



KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

PHILATELIC HISTORY



by - Ralph Yorio

First Edition

by

Ralph Yorio

The Viking Press



Introduction

This booklet is authored by Ralph Yorio, founder and first president of the Kennedy Space Center Philatelic Society, to inform philatelists, space cover collectors and space fans about the philatelic history of the Kennedy Space Center (KSC) from 1965 to 1971.

On June 3, 1965, NASA-KSC published an announcement that KSC would open a postal facility on July 1, 1965 at the Kennedy Space Center. It would be a contract branch of the Orlando, Florida post office. NASA appointed Mr. John E. Markovich as Clerk-in-Charge. The post office was located in the KSC Headquarters Building. Two Zip Code numbers were given to this post office: 32815 for Kennedy Space Center Installation and 32899 for official National Aeronautics and Space Administration mail.

On July 1, 1965, the KSC Post Office opened; to commemorate this occasion, NASA-Mail and Reports Management Section, headed by "Dusty" Rhodes, of the Installation Support Directorate, issued a special cachet and thus started the philatelic history of KSC.

Since the opening of the post office, many unique items have been generated. Official cachets were issued by NASA-KSC to commemorate special events. These cachets are normally issued for Gemini and Apollo launches only; however, four cachets were issued for other purposes, i.e., opening of post office, launch of Surveyor C, Fire Prevention Week and First Anniversary of Lunar Landing.

Also starting with the Apollo 7 launch, special postal cards printed by NASA-KSC have been given to VIP guests witnessing the launch. At present, Apollo 7 through 14 launches were commemorated by these cards and this practice will most probably continue.

The main body of this booklet deals with the cachets issued by NASA-KSC, the flight data and quantity of covers cancelled. All of this information is cataloged in this booklet, plus the following topics:

The KSC postal cards used for Apollo launches.

The post marks used since the opening of the post office.

The possibility exists that a counterfeit KSC cancellation is in existence. A photograph and description is enclosed noting the significant differences.

A first day of issue of the "twin-stamp" to honor the Gemini flights held at the Visitor's Information Center, KSC on September 29, 1967.

Information on how to obtain covers with KSC launch day cancellation on up-coming Apollo and Apollo Applications Program launches is discussed.

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FIRST OFFICIAL CACHET

To honor the opening of the Kennedy Space
Center Post Office, Branch of Orlando, Florida

All mail cancelled this date received the KSC
cachet, more than half was official mail,
nonphilatelic.

Quantity - 7,116 (about 3000 philatelic covers)



Apollo (AS-10)

30 July 1965

Saturn I vehicle was used in this unmanned mission to boost the Pegasus III micrometeoroid satellite into orbit. Data was continually received from the Pegasus until August 1968. This was the final Saturn I flight, with 10 out of 10 successes. Also final Pegasus satellite launched. No recovery was made.

Quantity Issued - 8,240 covers



Gemini V

21 August 1965

The first official KSC cachet to honor a manned launch, the lift-off of Gemini V with astronauts L. Gordon Cooper and Charles Conrad, Jr. aboard. Purpose of mission was to demonstrate physiological feasibility of lunar flight missions and to evaluate the spacecraft performance.

Flight Data

120 earth orbits

190 hours 56 minutes duration

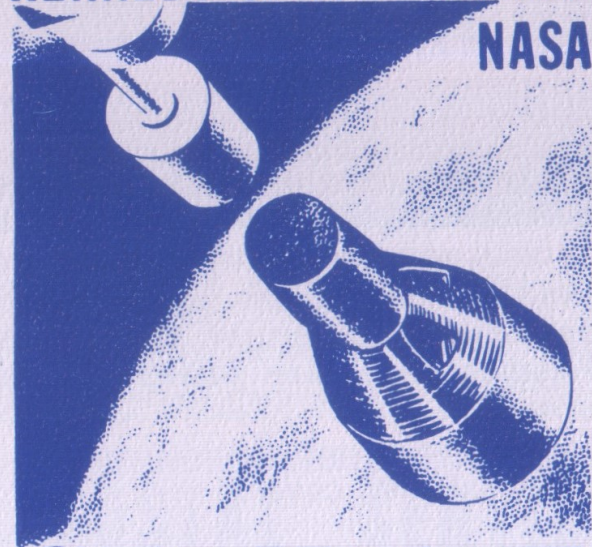
First use of fuel cell in spacecraft

Splashdown on 29 August 1965

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Lake Champlain

Quantity Issued - 5,540 covers

**KENNEDY SPACE CENTER
NASA**



GEMINI V

Gemini VII

4 December 1965

Astronauts Frank Borman and James A. Lovell, Jr. manned this mission. Purpose of mission was to extend physiological testing and spacecraft performance evaluation and to act as target vehicle for the Gemini VI for the first manned rendezvous.

Flight Data

206 earth orbits

330 hours 35 minutes duration

Splashdown on 18 December 1965

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Wasp

Quantity Issued - 7,380 covers



Gemini VI

15 December 1965

To honor the launch of Gemini VI manned by Walter Schirra and Thomas Stafford. Scheduled for lift-off on 25 October 1965 in conjunction with a launch of a target Agena missile. The Agena exploded at initiation of first burn and Gemini VI launch was scrubbed. The flight plan was changed and Gemini VII would be launched before Gemini VI and the two spacecraft would rendezvous in space.

