

SPACE CITY COVER SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 53546

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77052



Space Log

Vol. I No. 1

April 1971

SOVIET SPACE STATION

While interest in and appropriations for the U. S. space program seem to lag more as the months go by, the Soviet Union appears on the verge of a new era in space. On April 19, 1971 the Soviet Union launched a mysterious new satellite called "Salute" and Western space experts speculated it was the first stage of an effort to build a manned orbital platform. The Soviet news agency Tass announced the launch without reporting details of the mission. It's orbit was exactly the same as that used in previous Soviet manned Soyuz flights. Details were kept secret, as usual in the Soviet space program, but the semi-official sources said the mission would be part of the long-range Soviet aim of building an orbiting space station. The "Salute", possibly the first of a series, was described officially only as an "orbital scientific station". The government newspaper Izvestia featured the brief launching announcement in bold type on the front page, in effect telling the Soviet people to pay attention and watch for more to come. The Salute craft was put into an orbit with an inclination of 51.6 degrees to the equator. This is the type of orbit normally used by manned Soviet spacecraft or the dummy ships they maneuver with. A progress report on the Salute craft said it had completed nine orbits by 6 p.m. Moscow time. The craft completed its first revolution in one hour, 28 minutes and 30 seconds. Its apogee, or high point, was 138 miles and its perigee, or low point, was 124 miles. The Soviet Union lacks the world-wide tracking system that the United States uses in manned shots, but two Soviet ships in the Atlantic have been deployed to supplement their existing net-work.

APOLLO 15 RECOVERY SHIP CACHETS

Manned Spacecraft Recovery Forces of the U. S. Navy will provide commemorative cachet and cancellation services for the up-coming Apollo 15 manned flight to the moon. Philatelic coordinators designated for the Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Recovery Forces (TASK FORCE 140 and 130) will receive all such covers and make distribution to assigned recovery ships.

To permit adequate time for handling of covers, collectors should send PRE-STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED envelopes (3 5/8 x 6 1/2") to the appropriate coordinator at least three weeks prior to the scheduled launch date for the mission. For the scheduled July 26, 1971 launch of Apollo 15, covers should be received prior to July 2, 1971.

In accordance with U. S. Postal regulations, only United States postage may be used on covers submitted. (Be sure and use 8¢ stamps for first class mail or 11¢ for airmail as the new rates will then be in effect). Stamps

of other countries or the United Nations cannot be used. CASH, MONEY ORDERS OR CHECKS IN LIEU OF POSTAGE CANNOT BE ACCEPTED. It is requested that collectors furnish the covers, with a filler inserted and the flap tucked in to facilitate handling.

Due to the popularity of the cancellation service and the limited postal facilities on recovery ships, each recovery force coordinator will ACCEPT A MAXIMUM OF TWO (2) COVERS FROM AN INDIVIDUAL COLLECTOR. When more than the authorized number of covers is received, they will be returned unprocessed. Covers received too late for distribution to Recovery Force units will also be returned unprocessed.

Addresses for the Atlantic and Pacific area Coordinators are: Apollo 15 Covers, Task Force 140, Naval Air Station, Norfolk, VA 23511 and Chief-in-Charge (Apollo 15), Task Force 130, Navy Terminal Post Office, Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, CA 96610.

For those of you that do not wish to service your own covers, we will be glad to do it for you. Send us a note letting us know on the number wanted from each Task Force. We will then use peelable address labels, put them on rag-bond envelopes, affix the necessary postage and send them off for you. After they are completed by the Task Force, they will be returned directly to you by them. Our service charge for this is 50¢ for each cover wanted. (But remember there is a limit of two per Task Force). If you want us to do this for you, please send in by return mail so that you don't miss out on the deadline.

A NEW U. S. SPACE STAMP

All of you that have notice envelopes on file with us have already been notified of the proposed new U. S. space stamp and we would like to pass along what details have been given by the United States Postal Service. In their Philatelic Release No 18 for release March 13, 1971, it stated, "Earthman's last frontier -- conquest of space -- has excited the world into issuing more postage stamps on the subject than perhaps for any other. A stamp saluting U. S. space accomplishments, with focus on the past decade, will be issued in this year of Apollo 15. On May 5, 1961 Alan B. Shepard, Jr. was rocketed in a Mercury capsule in the first U. S. manned sub-orbital flight. He was lifted 116.5 miles above the earth. On July 20, 1969, the first footprints appeared on the moon".

That gives us some information but not what we would really like to know. And that is...when will the space stamp be issued? (And there is a possibility it will be a twin-stamp like the one done in 1967). We will just have to wait and see. But don't worry. Just as the SCCS has been on the scene for other space first day covers, we will be there for this one and we guarantee you will not be disappointed.

