

National Postal Museum

The Smithsonian National Postal Museum is currently located on the lower level of the historic City Post Office Building, which was constructed in 1914 and served as the Washington, DC, post office from 1914 through 1986.

Until moving to this building on July 30, 1993, the collection was housed in the Smithsonian's Arts and Industries Building on the National Mall (1908-1964) and then moved (1964) to the building now known as the National Museum of American History.

The current location maintains one of the world's largest collections of stamps and philatelic materials and other items such as postal history that pre-date the use of stamps, a large collection of vehicles used to transport the mail, mailboxes and mailbags, postal uniforms and equipment.

For those of us who are not able to travel to

actually see the exhibits, the museum has and continues to improve on an already outstanding website. that can be found at: http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/museum/1_museum.html

Key to this site is the Arago™ Online Collection Database, the Museum's educational and research portal. *This allows the user to view the collections in a context-rich setting with full color images and zoom-in capability (museum's claim).*

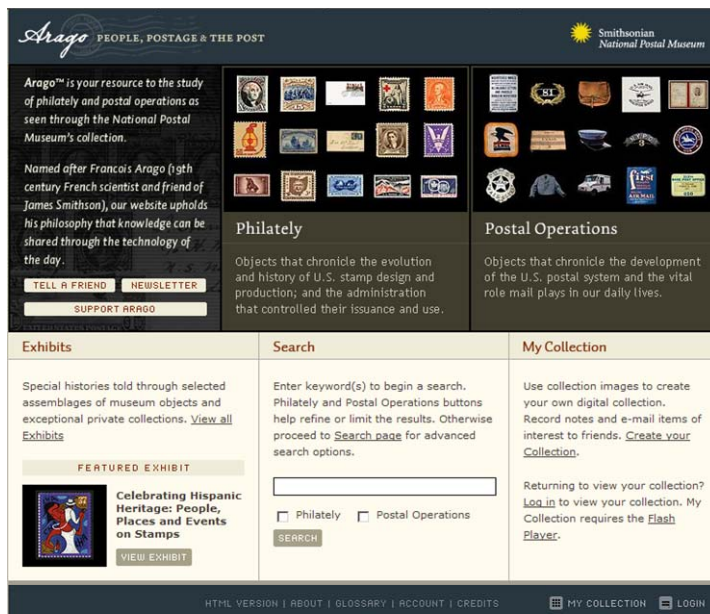
You can directly access this portal via <http://www.arago.si.edu/> (see screen dump to the right).

There are three section to this viewing tool. You have the ability to browse through the various online exhibits, conduct searches to find philatelic items and create your own online collections of items of interest.

After you have found the item, you have the option of moving a copy to "My Collection". This requires that you register (its free)



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with the museum. If you wish to access this collection again, all you have to do is log in. The "my collection" function requires the 'flash' viewer to be installed on the accessing PC.

The current exhibit showcases "Hispanic Heritage: People, Places and Events on Stamps".

In general, the site has excellent graphics and comments about most items – and can provide hours of exploration enjoyment this coming winter.