a song for a girl he liked and named it for her; *Donna* was a nationwide hit and earned Valens an appearance on *American Bandstand*. At the age of 17, Ritchie Valens was killed in a plane crash on February 3, 1959, along with Buddy Holly, J. P. Richardson (the "Big Bopper"), and pilot Roger Peterson. At the time of his death, Valens biggest hit, *Donna* was number two on the pop charts and *La Bamba* had hit the charts 26 days before his death. On March 19, 2001, Ritchie Valens was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Valens is remembered on a 29-cent stamp in the *Legends of American Music* (rock and roll, rhythm and blues) series.

Stamp issued: 1993



Padre Félix Varela

Born in 1788 in Havana, Cuba, Padre Félix Varela quickly distinguished himself as a great educator. During his professional career, Varela did something considered strange for that time — he taught and defended the principle of giving women the same education as men. In the early 1820s, Padre Félix Varela concentrated his efforts on helping poor minorities living in New York City and founded nurseries and orphanages for the children of poor widows. He organized the New York Temperance Association and lived in hospitals while caring for cholera victims during an epidemic in 1832. Varela also founded the first Spanish newspaper in the United States. He published articles about human rights and essays on religious tolerance, cooperation between the English- and Spanish-speaking communities, and the importance of education. His 30 years of humanitarian work earned him high esteem in the United States and abroad, including being named Vicar General of the New York diocese of the Roman Catholic Church. Varela died in 1853, but his legacy continues through the Félix Varela Foundation, which has locations in Miami and New York. Varela is honored on a 32-cent commemorative stamp.

Stamp issued: 1997



Christopher Columbus

Although mariner and navigator Christopher Columbus was not the first European to sail to the New World, his four voyages (1492–93, 1493–96, 1498–1500, and 1502–04) mark the beginning of continuous European efforts to explore and colonize the Americas. Although Columbus was Italian and kept his Genoese citizenship, he spent his adult life in the service of Castile, Spain. He was the eldest son of Domenico Colombo, a wool-worker and small-scale merchant, and his wife, Susanna Fontanarossa. Columbus had two younger brothers, Bartholomew and Diego. Columbus spent eight years convincing Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to give him three ships and 90 men to search for a new route by sea to Asia (Cathay) and prove his theory that the Earth was round. On August 3, 1492, the fleet of three ships — the Niña, Pinta, and Santa María — set forth from Palos on the Tinto River in southern Spain. The first sighting of land came at dawn on October 12. Thinking he had reached the East Indies, Columbus referred to the native inhabitants of the island as Indians, a term that was ultimately applied to all indigenous people of the New World. The United States celebrates a national holiday in his honor (on the Monday closest to October 12, the date of the first landfall in 1492). Columbus, his brothers, and others in his party are depicted on numerous stamps, which are shown and identified as follows:

Columbian Exposition



Columbus (portrait)

The World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, was the first critically and economically successful U.S. world's fair. The exposition was to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus's landing in the New World. The Postal Service issued the following special series of 13 postage items to honor this event. Each stamp in the series shows a different scene commemorating events related to Columbus's landing in America.

Stamps issued: 1893



Isabella and Columbus



Columbus Describing Third Voyage



Columbus in Chains



Isabella Pledging Her Jewels



Columbus at La Rábida



Columbus Announcing His Discovery



Columbus Presenting Natives



Columbus Restored to Favor



Columbus Welcomed at Barcelona



Columbus Soliciting Aid of Isabella





Landing of Columbus



Columbus in Sight of Land

Bartholomew Columbus

An Italian explorer for Spain, Bartholomew Columbus (also known as Bartolome Colon and Bartolomeo Colombo) accompanied his brother Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to the Americas in 1493 and his fourth voyage to the Central American coast from 1502 to 1504. He founded the Santo Domingo settlement in 1496, and was governor of the Spanish settlements in Hispaniola from 1496 to 1498. Bartholomew is pictured on a \$2 commemorative stamp in the Columbian series.

