

## Then and Now – Exposition Issues:

This year we had a triangular-self-adhesive stamp to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the founding of the Jamestown Colony in Virginia. One hundred years ago there was a similar event – *The Jamestown Exposition Stamps of 1907*.



Starting with the 200th birthday of the US in 1876, the USPOD found that it could make money and generate some good public relations for the organization. They repeated the program with the Columbian (1893), Trans-Mississippi (1898), Pan-American (1901), and Louisiana Purchase (1904) stamps.

The 1907 "commemorative" sets issued for the Jamestown Exposition of 1907 located at what is now the Norfolk Naval Station consisted of three stamps based on the 'history' of the colony.



The three stamps were:

**1¢ Captain John Smith** - The 'good' Captain was an English adventurer and soldier, and led the expedition that founded the Jamestown, Virginia settlement. His "account" of the Virginia Settlement is the one found in most US history books.



**2¢ The Founding of Jamestown** - This stamp is inscribed "*Founding of Jamestown, 1607*" and actually depicts the event though the stamps April 26 issue date actually is the 300th anniversary of Captain Smith's landing in Virginia. The construction of the actual settlement started a month -later after a quick and imperfect search for a better site was conducted.



**5¢ Pocahontas** - This stamp was a late addition to the series and the result of a public relations effort of the exposition committee. Pocahontas was added to the set as a "*romantic touch*". The painting from which the engraving was made portrays her as she appeared in England at her presentation at the Court of King James.

The USPOD got around the law prohibiting the use of advertisements on U.S. postage stamps, a disclaimer of sorts - "Commemorative Series, 1907" - was placed on each stamp, rather than the name of the Exposition itself. And as with the earlier "commemorative" stamps, this gave rise to a variety of "*JAMESTOWN CELEBRATION*" and "*EXPOSITION STATION*" cancellations promoting and providing souvenirs for the event. Creating, again, a subspecialty in cancellations and covers bearing these cancellations similar to the prior Columbian event.

There were some major outcomes that would affect involvement of the USPOD in commercial expositions in later years.

For the first time, the USPOD found itself with a large stock of unsold stamps as the 1907 Exposition was not nearly as successful commercially as the ones celebrated by the earlier commemoratives and sales of the stamps lagged far behind predicted volume.

With this in mind, our USPOD, had to be forced into issuing single stamp for the Alaska-Yukon Exposition/Seattle World's Fair of 1909; but in this case the stamp was very successful, particularly the imperforate variety – and paved the way for a full issue honoring the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco on the opening of the Panama Canal.