



NEWS New Deal

The National New Deal Preservation Association

* Bulletin *

Lessons from the New Deal – A blueprint for renewing American prosperity and ingenuity

•••• Saving Our New Deal Post Offices ••••

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Other Relevant Links

Save the Post Office

New Deal Post Office Murals

New Deal Art Registry

New Deal Network

The Living New Deal

Rural Organizing Project

WPA Today

Because so many post offices were built between 1933-43 by New Deal funding and beautified by its arts programs, the National New Deal Preservation Association (NNDPA) is concerned about the pending closure of many post offices and wants to alert you to the direct issues and broader implications of the postal service consolidation. In an effort to deal with economic conditions, Congress has brought to the fore the concept of privatization of various Federal entities, in particular the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). NNDPA is opposed to these actions and hopes to motivate you to join us in protecting endangered post offices. Possibly your own.

SOME HISTORY: Some may not be fully aware that in 1971 Congress changed the USPS from a federal governmental agency to a “quasi-governmental agency.” The result was to put them on their own to fiscally survive. Then, in 2006, Congress added a requirement that effectively took a MAJOR BITE out of their meager profits when it established the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act which required USPS to pay its retiree’s benefits in advance at a larger percentage than any other full-fledged agency. Consequently, USPS is running in an increasingly larger debt, which Congress created, and which now appears unwilling to reduce the percentage rate to a more fair and equitable level.

CURRENTLY: USPS now proposes closing small, rural post offices that frequently are the “hub” or core site of small villages. Furthermore, a significant number of the post offices in larger communities have murals in them depicting the history of the area or some scene that focuses on the major economy of that geographic area. These murals, in and of themselves are artworks that must be conserved and protected as part of our history. Another challenge comes when local groups have been known to take measures into their own hands without following federal regulations and either painting over or destroying some of the art housed in public buildings –your publically owned art, not just theirs.

SAVE OUR POST OFFICES: Many communities are standing up to these USPS actions and are taking steps to preserve their beloved local post offices. Our efforts are directed at the USPS to find other ways to keep the buildings open and/or develop other uses for the spaces, keeping the public art intact and in public view. These buildings and their art are part of our Nation’s historic legacy.

THE BOTTOM LINE is that Congress created problem and Congress needs to fix it. To this end, we encourage each of you to contact your Congressional members and express your concerns about potential closings in your community. For more information on the pressing issues involved, please check out the links on this page and contact information provided in this Bulletin. Thank you for your attention to this critical challenge.

Harvey Smith, President

Kathryn Flynn, Executive Director

National New Deal Preservation Association

Excellent Sources of information

For the most complete information about the U.S. Postal Service and the issues that threaten this uniquely American institution. Headquartered at the Gallatin School at New York University, their email is: admin@savethepostoffice.com

www.savethepostoffice.com

WPA Today

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The Living New Deal

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New Deal Art Registry

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Rural Organizing Project

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New Deal Network

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NNDPA highly recommends reading four outstanding articles by clicking the links below. They provide greater context and perspective on the post office's profound influence in American society. Hard copies available upon request by contacting Kathy Flynn at the NNDPA office: (505) 473-3985

The Fading Genius of the US Post Office

by Gray Brechin – Op-Ed in the U.K.'s *The Guardian*

Post Office sale is a surrender to corporate interests

by NNDPA President Harvey Smith

Congress Must Not Hobble Postal Service

The New York Times coverage of Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and his proposed legislation

High on Landmark Panel's List: A Post Office Lobby

by David W. Dunlap, *The New York Times*