Stamp issued: 1893

Stamp reissued: 1992

Christopher Columbus

Stamp issued: 1992

Diego Columbus

Seventeen years younger than his brother Christopher, Diego Columbus sailed with his brother on his second voyage. Diego is seen on a \$2-stamp in the Columbian series on which, he is seen standing with his brother Christopher who is in chains. The stamp was later reissued as a \$2 commemorative stamp.

Stamp issued: 1893

Stamp reissued: 1992

Columbus's Landing in Puerto Rico

On September 25, 1493, Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain on his second voyage with 17 ships and almost 1,500 men. On November 19, 1493, Christopher Columbus landed on the western coast of Puerto Rico. The Taino Indians who greeted Columbus showed him gold nuggets in the river. The city of Puerto Rico quickly became Spain's most important military outpost in the Carribean. A 15-cent stamp was issued to honor this historic event.

Stamp issued: 1993

First Voyage of Christopher Columbus:



Seeking Queen Isabella's Support



Crossing the Atlantic



Approaching Land



Coming Ashore

Stamps issued: 1992



Rodrigo de Escobedo (Escobar)

As the legal officer or notary aboard the Santa Maria, Rodrigo de Escobedo witnessed discoveries and recorded all official transactions in the name of Spain. The Niña, Pinta, and Santa María sailed on September 6, 1492, from the Old World to the New World and arrived on the shores of Guanahani Island on October 12. Escobedo duly witnessed the great event at the site that was named Fernandez Bay. Escobedo is seen on a 15-cent stamp in the Columbian series, which shows him in the center of the painting Landing of Columbus by John Vanderlyn. Escobedo is standing behind Columbus, which indicates his importance. The stamp was reissued as a 29-cent commemorative stamp.

Stamp issued: 1869

Stamp reissued: 1992



Landing of Columbus

Stamp issued: 1869

Alonso de Ojeda

Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda sailed with Christopher Columbus on his second voyage in 1493. He sailed with Columbus again in 1499 and 1500, along with Amerigo Vespucci and Juan de la Cosa. Ojeda is seen on a 15-cent stamp in the Columbian series. On the stamp, he is pictured in John Vanderlyn's painting Landing of Columbus. Ojeda is standing behind the left side of the flag wearing a feather in his hat and a gun on his shoulder. The stamp was reissued as a 29-cent commemorative stamp.

Stamp issued: 1869

Stamp reissued: 1992

Juan Pérez

As guardian and confessor to Queen Isabella, Juan Pérez was impressed with Christopher Columbus's proposal for an expedition to the west. Pérez succeeded in having Christopher Columbus recalled to the royal court for another hearing about his expedition. Pérez accompanied Columbus on his second voyage in 1493, and he is credited with celebrating the first Mass and building the first church in the New World. Pérez is seen on a 30-cent stamp, which was reissued as a commemorative stamp. On the stamp, Pérez is at the table on the left.

Stamp issued: 1893

Stamp reissued: 1992

Martin Alonso Pinzón

Spanish explorer Martin Alonso Pinzón commanded the Pinta on Christopher Columbus's first voyage to the Americas in 1492. Pinzón's family and two other families — the Niños and the Quinteros — made it possible for Christopher Columbus to outfit and man his ships for the voyage west. Pinzón took his younger brother Francisco Pinzón on the voyage as ship's master. Martin Pinzón is seen in the center of the 15-cent stamp, which was reissued as a 29-cent commemorative stamp.

Stamp issued: 1869

Stamp reissued: 1992

Vicente Yáñez Pinzón

Spanish explorer Vicente Yáñez Pinzón commanded the Niña on Christopher Columbus' first voyage to the Americas in 1492. Vicente was part of a famous maritime family — the Pinzóns on Palos. His family and two others — the Niños, and the Quinteros — were instrumental in furnishing ships and crew for Christopher Columbus's voyage in search of the Indies. Vicente is seen just to the left of the center of a 2-cent stamp, which was reissued as a 2-cent commemorative stamp.

Stamp issued: 1869

Stamp reissued: 1992

Rodrigo Sánchez

As the royal comptroller, Rodrigo Sánchez was to account for all riches acquired on Christopher Columbus's sailing voyage westward in hopes of reaching the east. Sánchez also had to ensure that Columbus adhered to the terms of the agreement that Columbus made with Spain in April 1492. Sánchez is seen on a 15-cent stamp, which was reissued as a 29-cent commemorative stamp.

