

The Postal Commemoration of the 1967 Alaska Centennial Exposition

PURPOSE & SCOPE: This is a traditional exhibit which illustrates the postal and philatelic commemoration of the 1967 Alaska Centennial Exposition.

TREATMENT: The 1967 Alaska Centennial Exposition was a well publicized event intended to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Alaska Purchase. To support the Expo the Post Office Department issued a commemorative stamp, meters were created and advertising slogan cancels were used at several post offices across Alaska. Unfortunately a small earthquake followed by severe flooding near Fairbanks, which was the site of the Exposition, contributed to low attendance.

This exhibit begins with a study the stamp including para-philatelic material. Errors of the stamp are also included. Following is a section including first day covers, commercial usages of the stamp, and covers for philatelic events organized to coincide with the Exposition. First cachets are indicated by the symbol **●**. The final section illustrates various ways in which the celebration was advertised. Covers with advertising slogan cancels, advertising covers and meters with advertising slogans are included. Several of the slogan advertising covers are newly documented earliest known or latest known uses; these are indicated by the symbol **☒**.

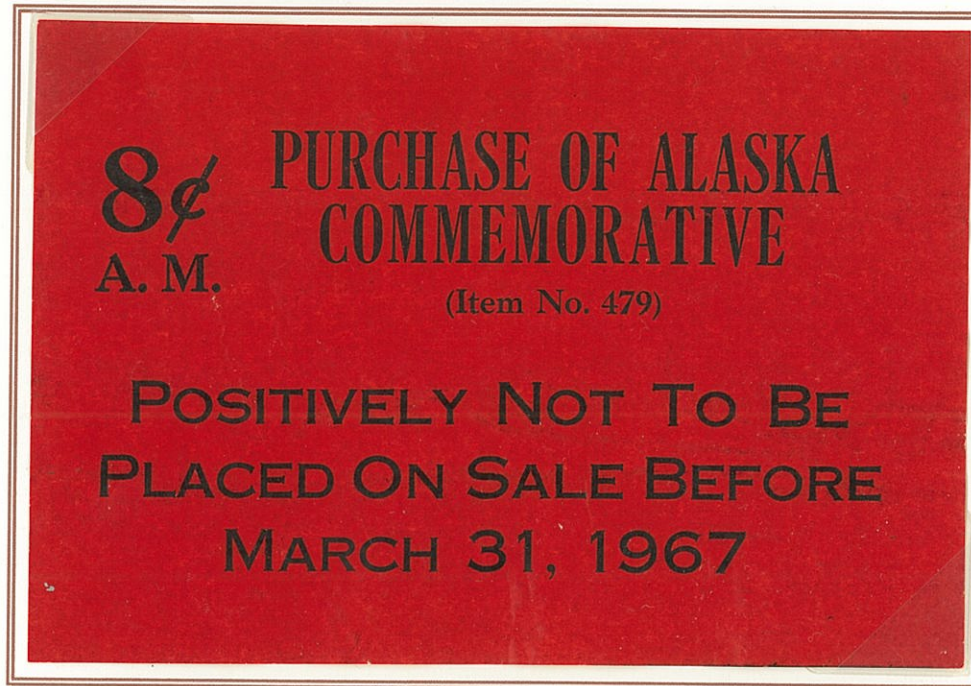
PERSONAL STUDY & RESEARCH: Personal study of this Exposition and these issues over the past 20 years has led to numerous discoveries, especially in the advertising machine cancels.

CONDITION & RARITY: The material shown was chosen specifically for condition and rarity. Much of the material included, hand drawn/hand painted FDCs, and the errors are either unique or exist in populations of fewer than twenty. As a result of these factors this exhibit could not be duplicated.

Items of special significance are highlighted with a dark brown double line border.

Commemorative Stamp

The stamp was designed by Willard Cox with the modeling and engraving done by Robert J. Jones, Edward R. Felver and Kenneth C. Wiram. Initial designs noted the purchase "from Russia" which was removed from the final stamp. Four of the



first designs were based on a totem pole pictured in an Alaska travel brochure with the photo attributed to Burton Homes a noted traveler and lecturer. After the design had been chosen and approved work on the engraving began. It was discovered

that the totem pole was in fact from British Columbia and not Alaska as originally thought. Engraving was stopped and Cox was asked to prepare a new design. Cox ultimately settled on a Tlingit screen or room divider in the Alaska State Museum.

This is a scarce Post Office Department seal used when shipping pads of stamps to post offices. The seal indicates that these stamps were not to be placed on sale until one day *after* the official first day of issue which was March 30, 1967.



.At right is the lower right position of all four plate number blocks used for this issue and the "Running Mr. Zip" which appears in the selvage of this issue.



.At left is a plate block signed by Willard Cox the designer as well as all three engravers.



.At left is a color "smear" likely caused when excess ink was not cleaned from the printing plate. At right is a misperforation caused when the sheet and the perforating equipment were misaligned.

