

EMBARGO FOR RELEASE
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O! Blue Eyes returns to 'Stamping Ovation' *Postal Service offers exclusive Sinatra CD*



WASHINGTON, DC — The “Chairman of the Board’s” children joined the Postal Service’s Chairman to celebrate the achievements of “O! Blue Eyes” by dedicating the Frank Sinatra commemorative stamp in the first of three ceremonies taking place in New York City, Las Vegas and Hoboken, NJ, today. All 120 million Frank Sinatra 42-cent First-Class stamps become available nationwide today. To celebrate the iconic entertainer’s legacy, the Postal Service is offering exclusive Sinatra memorabilia available at www.usps.com/sinatra and at select Post Offices.

“Today, the Postal Service is proud to deliver its own special tribute to the ‘Chairman of the Board,’” said Postal Service Board of Governors Chairman Alan Kessler. “On Frank’s 80th birthday, the City of New York turned the Empire State Building blue. Starting today, we’re going to try to do New York City one better — by turning America’s mail a beautiful shade of blue. One hundred twenty million portraits of ‘O! Blue Eyes’ will carry our cards, letters and packages to their destinations all around the world.”

Nancy Sinatra, her daughter, A.J. Lambert, and Frank Sinatra Jr., accompanied Kessler and Rep. José E. Serrano (D-NY) in dedicating the stamp during a 10 a.m. first-day-of-issue ceremony in New York City’s Gotham Hall. Serrano is a long-time admirer of Sinatra and learned to speak English from listening to his father’s Sinatra records.

Tina Sinatra will join Postal Service Governor James Bilbray at a first-day-of-issue ceremony in Las Vegas at the Bellagio Fountains main alcove at noon PT (3:00 p.m. ET) to dedicate the stamp. At 2:30 p.m. PT, she and Frank Sinatra stamp artist Kazuhiko Sano will participate in an autograph session at the Wynn Las Vegas. The Sinatra stamp will be available for sale at the Wynn Las Vegas’ Restaurant and Show Reservation kiosk located on the Esplanade from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. PT.

Also at 3 p.m. ET, Frank Sinatra Jr. will join Postal Service District Manager Maria Morse and Rep. Albio Sires (D-NJ) in a first-day-of-sale ceremony near the Frank Sinatra Post Office in Hoboken, NJ, at Pier A Park.

“Our father loved this country,” said the Sinatra family, represented by Nancy, Frank Jr. and Tina Sinatra. “This would have been one of his happiest days.”

Sinatra left his mark on American culture with his amazing vocals and romantic style. To celebrate the life of this great entertainer, the Postal Service is offering limited quantities of specially designed Sinatra shipping supplies, Sinatra musical greeting cards, classic Sinatra artwork and a new *Sinatra Nothing But the Best* CD. Unique to CDs sold in music stores under the same title, the Postal Service limited edition offers an exclusive bonus track featuring "I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself A Letter," — a one-time hit parade tune of particular interest to the Postal Service. The CD also includes a collectible commemorative Frank Sinatra stamp bearing the official USPS first-day-of-issue postmark. Customers visiting www.usps.com/sinatra and select Post Offices can also enter a sweepstakes to win an ultimate entertainment system, Sinatra music, movies and more.

Art director Richard Sheaff of Scottsdale, AZ, worked with stamp artist Kazuhiko Sano of Mill Valley, CA, to create the image based on a 1950s photograph of the entertainer. The stamp depicts Sinatra's charismatic smile, trademark fedora and striking blue eyes that earned him the nickname "Ol' Blue Eyes." Sinatra's autograph also appears on the stamp.

In a 60-year career studded with accolades, Sinatra won several Grammys, received the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award in 1971, and was recognized at the Kennedy Center Honors in 1983. Sinatra gave generously to many charities and was noted for his philanthropy. President Reagan awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1985. Sinatra was born in Hoboken, NJ, in 1915. He died in 1998 (see attached background).

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Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/welcome.htm. A high-resolution image of the Frank Sinatra stamp is available for media use only at: <http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/2008stamps/downloadcenter.htm>

An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services, not tax dollars, to pay for operating expenses. The Postal Service has annual revenue of \$75 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.