Stamp issued: 1869

Stamp reissued: 1992



Voyages of Columbus:



Claiming a New World



Seeking Royal Support



Reporting Discoveries

Royal Favor Restored
First Sighting of Land (not pictured)
Stamps issued: 1992

World Columbian Stamp Expo



Stamp issued: 1992



The Alamo



As the historic 18th century Franciscan mission, the Alamo symbolizes the spirit of determination and resistance of Texans who fought for their independence from Mexico during the Texas Revolution. After losing San Antonio in December 1835 during the Siege of Bexar, Mexican General Santa Anna was determined to retake the location and to inform Texans of their fate if they continued to resist Mexican rule. Over 180 Texans (regular army and volunteers) took refuge in the fortified grounds of the Alamo. The Mexican forces had grown to over 2,000 troops when they stormed the Alamo fortress. William B. Travis, James Bowie, Davy Crockett, and over 180 other defenders died, but the heroic resistance roused fighting anger among Texans, who six weeks later defeated the Mexicans at San Jacinto, crying “Remember the Alamo!” The chapel-fort became a state preserve in 1883. The complex, which was restored in 1936–39, is now a major tourist attraction. The Alamo is featured on a 3-cent Republic of Texas stamp and on a 9-cent Alamo stamp.

Stamps issued: 1936 and 1956

Alliance for Progress

Established by the United States and 22 Latin American countries, the Alliance for Progress began in 1961 during the presidency of John F. Kennedy. Described as the U.S. assistance program for Latin America, the Alliance was to counter the appeal of revolutionary politics. The program included assistance to relieve the continent's poverty and social inequities and provided military and police assistance to counter a communist revolution. The



charter of the Alliance, which was formulated at an inter-American conference at Punta del Este, Uruguay, called for an annual increase of 2.5 percent in per capita income, the establishment of democratic governments, more equitable income distribution, land reform, and economic and social planning. However, the United States reduced its commitments to Latin America as it became preoccupied with the Vietnam War and Latin American nations were unwilling to implement many of the necessary reforms. The Organization of American States disbanded the permanent committee created to implement the alliance in 1973. A 5-cent commemorative stamp was issued to mark the second anniversary of the establishment of the Alliance for Progress.

Stamp issued: 1963

Alta California



Spain founded its first civil settlement in 1777 in Alta (upper) California at what is now the city of San José (i.e., El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe). Before 1777, Spain established a chain of eight missions and presidios in Alta California, which proved inadequate to secure the territory from invasion. Spain's solution to this problem was to establish a permanent civilian population to produce food and other goods for the missions and presidios. The civil settlements in Alta California had a profound influence on the development of the West Coast and the entire United States. The founding of El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe dominates the history of the West Coast as the founding of the Plymouth Colony dominates the history of the East Coast. Alta California included the present states of California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and parts of Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. A 13-cent stamp was issued to commemorate the bicentennial year of the establishment of the civil settlements in Alta California.

Stamp issued: 1977

California Settlement

In 1769, Gaspar de Portola who was accompanied by Father Junipero Serra led a Spanish expedition to settle California. At what is now San Diego, the first of 21 missions and presidios began the Spanish colonization. A 6-cent stamp was issued to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the settlement of California.

Stamp issued: 1969



Cinco de Mayo



A date of great importance for Mexican and Mexican-American communities, Cinco de Mayo marks the victory of the Mexican Army over the French at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. On that day during the French occupation of Mexico, General Zaragoza and his troops were victorious over the greatest military power in the world at that time. Mexicans who had previously shown little interest in their country's future felt pride, nationalism, and determination to defend Mexico's sovereignty. The phrase "Viva el Cinco de Mayo!" inspired increasing numbers of Mexicans to aid their country during the war that lasted from 1863 to 1867. In the United States, people of Mexican descent celebrate this significant day by having parades, mariachi music, folklorico dancing, and other types of festive activities. The celebration gives Mexican Americans an opportunity to celebrate their cultural pride and their hopes for the well being, dignity, and advancement of Mexico and Mexican people everywhere. A 32-cent stamp and a 33-cent stamp were issued to honor this event.

