



September 1996

TREASURY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Inside this Newsletter...

Disastrous Fire Closes Treasury Building. A rooftop fire has closed portions of the North wing, as extensive repairs are conducted.

1996 Ornament Notes U.S. Customs History. Treasury's oldest bureau is the subject of THA's commemorative holiday ornament. Order yours today for early order discount and ensured delivery by the holidays.

You Can Help in THA's Search for MT Pix. THA's gifts-in-kind to the Treasury Department of historic 19th century Main Treasury pictures are expanding and we can use your help in our searches.

Open House on Lafayette Square. After a tremendous success in 1995's "Salute the Square" event, the organizations surrounding the President's Park will open their doors to the public once again in a neighborhood event.

Second Annual "Salute the Square" Set for October 12

Mark your calendar for the tours of the neighbors of Lafayette Square, including the White House, the Decatur House, Department of Veteran Affairs, the Grange, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, St. John's Church, the Treasury Building and several others. Also, the Park Service will conduct "living history" activities in the park itself. The free October 12 Open House event will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; for further information, call the Decatur House at (202) 842-0918.

Treasury Roof Fire Evacuates Building

On June 28, a rooftop fire began from what investigative reports later attributed to an accident caused by a torch used in a re-roofing project over the North wing of the Building, above the Cash Room. The fire was out of control for 4 hours as Treasury staff watched 75 firefighters struggle with the fire atop the 127-year old wing.

Extensive damage was caused throughout the North wing's interior by water used to control the fire, as well as by ashes, soot, and other debris resulting from the fire. At one point, 8 inches of water was standing on the floor of the Cash Room, where marble walls and floors as well as ceiling plaster suffered significant staining. Immediately after the fire was extinguished, Treasury staff removed from the premises a great number of fine art and 19th century furnishings, to protect the priceless collection of artifacts that are significant to the history of the second oldest cabinet department.

The Building was closed to employees through July 3, while clean-up work was in progress. Approximately 200 employees remain displaced in alternate work locations while repair work to the North wing continues. Treasury has requested funds from Congress to repair the damages.

ISO: 19th Century Pictures of Treasury

THA is always in search of original pictures of the Treasury Building, including photographs, etchings, and stereopticon pictures (especially 1860-1900 era) to purchase as gifts to the Treasury Department, to assist in enhancing its archives. If you are an antique hunter and you locate any pictures of the Treasury Building when visiting your local antique shops, please let us know by calling our message and information line, (202) 895-5250, with details.

[Ed. Note: phone number was changed to (202) 298-0550 after publication date.]

1996 Ornament Commemorates Customs' History

THA's 1996 commemorative ornament, the eighth in our bureau series, commemorates the rich history of the U.S. Customs Service, the oldest bureau of Treasury, older than the Department itself. The ornament, which measures about 2-3/4 by 3 inches, is produced in 24-karat gold finish with color enamel. It depicts the second Revenue Cutter **Eagle**, launched in 1798 and under the command of customs collectors to enforce tariff laws on the territorial waters of the United States. The ornament's frame includes the Customs flag or ensign. Preliminary design is illustrated below. The ornament is provided with a hanging ribbon and gift box and is accompanied by an educational card.

Current THA members may order the ornament at \$10 each, with discounts offered for early orders and bulk orders. Please check your mailing label on this newsletter to determine if you are a current 1996 member or a 1995 member. You may use the form in the last column of this newsletter to order and to renew your membership if you are still a 1995 member. Deliveries will begin in November.

Treasury Historical Association
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20220



Coming Soon: THA's Second Cat's Meow Collectible

THA will have available for both members and non-members its second *Cat's Meow* collectible building in December. This will be the IRS National Office Building, which like all *Cat's Meow* buildings will feature the trademark black cat.

The *Cat's Meow* historic buildings are collectibles produced by FJ Designs, Inc., of Wooster, Ohio, and collected by thousands. THA previously offered the Treasury Building to members only for a limited time, with the first three hundred sold being numbered by the manufacturer. We will again be offering the Treasury Building, but to both members and non-members.

The price will be \$20 each building for members and \$25 each building for non-members. Our next newsletter will have details for ordering these collectibles.

See your Mailing Label

Please review the mailing label below and advise us of any errors. We recently established a new database for membership records and want to assure that all is correct. Thanks.

Order Form for 1996 Ornament

Please use the following form to order your 1996 THA commemorative ornament. No other ornament flyer will be sent to THA members.

Cut out this column, including the pane with your mailing label. Mail your order with your check to us at:
THA, P.O. Box 28118, Washington, DC 20038-8118.

Order for 1996 Ornament

___ 1996 Ornaments, U.S. Customs Service @ \$10 each: \$_____

Less early order discount for orders postmarked by 10/7/96 @ \$1 each - \$_____

Less bulk order discount for orders of 30 or more (1 check, 1 destination) @ \$1 each - \$_____

Total of Order: \$_____

Membership Renewal

Please check category for 1996 membership renewal donation:
___ General (\$12); ___ Supporting (\$50);
___ Patron (\$100); ___ Sustaining (\$250);
___ Life Sponsor (\$500); ___ Life Donor (\$1,000 or more).

Membership Donation: \$_____

Member Mailing Label Here