

2-15-1980

Black Heritage Stamp Series: Benjamin Banneker

United States Postal Service. Stamp Division

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Footer logo



Issue Date: February 15, 1980
First Day City: Annapolis, Maryland
Designer: Jerry Pinkney
 Croton-on-Hudson, New York
Modeler: Richard C. Sennett
Press: Gravure
Colors: Ochre, moss green, light green, purple,
 key brown and dark green
Image Area: .84 x 1.44 inches or
 21.33 x 36.57 millimeters
Plate Numbers: Six (preceded by the letter A)
Stamps Per Pane: 50
Selvaige: © U. S. Postal Service
 ® Use Correct ZIP Code
 ® Mr. ZIP

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Benjamin Banneker Commemorative Stamp

A 15-cent commemorative stamp honoring Benjamin Banneker will be issued February 15 in Annapolis, Maryland. This is the third stamp issued in the Black Heritage USA Series, which recognizes contributions of Black Americans to the growth and development of the United States. The series began in 1978 with a stamp honoring Harriet Tubman and continued with the Martin Luther King, Jr. issue in 1979.

Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806) was a noted astronomer and surveyor. He also produced almanacs for a number of years and served as scientific assistant to Major Andrew Ellicott, appointed by President George Washington to lay out the 10-mile square for the Federal Capital in the District of Columbia in 1791.

Procedures for ordering first day cancellations are as follows:

— **Customers affixing stamps.** Customers are urged to buy stamps at post offices and affix them to their covers. Such covers will get preferential service. Covers must be addressed. Peelable return address labels are suggested. Affix stamps in the upper right corner ¼ inch from the top and the right side. Place addresses on the right side at least ⅝ inch up from the bottom. Insert a filler of postal card thickness in each cover. Orders must be postmarked by March 1 and mailed to "First Day Cancellations, Postmaster, Annapolis, MD 21401." No remittance is required.

— **Postal Service affixing stamps.** Except for affixing stamps and addressing orders, follow the procedures listed above. Address orders to "Banneker Stamp, Postmaster, Annapolis, MD 21401." The cost is 15 cents per stamp to be affixed. Personal checks in the exact amount will be accepted for orders up to the limit of 50 covers. Postage stamps and cash are unacceptable as payment. Orders must be postmarked by March 1.



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE





AMERICAN COMMEMORATIVES



Benjamin Banneker



Benjamin Banneker, the third person to be honored in the Postal Service's "Black Heritage USA" series, was an astronomer, farmer, mathematician and surveyor who lived from 1731 to 1806.

Banneker was freeborn in Baltimore County, Maryland. His grandmother taught him to read and write, and during several winters he attended a small school where he developed an interest in science and mathematics.

While farming the land his father owned, Banneker pursued his interest in mathematics, and



at the age of 22, constructed a wooden striking clock. After the Revolution, Banneker taught himself astronomy, and continued to extend his knowledge of mathematics and mathematical principles.

When in 1791, Major Andrew Ellicott was appointed to survey the District of Columbia for the plan of the nation's capital, Banneker was appointed to serve as scientific assistant. In the same year, Banneker's almanac was first published, with astronomical and tide calculations, and weather predictions. The almanac was printed annually from 1791 to 1796.

Other famous black Americans honored in this series are Harriet Tubman and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. All three stamps were designed by Jerry Pickney. The steel line engraving of men surveying the countryside is taken from a Sterling Iron & Roadway Company stock certificate. The male figure farming was engraved by J. Smillie.





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A 0018

A 0019

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