



UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 13, 2003

POSTAL NEWS

Media Contacts: Liz Carter (202) 268-5188
Beth Barnett (615) 885-9394
Postal Service Web Site: www.usps.com
Stamp News Release Number: 03-044

LIVE AT THE GRAND OLE OPRY: USPS HONORS COUNTRY MUSIC LEGEND ROY ACUFF

Roy Acuff Tribute Show, *broadcasting LIVE from the Grand Ole Opry*, includes USPS stamp dedication ceremony for the new Roy Acuff stamp

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Postal Service will issue a new postage stamp commemorating the life and accomplishments of Grand Ole Opry legend, singer and songwriter Roy Acuff Sept. 13 at the Roy Acuff Tribute Show. The show will be broadcast live on County Music TV (CMT) between 7 and 8 p.m. CST., from the Grand Ole Opry, 2802 Opryland Dr., Nashville, Tenn. For admission details, please check the Grand Ole Opry website at www.opry.com. Stamp collectors and the general public can purchase stamps and obtain cancellations at the Opry Plaza retail unit.

Acuff helped turn the Grand Ole Opry into the nation's foremost country music institution, and his role in the music publishing business helped make Nashville the country music capital of America. The 37-cent self-adhesive Roy Acuff stamp will be available at the Grand Ole Opry and at Nashville Post Offices on Sept. 13, and nationwide beginning Sept. 14.

"Through the issuance of this stamp, we celebrate Roy Acuff's life and history-making career accomplishments that entertained generations of country music listeners," said Postmaster General John E. Potter, who will dedicate the stamp. "The Postal Service is proud to be a part of this tribute to one of country music's first true superstars."

Expected to join Potter at the ceremony are country music favorites Vince Gill and Patty Loveless, as well as General Manager, Grand Ole Opry Pete Fisher; former Postmaster General Marvin Runyon; former Tennessee Governor Ned R. McWherter, currently serving on the presidentially appointed Postal Service Board of Governors; and Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell.

Roy Claxton Acuff was born in Maynardville, Tenn., on Sept. 15, 1903. As a young man, Acuff was a natural athlete who aspired to be a professional baseball player, but a severe case of sunstroke in 1929 ended his athletic career. During a long recuperation, he honed his skill with the fiddle, and during the summer of 1932, he fiddled and performed in skits with a traveling medicine show.



In 1933 Acuff formed a band known as the Tennessee Crackerjacks, later renamed the Crazy Tennesseans by a radio announcer. In 1936, Acuff and his band made their first recordings, including a version of a traditional song that would become one of Acuff's best known numbers, "The Great Speckled Bird." The band first performed at the Grand Ole Opry in October 1937, but it was Acuff's Feb. 5, 1938, performance of "The Great Speckled Bird" that first earned him national fame and made his band—renamed the Smoky Mountain Boys—Opry regulars.

Acuff's repertoire included renditions of traditional and sacred songs such as "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" and "I Saw the Light," as well as sentimental favorites such as "The Precious Jewel." He was also well known for his songs about trains, especially "Wabash Cannonball."

For decades Acuff's name was nearly synonymous with the Grand Ole Opry. In 1983, he moved into a house on the Opryland grounds and continued to perform on the Opry stage until shortly before his death on Nov. 23, 1992.

Acuff received numerous honors and awards during his long career, including entry into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1962 – its first living member. In 1987, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences; in July 1991, President George H. W. Bush presented a National Medal of the Arts; and in December 1991, he was honored by the Kennedy Center.

The stamp art, a black-and-white photograph that catches Acuff in a playful moment—holding his fiddle under his arm rather than in its usual position under the chin—is by John E. Hood, and appeared in the March 5, 1949, issue of Collier's magazine. Richard Sheaff of Scottsdale, Ariz., designed the stamp.

The following text appears on the back of the stamp: Roy Acuff (1903-1992) was one of country music's first superstars. He helped turn the Grand Ole Opry into the nation's foremost country music institution and was instrumental in making Nashville the country music capital of America.

To see the Roy Acuff stamp, visit the Postal Service Web site and open 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. In addition, a selection of stamps and other philatelic items are available at the online Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. Custom-framed art 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. It is an independent federal agency that visits 140 million homes and businesses 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 \$66 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume—some 203 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves 7 million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Issue: *Roy Acuff*
Item Number: 454600
Denomination & Type of Issue: 37-cent commemorative
Format: Pane of 20 (1 design)
Series: N/A
Issue Date & City: September 13, 2003, Nashville, TN 37230
Designer: Richard Sheaff, Scottsdale, AZ
Art Director: Richard Sheaff, Scottsdale, AZ
Typographer: Richard Sheaff, Scottsdale, AZ
Photographer: John E. Hood (Deceased)
Engraver: Keating Gravure
Modeler: Avery Dennison, SPD
Manufacturing Process: Gravure
Printer: Avery Dennison (AVR)
Printed at: AVR, Clinton, SC
Press Type: Dia Nippon Kiko (DNK)
Stamps per Pane: 20
Print Quantity: 52 million stamps
Paper Type: Nonphosphored, Type III, Block tagged
Adhesive Type: Pressure sensitive
Processed at: AVR, Clinton, SC
Colors: Yellow, PMS 185 (Red), Black, Black
Stamp Orientation: Vertical
Image Area (w x h): 0.840 x 1.410 in./21.336 x 35.814 mm
Overall Size (w x h): 0.990 x 1.560 in./25.146 x 39.624 mm
Full Pane Size (w x h): 5.875 x 7.250 in./149.23 x 184.150 mm
Plate Size: 200 stamps per revolution
Plate Numbers: "V" followed by four (4) single digits
Marginal Markings: "© 2002 USPS" • Price • Plate position diagram
Plate numbers (4 per pane) • 4 Barcodes on back
Catalog Item Number(s): 454620 Block of 4 — \$1.48
454630 Block of 10 — \$3.70
454640 Full Pane of 20 — \$7.40
454661 First Day Cover — \$0.75
454693 Full Pane w/FDC — \$8.15

How to Order the First Day of Issue Postmark

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first day of issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at their local Post Office, by telephone at 1 800 STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store Web site at www.usps.com/shop. 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:

ROY ACUFF COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS
POSTMASTER
525 ROYAL PKY
NASHVILLE TN 37230-9991

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 Oct. 14, 2003.