

Last Chance Joe Covers By Howard Kadohiro

The Restoration of Last Chance Joe was finally completed and unveiling set for June 22, 2018. Museum members, donors, volunteers, City and State leaders were invited to the ceremony. I started to plan for a commemorative cover on the weekend of June 9 and the completed design was sent to the printers on June 18th. The printed sheets were picked up on June 19th.

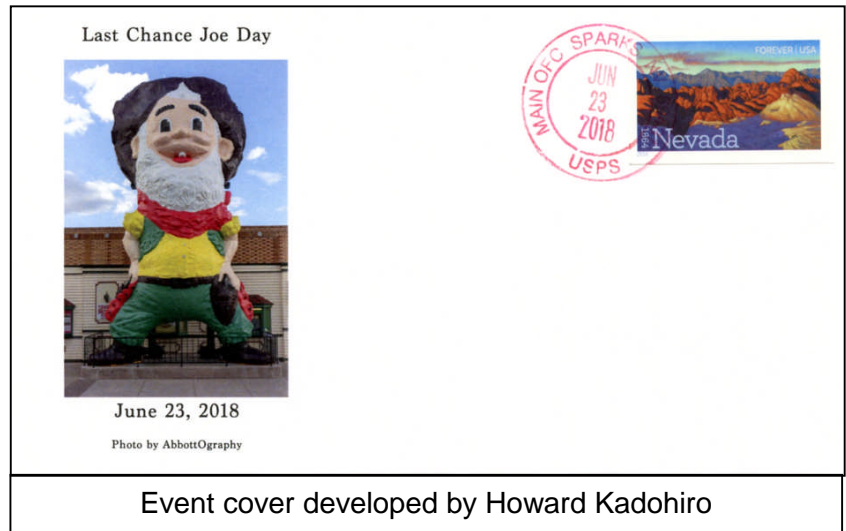
The only post office open on Saturday, New Life Bookstore on Greenbrae, was approached on Tuesday the 19th to cancel the cover but they refused to do it on a hand back basis. Covers that were hand stamped would have to be sent through the mail. The next day the Main Sparks Post Office was contacted and agreed to postmark and hand back the unveiling day covers on Friday. Since Sparks Post Office was closed on Saturday, arrangement with a clerk at the Main Reno Post Office for that day, was tried, but turned down for the same reason as Greenbrae. Covers could not be handed back and need to be addressed and sent through the mail.

Charlene Baltz, Executive Assistant to the Reno postmaster, was contacted for assistance, and she made arrangement to have the Last Chance Joe Day covers left at the Main Sparks Post Office on Friday, postmarked "June 23, 2018", and picked up on Saturday at "will call". Many thanks to Charlene and the Main Sparks Post Office on Prater Way.

About 50 covers each for the unveiling on June 22nd, and Last Chance Joe Day, June 23rd were made. They were given to Museum members, donors, volunteers and public official on Friday and Saturday. Remaining covers are available for \$5.00 each with all proceeds going to the Sparks Museum and Cultural Center.

Howard Kadohiro is a NSSS member who collects Hawaii philately and naval covers.

Editor note: Last Chance Joe is an iconic 32-foot tall figure that stood by the entrance to the Sparks Nugget Casino & Hotel since about 1958. Under new ownership, Last Chance Joe was removed in Oct. 2014. After much negotiating with city officials and a promised restoration fund, he was moved about 100 yards east on Victorian Ave. to grace the front of the Sparks Museum & Cultural Center. After installation in front of the museum and a complete restoration, Last Chance Joe was "unveiled" on June 22 and dedicated on June 23. Thus, the event covers as Howard outlined above. This is Howard's first attempt at creating a special event cover with printed cachet and the process he went through to obtain the appropriate cancel, even when the post office was closed. What a great job!



Restored Last Chance Joe in front of the Sparks Museum. He is facing Interstate 80. This is a drone-photo on a pamphlet telling the story of Joe written by Dick Dreiling.