Stamp issued: 1998 and 1999

Coronado Expedition

Inspired by Marcos de Niza's description of the Seven Cities of Cibola in what is now Arizona, Spanish explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado led the first expedition through the American Southwest. A 3-cent stamp was issued, which depicts a reproduction of Gerald Cassidy's painting *Coronado and his Captains*.



Stamp issued: 1940

Gadsden Purchase

In 1853 James Gadsden, the U.S. Minister to Mexico, signed a treaty with that country to pay \$10 million for a strip of land that is now largely the state of Arizona. The Gadsden Purchase represented the last major addition of territory to the United States and created the current southwestern boundary with Mexico. A 3-cent stamp was issued to honor the important purchase.

Stamp issued: 1953



Mexican Independence



Shortly before dawn on September 16, 1810, Father Miquel Hidalgo made a crucial, impulsive decision that led to Mexico's bloody struggle for independence from Spain. In the early 19th century, Mexicans were discussing how to revolt against Spain. Father Hidalgo, the leader of a revolutionary group, heard that the Spanish government had ordered his arrest. In response, he rang the church bell on the night of September 15, 1810, to call his congregation to church for mass. When the people arrived, Father Hidalgo rallied them to fight. He gave a speech that is now called Grito de Dolores. In it he said, "Viva Mexico!" and "Viva la independenciam!" These famous words are still remembered and repeated at Mexican Independence Day celebrations. The United States and Mexico jointly issued stamps with similar designs. The American version is a 4-cent stamp that marked the 150th anniversary of Mexican independence.

Stamp issued: 1960

Palace of Governors

As the oldest public building in the United States, the Palace of Governors was built by Spanish settlers in 1610. The government in New Mexico was located at the site from 1610 until 1901. During those years, the flags of Spain, Mexico, the Confederacy, and the United States flew over this historic building. The building, which is in Sante Fe, New Mexico, is now a museum. A 1¼-cent stamp was issued to commemorate this historic site.

Stamp issued: 1960



Panama Canal



The 51-mile long waterway path that links the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans — the Panama Canal — officially opened on August 15, 1914, when the U.S. cargo ship *Ancon* made a historic first transit. A sea-level canal crossing had been a dream ever since Spanish explorer Vasco Nunez de Balboa saw the eastern shores of the Pacific Ocean after he crossed the Isthmus of Panama in 1513. In

1534, King Charles I of Spain ordered the first studies for the construction of a canal through the isthmus. However, the Spanish government eventually abandoned its interest in the canal. In 1880, French company directed by Vicomte Ferdinand de Lesseps, who was hailed for his work as builder of the Suez Canal, led the French effort to construct the canal. In 1889, de Lesseps and the company had to abandon the project. In 1903, the province of Panama declared its independence from Columbia and immediately signed the Hay-Bunau Varilla Treaty, which authorized the United States to start construction of the Canal in 1904. It was President Theodore Roosevelt's determination to make the Panama Canal a reality that led to the massive effort that, in the end, produced one of the engineering marvels of the century. A 3-cent stamp was issued to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the opening of the Panama Canal and a 32-cent stamp was also issued to commemorate the event.

Stamps issued: 1939 and 1998

Pan American Union

The Pan American Union was founded in 1889–90 at the first of the modern Inter-American Conferences as the Commercial Bureau of the American Republics. The organization was formed to promote international cooperation; offer technical and informational services to all the American republics; serve as the repository for international documents; and through subsidiary councils, further economic, social, judicial, and cultural relations. In 1902, the name was changed to the International Bureau of the American Republics. It wasn't until 1910 that the name Pan-American Union was adopted. In 1948, the Pan-American Union was made the General Secretariat for the Organization of American States. However, the anniversary of its founding is Pan-American Day. A 3-cent stamp was issued to honor the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Pan-American Union.