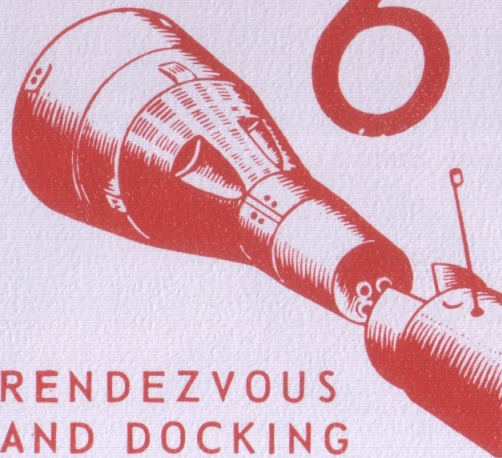
Flight Data

15 revolutions of earth
25 hours 51 minutes duration
Splashdown on 16 December 1965
Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Wasp

Less than 3,000 covers were cacheted prior to change in schedule, these were held and cancelled on 15 December 1965 when the KSC cachet was issued for Gemini VII and VI rendezvous in space.

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER • NASA

GEMINI 6



RENDEZVOUS
AND DOCKING

Rendezvous of Gemini VII and Gemini VI

15 December 1965

First manned rendezvous in space. Gemini VI maneuvered within several feet of Gemini VII. Both spacecraft maintained position with each other for 5.5 hours.

Note: The cachet design was reversed due to printing problems; both are shown to the right.

Quantity issued - 11,120 covers (no breakdown is known of the two cachets)



Apollo 1 (AS-201)

26 February 1966

First flight of Saturn 1B launch vehicle. This unmanned Saturn 1B suborbital mission was to demonstrate the spacecraft and launch vehicle configuration for compatibility and structural integrity.

Flight Data

Splashdown on 26 February 1966

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Boxer

Quantity Issued - 11,080 covers



Gemini VIII

16 March 1966

Astronaut Neil Armstrong and David Scott were aboard. Purpose of mission was to be part of the first dual launch with an Atlas-Agena and to dock with the target vehicle, the Agena. Mission was curtailed by a short circuit in #8 thruster (Orbital Altitude Maneuvering System) causing depletion of fuel. First Pacific landing in preplanned emergency area and recovered by a destroyer, not the prime recovery ship (an aircraft carrier).

Flight Data

7 revolutions of earth

10 hours 42 minutes duration

Splashdown on 16 March 1966

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Leonard F. Mason

The Agena reentered earth atmosphere on 15 September 1967

Quantity Issued - 12,370 covers



Gemini IX

3 June 1966

Astronaut Thomas P. Stafford and Eugene A. Cernan manned this mission. Purpose was to dock with the Agena which was launched on 1 June 1966 and for astronaut EVA (extra vehicular activity) using a AMU (astronaut maneuvering unit). Docking could not be accomplished when the shroud on the Agena failed to clear the docking adapter. Two hours and two minutes of EVA was accomplished but the AMU was not employed due to difficulty of the astronaut to don the unit and fogging of the spacesuit faceplate.

Flight Data

44 revolutions of earth

72 hours 21 minutes duration

Splashdown on 6 June 1966

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Wasp

Quantity Issued - 14,630 covers



Apollo 2 (AS-203)

5 July 1966

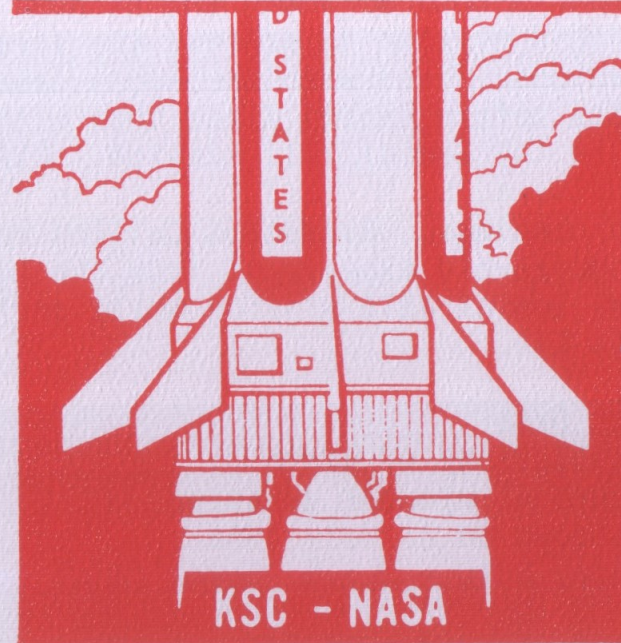
This unmanned mission was to test the S-IV-B stage vent and restart capability using liquid hydrogen. Flight was deliberately terminated during liquid hydrogen-structural test.

