

National Air Mail Week

May 15 -21, 1938

By Howard Grenzebach

The year is 1938 and the Great Depression is in full swing. Europe is at peace, but Hitler is at work to bring that peace to an end. The airlines in the US are struggling, FDR is president and the 1939 World's Fair in San Francisco is just around the corner. Do these things have anything in common? Well, yes but only when you get rid of Hitler.

In that year a new stamp was issued, C23 to celebrate 20 years of airmail service. Airmail has been a boon to the air transport industry so, the president along with James A. Farley chose to initiate National Air Mail Week which ran from May 15 to 21, 1938 in which the citizens were encouraged to send letters by airmail and, they did.....in droves.



Stamp collectors, of course, rose to the call by creating covers to celebrate the occasion in every state and from every major city. The cover you see here was created in San Francisco and, no doubt with the aid of the city, to advertise the coming World's Fair in 1939. Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Alaska also participated.



The other side is clean except for the aging gum. It also has a nice invitation to all to visit the Fair being held on Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay.

If you would like to see these covers, go to <https://www.aerodacious.com/> and click on the “National Air Mail Week” link. California produced 43 different covers, this being one of them. The most cities represented were in Pennsylvania with 74 and least was in Oklahoma with one. Nevada had eight covers, one from Reno but, sadly, none from Las Vegas were shown on that site. Most of the covers sport the C23 stamp issued that year, a few used three cents in postage (money was tight) and very few had no postage at all.



The Reno Cover

The cover responsible for all this falderah was found in a group of stamps won in the club meeting raffle. It's from San Francisco and is a left-over that never fulfilled its purpose to be mailed in that week.

The raffle is only a dollar (for the good of the club) and every now and then you find some wonderful things.

More information on National Air Mail Week can be found at the American Air Mail Society on <https://www.americanairmailssociety.org/wecollect/national-air-mail-week/>

Howard Grenzebach is currently a Director of NSSS and collects Worldwide pre-1950, early Grenada, and Swiss standing Helvetia.



C23 – Bicolor Eagle airmail stamp