How to Order first-day-of-issue Postmark

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first day of issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at www.usps.com/shop, by calling 800-STAMP-24 or by visiting their Post Office. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others, and place them in a larger envelope addressed to:

Frank Sinatra Stamp
Postmaster
1001 E. Sunset Rd., Rm. 1006B
Las Vegas, NV 89199-9998

Frank Sinatra Stamp
Postmaster
421 8th Ave., Rm. 2029B
New York, NY 10199-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by July 12, 2008.

How to Order First-Day Covers

Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-STAMP-24 or writing to:

Information Fulfillment
Dept. 6270
U.S. Postal Service
P.O. Box 219014
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

There are eight philatelic products available for this stamp issue:

- Item 463299, Cancellation Keepsake w/two Digital Color Postmarks, \$11.40.
- Item 463284, Uncut Press Sheets (six up), \$50.40.
- Item 463261, First Day Cover — New York, \$.80.
- Item 463269, First Day Cover — Las Vegas, \$.80.
- Item 463265, Digital Color Postmark — New York, \$1.50.
- Item 463279, Digital Color Postmark — Las Vegas, \$1.50.
- Item 463289, Compact Disc w/Insert, \$16.99.
- Item 463291, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.

Domestic customers will be charged a \$1 shipping and handling fee per order, regardless of quantity. As Sinatra's popularity extends worldwide, international customers may purchase the stamp and related merchandise for an additional \$5 fee by fax at 1-816-545-1201 or by calling (1-816-545-1100). International customers may submit orders through the mail by writing to:

Stamp Fulfillment Services
P.O. Box 7247
Philadelphia, PA 19107-7097

At this time international customer orders are not available through www.usps.com/sinatra or through www.usps.com/shop.

Frank Sinatra Backgrounder

An Oscar-winning actor who appeared in more than 60 motion pictures, Frank Sinatra was even more celebrated as a singer, admired the world over as a supreme interpreter of American popular song.

The son of Italian immigrants, Francis Albert Sinatra was born Dec. 12, 1915, in Hoboken, NJ. As a boy he would sit on the docks, staring across the Hudson River at New York City's skyline, pondering his future. Decades later, when he first sang the theme from "New York, New York," Sinatra might have remembered those times as he belted the line, "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere." By then, he had long since become an iconic figure, known as much for his visual image — particularly the jauntily cocked fedora and loosened collar of his classic album covers — as for his music.

Street Corner Singer

Inspired by Bing Crosby, a major vocalist of the 1930s, the youthful Sinatra set his sights on a career in music and began singing on street corners with friends. In 1935, he and three others auditioned for *Major Bowes' Amateur Hour*, a popular radio program of its day. They performed as the "Hoboken Four" and won the talent contest.

After touring for a season with the Hoboken Four, Sinatra decided to go it alone. In 1939, he was singing at a roadhouse in New Jersey when trumpeter and bandleader Harry James hired him to sing with his orchestra. He made his first appearance with the James band in June 1939 and soon made his first commercial recording, "From the Bottom of My Heart."

Months after signing with James, Sinatra was invited by Tommy Dorsey to sing with his band. He sang with the famous trombonist, who then led one of the top swing bands in the country, from January 1940 to September 1942. Six months after joining the Dorsey orchestra, he hit number one with "I'll Never Smile Again." Other hits with Dorsey included "Polka Dots and Moonbeams" and "The Song Is You."

America's First Pop Icon

Sinatra made his breakthrough appearance as a solo performer on Dec. 30, 1942, when he debuted in New York at the Paramount Theater. The hysteria set off by his fans made headlines, and within weeks he had signed recording, movie and radio contracts.

In this phase of his career, Sinatra was known primarily as a sensitive crooner whose musical style was perfect for the World War II era, when many couples were separated by circumstance. He worked hard at making his singing as conversational as possible and giving the melody and lyrics a flowing, surprisingly unbroken quality.

His wholehearted embrace of the technology of sound recording enhanced Sinatra's talent. He effectively used the microphone, which brought intimacy and articulation to the forefront of the art of popular singing, as a prop to convey emotion and to expand his dynamic range.

