

Unveiling of Mackinac Bridge Stamp Draws Collectors to Straits



Larry Rubin (left), the first executive secretary of the Mackinac Bridge Authority, shakes hands with current Executive Secretary Bob Sweeney during a commemorative bridge stamp unveiling Wednesday, February 3, at Bridge View Park in St. Ignace. Mr. Rubin served as the head administrator at the bridge from July 1, 1950, to December 1982, and Mr. Sweeney has served in the position since 2002.



Local leaders and dignitaries gather on the Mackinac Bridge Wednesday, February 3, after the new stamp honoring the bridge was unveiled in St. Ignace. Pictured are (from left) Michigan Department of Transportation Director Kirk Steudle, Mackinac Bridge Authority Chairman William Gnodtke, Bridge Authority member Barbara Brown, American First Day Cover Society President Chris Lazaroff, Acting District Marketing Manager Terri Hagen from the U.S. Postal Service, USPS Customer Relations Coordinator Sabrina Todd, Ann Jousma-Miller representing Governor Jennifer Granholm, St. Ignace Mayor Paul Grondin, and Mackinac Bridge Executive Secretary Bob Sweeney. (Photograph by Tim Burke, MDOT)

Stamp Put Into Circulation February 3

By Mark Tower

The Mackinac Bridge was commemorated Wednesday, February 3, when the United States Postal Service released a stamp honoring the iconic Michigan landmark. State and local political figures met with local residents and stamp enthusiasts Wednesday at Bridge View Park in St. Ignace to officially unveil the \$4.90 priority mail stamp depicting the five-mile suspension bridge linking Michigan's upper and lower peninsulas.

Along with being a draw for tourism and an important link for commerce in the state, the Mackinac Bridge provides a sense of pride shared by all who live near it, come to visit, or even see a pic-

ture of it, said Kirk Steudle, director of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

"It really is a symbol of Michigan," he noted, "and there is a special relationship people have with this bridge. It creates pride every time you cross it, every time you see a picture of it."

In his remarks, Mackinac Bridge Authority Chairman William Gnodtke recognized the men and women who planned, designed, and built the bridge.

Chris Lazaroff, president of the American First Day Cover Society, an organization devoted to advancing the collection of first-day-issued stamps and covers. Mr. Lazaroff noted that most stamps do

not have a ceremony when they are released, and it's even more unusual to hold such a ceremony near the site it honors.

The stamp features a high-angle view of the bridge with seagulls swooping around its towers and a freighter passing underneath its center span. Artist Dan Cosgrove of Clarendon Hills, Illinois, used panoramic photographs of the bridge as a reference to create the stamp image, and has designed a number of other stamps for the postal service.

Mackinaw City Postmaster Adriane Waldie and other post office employees from St. Ignace and Mackinaw City sold and canceled first-day issues of stamps to collectors during the Mackinac Bridge stamp unveiling ceremony

Wednesday. The stamp was put into circulation at post offices around the country Wednesday, February 3.

The longest suspension bridge in the Western Hemisphere, the Mackinac Bridge cost nearly \$100 million to build, took more than three years to complete, and is designed to support 38,486 tons and can move up to 35 feet in high winds.

The Mackinac Bridge stamp is available for purchase at U.S. Post Offices nationwide, or through the post office's Web site or telephone ordering system.

Collectors who wish to order a first-day-of-issue postmark for the new stamp can do so by affixing the stamp to a self-addressed envelope and bring it or mail it in a

larger envelope to the Mackinaw City post office. There is no charge for this special postmark, but all orders must be received within 60 days of the stamp release, or postmarked by April 5.

At the commemoration, Ann Jousma-Miller, Upper Peninsula director for the office of Governor Jennifer Granholm, said when she owned a bed and breakfast in Gladstone, she frequently received

calls from potential guests asking how close she was to the Mackinac Bridge.

"Well, that's why we are coming,' they would tell me," Mrs. Jousma-Miller said. "We have this marvel in our state that people come many miles to see."

Representatives from the offices of U.S. Representative Bart Stupak and U.S. senators Debbie Stabenow and Carl Levin also attended.

Case Earns Fall 2009 Academic Honors

William Charles Case was named to the dean's list at Pensacola Christian College in Pensacola, Florida, for the 2009 fall semester. Mr. Case is a senior studying communications with a

concentration in broadcasting.

He is the son of Barton and Nancy Case of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and the grandson of Eileen Nye of Hessel and Petoskey.

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