A personal collection presented by

Robert Wilcock
Official Olympic Invitation to the National Olympic Committees

Front cover (reduced in size).
Official Olympic Invitation to the National Olympic Committees

LE COMITÉ D'ORGANISATION DES XIIIe JEUX OLYMPIQUES D'HIVER SE CONFORMANT AUX INSTRUCTIONS DU COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIQUE, A L'HONNEUR DE VOUS INVITER À PARTICIPER AUX CONCOURS ET AUX FÊTES QUI AURONT LIEU À LAKE PLACID, DU 13 AU 24 FÉVRIER 1980.


Inside front cover (reduced in size).
These invitations were awaiting the signature of the Lake Placid Olympic Organizing Committee president, Ronald MacKenzie, when he suddenly passed away on 23 December 1979. Fresh invitations were prepared; however a few of the originals escaped the shredder.
Lake Placid was chosen at the 75th IOC Session in Vienna, Austria on 13 October 1974 to host the XIII Olympic Winter Games. This display illustrates the postal history of those Games.
Lake Placid Olympic Organizing Committee

The Committee was formed in 1975, shortly after Lake Placid was chosen to host the Games. Before the Games logo was devised, the Chamber of Commerce logo was used, the Chamber of Commerce being the principal movers for the Games. The meter (Pitney Bowes PB 449387) invited “Skate at LAKE PLACID”.

LAKE PLACID
XIII WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES
ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
OFFICES - OLYMPIC ARENA/LAKE PLACID, NEW YORK 12946

PRESS RELEASE

Edward Epstein
Board of Education
33 Church St. 07505
Paterson, New Jersey
Lake Placid Olympic Organizing Committee

The principal meter shows the logo (Pitney Bowes PB 911976).

George Hart, M.D.
153 Main Street
Lake Placid, New York 12946
Lake Placid Olympic Organizing Committee

A plain meter tape (Pitney Bowes PB 3009707).

The cachet advertises the Olympic Philatelic Exhibition.
Lake Placid Olympic Organizing Committee

“Season’s Greetings” card.

Season’s Greetings

May the spirit of the Olympics
be with you this Holiday Season.

— Lake Placid Olympic Committee
Lake Placid Olympic Organizing Committee

Greetings card.
Flaming Leaves Pre-Olympic Competition

There was only one pre-Olympic event honoured philatelically, the Flaming Leave Figure Skating Championships. There were two dies:

Die 1: course impression, date offset

Die 2: clear impression, more accurately centred date.
Au Sable (New York) Schools Cards

These cards reproduce banners from the Children’s Outdoor Banner Project for the Games.

Au Sable Valley Central Middle School  
Au Sable Forks Elementary School
**USPS Olympic Slogan Cancels**
“HOME OF THE WINTER OLYMPICS”

A USPS philatelic release of 30 November 1979 announced postmark slogans for use in Lake Placid and surrounding towns.

The principal machine in Lake Placid had a 3-line slogan.

A reserve machine was used 5-19 March 1980 with a 2-line slogan.
USPS Olympic Slogan Cancels
“HOME OF THE WINTER OLYMPICS”

9 November 1979 is the first recorded day of use of the postmark slogan.
**USPS Olympic Slogan Cancels**

“HOME OF THE WINTER OLYMPICS”

Ray Brook – home of the Olympic Village – had a 3-line slogan.

Wilmington, located near Whiteface Mountain which was home of the downhill events, had a 2-line slogan.
USPS Olympic Slogan Cancels
“HOME OF THE WINTER OLYMPICS”

The Lake Placid Club was not in the published list of post offices with the slogan, but a 2-line slogan was used from 8 January 1980.

Not only was the Lake Placid Club where the 82nd IOC Session was held, it was also from there that the drive to bring the 1932 Olympic Winter Games to Lake Placid was launched.

The Lake Placid Club post office, which opened in 1895, was finally closed in May 1980.
USPS Olympic Slogan Cancels
“HOME OF THE WINTER OLYMPICS”

Saranac Lake, home of the Official Olympic Philatelic Exhibition, 2-line slogan.

The “Sprinter” Olympic postal stationery card is overprinted by the Lake Placid News on the reverse.
USPS Olympic Slogan Cancels
“HOME OF THE WINTER OLYMPICS”

Lodging for Olympic visitors was provided in a number of towns. Five were provided with Olympic slugs, however the post offices at Keene, Upper Jay and Glenn Falls never introduced them.

