

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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USPS Media Contact: Media Relations 202-268-2155  
usps.com

USS Constellation Museum: Chris Rowsom 410-539-1797 x402  
rowsom@constellation.org

Sailabration: Tracy Baskerville 410-752-8632  
tbaskerville@promotionandarts.com

Stamp News Release # 04-036

## **USS CONSTELLATION STAMP SETS SAIL JUNE 30 TO LAUNCH 150TH ANNIVERSARY 'SAILABRATION'**

WASHINGTON — The first of 45 million images depicting the U.S. Navy's last all-sail warship weighs anchor June 30 from Baltimore, MD to navigate the nation's mail stream when the U.S. Postal Service commemorates the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *USS Constellation's* launch with a commemorative postage stamp.

The 11:30 a.m. dedication ceremony, free and open to the public, takes place at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater near the 186-foot sloop-of-war in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The event also marks the beginning of a five-day tall ship "Sailabration" that culminates July 4 with a harbor-wide fireworks display.

"The Postal Service is proud to extend the image of this magnificent ship beyond Baltimore and the Chesapeake Bay," said Deputy Postmaster General John Nolan, who will officiate at the first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony.

The stamp art is a hand engraving based on a photograph, believed to date to 1893, in the collection of the U.S. Naval Historical Center.

Baltimore, as the host city of this First-Day-of-Issue Dedication Ceremony, holds the unique distinction of being the nation's only city where the stamp will be available on June 30. The stamp will be available at Post Offices and Philatelic Centers nationwide July 1.

"The museum is extremely pleased that *USS Constellation* will be honored by the commemorative stamp on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of her launch," said *USS Constellation* Museum Executive Director Christopher Rowsom ([www.constellation.org](http://www.constellation.org)). "It is a great opportunity to celebrate the history of this ship, and all three ships named *Constellation*, and to bring that history to the nation."



Ships scheduled to showcase the Sailabration include: *Bluenose II*, 181' Nova Scotian tall ship; *Capitan Miranda*, 205' Uruguayan Navy training tall ship; *Cisne Branco*, 257' Brazilian Navy training tall ship; *Cuauhtemoc*, 270' Mexican Navy training tall ship; *Mircea*, 269' Romanian Navy training tall ship; *Pride of Baltimore II*, 170' Maryland Goodwill Ambassador and tall ship; and *Sagres*, 296' Portuguese Navy training tall ship.

For decades naval authorities disagreed on whether *Constellation* was a new ship built in 1854 or a modification of the 1797 frigate of the same name. In 1991, scientific examination of the ship and a recently discovered half-hull model confirmed that the ship berthed in Baltimore and known as the *USS Constellation* was indeed a new ship built in 1854.

The third ship to bear the name was the aircraft carrier *USS Constellation* (CV 64). Commissioned in 1961, the ship participated in naval operations ranging from the War in Vietnam to supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. She was decommissioned in 2003.

The *USS Constellation* depicted on the stamp, as the last Civil War-era naval vessel still afloat, was built at the Gosport Navy Yard (now the Norfolk, VA Naval Shipyard) and launched on August 26, 1854. The *Constellation* actively served the nation for nearly 100 years. Today the ship is a floating museum anchored in Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

The largest and last all-sail sloop-of-war built by the U.S. Navy, the *USS Constellation* carried 22 guns on one deck and a crew of nearly 300. Commissioned on July 28, 1855, the vessel was deployed to the Mediterranean Sea, and later assigned to interdict the slave trade off the west coast of Africa. During the Civil War, the *Constellation* was assigned to the Mediterranean and later to the Gulf of Mexico blockade.

For some twenty years after 1873, *Constellation* served as a training ship for Naval Academy midshipmen, and occasionally was used for other missions including transporting works of American art to the Paris Exposition of 1878 and food to Ireland during the 1880 famine. Over the next 50 years, *Constellation* would serve as a training ship, sit in dry dock, and participate in the 1914 Star Spangled Banner Centennial Tour. Its last appearance as a commissioned ship occurred during the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on July 5, 1926.

Decommissioned by the Navy in 1933, *Constellation* returned to active duty during World War II as relief flagship for the U.S. Atlantic Fleet and Battleship Division Five. In 1955, having been decommissioned once again, the ship was brought to Baltimore and donated by the Navy to a local non-profit foundation. When finally opened to the public nearly a decade later, it had been configured to resemble its namesake, the frigate *Constellation*.

In November 1996, *Constellation* was towed into dry dock to undergo extensive restoration. On July 2, 1999, the venerable all-sail ship, a National Historic Landmark now restored to its as-

built (1854) configuration, returned to its permanent berth in Baltimore's Inner Harbor and re-opened its decks to the public.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to about 141 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$68 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume — some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year — and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.

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## TECHNICAL DETAILS

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Issue:                        | <i>USS Constellation</i>  |
| Item Number:                  | 456700  |
| Denomination & Type of Issue: | 37-cent Commemorative   |
| Format:                       | Pane of 20 (1 design)   |
| Series:                       | N/A   |
| Issue Date & City:            | June 30, 2004, Baltimore, MD 21233  |
| Designer:                     | Howard E. Paine, Delaplane, VA  |
| Engraver:                     | Christopher Broadbridge   |
| Art Director:                 | Howard E. Paine, Delaplane, VA  |
| Typographer:                  | John Boyd, New York, NY   |
| Modeler:                      | Joseph Sheeran  |
| Manufacturing Process:        | Intaglio  |
| Printer:                      | Ashton Potter (USA) Ltd. (APU)  |
| Printed at:                   | Williamsville, NY   |
| Press Type:                   | Stevens, Vari-size Security Press   |
| Stamps per Pane:              | 20  |
| Print Quantity:               | 45 million stamps   |
| Paper Type:                   | Prephosphored, Type I, 175 PMU  |
| Adhesive Type:                | Pressure-sensitive  |
| Processed at:                 | Ashton Potter (USA) Ltd.  |
| Colors:                       | PMS 4625 (Brown)  |
| Stamp Orientation:            | Square  |
| Image Area (w x h):           | 1.075 x 1.075 in./27.305 x 27.305mm   |
| Overall Size (w x h):         | 1.225 x 1.225 in./31.115 x 31.115 mm  |
| Full Pane Size (w x h):       | 5.9 x 7.12 in./149.86 x 180.848mm   |
| Plate Size:                   | 180 stamps per revolution   |
| Plate Numbers:                | "P" followed by one (1) single digit  |
| Marginal Markings:            | © 2003 USPS • Plate number • Price<br>Plate position diagram • Four Barcodes<br>on back of pane   |
| Catalog Item Number(s):       | 456720 Block of 4 — \$1.48<br>456730 Block of 10 — \$3.70<br>456740 Full Pane — \$7.40<br>456761 First Day Cover — \$0.75<br>456793 FP w/FDC — \$8.15 |

### **How to Order the First Day of Issue Postmark**

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first day of issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at their local Post Office, by telephone at 800-STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store Web site at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place them in a larger envelope addressed to:

USS CONSTELLATION COMMEMORATIVE STAMP  
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE  
POSTMASTER  
900 EAST FAYETTE STREET  
BALTIMORE, MD 21233-9715

After applying the first day of issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by July 30, 2004.

### **How to Order the First Day Covers**

Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first day of issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by telephoning 800-STAMP-24 or writing to:

INFORMATION FULFILLMENT  
DEPT 6270  
US POSTAL SERVICE  
PO BOX 219014  
KANSAS CITY MO 64121-9014

First day covers remain on sale for at least one year after the stamp's issuance.