

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Glimmering in Gold

### *Postage Stamps Commemorate Transcontinental Railroad Anniversary*

PROMONTORY SUMMIT, UT — The U.S. Postal Service marks the 150th anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad with three distinct Forever stamps. A first-day-of-issue ceremony for the stamps was held today at the Golden Spike National Historic Site at Promontory Summit, Utah.

“Building the transcontinental railroad was one of the great achievements of the 19th century,” said Mike Mirides, the Postal Service’s Salt Lake City District manager and the stamp ceremony’s dedicating official. “The three distinct designs of the Transcontinental Railroad Forever stamps evoke the spirit of that era.”

News of the stamp is being shared on social media using the hashtag **#RailroadStamps**.

#### **Binding the nation together**

President Abraham Lincoln promoted the railroad during the Civil War as a way of binding the nation. The Central Pacific Railroad Co. built the western portion of the railroad starting from Sacramento, CA. The Union Pacific Railroad Co. built the eastern section beginning from Omaha, NE. Both companies employed many workers at a time when roadbeds had to be dug and tunnels excavated without the benefit of machines.

A large workforce — primarily Chinese and Irish immigrants — carried out most of the backbreaking and often dangerous work that made the achievement possible. The work force, totaling more than 20,000 at its peak, also included German and Italian immigrants and some African Americans. Thousands of Mormon workers helped make the final push across Utah.

The completed railroad covered nearly 1,800 miles and reduced travel time across the country, from as long as six months to about a week. By easing the movement of goods and people across the country, the transcontinental railroad made the American West an integral part of the nation.

The completion was marked by the Golden Spike Ceremony, held on May 10, 1869, when rail lines were

joined at Promontory Summit, north of the Great Salt Lake in Utah.

## Transcontinental Railroad Forever Stamps

Photographs of replicas of the two locomotives at the Golden Spike National Historic Site were used as visual references for the stamp artwork. Separate stamps feature the Jupiter and the No. 119 locomotives that powered the trains carrying the officers and guests of the two train companies to the Golden Spike Ceremony. Centered between them, a third stamp portrays the famous golden spike that was a prominent part of the ceremony.

Michael J. Deas illustrated the Jupiter and No. 119 stamps using traditional, 19th-century oil painting techniques. Kevin Cantrell illustrated the stamp depicting the ceremonial golden spike and did the border treatments and typography for all three stamps. Each of the stamps and the header feature gold-foiled highlights that produce a glimmering effect. The text Jupiter, No. 119, and FOREVER USA are in Brothers font by Emigre, Inc. Brothers is a trademark of Emigre, Inc. 2019 ©Emigre.

Art director Greg Breeding designed the issuance.

Transcontinental Railroad stamps are being issued as Forever stamps, sold in panes of 18. These Forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail one-ounce price.

All postage stamps are available for purchase at Post Offices locations, online at [usps.com](https://usps.com) and by toll-free phone order at 1-800 STAMP-24.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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