



**UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 2, 2004

POSTAL NEWS

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Postal Service Web Site: www.usps.com
Stamp News Release Number: 04-016

THEODOR SEUSS GEISEL HONORED BY U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

New Stamp Dedicated

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Postal Service dedicated the Theodor Seuss Geisel commemorative postage stamp today at the Geisel Library, University of California, San Diego, 9500 Gilman Dr., La Jolla, Calif. The new stamp is available locally today, and will be available nationwide beginning March 3. Traveling around the world on letters, cards and packages, the Theodor Seuss Geisel stamp honors the Pulitzer Prize-winning author better known as Dr. Seuss, who introduced countless children to the joys of reading.



“With this stamp, the Postal Service is pleased to call attention to the very unique creative legacy of one of the world’s most beloved authors,” said Angelo Wider, manager, Finance Administration for the Postal Service, who dedicated the stamp. “We are honoring Theodor Seuss Geisel’s accomplishments, his life – and most importantly – his playful love of learning.”

Joining Wider at the ceremony were Dr. Dennis P. Smith, executive director, San Diego Council on Literacy; Marsha A. Chandler, acting chancellor, University of California, San Diego; Carl T. Herrman, stamp designer; Al Iniguez, vice president, Pacific Area Operations, U.S. Postal Service; and John E. Platt, district manager, San Diego District, U.S. Postal Service.

Theodor Seuss Geisel (pronounced GUYS-ell) was born on March 2, 1904, in Springfield, Mass. After sending his work to numerous magazines, he made his first sale to The Saturday Evening Post, which published one of his cartoons in its July 16, 1927 issue. Shortly afterwards he moved to New York City and joined the staff of the humor magazine Judge, where he first used the pen name Dr. Seuss, his mother’s maiden name and his own middle name.

Geisel was then employed by Standard Oil of New Jersey in 1928 to design an advertising campaign for their insect repellent, Flit. The slogan that he invented for this campaign ("Quick, Henry, the Flit!") became a popular American catchphrase. While continuing his work in advertising, he sold cartoons and humorous prose to Life, Liberty and Vanity Fair magazines, and made his first foray into book illustration in 1931, providing the artwork for two collections of children's sayings.

Geisel authored 44 books for children, typically featuring a story in verse seasoned with zany humor and illustrated with drawings of fantastic creatures who became part of American popular culture, such as Horton the elephant in "Horton Hatches the Egg" (1940) and "Horton Hears a Who!" (1954) and the Grinch in "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" (1957). Although his books usually teach a lesson about virtues like compassion and loyalty, they are never preachy.

Many consider "The Cat in the Hat" (1957) his most innovative book. Challenged by an editor to write a book for beginning readers that was imaginative and fun, unlike classroom primers then in use, Geisel worked from a vocabulary list of only 225 words. It was an immediate success and is now considered one of the most influential readers ever written.

The success of "The Cat in the Hat" led to the creation of Beginner Books, now a division of Random House, dedicated to publishing entertaining, educational stories for beginning readers. Geisel was its cofounder and president. Beginner books published such Dr. Seuss favorites as "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish" (1960), "Green Eggs and Ham," (1960) and "Fox in Socks" (1965).

Geisel also broke new ground by introducing young readers to pressing social issues. "The Lorax" (1971) portrayed threats to the environment and "The Butter Battle Book" (1984) criticized the arms race.

The last two books written and illustrated by Geisel reflected the wisdom of his years. "You're Only Old Once!" (1986), a wry look at aging for adult readers, was subtitled "A Book for Obsolete Children," and was published on Geisel's 82nd birthday. His final book, "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" (1990), offered encouragement to the young as they set out on the journey of life. A best-seller, the book became a popular graduation gift.

Throughout Geisel's career, his books were critically acclaimed as well as popular. In 1984, Geisel was honored with a Pulitzer Prize "for his special contribution over nearly half a century to the education and enjoyment of America's children and their parents."

Geisel's talents also extended to film, and, always alert to new ways of reaching children, Dr. Seuss was intrigued by the possibilities of television. With animator Chuck Jones,

he produced Peabody Award-winning television adaptations of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" (1966) and "Horton Hears a Who!" (1970), and contributed the lyrics to the songs in both programs. He received an award from the International Animated Cartoon Festival for the television version of "The Lorax" (1971) and won Emmy's for two specials he produced between 1975 and 1982.

Theodor Geisel died on September 24, 1991, in La Jolla, California.

Carl T. Hermann of Carlsbad, Calif., was the designer and art director for the stamp. The stamp features a color photograph of Geisel taken in Dallas, Texas, in 1987. In the stamp design, Geisel is surrounded by his illustrations of six characters from his books. From left to right: The Cat in the Hat from "The Cat in the Hat" (1957); the Grinch (with color added) from "How the Grinch Stole Christmas! (1957); the Glotz (or the identical Klotz) from "Oh Say Can You Say?" (1979); and three characters from the 1965 book "I Had Trouble Getting to Solla Sollew:" the Skritz, the anonymous "young fellow," and the Skrink.

One hundred seventy-two million Theodor Seuss Geisel self-adhesive 37-cent stamps have been printed. To see the Geisel stamp, location the online version of this press release at www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm.

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog are available by toll-free phone order at 1 800 STAMP-24. A wide selection of stamps and other philatelic items are also available at the Postal Store, www.usps.com/shop, and www.postalartgallery.com offers beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to about 141 million addresses 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 \$68 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume - some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year - and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.

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