Tupper Lake 2-line slogan.

Plattsburgh’s 3-line slogan was arranged uniquely: “HOME OF / THE / WINTER OLYMPICS”
USPS Olympic Postal Stationery Card

Following the publicity slogan postmarks, the Olympic philatelic programme continued with the issue of a postal stationery card designed by Robert M. Cunningham. 14 cents represented the postage rate for international surface rate postcards.
USPS Olympic Postal Stationery Card

The card was issued in Atlanta, Georgia to coincide with the U.S. Figure Skating Championships. A total of 160,977 First Day of Issue cards were serviced.

Die 1: 20mm circular date stamp.

Die 2: 25mm circular date stamp.
In 1932, when the United States hosted Olympic competition, a 2¢ stamp depicting a skier was issued to honor the Winter Olympic Games at Lake Placid. Later that year, the Games of the X Olympiad, held in Los Angeles, were honored with a 3¢ stamp showing a runner at the starting mark and a 5¢ issue featuring the famous statue of Myron’s Discobolus, the classic representation of a discus thrower.

Since then, the Postal Service has honored

the Olympic movement of international amateur athletic competition with one stamp in 1960 when the Winter Games were held in Squaw Valley. . . four in 1972 when the Winter Games were held in Sapporo, Japan and the summer games were held in Munich. . . and four in 1976 when the Winter Games were held in Innsbruck, the summer games in Montreal.

With the 1980 Olympic postal issue, the United States Postal Service wished to honor the important role of the U.S. in hosting the Winter Olympic Games at Lake Placid, New York. . . and signify the importance of the Olympic movement worldwide. An unprecedented issue of 10 postage stamps, three postal cards, a stamped envelope and an aerogramme was made.

Designed by New York City artist Robert M. Cunningham, the stamps in this block of four honor events in the Winter Olympic Games; they depict a speed skater, a slalom skier, a ski jumper and an ice hockey goaltender. The individual sports were selected from the perspective of a gracious host nation wishing to portray events favored by a number of nations. The athletes depicted were both men and women . . . their uniforms are the artist’s rendition and are not representative of any specific country.

The stamps were issued at ceremonies at Lake Placid, New York, on February 1, 1980.

The steel engraving of the quadriivia group chariot was first used on a bank note of the Banque Nationale de France, and was engraved by William Adolph. The male figure representing communications was used by several companies for stock certificates.
USPS Olympic Stamps

Invitation to the First Day Ceremony with RSVP card.

The National Fine Arts Committee of the XIII Olympic Winter Games together with The United States Postal Service cordially invites you to attend The First Day of Issue Ceremony of the 1980 Winter Olympic Commemorative Stamps and to attend a luncheon following on Friday, February 1, 1980 at 12:30 p.m. The ceremony will be in the Agora Theatre of the Lake Placid Resort Hotel at 11:00 a.m. Luncheon will be in the Forest Dining room at 12:30 p.m.

R.S.V.P. on the enclosed reservations necessary

I will attend the First Day of Issue

Ceremony □

and Luncheon □

being held at the Lake Placid Resort Hotel on February 1, 1980 If you are attending the luncheon, please enclose $10.00 per reservation by December 15, 1979. Tickets will be mailed to you.

(Your address) .......................................................... ..........................................................
USPS Olympic Stamps

Two dies were used for the First Day postmarks, one with a 20mm circular date stamp (top), and the other with a 25mm circular date stamp (bottom).

Both the above covers were furnished by the Albany, NY Olympic Cancellations Office, by mail order. The stamps are line perforated (“electric eye” machine). Comb perforated stamps were not available in the Lake Placid area.
USPS Olympic Stamps

Speed Skating
The speed skating courses range from 500 to 10,000
meters for men and from 500 to 3,000 meters for
women. Americans have excelled in short-distance
racing. Charles Jewtraw (U.S.A.) won the 500-meter
race in the first Winter Olympics in 1924. U.S.
contestants, Anne Henning (500 meters) and Dianne
Holm (1,500 meters), won in 1972 and Sheila Young
(500 meters) won in 1976.

The Ronald MacKenzie
Memorial Sports
Philatelic Exhibit
February 1980
Saranac Lake, N.Y.

