

# The Cover Story

## The Worlds Columbian Exposition by the Editor

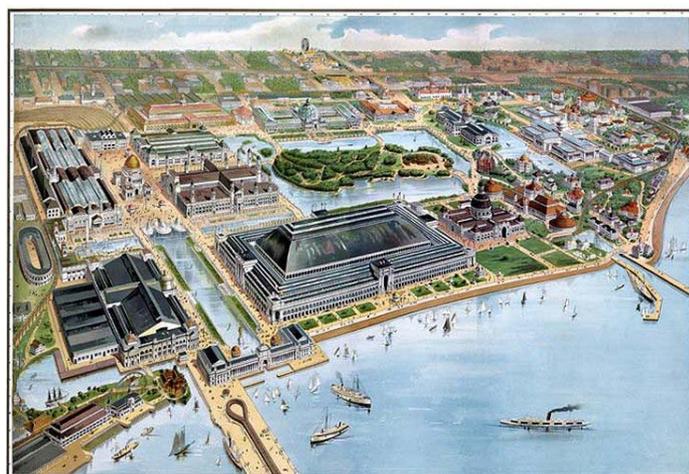
The year was 1893-- which represented a much simpler time. Travel was still difficult by the standards of today, however things were about to change. This event celebrated the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus. The iconic centerpiece of the Fair, the large water pool [Picture 1], represented the long voyage Columbus took to the New World. Chicago bested New York City; Washington, D.C.; and St. Louis for the honor of hosting the fair. The fair was an influential social and cultural event. The fair influenced countless areas of U.S. culture and design.

The exposition covered more than 600 acres, featuring nearly 200 new (but purposely temporary) buildings of predominantly neoclassical architecture, canals and lagoons, and people and cultures from 46 countries. The Fair was open to the public from May 1<sup>st</sup> to October 30<sup>th</sup> – during which time 27 million people attended. To place that attendance number within the context of the era – the population of the United States in the census year of 1890 was just short of 63 million.



Picture 1

The four tickets on the Front Cover [Figures A, B, C & D] were valid for any one day admission during that time frame. The scans of the tickets don't do justice to the fine engraving and intricate design work. Even the back of the ticket was beautiful [Figure E]! The American Banknote Company was the printing company engaged for this project.



BIRDS-EYE VIEW OF THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, CHICAGO, 1893.

The layout of the fairgrounds was created by Frederick Law Olmsted [1822-1903], who also was responsible for Central Park in New York City, and the George Washington Vanderbilt II Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina. This prolific landscape architect was also responsible for many other spectacular properties during this era.



The building of the “White City” came to be the trademark of this fair. While the classical style of architecture used on most of the buildings was eye-catching, especially with the use of street lights at night, not everyone viewed this as an advancement of design. One well respected architect of the era, Louis Sullivan [1856-1924] years later, in 1922, wrote that the classical style of the White City had set back modern American architecture by forty years.



The issuance of the sixteen stamps, from 1¢ to \$5, of the Columbian Series was also tied to the Fair. This set was extraordinary for its breadth – but also loathed by collectors of the era for the excessive cost.



# The U.S. Coast Guard “Racing Stripe”

by Mel Borofsky

At the stamp show in September, at the Bahia Shrine Center, Steve Patrick found a non-descript letter written by a Coast Guardsman during WWII. The letter discussed some philatelic material the individual had and was will to swap for some of the material held by the letter recipient. While interesting in its own right what drew my immediate attention was the letterhead. Featured was a Coast Guard vessel with a very plain looking hull.

It prompted me to research when and why the Coast Guard adopted the red and blue “racing stripe” that is very recognizable, even at a great distance (especially by the bad guys).



It seems that in 1956 a Pan American clipper, “Sovereign of the Skies,” lost two of its engines in route from Hawaii to California and went down in the ocean. The USCG Cutter “Pontchartrain” heard their distress call and rapidly came to their aid. The “Pontchartrain” sent out its small boats and gathered up the thirty-one passengers and crew. No sooner had one survivor gained the safety of the cutter’s deck, than he gratefully exclaimed, “Thank goodness for the Navy!”



This was one of dozens of cases of mistaken identity. The then Commandant of the Coast Guard requested a contract with famed trademark designer, Raymond Loewy. In 1966, following many planning meetings, Loewy’s rendition of the “racing stripe” or “slash” as it is fondly called in the service, was adopted by the Coast Guard.

The last Coast Guard asset to display the “strip” was the USCG Barque “Eagle” for the parade of ships in 1976.



## The Florida Postal History Society by the Editor

The FPHS is actively soliciting new members. The website at [www.FPHSOnline.com](http://www.FPHSOnline.com) has an incredible depth of information going back to the beginnings of the organization. Membership dues are a reasonable \$15 for web access to the Journal or \$25 for a mailed hardcopy. A number of the members of the CFSC are members of the FPHS – please consider being a new member or renewing your membership. This is a very small group of folks that put out a very high quality journal 3 times a year. The FPHS would greatly benefit from a surge in membership!