



Sparks Headlight

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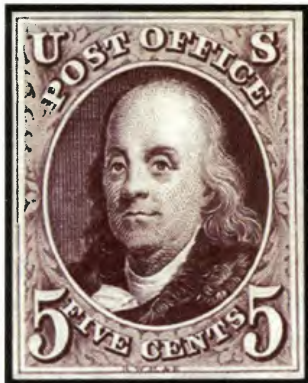
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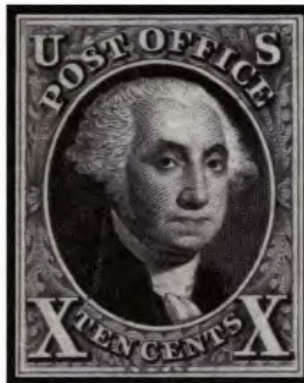
Philatelic NEVADA

By Philatelist Dick Dreing

The hobby of stamp collecting or Philately has been around since the first postage stamp was issued by Great Britain on May 5, 1840. The first government issued stamps in the U.S. were issued on July 1, 1847 and showed the portraits of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. What do these pictured stamps have to do with Nevada history?



1847 US 5¢ Red Brown Franklin



1847 US 10¢ Black Washington

Absolutely nothing! They are pictured here merely to establish that this article will be dealing with postage stamps

issued by the U.S. Government. The stamps to be discussed were either issued in or about Nevada. The study of these stamps will shed a great deal on Nevada history and may even create a slight bit of humor.

This article will not cover hunting or fishing stamps issued by Nevada, nor will it discuss Nevada Revenue stamps, only ordinary U.S. postage stamps.

The first stamp issued in Nevada was the Boulder Dam stamp on September 30, 1935 in Boulder City, NV.

When U.S. Interior Secretary Ray Wilbur spoke at a ceremony starting the building of the railway between Las Vegas and the dam site on September 30, 1930, he named the dam "Hoover

Dam," citing a tradition of naming dams after Presidents, though none had ever been so honored during their terms of office.

After the election defeat of President Hoover in 1932 and the accession of the Roosevelt administration, newly appointed Interior Secretary Harold Ickes ordered on May 13, 1933 that the dam be referred to as "Boulder

Dam." President Roosevelt also referred to it as Boulder Dam to avoid honoring his political opponent. However, in the following years, the name "Boulder Dam" did not take hold as many Americans were using the two names interchangeably and mapmakers were divided over which name should be printed. Memories of the Great Depression faded, and Hoover to some extent rehabilitated himself though good



works during and after World War II. In 1947 a bill passed both Houses of Congress unanimously restoring the name to "Hoover Dam."

The Post Office Department issued this stamp at Genoa, Nevada on July 14, 1951, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first permanent settlement in Nevada. The sponsoring organization was the Reno Stamp Club which had been formed in 1947 by a group of local stamp collectors. It was due to the untiring efforts of the Reno Stamp Club, Hon. Walter S. Baring and U.S. Senator Pat McCarran that this goal was achieved. Nevada had finally obtained both national and international recognition of its first historic event.



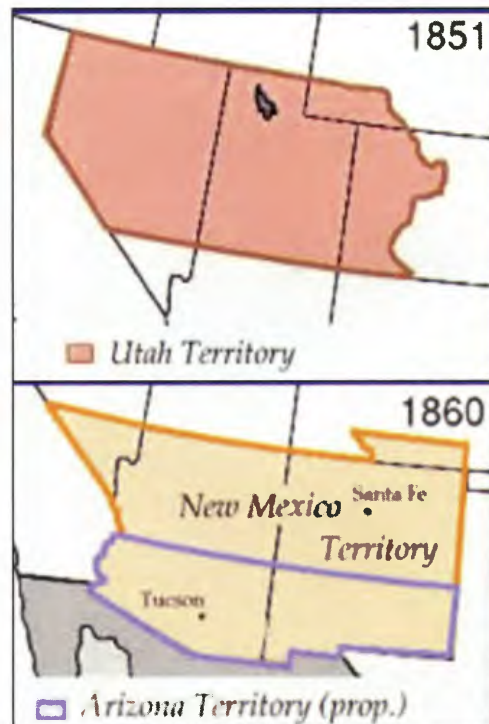
On June 8, 1959, this stamp was issued in Virginia City to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Comstock Lode in Nevada. Lured by the discovery of gold and silver, miners erected tent cities that eventually turned into some of the most important cities in the U.S. today. The riches of the Comstock Lode attracted thousands of people to Western Nevada. Virginia City flourished, becoming one of those most important cities in the West. The grubby prospectors-turned-millionaires built fabulous mansions and imported the finest goods from around the world.