First Day of Issue

XIII Olympic Winter Games
Lake Placid 1980
USPS Olympic Stamps

Margin plate block of 4, left pane, bulls-eye perforations (comb 11).

Margin plate block of 4, right pane, electric eye perforations, line 11.25 x 10.50.

Commemorative Stamp and Stationery folder (front cover).
(image reduced in size)
Winter. Heralded by autumn’s gray rains and the frost-touched fields of November. Born in the dusk of the shortest day of the year. Blazing at the first sudden snowfall's diamond brilliance. Rampant in the raging blizzards of February. And slowly dying at April’s sudden thaw, pierced by spring rays and warmth.

In the beginning of time, man saw winter as his enemy… the last cruel attack of a world which had already tried his ability to survive. It was a time of numbing cold, of treacherous ice and deceptive snow, of hunger, of fear.

And of challenge. For only the best… the strongest, the swiftest, the most daring… survived.

The challenge of man against winter is one which stands to this day, a challenge symbolically reenacted every four years in the Winter Olympic Games.

• Speed skaters match the whistling intensity of a winter storm.
• Figure skaters capture the incandescent beauty of a snowflake.
• Ski jumpers mirror the silent flight of a solitary Canada goose soaring above a silvered landscape.
• Ice hockey players collide with the crunching strain and sudden buckling release of a deep frozen river at break-up.
• Downhill racers turn with the searing dazzle of a meteor shower on an icy winter’s night.

For during the Olympic Winter Games, man is pitted not only against his own ideal of athletic excellence, but also against the brutality, the treachery of a frozen universe.

The commemorative stamps and stationery in this folder were issued by the United States Postal Service to honor the XIII Winter Olympic Games held in 1980 at Lake Placid, New York, on February 13 through 24.

In an attempt to capture the true international spirit of the games, the stamps feature athletes competing in winter events which have been won over the years by individuals and teams from many nations, and depict competitors without identifying their nationalities.

They show that a country’s winning is not the main thing. It is “the bringing together of the nations of the world on a common footing—the true ideal, in a realm of sport, of the brotherhood of man.” (Ellery Clark, member of the U.S. team competing in the first modern Olympics, 1896.)

Each of the stamps in the block of four features an event in the XIII Winter Olympic Games: speed skating, downhill skiing, ski jumping, and ice hockey. Each is in the denomination of 24c and bears the word “Olympics” on it as well as the USPS Winter Games symbol.

The stamps were printed by the gravure process, and were designed by Robert M. Cunningham.

They were issued on February 1, 1980, at Lake Placid, New York.

This die-cut international issue contains a woman figure skating.

It bears the word “Olympics” on it and the USPS Winter Games symbol. It was printed by the offset process and was designed by Robert M. Cunningham.

This card was issued on January 15, 1981, in Atlanta, Georgia, during the U.S. figure skating championships.

(Images reduced in size)
USPS Olympic Stamps

Official USPS Poster

XIII OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Lake Placid, New York, February 13-24, 1980

Each of the stamps in the block of four features an event in the XIII Winter Olympic Games: speed skating, skiing, ski jumping and ice hockey. They were issued on February 1, 1980, at Lake Placid, New York. They are part of the series of stamps and postal stationery issued by the United States Postal Service to honor the 1980 Olympic Games.
Sled Dog Mail

On 2 February 1980, there was a special Sled Dog Mail Run from Lake Placid Resort to the Olympic Philatelic Exhibition – the Ronald MacKenzie Memorial Exhibit – at Saranac Lake. Upon arrival, mail was cancelled. Some mail also received the exhibition backstamp and the British Post Office backstamp. There was to have been an Adirondack Railway backstamp, but intense cold meant the railway could not run, thus no mail was not carried.
Dear Mr Wilcock,

Further to my previous reply of 21 November, I have finally been able to obtain some information for you regarding the 1980 Winter Olympics.

Prior to the opening of the 1980 Winter Olympics the USPS opened a philatelic exhibit at Lake Placid. As part of the opening ceremony on 2 February 1980 a dog sled run was organised to carry mail to the exhibit. Our Agents recommended part sponsorship in this venture as part of our usual advertising campaign to keep British issues before the eyes of the American collector. We provided some British First Day covers and to maximise exposure we also provided a cachet for philatelic items. This was not a postmark cancellation (ie it was not postally valid) and was not used to cancel stamps. As the British Post Office does not "back stamp" items by which I mean cancel stamps on the front of a letter and also stamp the back with a postally valid cancellation, and as a cachet was used in this case it could not be considered to be a backstamp.

