

# thomasedison & the bulb

## ... Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Light Bulb.

### What's the reason for this exhibit?

The exhibit tells the story of the "Electric Light's Golden Jubilee" stamp, and the event celebrated - the origins and rationale with emphasis on the stamps's use. Through the years the stamp has been referred to as the "Edison commemorative." It does not, however commemorate Edison, but rather his inven-

tion - the light bulb. Because of his role as an inventor and the way in which he was exploited by the commercial interests behind the "Golden Jubilee," he is inexorably tied to the bulb and the stamp. The stamp has come to celebrate Edison as well as the bulb.

### What will I see in the exhibit?

This is an experimental exhibit that uses stamps, postal history, first day covers, postcards and an occasional cinderella. The focus is on the stamp, often referred to by collectors as "the bulb," and the many ways it was used for both postage and commercial promotion. You will see the stamp alone and

how it came to the public - actually three different stamps of the same design. Production methods are not addressed in detail, and there are no known errors. The focus is on the three stamps and what they commemorate, not generic production processes and anomalies, nor are cachets important.

### How is it organized?

#### PART 1 - THE STAMPS

**ORIGIN:** Development of the stamp, including small die proof and photo essay.

**THE STAMPS:** Examples of the stamps - flat press, rotary and coil.

#### PART 2 - FIRST DAY COVERS

A showing of interesting FDCs without regard to cachets.

The usage, not the cachet, is most important..

#### PART 3 - THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

Items issued to commemorate the Golden Jubilee, which the stamp celebrated and associated events.

#### PART 4 - USES

**DOMESTIC:** Primarily illustrates the first class rate in the

United States and its possessions - the rate for which the stamp was issued. Air service within the United States and possessions. Special delivery and registered.

**INTERNATIONAL:** Surface usage as well as a presentation of interesting destinations and air rates of the period, including catapult and zeppelin mail. And representative illustrations of special mail treaty rates from around the world. Special delivery and registered.

**BEYOND THE RATE:** Covers with interest other than the class of service.

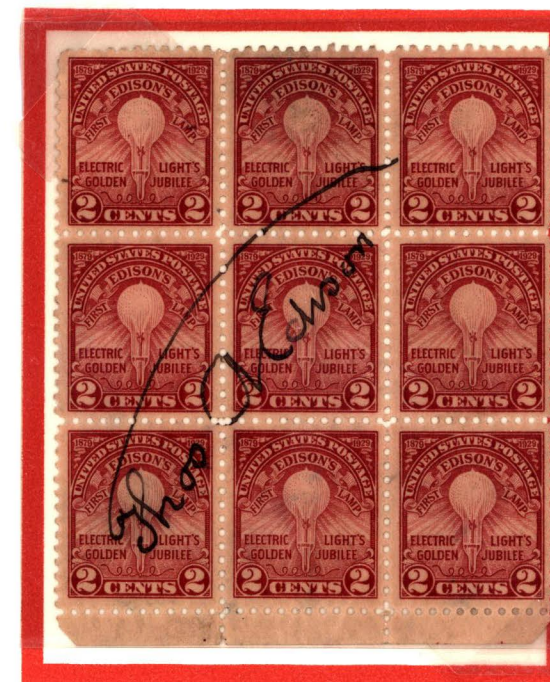
#### PART 5 - EPILOGUE

**DEATH OF EDISON:** Though Edison died 2 years after the stamp was issued, the stamp honoring the bulb was still used to commemorate his death.

### What will I not want to miss?

Items of significant interest or rarity are shown with a red border for easy identification. Usages of this stamp beyond first class are elusive. Usages and items of special note: *Thomas Edison auto-*

*graphed block & FDC, small die proof, special delivery from Great Britain, supplementary mail, internal air rate for Australia, among others.*



Block of 9 Golden Jubilee stamps autographed by Edison. Flat plate.

To promote the light bulb and the use of electricity, General Electric promoted the idea of a stamp to celebrate the light bulb's invention by Thomas Edison. While the major events of *Electric Light's Golden Jubilee* were on October 21, the 50th anniversary date of the bulb's invention by Edison, the first stamp was issued June 5, 1929. to align with the Golden Jubilee convention in Atlantic City. The event was celebrated throughout the summer in cities across the U.S.