Retired Nevada State Archivist Guy Rocha has debunked the myth that Nevada was made a state because the Union needed the gold and silver to help fund the Civil War. Two facts that he laid out state: "FACT: Nevada Territory was a federal territory, a part of the Union, and President Abraham Lincoln

appointed Governor James Warren Nye, a former Police Commissioner of New York City to ensure that it stayed that way. Governor Nye put down any demonstrations in support of the Confederacy, and there were some. The Federal Government bought much of Nevada's gold and silver bullion to support its currency. What Federal taxes there were at the time could be effectively collected went into the Union coffers. Therefore, Nevada's creation as a TERRITORY on March 2, 1863 by the U.S. Congress ensured that its riches would help the Union and not the Confederate cause. **FACT:** By the time Congress approved an Enabling Act for Nevada on March 21, 1864, the Civil War was winding down. The Union had won decisive victories at both Gettysburg and Vicksburg, and the South was in shambles. President Lincoln sought reelection and faced a three-way race against General John C. Fremont, the radical Republican candidate, and General George B. McClellan, a Democrat. He had earlier in the war relieved both generals of their commands. New states, and their popular and electoral votes, were needed to reelect Lincoln in support of his moderate, reconstruction policies for the South. Among the proposed policies was the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery. If Nevada were a state, it could ratify the Amendment and help in the passage of the landmark humanitarian legislation." For the complete and very interesting discussion of these facts, see <http://www.nevadaweb.com/nevada/rocha-2.html>.

The next reason for a stamp to be issued in Nevada was to celebrate the Centennial of Nevada Statehood. What became Nevada as a part of the United States came with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo with Mexico in 1848. Mexico had never established any control in Nevada, but American

mountain men were in the Washoe (the early name for what became Nevada) as early as 1827. A permanent American presence began in 1851 when the Mormons set up way stations enroute to the California gold fields. In the absence of any governmental authority, some 50 Mormons and non-Mormon prospectors and cattle ranchers drew up the "Washoe Code" to deal with land claims; its scope eventually covered other governmental issues. There was still no Federal presence in the area, so religious tensions worsened and petitions of complaint were sent to Washington DC. Non-Mormons sought annexation to California which had become a state on September 9, 1850. Utah Territory was created as part of the national Compromise of 1850. The compromise admitted California into the Union as a free state and designated Utah and New Mexico as territories with the right to decide whether to permit slavery or not. The boundaries of the territory were the forty-second parallel on the north, the thirty-seventh parallel on the south, the



summits of the Rocky Mountains to the east, and the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the west.



Utah Territory responded to the complaints by incorporating the area as a county. When Federal troops were sent to Utah in 1857, the Mormons were recalled to Salt Lake City by Brigham Young to ward off the “invasion.”

When the Mormons left, the non-Mormons took over and launched a move for separate territorial status. The early 1860s saw the end of an Indian war, the great Comstock mining boom of 1859 in Virginia City and the coming of the Civil War. The provisional territorial government led to the creation of Nevada Territory by Congress in 1861. The pragmatic attempts to establish workable frontier institutions had failed and the paternalistic territorial system was welcomed. Nevada became a state on October 31, 1864, after telegraphing the entire Constitution of Nevada to the Congress days before the November 8 Presidential election (the largest and costliest transmission ever by telegraph).

A local uproar occurred when the initial design for the stamp was unveiled in February 1964. It seems the photograph that had been used for the initial design was, in fact in error, as it showed a reversed view of the city. Fortunately, there was sufficient time for the error to be corrected before printing and the correctly designed stamp was released on July 22, 1964 in Carson City.

The next occasion for a stamp to be released in Nevada happened to honor the 450th anniversary of the introduction of sheep to this continent. It was issued at the convention of the National Wool Grower Association being held in Las

Vegas. The stamp was issued on January 19, 1971 in Las Vegas.



Issued as part of the ongoing Bicentennial celebration, the 13¢ State Flags pane was a first in U.S. history. This was the first time a pane with 50 face-different stamps was issued. Each state is represented by its official flag, with the stamps arranged on the sheet in the same order each state was admitted into the Union.



This sheet was issued in Washington, DC. The format proved to be popular with collectors, and has been repeated many times since.

Photography truly is a window on our world, to all our worlds, in literally every part of our daily lives, especially with the advent of Smartphones and the like which can produce images on demand. More than 100,000 professional photographers throughout the United

States take pride in their contribution to human progress and achievement. The Photography Commemorative stamp was issued in Las Vegas on June 26, 1978 at the 1978 convention of the Professional Photographers of America, Inc. which was established in 1880. It was the first stamp to show the new postage rate of 15 cents.



