

Hi, Fred Nelson for community Comment,

In Nineteen Sixty Two, Eureka Postmaster Bill Lambert presided at the dedication of the new Main Post Office, located on West Clark Street. He saved some photos of the event as well as a copy of the invitation and a four page list of those attendees who had signed in that day. This was the start of an attempt to record a history of local postal events through newspaper articles and pictures. Postmaster Lambert retired shortly after the Clark Street office was opened and was succeeded by Postmaster Al Houle. Al was very interested in saving local postal history and wanted to continue what Bill had started. An old post office mail collection box, the kind that used to be attached to a post or the side of a building, was refurbished and painted antique white with gold trim. It was kept on the Postmaster's desk and was used as a receptacle for postal pictures and newspaper articles until they could be placed in an album. Anything too large for the box was stored in a closet in the Postmaster's office. Al Houle continued to collect photos and clippings during his tenure. Following his retirement the practice was carried on by the two succeeding Officers-in-Charge and by me when I was appointed Postmaster as well as Postmaster John Segress, who succeeded me. After John's retirement in Nineteen Ninety Six, the San Francisco District sent an Officer-in-Charge from the Bay area until a new Postmaster could be appointed. Shortly after her arrival, a partially filled picture album plus a number of loose album pages were discovered in a trash can by one of the employees. These were the pictures, taken over the years, of our local employees at the Eureka office as well as some news clippings and pictures of employees from the surrounding "955" offices. The employee recovered the albums and placed them in the hands of another employee for safe keeping. After seventeen years the employee, in custody of the photo albums, thought it best to return as many pictures as possible to the subjects who are still alive or their survivors. She contacted those she knew and returned as many pictures as possible. The remainder was turned over to me and I have been identifying and returning many more with the help of five retired employees. I am hoping to donate some of the non-people photos to the local historical society. Regarding other memorabilia that had been collected over the years, I have no idea what happened to it This is an example of what happens to historical documents when one or two callous individuals are placed in charge. The Eureka Post Office, plus the other county post offices, is rich in history but I am afraid that not much has been done to record it except for the Humboldt Historical Society.

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