Flight Data

No recovery - vehicle destructed on 5 July 1966

Quantity Issued - 9,360 covers

SATURN 1B AS-203



Gemini X

18 July 1966

Astronauts John W. Young and Michael Collins flew this mission to achieve the first dual rendezvous, first with the Agena launched only minutes before Gemini X and then with the Agena used in the Gemini VIII mission. EVA was accomplished by Michael Collins in three separate hatch openings. Astronaut Collins retrieved a micrometeoroid experiment from the Agena used in the Gemini VIII mission while performing one of his EVA.

Flight Data

43 revolutions of earth

70 hours 47 minutes duration

Splashdown on 21 July 1966

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Guadalcanal

11 Quantity Issued - 16,540 covers



Apollo 3 (AS-202)

25 August 1966

This was a suborbital mission, unmanned to test the Apollo subsystems and space vehicle structural integrity. Evaluated Apollo heatshield at high heat loads.

Flight Data

1 hour 23 minutes duration

Splashdown on 25 August 1966

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Hornet

Quantity Issued - 10,760 covers



Gemini XI

12 September 1966

Charles Conrad, Jr. and Richard F. Gordon, Jr. manned this mission. Rendezvous and docking was achieved with a Agena Target Vehicle, launched also on 12 September 1966, in 1 hour after launch of Gemini XI, in the first revolution. A tethered EVA was performed by Gordon whereby the Gemini and Agena were tied together. This mission produced the highest apogee, 739 nautical miles, thus far in the Gemini Program.

Flight Data

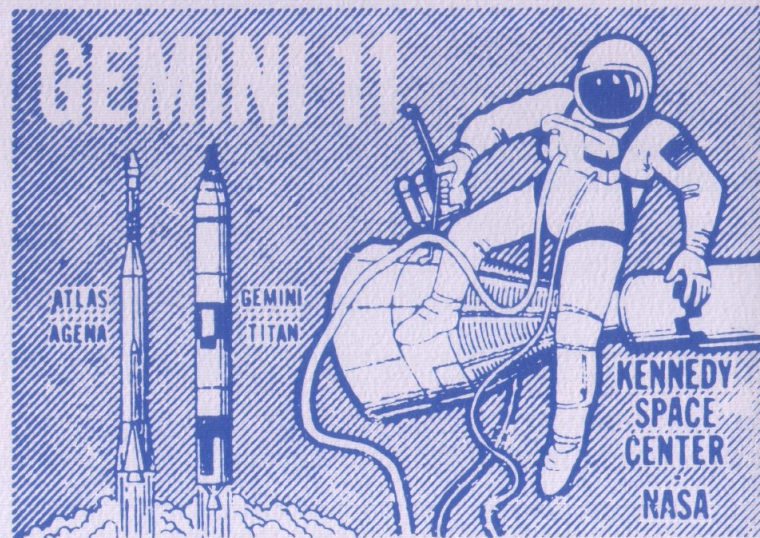
44 revolutions of earth

71 hours 17 minutes duration

Reentry was completely computer controlled

Splashdown on 15 September 1966

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Guam



Fire Prevention Week

10 October 1966

This cachet was applied to all mail on 10 October 1966 and occasionally upon request during the remainder of the week to make the public aware of the occasion.

Quantity Issued - unknown. Philatelically prepared covers are very few.



Gemini XII

11 November 1966

Final mission of the Gemini series. Astronauts James A. Lovell, Jr. and Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr. aboard. This spacecraft docked with a Agena Target Vehicle launched also on 11 November 1966. Aldrin performed umbilical EVA and standup with hatch door open EVA for a total of 5 hours 37 minutes. Also photographs were taken of a solar eclipse. Gemini series proved that man could endure spaceflight, perform given manual tasks, and was ready for the Manned Apollo Program.

