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HENRY FONDA JOINS U.S. POSTAL SERVICE LEGENDS OF HOLLYWOOD STAMP SERIES

WASHINGTON – With the 11th stamp in its Legends of Hollywood series, the U.S. Postal Service honors Henry Fonda, one of America’s greatest actors, on the hundredth anniversary of his birth. For nearly half a century, Fonda distinguished himself in both theater and film, winning acclaim in each medium.

The Henry Fonda commemorative postage stamp was dedicated in a special ceremony today at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills.

“Kind-hearted; trustworthy; heroic—these are the iconic American traits that Henry Fonda brought to his roles on the stage and on the big screen,” said John F. Walsh, Vice Chairman of the presidentially appointed U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors, who dedicated the stamp. “He was the kind of hero everyone rooted for.”

This stamp is available today at the Academy and all Beverly Hills Post Offices. More than 100 million stamps will be available at Post Offices and philatelic centers nationwide May 21.

Previous Legend of Hollywood honorees include Marilyn Monroe (1995), James Dean (1996), Humphrey Bogart (1997), Alfred Hitchcock (1998), James Cagney (1999), Edward G. Robinson (2000), Lucille Ball (2001), Cary Grant (2002), Audrey Hepburn (2003) and John Wayne (2004).

Henry Fonda typically played thoughtful men of integrity, and was indelibly associated with the American characters he portrayed, among them young Abe Lincoln, lawyer Clarence Darrow, marshal Wyatt Earp and in what many consider his finest performance, the dispossessed farmer Tom Joad in “The Grapes of Wrath.” As an actor, Fonda was noted for his seeming naturalness and ease, an illusion he worked hard to convey, and his distinctively flat Midwestern accent. He was a versatile performer, equally effective in comedic and dramatic roles.



While noted for his professionalism and the quality of his concentration, Fonda remarked that he was most able to relax when he was acting. He claimed it was therapeutic to pretend to be someone else. Though he often appeared in Westerns, Fonda didn't like working with horses.

Fonda was born May 16, 1905, in Grand Island, NE, and was still an infant when his family moved to nearby Omaha. As a young man, he was encouraged to try acting by a friend of his mother's, Dorothy Brando (at that time the mother of baby Marlon). After giving up his plans to become a journalist, Fonda moved to the East Coast, where he continued his theatrical apprenticeship. He and a friend, Jimmy Stewart, became roommates in Depression-era New York.

Soon after establishing himself in the Broadway theater, Fonda became a film star. He was praised in a New York Times review of "Young Mr. Lincoln" (1939) for the "warmth and kindness, the pleasant modesty, the courage, resolution, tenderness, shrewdness, and wit" he brought to his performance. He was nominated for an Academy Award for his work in "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940). He played opposite such leading ladies as Barbara Stanwyck in "The Lady Eve" (1941), a masterpiece of screwball comedy, and Bette Davis in "Jezebel" (1938).

When the United States entered World War II, Fonda enlisted in the Navy, saying, "I don't want to be in a fake war in a studio." After serving for three years as an air combat intelligence officer, Fonda appeared on Broadway in "Mister Roberts," a comedy about the Navy, wearing his own officer's cap to play the title role. The play was a hit, and Fonda won a Tony Award in 1948 for his acting; he reprised his role on tour and in the film version.

Some of Fonda's memorable stage roles were in "First Monday in October," in which he played a Supreme Court Justice, and in a full-length solo show, "Clarence Darrow." In film, Fonda's most celebrated late work was "On Golden Pond" (1981), in which he played Norman Thayer, a retired professor facing old age, opposite Katharine Hepburn as his wife. Both Fonda and Hepburn won Academy Awards in 1982 for their work; Jane Fonda, for her performance as their daughter, received an Academy Award nomination.

Henry Fonda received many other honors, including a special Oscar in 1981 for his contribution to film and a special Tony Award in 1979 for his contribution to American theater. He was the patriarch of a noted family including his daughters Jane and Amy, son Peter and grandchildren Bridget Fonda, Troy Garity, Vanessa Vadim and Justin Fonda. He died in Los Angeles on August 12, 1982, at age 77.

Stamp artist Drew Struzan based his portrait of Fonda on a photograph taken by Frank Powolny in 1941. For the selvaqe, art director Derry Noyes chose a photograph showing Fonda in his performance as farmer Tom Joad in "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940).

The following text appears on the selvaqe: Henry Fonda (1905–1982) was noted for his naturalness and sincerity in stage roles and on the screen. Effective in comedic or dramatic roles, he typically played thoughtful men of integrity. In a career spanning nearly 50 years, he won

many honors, including a Tony Award in 1948 for his work in the Broadway production of “Mister Roberts” and the Academy Award for best actor in 1982 for “On Golden Pond.”

To see the Henry Fonda commemorative postage stamp and other stamp designs, go to the Postal Service’s online store at www.usps.com/shop, and simply click on “Release Schedule” in the Collector's Corner.

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by calling 1-800-STAMP-24. A selection of stamps and other philatelic items are also available at the online Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. In addition, beautifully custom-framed prints of original stamp art are available at www.postalartgallery.com.

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 more than 142 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 \$69 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 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.

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