Academy Award Winner

Highlights among Sinatra's early musical films include *Anchors Aweigh* (1945) and *On the Town* (1949). In 1946, he received a special Academy Award for *The House I Live In*, a short film arguing in favor of racial and religious tolerance. In 1953, Sinatra's popularity soared to new heights with the release of *From Here to Eternity*, in which he proved that he was an outstanding dramatic actor, winning an Academy Award for his supporting role as Maggio, a scrappy Italian-American soldier. For his dramatic performance in *The Man With the Golden Arm* (1955), Sinatra received a Best Actor nomination. Other highlights of his film career include the musicals *Young at Heart* (1955), *Guys and Dolls* (1955), *High Society* (1956), *Pal Joey* (1957), and *Can-Can* (1960). He also excelled in non-singing roles in films such as the crime caper *Ocean's Eleven* (1960) and *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), a political thriller that addressed the Cold War.

Darker, Emotional Singer

Musically, Sinatra had entered another phase in the 1950s, an era that is generally considered his greatest period. The boyish crooner evolved into a deeper, more personal interpreter of pop songs who conveyed the meaning of a lyric with intensity and remarkable nuance. Sinatra had begun to express darker emotions that had not been previously acceptable, thus paving the way for the aggressive style of singers in the rock era. At the same time, his rhythmic acuity intensified, so that he sang with finger-

snapping confidence that made him seem the essence of “cool” — a shift that mirrored postwar America’s newfound swagger.

“Concept Album” Pioneer

Sinatra did much to establish and preserve the great American songbook. He gave the classic songs new life by almost single-handedly inventing the pop album format. As the new medium of the long-playing record developed, Sinatra pioneered what was later known as the “concept album” — a musical album created entirely around a single concept. Collaborating with such legendary arrangers as Nelson Riddle, Billy May and Gordon Jenkins, as well as personally choosing the songs for each album, the order in which they would appear, the microphone placement for the instruments — and in some cases even conducting the orchestra himself — Sinatra made some of his most important and inspired musical works.

From 1955 to 1958, he released several albums now considered classics, including *In the Wee Small Hours* (1955), a selection of torch songs; *Songs for Swingin’ Lovers!* (1956), containing “I’ve Got You Under My Skin,” a favorite of many fans; *A Swingin’ Affair!* (1957); and *Frank Sinatra Sings for Only the Lonely* (1958). Sinatra said the latter collection of moody ballads, including his signature “saloon songs,” “Angel Eyes” and “One for My Baby (and One More for the Road),” was his favorite.

Sinatra formed his own recording company, Reprise, in late 1960, and around this time became known as the “Chairman of the Board.” Now in his late 40s, Sinatra was famous not only for his musical talent and acting ability, but as the central figure in the so-called “Rat Pack,” a professional and personal circle that included Dean Martin, Peter Lawford, Sammy Davis, Jr. and Joey Bishop. During this period, Sinatra became closely identified with Las Vegas, which he helped to popularize as an entertainment center.

Versatile Performer

In the 1960s, Sinatra worked in almost every conceivable setting, from the great jazz orchestras of Count Basie (*It Might as Well Be Swing*, 1964) and Duke Ellington (*Francis A. & Edward K.*, 1967) to the semi-symphonic settings of *Sinatra & Strings* (1962) and *The Concert Sinatra* (1963) to the gentle bossa nova of *Francis Albert Sinatra & Antonio Carlos Jobim* (1967) and the jukebox pop of *Strangers in the Night* (1966) and *My Way* (1969).

Later in his career, Sinatra became an elder statesman on the music scene, and was known by the nickname “Ol’ Blue Eyes.” In 1985, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Ronald Reagan. He had a number-one selling hit with *Duets* (1993), a collection of 13 standards pairing him with singers such as Tony Bennett, Gloria Estefan and Bono of U2.

Sinatra is widely regarded by singers, musicians, critics and fans as the single most important and influential performer of the American popular song. In a career studded with accolades, he won several Grammys, received the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award in 1971 and was recognized at the Kennedy Center Honors in 1983. Sinatra gave generously to many charities and was noted for his philanthropy. He died May 14, 1998, at age 82.

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