

The Final Mission: Space Shuttle Endeavour Covers

By Christopher William Anton Janson



I knew the space shuttle Endeavour had come to California, because my Uncle Bill Orr had emailed me photos of the flyby of the shuttle near the Queen Mary. Later that day, the shuttle ended up at LAX where it remained for about 3 weeks.

It wasn't until SESCOAL on October 7, 2012 that I found out that its permanent home was going to be at the California Science Center. I also learned that there was to be a special pictorial cancel designed by Phil Dockter for October 12, 2012. After getting home that night around 10 PM, I decided that I would design a special cachet for this event, since my Uncle Bill Janson wanted to visit the center on that day.

On Monday, October 8, 2012, I started sketching the Endeavour, because I only had 4 days to complete my work. I began by outlining the Endeavour in pencil while I watched videos of the Enterprise. I also used pictures of the Endeavour as references to help me with the outline. After I completed the outline of the Endeavour, I put it away for the night until the next day.

The next day, I started drawing some of the finer details with my pencil . . . lightly, of course, because I didn't want the pencil to show after I colored it in with markers and colored pencils. After penciling in the American flag, the windshield, windows, etc., I started to color in portions of it with a black marker.

On Wednesday, I emailed my Uncle Bill to confirm that he still wanted to visit the science center on October 12. I was happy to hear that it was "a go". I got back to work on my drawing of the Endeavour. Using my black marker, I filled in the windows on the shuttle. Then I used blue and red colored pencils to fill in the American flag.

The following day, I put the finishing touches on my artwork, including the words "Endeavour" and "United States", with a black marker. I then scanned my colored sketch into the computer and printed the cachet on two different sized envelopes. The #10 envelope is illustrated here.



The big day finally arrived, and my Uncle Bill and our friend, Curt, picked me up at my house around 8:30 AM. We went straight to the science center parking lot where the Space Shuttle Endeavour was situated. My uncle Bill and I took some pictures. After that, we went to eat breakfast and returned to take more pictures of the shuttle. After wandering around until noon, we went back to the car and headed over to the post office to get the cancels.

After removing from my backpack my envelopes and those belonging to Uncle Bill, we started sticking stamps on them. We handed them to Curt so that he could cancel them for me. I must say he did an excellent job. After all of our covers were cancelled, we put them back into my backpack and went home.

At the end of the day, I recalled quotes from everybody's two favorite Star Trek characters . . . starship Captain Kirk (William Shatner), who said, "Space, the Final Frontier. These have been the voyages of the Space Shuttle Endeavour. To seek out new science, to build new outposts, to bring nations together on the Final Frontier. To boldly go and do what no spacecraft has done before.", and Mr. Spock (Leonard Nimoy), who would have said, "Highly logical." Isn't that the truth.