Flight Data

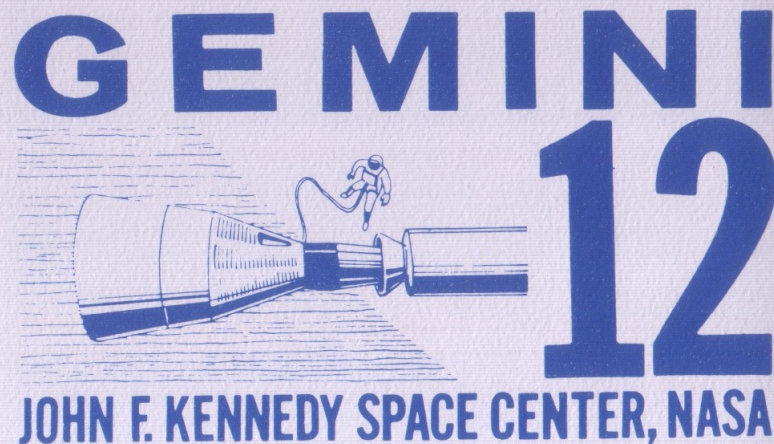
59 revolutions of earth

94 hours 34 minutes duration

Splashdown on 15 November 1966

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Wasp

Quantity Issued - 18,500 covers



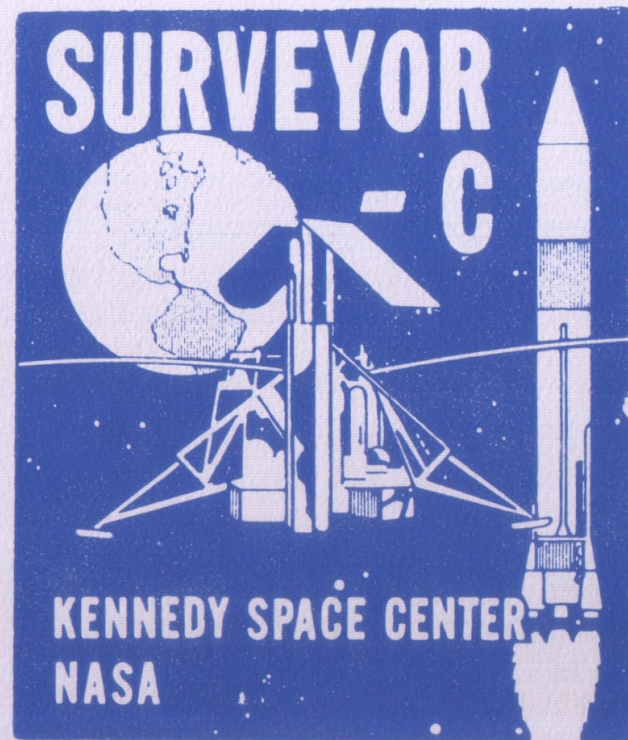
Surveyor C

17 April 1967

Lunar exploration mission launched by a Atlas-Centaur vehicle. This spacecraft landed on the lunar surface on 19 April 1967. 6300 pictures were transmitted back to earth. A lunar surface sample experiment was conducted on this mission.

Note: This is the Surveyor from which the Apollo 12 crew removed parts and returned them to earth for engineering evaluation.

Quantity Issued - 3,890 covers



Apollo 4 (AS-501)

9 November 1967

First launch of Saturn V vehicle. Objective of this unmanned mission was to verify the performance of booster capability and spacecraft development. The Apollo spacecraft tested heatshield at reentry velocity. This was the first launch from Launch Complex 39.

Flight Data

8.5 hours duration

Splashdown on 9 November 1967

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Bennington

Quantity Cancelled - 34,000 of which 9,685 had the KSC cachet applied

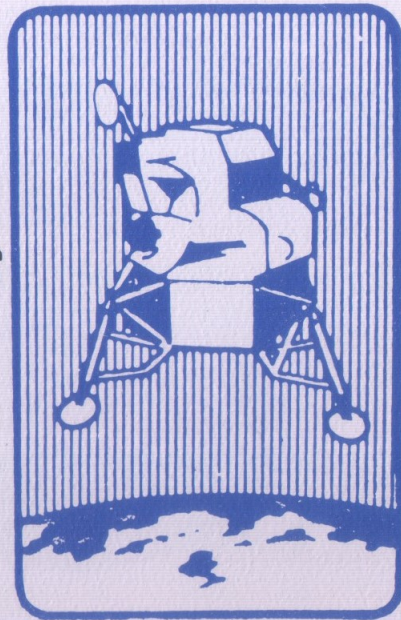


AS 501
APOLLO
MISSION 4

Apollo 5 (AS 204/LM-1) 22 January 1968
Unmanned Saturn 1B flight with first Lunar
Module (LM-1) aboard. Verified ascent and
descent stage propulsion systems were
operational. Evaluation was also made of
the LM staging, the separation of the ascent
and descent stages and also S-IV-B and
Instrumentation Unit (IU) orbital performance.
No recovery was made.

Quantity cancelled - 26,000 of which 8300 had
the KSC cachet applied

AS 204
LEM
APOLLO
MISSIONS



Apollo 6 (AS-502)

4 April 1968

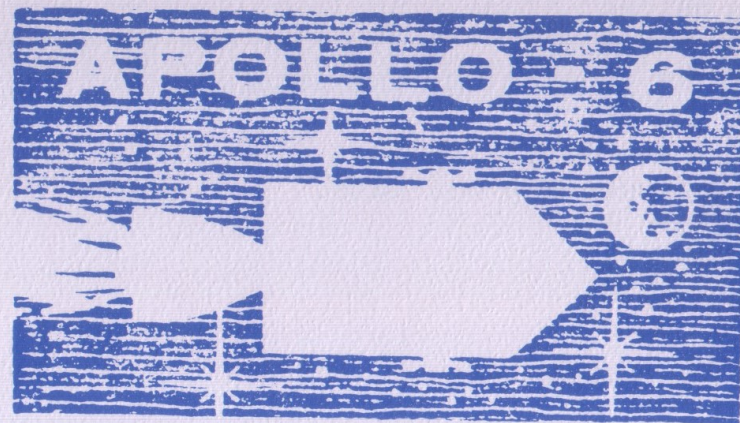
Unmanned Saturn V launch vehicle development mission. Attempted an inflight S-IV-B stage engine restart, however this was not accomplished. Apollo spacecraft functioned normally.

Flight Data

Splashdown on 4 April 1968

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Okinawa

Quantity Cancelled - 24,000 of which 9,740 had
the KSC cachet applied



KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, FLORIDA

Apollo 7 (AS-205)

11 October 1968

First manned flight of an Apollo spacecraft. Launched by a Saturn 1B with astronauts Walter M. Schirra, Donn F. Eisele and Walter Cunningham aboard. Purpose of mission was to evaluate Apollo spacecraft systems while in earth orbit. Rendezvous between the Apollo and S-IV-B Stage was accomplished and black and white TV transmissions were made.