The U.S. Postal Service attempts to issue stamps at the national conventions of several of the national stamp collecting societies or clubs. It is not necessarily because the USPS likes these organizations, but because they realize the catering to them will result in many stamps being purchased which will never be used and therefore create pure profit for the USPS. Some of the organizations that routinely receive a stamp issuance at their national conventions are the American Philatelic Society (APS), the American Topical Association (ATA) and the American First Day Cover Society (AFDCS). All three of these organizations have international membership. APS members study all aspects of stamps, the ATA members collect stamps that deal with any topic that applies to their field of interest such as trains, planes, cars, ships, animals, medicine, Fairy Tales, etc. The AFDCS members collect covers (envelopes) that bear the date cancellation which shows the First Day of Issue of a stamp,

basically the stamp's birth certificate. These covers may deal with specific topics or countries as desired by the individual collector. Many of these covers have a commercially printed cachet on the left side of the cover to complement the stamp design.

In an effort to draw attention to the preservation of Wildlife Habitats, a block of four different design stamps illustrating wildlife habitats threatened by man and man's progress was issued. Pictured are a Great Blue Heron (Wetland Habitats), a Badger (Grassland Habitats), a Grizzly Bear (Mountain Habitats) and a Ruffed Grouse (Woodland Habitats).



This block of four stamps was issued on June 26, 1981 in Reno at the national convention of the AFDCS hosted by the Nevada Stamp Study Society located in the Truckee Meadows area (Not to be confused with the Reno Stamp Club of the 1940s and 1950s). This block of stamps was the first stamps ever issued in Reno.

On April 14, 1982, another 50 design different stamp sheet was released. The



story of these stamps begins in 1978, when Fleetwood (a First Day Cover cachet company) hired father-son wildlife artists Arthur and Alan Singer to create 50 original paintings of state birds and flowers for a set of Fleetwood cover cachets. When U.S. Postal Service officials saw the high-quality paintings, they immediately decided to issue a 50-stamp se-tenant showcasing the father-son team's watercolor paintings.

The father-son team labored for over a year on this beautiful philatelic masterpiece. Arthur created the birds, while son Alan painted the flowers. Each stamp is unique – making it the first series of its size to feature original artwork for each different stamp. North Carolina and Virginia share both their state flower (Flowering dogwood) and their state bird (Cardinal), yet each state is represented by an original watercolor painting.

These stamps were issued in Washington, DC and each state capitol on the same day. At the time of their issue, these stamps were the most popular in U.S. Postal history.

Our next stamp was not issued in Nevada, but does have a bearing on Nevada as it shows one of the twenty-one species of cactus found in the state. The California Barrel Cactus is found in southern Nevada, primarily in Moapa Valley Clark County.

This stamp is part of a set of four paying tribute to the species of plants that have adapted over the eons to withstand the harsh environment of the desert. Surviving through extremes of temperature and very little rainfall, the cactus has adapted and flourished. Issued on December 11, 1981 in Tucson, AZ, The other stamps featured the Agave, Beavertail Cactus and the Saguaro.



To open the 1985 national convention of the American Topical Association in Reno, Nevada, the USPS released two rather unconventional stamps on June 21, 1985.

The **Transportation coils** series is a set of definitive stamps issued by the United States Postal Service between 1981 and 1995. The complete series eventually totaled 80 different stamp designs, making this one of the largest set of stamps. Officially dubbed the "Transportation Series", they have come to be called the "transportation coils" because all of the denominations were issued in coil stamp format.

The theme of the series was historical transportation vehicles used in the United States since its independence. The designs are spare, consisting only of the vehicle itself, and with inscriptions describing the general type ("Buckboard



or Ambulance") and a date, either a decade or sometimes a specific year.

Many of those denominations were unusual decimal rates, such as 16.7 or 24.1 cents, used by bulk mailers and other businesses. The series has become popular with stamp collectors because of the "classic" engraved designs.

Again, on July 8, 1995, Reno became



the issue city for two stamps to help kick off the national convention of the ATA hosted by the Nevada Stamp Study Society. This time, however, there was no historical basis to the design of the stamps. The USPS began a series of stamps depicting the Flora and Fauna of the US. The two stamps issued in Reno showed Peaches and a Pear.

In 1995, demand for self-adhesive or "peel and stick" stamps, as they became popularly called, increased dramatically. As a result, production of self-adhesives in 1995 more than tripled the 2.4 billion which were released in 1994. To meet consumer demand, production of the self-adhesive version of the 32-cent Peaches and Pear stamps jumped from 800 million to 1.4 billion!

