

## Rattlesnake Island Local Post Air Mail By Tom Reyman

Approximately 60 miles Northwest of Cleveland, Ohio lies a group of islands known as the Lake Erie Island in the waters of Lake Erie. Put-in-Bay Island is famous for its strategic role in the naval battles during the War of 1812 when Admiral Perry used it as a base of operations for his Lake Erie fleet. About two miles from Put-in-Bay is the less well-known island of Rattlesnake Island named for its serpentine appearance on the waters of Lake Erie. Rattlesnake Island is a privately owned property that is a retreat for an exclusive group of wealthy owners who make-up the ownership club for the island. Currently, there are approximately 65 members who have access to the guarded facilities there which include homes, lodging, and restaurants. No casual visitors are permitted on the island.

In 1929, a private air strip was constructed by the owner of the property at that time. In the 1950's, another cross runway was added. As the residents of the island needed access to mail services a local post service was established in 1966 so the U.S. Post Office could deliver mail via a Ford Trimotor aircraft. This service continued from 1966 to 1989. This was the only USPS-sanctioned local post in the United States.



The subject cover was posted from the island in 1968 with a Los Angeles destination. The mailing includes regular U.S. postage but features the Rattlesnake Island 10-cent local post stamp that includes an image of the Ford Trimotor approaching the island.

Under new ownership of the island, air mail service was restarted in 2005 but was again discontinued in 2013.

### References:

- [www.lakeerieliving.com/main/articles/rattlesnake\\_island\\_482.aspx](http://www.lakeerieliving.com/main/articles/rattlesnake_island_482.aspx)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/rattlesnake\\_island\\_9628lake\\_erie%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/rattlesnake_island_9628lake_erie%29)

**Tom Reyman** is a Nevada Stamp Study Society member whose collecting interests are U.S. FAM covers, general Air Mail covers, Canadian Semi-Official Air Mail stamps and covers, and Cape Breton (Nova Scotia) covers.