Stamp issued: 1940

Panama-Pacific Exposition

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition opened in San Francisco, California, on February 20, 1915. The Exposition honored the discovery of the Pacific Ocean and the completion of the Panama Canal. The following series of stamps was issued in denominations of 1, 2, 5, and 10 cents to commemorate the opening of the Panama Canal and the discovery of the Pacific Ocean:



Discovery of San Francisco Bay



Golden Gate



Pedro Miguel Locks, Panama



Vasco Núñez de Balboa

Stamps issued: 1913

Puerto Rico Election



In 1949, Luis Muñoz Marín became Puerto Rico's first elected governor. As governor, Marín started Operation Commonwealth. The goal of the program was to achieve more self-rule from the United States. Puerto Rico succeeded in becoming a commonwealth of the United States in 1952, as a result of Marín's efforts. A 3-cent stamp was issued to celebrate the first Puerto Rican gubernatorial election.

Stamp issued: 1949

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Founded in 1521, San Juan, Puerto Rico, is the oldest city flying the American flag. An 8-cent stamp was issued to commemorate San Juan's 450th anniversary.

Stamp issued: 1971



San Xavier del Bac Mission



Located on what today is the Pápago Indian Reservation in Tucson, Arizona, San Xavier del Bac Mission, which is also known as "White Dove of the Desert," is a masterpiece of Spanish Colonial architecture. Jesuit Father Kino founded the mission in 1692 to serve the local Pápago tribe. In 1783, Franciscan monks began to renovate the mission. Today's renovated building, which is part Moorish and part Byzantine, has a domed roof and is an adobe jumble of frescos, carved saints, and two lions. The lions represent Castile and are often decked with white satin bow ties. The mission is depicted on a block of four 8-cent Historic Preservation stamps.

Stamps issued: 1971

Settlement of Florida

Florida was the first continuous Spanish settlement in the New World. Spanish admiral Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles founded St. Augustine in 1565, naming the location in honor of the saint whose feast was on the day the settlement was established. A 5-cent stamp was issued to mark the 400th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine. At the same time, Spain also released an almost identical stamp, except for the necessary differences in language and denomination.

Stamp issued: 1965



Spanish-American War



Sent to Cuba in 1898 to protect American interests, the *U.S.S. Maine* was rocked by a mysterious explosion while moored in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898. More than 250 American sailors were killed. An ensuing investigation could not determine the cause of the explosion, although popular sentiment blamed the Spanish. To stir sentiment in support of war against Spain, the

American press used the popular slogan "Remember the *Maine*." Two months after the sinking of the battleship *Maine*, America declared war on Spain. To remember the *U.S.S. Maine* and the Spanish-American War, the Postal Service issued a 32-cent stamp.

Stamp issued: 1998

Southwest Settlement

In 1598, a Spanish expedition led by Don Juan de Oñate created the first European road in the United States, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (the Royal Road to the Interior Land) and later built the first European settlement west of the Mississippi at San Gabriel. The expedition initiated 400 years of commerce and cultural exchange throughout the Southwest. A 32-cent stamp was issued, which features a photograph of La Mision de San Miguel de San Gabriel. The building is a replica of the church at San Gabriel and is located in present-day Espanola, New Mexico, near the site of the original Spanish settlement.

Stamp issued: 1998



U.S. Territories (Puerto Rico)



A possession of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is located in the Caribbean Sea, about 1,000 miles southeast of Miami. Puerto Rico is comprised of the island of Puerto Rico and the adjacent islets of Vieques, Culebra, and Mona. When Christopher Columbus arrived there in 1493, the peaceful Taino Indians, who were being challenged by the warlike Carib Indians, inhabited the island. After Puerto Ricans began to press for independence, Spain, in 1897, granted the island broad powers of self-government. But during the Spanish-American War of 1898, American troops invaded the island, and Spain ceded it to the United States. Since then, Puerto Rico has remained an unincorporated U.S. territory. It's people were granted American citizenship under the Jones Act in 1917; were permitted to elect their own governor, beginning in 1948; and now fully administer their internal affairs under a constitution approved by the U.S. Congress in 1952. A 3-cent stamp featuring the island of Puerto Rico was issued. Other 3-cent stamps issued in this series featured the U.S. Virgin Islands, Hawaii, and Alaska.

Stamps issued: 1937