The Peaches and Pear self-adhesives feature simulated perforation die cuts. In addition to the pane and coil self-adhesive formats, the Peaches and Pears were issued in non-adhesive booklets as attached pairs.

On four occasions between 1976 and 1993, the U.S. Postal Service issued a pane of 50 stamps with each stamp bearing a different design. The format stemmed from a convenient coincidence — there are 50 states, and commemorative stamp panes at that time typically consisted of 50 stamps. Thus,

panes could be designed in which every state was assigned its own stamp.

Richard Sheaff, a resident of Scottsdale, Arizona, has worked under contract with USPS for some two decades, designing stamps and overseeing the work of stamp illustrators. He is a long-time collector of ephemera — defined as paper artifacts not intended to have permanent value — whose collection includes the old 1930s and 1940s "Greetings" linen picture postcards that were highly popular with tourists and travelers. The cards featured the name of a state, city or tourist attraction in large block lettering, with pictures representing the featured place inside each letter. The words "Greetings from," in smaller letters, were at the top. USPS officials debated what denomination to assign to the stamps. Richard Sheaff — who had taken on the triple role of art director, designer and typographer for the set — argued that the most appropriate face value would be 20¢, the postcard rate. "The stamps are based on postcards," Sheaff pointed out, "and people could use them on their own postcards when they travel on vacation or business." *In the final decision to denominate the stamps at the first-class letter rate of 34¢ rather than 20¢, the bottom line was a key factor; the higher face value would generate an extra 14¢ in profit for the Postal Service for every stamp saved by a collector and not used for postage.* (See, I told you profit was important!)





Construction on the Hoover Dam began on April 29, 1931, and was completed on March 1, 1936, more than two years early. The dam cost \$49 million dollars to build and is 726.4 feet high, the second-highest dam in the U.S. At the time of its construction, it was the world's largest electric power-producing facility and largest concrete structure. The Hoover Dam was honored on a 2008 U.S. Express Mail stamp which was issued in Washington, DC on June 20, 2008.

In 2008 the Postal Service began a new multi-stamp definitive series called "Flags of Our Nation". Two sets of ten stamps each were issued that year, and a set of ten was issued every year thereafter through 2012. The resulting series of sixty stamp designs depicted the fifty state flags, five territorial flags, the flag of the District of Columbia, and the Stars and Stripes flying over four American landscapes.

On April 16, 2010, in New York, New York, at the Mega Stamp Show, the fourth set of "Flags of Our Nation" stamps was issued. This set begins with a Stars and Stripes stamp depicting the "purple mountain majesties" inspired by the opening lines of "America the Beautiful" by Katharine Lee Bates



(1859-1929), and continues with stamps honoring the flags of Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and North Dakota.

A coil of 100 new USA First Class postage stamps, bearing an image of the Statue of Liberty and the U.S. flag, was issued on April 15, 2011 in Washington, DC The new U.S. first-class postage stamp, which shows a low-angled close-up of Lady Liberty's face and crown, was issued in December, 2010 according to an announcement about the "world-recognized" symbol of the United States. The statement described the statue as a gift from the people of France, designed by sculptor Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi, which stands 305 feet tall on Liberty Island off the tip of Manhattan, "a symbol of political freedom and democracy for millions of people around the world."



HOWEVER. . . Time Magazine published an article on April 15, 2011 entitled **"Who's That Lady? New Stamp Features Wrong Statue of Liberty!"**

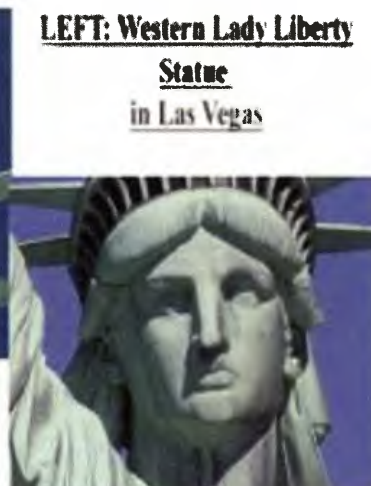
The huddled masses would be sorely disappointed – the Ellis Island greeter depicted on a new U.S. stamp is actually her Las Vegas replica. The green lady proudly gazes into the distance on the USPS's newest stamp. But upon closer inspection: she's a faker.

