



Report to the City Council
Council Meeting of August 9, 2016

Agenda Section: New Business

Subject: Consideration and proposed approval of a letter to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee in Washington DC supporting a commemorative stamp of the mural located in the St. Helena Post Office lobby

CEQA Status: Not a CEQA project

Prepared By: Cindy Black, City Clerk

Approved By: Jennifer Phillips, City Manager

BACKGROUND

Congressman Mike Thompson requested support from the City of St. Helena for the issuing of a commemorative stamp set to memorialize five Works Progress Administration (WPA)-era murals located in five different post offices around the nation. The post offices are located in the following cities:

Safford, Arizona
Saint Helena, California
Long Prairie, Minnesota
Waurika, Oklahoma
Greybull, Wyoming

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the federal government searched for ways to provide work to the many unemployed individuals, as well as to lift the spirits of all Americans. The WPA was part of its solution. By its termination in 1943, WPA had provided jobs for almost nine million workers and part-time work for more than four million students or youth. Most workers were employed in road maintenance or building construction, but works of art were also commissioned in public buildings by the WPA and the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts to provide employment to artists and artisans and make art accessible to all. As a result, post offices across the country were enlivened by murals showcasing our nation's history, culture and values.

DISCUSSION

A proposal for this commemorative stamp set was made on July 27, 2000, as well as on October 1, 2004, and January 6, 2010. Congressman Thompson and his colleagues are again asking the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee to consider the commemoration of these five murals and request the support of the City of St. Helena.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to the City of St. Helena.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends approving the letter of support to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee recognizing the City of St. Helena's Post Office mural.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Congressman Mike Thompson's letter to Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
2. Congressman Mike Thompson's letter to the St. Helena City Council
3. Proposed St. Helena City Council letter to Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 8, 2016

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 3300
Washington, DC 20260-3501

Dear Committee Members:

We are writing to renew our support for the issuing of a commemorative stamp set to memorialize five Works Progress Administration (WPA)-era murals located in five different post offices around our nation. These post offices are located in the following cities:

Safford, Arizona
Saint Helena, California
Long Prairie, Minnesota
Waurika, Oklahoma
Greybull, Wyoming

A proposal for this commemorative stamp set was made on July 27, 2000, as well as on October 1, 2004, and January 6, 2010. We are writing once again to urge your consideration of the commemoration of these five murals.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the federal government searched for ways to provide work to the many unemployed individuals, as well as to lift the spirits of all Americans. The WPA was part of its solution. By its termination in 1943, WPA had provided jobs for almost nine million workers and part-time work for more than four million students or youth. Most workers were employed in road maintenance or building construction, but works of art were also commissioned in public buildings by the WPA and the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts to provide employment to artists and artisans and make art accessible to all. As a result, post offices across the country were enlivened by murals showcasing our nation's history, culture and values.

Sadly, many of these murals have decayed, been destroyed, or been painted over. However, many still remain. The five post offices in the cities listed above contain sterling examples of the murals from this important era in our history.

These murals are illustrative of the American spirit, representing men and women overcoming adversity through hard work and ingenuity. We can think of no better way to memorialize this period and the spirit of hard-working Americans than an official commemorative postage stamp.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,


MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress


ANN KIRKPATRICK
Member of Congress


COLLIN C. PETERSON
Member of Congress


TOM COLE
Member of Congress


CYNTHIA M. LUMMIS
Member of Congress

MT/sn

MIKE THOMPSON

5TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TAX POLICY



**CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515**

DISTRICT OFFICES
2721 NAPA VALLEY CORPORATE DRIVE
NAPA, CA 94558
(707) 226-9898
985 WALNUT AVENUE
VALLEJO, CA 94592
(707) 645-1888
2300 COUNTY CENTER DRIVE, SUITE A100
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403
(707) 542-7182
CAPITOL OFFICE
231 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3111
WEB <http://mikethompson.house.gov>

July 8, 2016

**St. Helena City Council
1480 Main Street
St. Helena, CA 94574**

Dear Council Members,

I recently renewed my request to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) to create postage stamps commemorating Works Progress Administration (WPA)-era murals in U.S. post offices, including in our own St. Helena Post Office.

During the Great Depression, the WPA and the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts commissioned art in public buildings to provide employment to artists and artisans and to lift the spirits of all Americans. As a result, post offices across our country were enlivened by murals showcasing our nation's history, culture and values. *Grape Pickers*, by Lew Keller, is a wonderful example of the art produced during this period.

Because CSAC receives so many requests and only 25 to 30 subjects are approved each year, it can take years before a decision is made on a commemorative stamp proposal. It would be extremely helpful in generating support if the council would weigh in with a letter of support. Please address your support to:

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 3300
Washington, DC 20260-3501

Sadly, many post office murals have decayed, been destroyed, or been painted over. Ours is beautiful and should be used to memorialize this great project

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress**

MT/sn
Enclosure



City of St. Helena
"We will conduct city affairs on behalf of our citizens
using an open and creative process."

1480 Main Street
St. Helena, CA 94574
Phone: (707) 967-2792
Fax: (707) 963-7748

www.ci.st-helena.ca.us

Attachment 3

August 9, 2016

Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 3300
Washington, D.C. 20260-3501

Dear Stamp Advisory Committee Members:

The City of St. Helena strongly supports the request of Congressman Mike Thompson that your Committee recommend a commemorative stamp honoring the two magnificent and well-preserved murals in our Post Office. The murals, entitled *Grape Pickers*, are by the artist Lew Keller.

St. Helena is a small city in the Napa Valley. It started out as an agricultural center and today vineyards surround the city. Our Post Office, built in 1940, is an architectural gem located on Main Street in our downtown business district. The two murals are at each end of the lobby. They depict the harvesting of grapes by joyful farm workers – both Hispanic and non-Hispanic. The murals were installed in the lobby in 1942.

Many members of our community make daily visits to the Post Office. The murals are enjoyed by one and all.

It would be a true honor if your Committee recommended the commemoration of these wonderful works of art in a postage stamp.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alan Galbraith
Mayor, City of St. Helena

cc: Mike Thompson
Member of Congress
231 Canon Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515