

Profile in Space Philately: M. Allen Banks of the Space City Cover Society and the NASA Local Post

The Space City Cover Society (SCCS) and the NASA Local Post (NLP) were born in 1967 in Houston, Texas. The idea behind SCCS was to create collectible space event covers at a reasonable price so that collectors wouldn't go broke in the pursuit of the hobby. The NLP was created to fill the void of the lack commemorative postal stamps and cancels featuring the United States space program.

Information on the creators and organizers involved in the creation of the SCCS and NLP is difficult to come by.

It is rumored that there were several people involved in starting these two organizations, but the two names continually surface in SCCS and NLP documentation, is Harry L. Anderson and M. Allen Banks. Sadly, both of these individuals have passed on and very little biographical information is in existence.



M. Allen Banks

Allen Banks was born on October 20, 1911 and passed away at the age of 57 on June 22, 1969 in Houston, Texas. Unfortunately, Allen did not survive to see his passion of landing a man on the moon.

Allen was also a devout philatelist and was the president of the Houston Philatelic Society in the early 1960's. Prior to that Allen had been a reporter for the Brooklyn Eagle in Brooklyn, New York. Allen had also been a press aide to Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia of New York City.

In November of 1937 Allen while working for the Brooklyn Eagle, became involved in the New York Newspaper Guild strike. While walking the picket line outside of the Eagle, Allen became involved in an altercation that led him to being charged with disorderly conduct. Allen was very passionate about his work and would become just as passionate about philately and the space program.

It is not really clear what led Allen to the State of Texas or Houston, but once there, Allen became involved in producing first day covers and was the founder of Treyco, a Houston firm that produced first day and event covers. The SCCS Apollo 1 covers bear a Treyco logo.

Treyco was registered as a domestic for-profit corporation in the State of Texas that began on October 8, 1962.



Early Treyco Cover

In 1966, Allen created the "Lincoln Society of Philately" and filed it as a domestic nonprofit corporation with the State of Texas on September 16, 1966. It was under this corporation that Allen published the "*Lincoln Philatelic Checklist*" that he co-authored with Harry Anderson. Allen served as vice president of the corporation.

Allen would put all of his skills as a reporter, press aide and government worker to good use when he and Harry Anderson formed the SCCS and NLP. Allen knew exactly how to promote and publicize SCCS and the NLP and had connections with the Houston Post Office to obtain cancellations for the covers they would produce.

Both Harry Anderson and Allen Banks were very private persons which tends to be the reason for very little information being available about the two. One thing for sure is the love of America's space program and philately that they shared. Their legacy of work, local post issues and covers proves that so very well.