Even the Post Office didn't pick up on the printing error: a popular stamp

magazine, *Linn's Stamp News*, brought the issue to light. The New York icon shown on the stamp is actually located 2,500 miles away – at the New York-New York Casino in Vegas. Sin City's statue bears a number of differences to the original, not the least of which is her size: she stands at only half of the original's 151 feet. Though the full statue isn't visible on the stamp, the small visage printed on the postage features different hair and better-defined



RIGHT: Original Statue of Liberty in New York



LEFT: Western Lady Liberty Statue in Las Vegas

eyes than her New York sister. The Postal Service reportedly chose the image from a photography service, unaware that it wasn't the real deal. But they're standing by their choice. "We still love the stamp design and would have selected this photograph anyway," said USPS spokesman Roy Betts.

Meanwhile, back out west:

The U.S. Postal Service celebrated the Sequicentennial of Nevada statehood May 29, 2014 by dedicating a Forever Stamp to commemorate its 150th anniversary. Known by several nicknames — the Silver State, the Battle Born State, the Sagebrush State — Nevada became the 36th state Oct. 31, 1864.

USPS reports "Nevada is truly one of our nation's most beautiful treasures," said former Nevada Congressman and current U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors Vice Chairman James

Bilbray. "With so much to choose from, it was difficult to decide on an image the size of a postage stamp to adequately depict Nevada's revered beauty and history. We chose to feature the Fire Canyon in Nevada's first state park, the Valley of Fire. The canyon's natural sandstone formations are just one of the state's breathtaking landscapes."



The First-Day-of-Issue dedication ceremony took place at the Smith Center for Performing Arts in Las Vegas where Bilbray was joined by Nevada Gov. money Brian Sandoval; Nevada Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki; Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV); Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV); Nevada Sesquicentennial Honorary Poet Waddie Mitchell; Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe; College of Southern Nevada Professor of Social Sciences Dr. Michael Green and Nevada Statehood stamp artist Ron Spears in dedicating the stamp. Also participating was The Smith Center President and CEO Myron Martin.

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LAST CHANCE JOE

Last Chance Joe is a larger than life figure that resided on the front of the Nugget Casino in Sparks until October 7, 2014. He has been an image of the Old West spirit and tenacity that epitomized the settling and taming of our state and city.

A notice appeared on the Nugget website in December which stated "Affiliates of Global Gaming &

Hospitality (GGH) and Husky Finance are officially the new owners of John Ascuaga's Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, Nevada. The sale closed early Monday Morning, December 16, 2013."

The Reno Gazette-Journal reported on May 14, 2014 "A familiar Sparks icon is looking for a new home after the new owners of John Ascuaga's Nugget decided to remove the 36-foot statue of "Last Chance Joe" from the front of the building's façade.

Removal of the statue, which has stood in front of the casino since May 12, 1958, stems from the multi-year \$50 million renovation of the Nugget casino by new owners Global Gaming & Hospitality LLC, Nugget spokeswoman Lauren Garber said.

Garber said the casino would like to move "Last Chance Joe" to a historical society or museum, but moving the structure could be costly — up to \$60,000 to successfully relocate the prospector."

At a Sparks City Council meeting May 12, 2014 Councilwoman Julia Ratti indicated she had received a bid of \$59,200 to remove Last Chance Joe and to relocate him to the west end of the C Street Garage. After much discussion and public comment, the Council voted to not spend money to relocate Last Chance Joe.

Councilwoman Julia Ratti began a campaign to find funding elsewhere to save the famous figure. The Museum offered to have Last Chance Joe mounted to the front of the Museum to provide better visibility for the statue and to keep him on Victorian Avenue. In early September she notified the Museum Board that she had received a lower bid for relocation to the Museum and that she had an anonymous donor willing to foot the bill for most of the cost.

On October 7, 2014 amid much fanfare and news coverage, Last Chance Joe was removed safely from the Nugget by Q & D Construction and moved to a Nugget parking lot where he was to undergo some restoration prior to being relocated to the front of the Museum

building at 820 Victorian Avenue. Since the main entrance of the Museum at 814 Victorian is in a building that is on the National Register of Historic Places, it



could not be placed on 814 Victorian.

The City agreed we could encroach upon the sidewalk in front of 820. This was necessary as a concrete pedestal 5 feet wide and 20 feet long and about 3 feet high was needed so a metal pole for attachment to the figure to provide stability in winds can be installed. He could not be attached directly to the facade of 820 as it is a 1930s non-reinforced brick structure which probably would not withstand high winds without toppling the wall and Last Chance Joe

He has been installed, repaired and repainted and stands proudly in front of the museum on Victorian Avenue just west of Pyramid way.

It is now up to you, your business, your friends and acquaintances to help maintain a fund for minor repairs and repainting as necessary during all the the years he will be standing proud.

PLEASE BE GENEROUS AND DONATE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN. Joe needs you!