Flight Data

259 hours 12 minutes duration
Splashdown on 22 October 1968
Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Essex

Quantity Cancelled - 29,800 of which 10,760 had
the KSC cachet applied

First use of astronaut insignia
as the KSC cachet



This cachet is first gummed label
used; size 3 3/8 inches by 2 1/2
inches

Apollo 8

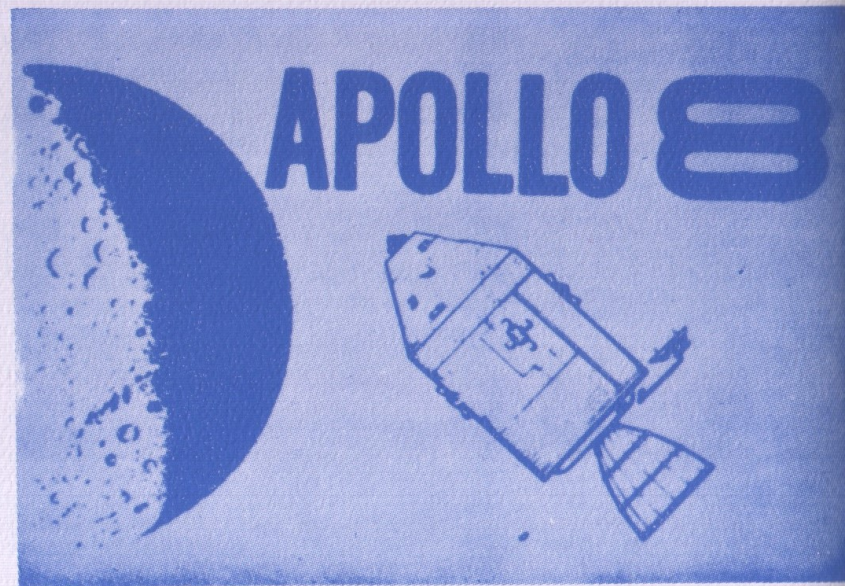
21 December 1968

First Manned Flight of a Saturn 5 vehicle.
Astronauts Frank Borman, James A. Lovell, Jr.
and William A. Anders aboard. The Command Module
was inserted into a lunar orbit for 10 revolutions.
Mission proved that Apollo hardware, less the
lunar module, was ready for moon landing.
Returned with excellent lunar orbit photography.

Flight Data

147 hours 1 minute duration
Splashdown on 27 December 1968
Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Yorktown

Quantity Cancelled - 34,500 of which 11,870 had
the KSC cachet applied



Second gummed label used as cachet.
The dimensions of the label are
1 1/4 inches by 2 inches.

Apollo 9

3 March 1969

First complete Saturn 5-Apollo-LM to be launched in earth orbit. Astronauts James McDivitt, David Scott and Russell Schweickart were aboard. First manned flight of the lunar module and successful rendezvous with the command module. EVA performed by Schweickart for 46 minutes.

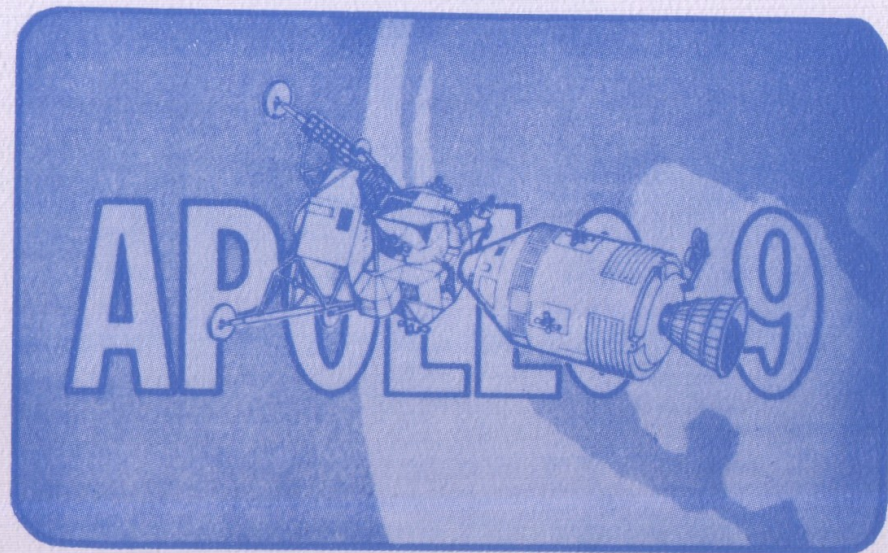
Flight Data

241 hours 1 minute duration

Splashdown on 13 March 1969

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Guadalcanal

Quantity Cancelled - 37,800 of which 15,870 had the KSC cachet applied



Apollo 10 (AS-505)

18 May 1969

Lunar orbit mission to evaluate the Lunar Module performance in lunar environment. Astronauts Eugene A. Cernan, John W. Young and Thomas P. Stafford manned this mission. Young remained in the command module while Cernan and Stafford ascended to within 50,000 feet of the lunar surface in preparation for lunar landing of Apollo 11. Nineteen color TV transmissions were sent back to earth.