As regards the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles our Agents have not advised us of any intentions to become involved as yet. However, the USPS are extensively involved and may be able to help you with any further information.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M L Turner
Olympic Meters

Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce

Olympic meter.
Olympic Meters

The Bank of Lake Placid had two meters with Olympic slogans.

Pitney Bowes PB #686809

Pitney Bowes PB #646719
Olympic Meters
Bank of Lake Placid. A cover sent from the Wilmington, NY branch with an Olympic slogan postmark.
Olympic Meters

Xerox Corporation - Rochester, NY
Coca-Cola - Plattsburgh, NY
Olympic Torch Relay

Torch Flight cover, with Olympia and Athens handstamps.

XIII. OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES
LAKE PLACID '80

PAR AVION
Michael Junge
Posto Restante
OLYMPIC VILLAGE STATION
LAKE PLACID
NY 12960 USA
Olympic Torch Relay

The Torch was flown into Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, and then carried by 52 runners, one from each State of the Union, north to Lake Placid. USPS introduced a series of hand cancels, in common design, for the principal cities en route. Yorktown, Virginia saw the initial public ceremonies, and from there the runner proceeded to Washington, DC.
Olympic Torch Relay

Wilmington, Delaware and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Olympic Torch Relay

New York (City) and Hyde Park, New York
The Torch reached Albany on 6 February 1980.

The relay then continued along two routes. One route went north via Ticonderoga, New York.
The second relay route went via Speculator, New York.

Both relays arrived on 8 February 1980 in Lake Placid, five days before the Opening Ceremony.
Olympic Event & Sport Postmarks
Opening Ceremony Station

There was a special hand cancel used only on the day of the Opening Ceremony.
Olympic Event & Sport Postmarks
Olympic Village & Winter Olympics Stations

There were nine pictorial cancels available from the temporary postal stationer (and by mail order). They were designed by Rudolph de Harak & Associates of New York.

The "Olympic Village" and "Winter Olympics" Stations were open throughout the Games from 13-24 February.
The most sensational result of the Games was the U.S. victory in ice hockey.
Robin Cousins took Gold for Great Britain in men's figure skating.
Heavy impressions resulted in a “phantom snowball” (a canceller screw head).

Eric Heiden of the USA won all five speed skating Gold
Olympic Event & Sport Postmarks
Intervale Station

Olympic Ski Jumps at Intervale, Lake Placid, N.Y.
Anton (Toni) Innauer of Austria took Gold on the 70-meter ski jumping hill. His hometown of Bezau honoured him with a postmark in 1983 (two variations are shown).

Hubert Neuper, also of Austria, won Silver on the 90-meter hill.
The Bob and Lug runs are at Mount Van Hoevenberg.
Mount Van Hoevenberg was also the base for the Nordic events of cross-country skiing and Biathlon.
Whiteface Mountain was the location for the Alpine skiing events. The postal station was open 13-23 February 1980.
Hanni Wenzel took Gold in the women's slalom and giant slalom. She won Silver in the downhill, and her brother Andreas won Silver in the giant slalom.

Liechtenstein's stamps for the Games showed views of the Principality.
The Sarajevo '84 Station was open only the day of the Closing Ceremony.

This cover was flown to Sarajevo and bears the Jugoslav Airlines cachet.
Olympic Event & Sport Postmarks

Mail order requests were to be sent to "Olympic Cancellations, Lake Placid, NY 12215". The postcode and computer label show that mail order cancellations were in fact applied at Albany, the New York state capital, 140 miles south of Lake Placid. After the Games, queries were dealt with at South Schodak, 15 miles further south.
Olympic Permit Mail

IN WINTER 1980 IT WILL BE A MATTER OF PRIDE FOR...

MRS J CHRISTIANSON
129 S BICYCLE PATH
SELDEN, NY 11784

AND AMERICA

CATCH OLYMPIC FEVER!

NOVA COLLECTIONS LTD.
349 EAST 52 STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10022

(reduced in size)
Philatelic Salutes

Examples of postmarks from the stamp shows honouring the Lake Placid Olympic Winter Games and their victors.