Flight Data

192 hours 3 minutes duration

Splashdown on 26 May 1969 in Pacific Ocean

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Princeton

Quantity Cancelled - 43,000 of which 19,600 had
the KSC cachet applied



Apollo 11 (AS-506)

16 July 1969

First manned lunar landing. "The Eagle has Landed"
Astronauts Neil A. Armstrong, Michael Collins and
Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr. aboard. Collins remained in
orbit around the moon in the command module while
Armstrong and Aldrin descended to the moon surface
in the Lunar Module on 20 July 1969. Returned
samples of lunar dust and rocks.

"One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind"

Flight Data

195 hours 18 minutes duration

Splashdown on 24 July 1969 in Pacific Ocean

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Hornet

Quantity Cancelled - 165,650 of which 19,500 had
the KSC cachet applied



Apollo 12 (AS-507)

14 November 1969

Second manned lunar landing. Astronauts Charles Conrad, Jr., Richard F. Gordon and Alan Bean manned this mission. Gordon remained in orbit around the moon in the command module while Conrad and Bean descended to the lunar surface in the Lunar Module on 19 November 1969. This was the first scientific expedition of the moon. Removed components off Surveyor which was located in nearby crater and returned them to earth for engineering evaluation.

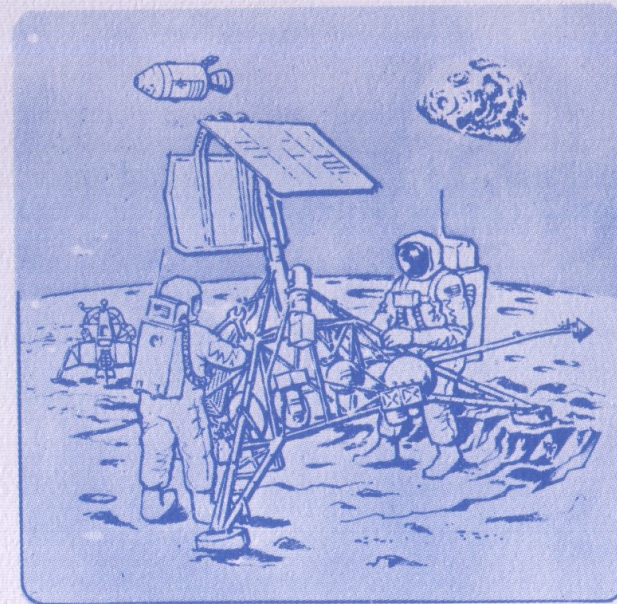
Flight Data

244 hours 36 minute duration

Splashdown on 24 November 1969 in Pacific Ocean

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Hornet

Quantity cancelled - 114,626 of which 3929 had
the KSC cachet applied



Apollo 13

11 April 1970

Third scheduled lunar landing. Astronauts James Lovell, Fred Haise and John Swigert manned this mission. An explosion occurred in the oxygen tank in the service module on April 13. On April 14, the mission was aborted, the spaceship circled the moon and the SIV-B stage hit the lunar surface to test the seismometer left by Apollo 12. Note: Thomas Mattingly was scheduled to fly this mission, but exposure to measles caused his replacement (Swigert) on April 10.

Flight Data

142 hours 55 minutes duration

Splashdown on 17 April 1970 in Pacific Ocean

Recovery Ship - U.S.S. Iwo Jima

Quantity Cancelled - 135,000 of which 6000 had the KSC cachet applied



Lunar Landing
First Anniversary

July 20, 1970

To commemorate the first anniversary of
the Apollo 11 lunar landing.
First Man on the Moon

Quantity Cancelled - 14000 of which 3200
had the KSC cachet
applied.



Apollo 14

January 31, 1971

Third manned lunar landing. Astronauts Alan Shepard, Edgar Mitchell and Stuart Rossa manned this mission. As Shepard and Mitchell descended to the lunar surface at Fra Mauro on February 5, Rossa remained in the Command Module. After completing scientific experiments, lunar blastoff was on February 6.

Flight Data

215 hours 44 minutes duration
Splashdown on February 9, 1971 in
Pacific Ocean
Recovery Ship - USS New Orleans

Quantity cancelled - 142,000 of which
20,000 had the KSC
cachet applied.



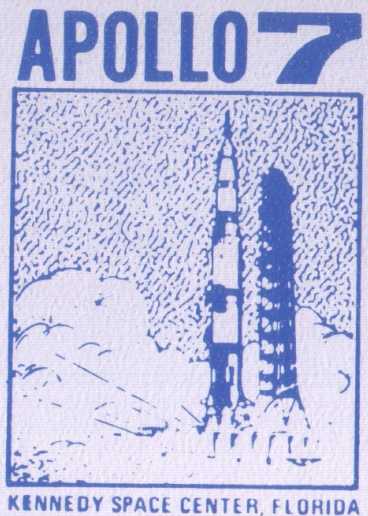
CACHETS DESIGNED AND PRODUCED BY KSC, BUT NOT OFFICIALLY RELEASED

Apollo 1, AS-204, first scheduled manned launch of Apollo Spacecraft (Apollo 1 never flown due to January 27, 1967 spacecraft fire).

40 covers cancelled at KSC on 1-27-67 have the KSC cachet applied.



Apollo 7, design too detailed for printing on envelopes

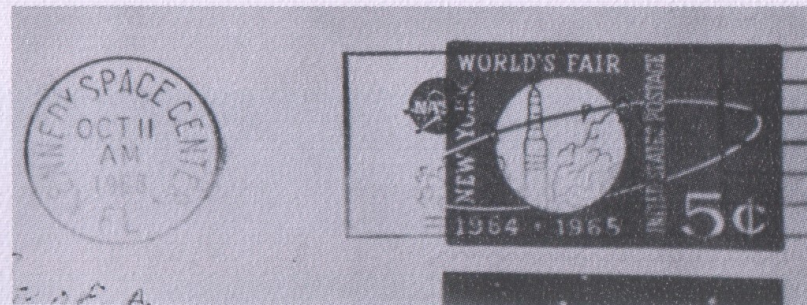


WARNING - COUNTERFEIT KSC CANCELLATION

The author has been notified by Mr. David Cheesman of Chicago, Illinois that a possible counterfeit KSC cancellation exists. The photograph, supplied by Mr. Cheesman, shows the variation in cancel from a genuine KSC postmark of the same date.

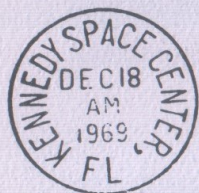
Note the sufficient differences between the cancellations.

1. Break in lower left corner of frame
2. Extended wing on NASA emblem
3. Extended lines representing the various stages of the Saturn 5 missile

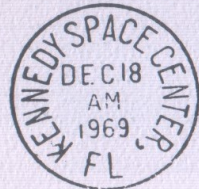


POSTAL CANCELLATIONS USED AT KSC

Aside from the regular seven wavy line cancel (used in July and August 1965), the standard registration hand cancel and the standard type hand parcel cancel, the following other cancellations exist:



Used since August 1965



Proposed but not used



Special cancellations used at Visitor Information Center, starting with Apollo 12, on days of manned Apollo launches. As of now, used three times, 11-14-69, 4-11-70 and 1-31-71.

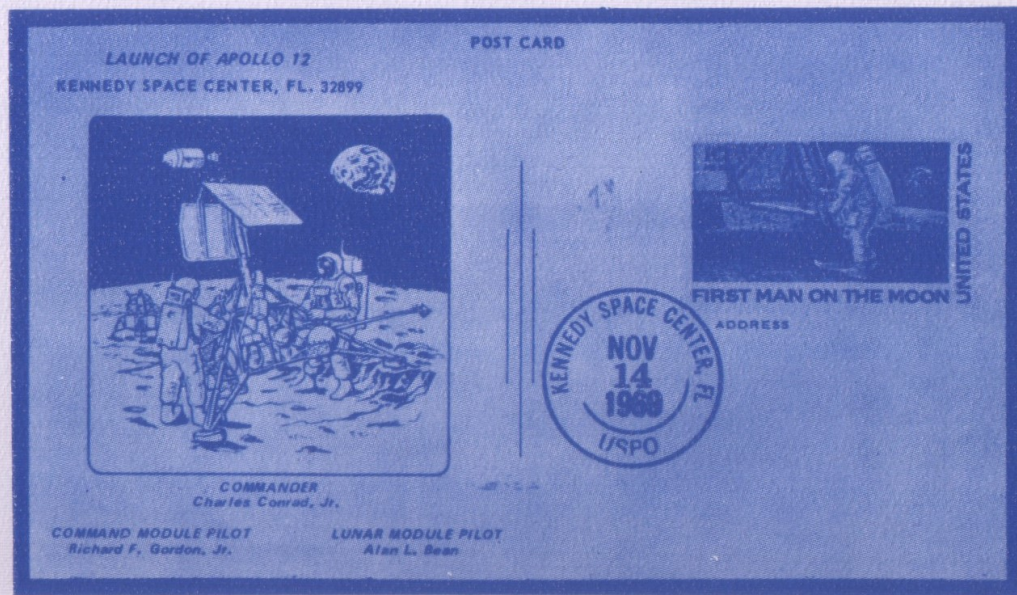
NASA POSTAL CARDS FOR APOLLO LAUNCHES

Starting with Apollo 7 and continuing through Apollo series, a special postal card was issued by KSC and distributed to NASA invited guests. These cards are relatively scarce and are philatelic prizes.

All cards basically contain a picture of the KSC cachet and names of the astronauts involved in the launch.

A typical NASA post card, Apollo 12, is pictured.

For all other NASA postal cards see back cover.



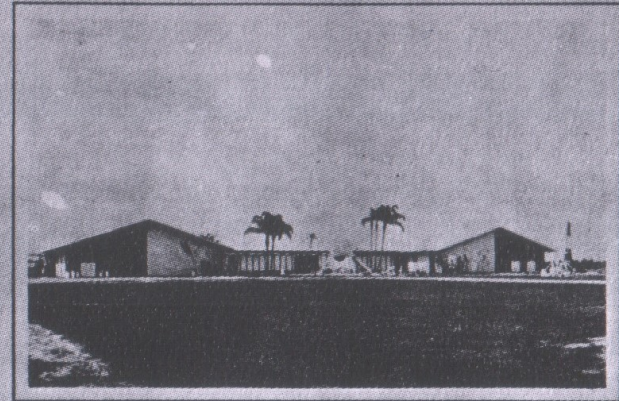
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

A special program was held at the Visitor Information Center on September 29, 1967, to honor the issuance of the twin 5¢ Space Accomplishment Stamps. Present at the ceremony were Mr. A. Siefert, Deputy Director of KSC; Spacewalker Astronaut Micheal Collins; Paul Calle, designed of the stamps and several hundred people of the general public.

At the right is depicted the front page of the First Day Ceremony program issued to the attendees.

Over 667,000 FDC were cancelled

TWIN SPACE STAMP COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY

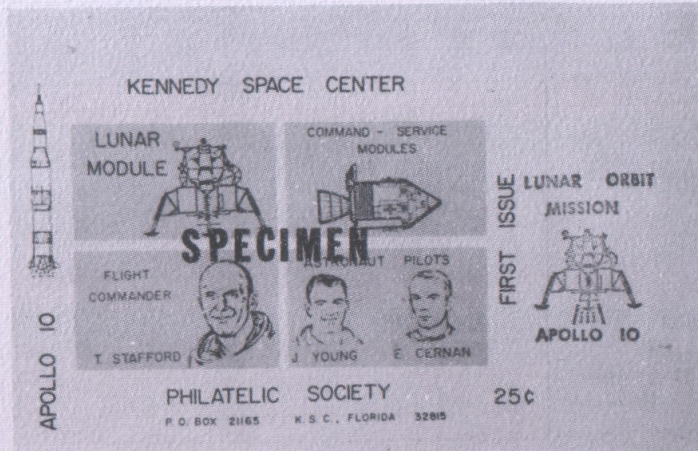


September 29, 1967

Visitor Information Center
John F. Kennedy Space Center, NASA
Kennedy Space Center, Florida

MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS

1. KSC Philatelic Society issued a souvenir sheet to honor the Apollo 10 mission, also made covers available for day of launch cancellation with a special cancellation on the souvenir sheet. Also, a precancel envelope for Apollo 14 with four dates available: 1-31-71, launch; 2-5-71, lunar landing; 2-6-71 lunar liftoff and 2-9-71 splashdown.



2. On September 9, 1969, the first day of issue of the 10¢ air mail, first man on the moon stamps, 500 covers were cancelled at KSC on 9-9-69 after the stamps were flown in from Washington, the official First Day of Issue city.

Information On Obtaining KSC Launch Day Cancellations

A special canceling unit will be set up on launch day of future manned spaceflight in the Visitors Information Center at the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, to cancel stamped addressed envelopes presented in person. This unit is established in cooperation between the Post Office Department and NASA to accommodate collectors interested in obtaining a special philatelic machine cancellation used at the John F. Kennedy Space Center.

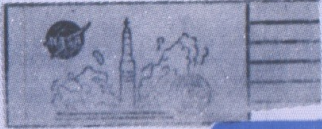
Individuals may send stamped, addressed envelopes to NASA, John F. Kennedy Space Center, Florida 32899, attention: IS-DOC-42, to receive the special philatelic machine cancellation. No more than 5 envelopes from any individual will be accepted through the mails. Only U.S. postage may be used on envelopes submitted, and cash, money orders, or checks in lieu of postage cannot be accepted. The outside envelope should be marked Special Philatelic Cancellation.

Envelopes not received in time for a specific launch date will be held until the next launch. In the event of a canceled mission, the same regulation will apply.

There will be no hand postmarking device available for the canceling of mail at the special unit at the Kennedy Space Center.



POST CARD



ADDRESS



APOLLO 11 LAUNCH

COMMANDER

Neil A. Armstrong

COMMAND MODULE PILOT

Michael Collins

LUNAR MODULE PILOT

Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr.

LAUNCH OF APOLLO 14
KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, FL. 32899

POST



ADDRESS

LAUNCH OF APOLLO 13
KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, FL. 32899

POST CARD



ADDRESS



COMMANDER
James A. Lovell

COMMAND MODULE PILOT
Thomas Mattingly

LUNAR MODULE PILOT
Fred W. Haise

copyright 1971

POST CARD



APOLLO X LAUNCH



ADDRESS



John F. Kennedy Space Center, NASA
Kennedy Space Center, Fl. 32899



McDIVITT - SCOTT - SCHWEICKART
APOLLO NINE LAUNCH

POST CARD

John F. Kennedy Space Center, NASA
Kennedy Space Center, Fl. 32899



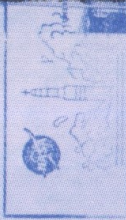
APOLLO 8



BORMAN - LOVELL - ANDERS
APOLLO EIGHT LAUNCH

POST CARD

John F. Kennedy Space Center, NASA
Kennedy Space Center, Fl. 32780



ADDRESS



APOLLO SEVEN LAUNCH