ENGRAVED SPACE COMMEMORATIVE ITEM

One of the "hot" items in philately today is the collecting of the souvenir engraved commemorative sheets put out by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing of Washington, D. C. The latest one is the one with a space theme and was first put on sale at INTERPEX in New York in March. These sheets feature an engraved block of four of the Mercury commemorative, in full color, with the other U. S. space stamps as a background. These are going fast and may still be available from the Bureau. The limit is 5 per person and cost \$1 each. Send your order direct to Office Services Branch, Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Washington, D. C. 20226. Mark on your outside envelope "INTERPEX SOUVENIR CARD".

AN EDITORIAL

To all of you that have shown so much courtesy to the Space City Cover Society these past few years we say "THANKS". And from the many comments we have recieved on our covers, we are happy. It makes all of the hard work seem worth while. And this BULLETIN in this form has been a long time coming but as each one's time is limited nobody seemed to "take the bull by the horns" and go with it. However, it is now off the launching pad and we will try our best to improve it with each issue.

There is not going to be any set schedule in publishing but we will try our best to get it out every two months. More if time permits but we will have to play it by ear. If there are any artists in the crowd, we would welcome your proposed design for a Masthead. It should be about the size as the one on the first page or maybe just a bit larger. If we can come up with a winner we will be happy to present that person with one of our Apollo 11 silver medals and also one of the .999 silver Moon Landing Plaques. That is the same as about \$20 so if you think it is worth a try, let us have your design. And if no objection, we will be glad to print the winner's name and address.

As you know, the SCCS is unlike any other organization in that we don't make any sort of charge for dues. All we ask is that you keep a supply of large, addressed, stamped envelopes on file with us and we will keep you posted on news events and cover happenings. And to add to all of that WE AREN'T EVEN GOING TO MAKE A CHARGE FOR THE SPACE LOG!! "Losing money but making friends" as Lum and Abner used to say. What we can make from the covers will find a good portion going to the Space Log and other such items. But if you do want to help out with it we have a suggestion.

For some months now we have been purchasing on the market one each of as many varieties of U. S. manned and unmanned space covers as we could afford. It is going into the preparation of a reference collection. We have a good start on it but most of it is recent material. Do you have one or two duplicates that you would like to donate to it? If so, just send them to us and we will add them to the collection. That will save us from having to purchase them and will let that amount go toward the Space Log.

WHAT WE WILL TRY TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THE SPACE LOG...There is so much that is happening every day along the space theme, that we felt that this would be a good place to make mention of those items and put them into a permanent record. Some of it may even be used in writing up your space collection. Some news items will just be touched upon but some of the others, ones that we feel are more important, will be gone into in detail. Any comments on what you would like to see on these pages will be appreciated. Just drop us a line.

WE TOOT OUR OWN HORN

Two years ago only a few space collectors felt that Houston, Texas was a "proper" cancel. No, don't think we are going to get into that involved area and start an argument, but do you know that Apollo 11 Moon Landing covers, cancelled at Houston on July 20, 1969 are now selling at \$4 to \$6 each in New York? That's right and remember that these were originally by the SCCS at 50¢ each. Since 1965 Houston has been the NASA Mission Control Center. That means that once the flight leaves the launch pad, Houston takes control of it. And now many collectors and most of the dealers, and practically all of the European

dealers and collectors want only Houston cancels for covers other than "Liftoff". For that reason covers for any of the flights before Apollo 12 with the Houston cancel are coming into demand. Have you seen any offers for Houston cancels on Apollo 7, 8, 9 or 10? No, we haven't either and only wish that we still had some. At that time there were only a few hundred done from Houston. On Apollo 7, the SCCS did 400 and on Apollo 8 there were about 850 cancelled when Borman, Lovell and Anders orbited the Moon on Christmas Eve. Where does that leave you with your SCCS covers that you bought from us for 50¢? It means that if Apollo 11, (July 20) covers with Houston cancels sell for \$4 to \$6 each, then these Apollo 7 and 8 should be about \$10 to \$15 each. And the only reason you don't see them advertised is that most of the ones that were cancelled by us were sent out one or two to a person. If you have any in your collection, consider yourself lucky.

YOUNG TO COMMAND APOLLO 16 MISSION

Navy Capt John W. Young has been named commander of the Apollo 16 lunar landing mission and Major Charles M. Duke Jr. and Lcdr Thomas K. Mattingly II as his crew. But of as much interest as the makeup of the prime Apollo 16 crew to observers of the space program was the vast and recent experience of the Apollo 16 backup crew.

Fred W. Haise is the Apollo backup crew commander. Haise was the lunar module pilot of the abortive Apollo 13 mission and has served on three backup crews. Capt Edgar D. Mitchell and Lt. Col Stuart A. Roosa, veterans of Apollo 14 are on the backup crew with Haise. Duke, 35, will be on the Moon with Young. Mattingly, who was 25 on Saint Patrick's Day, will be in lunar orbit while Young and Duke are on the Moon. Apollo 16 is scheduled for launch for March 1972.

Usually a backup crew consists of a commander with space flight experience and two men who have not yet flown in space. The backup crew will have more space flight experience than the prime crew, and more than any other prime or backup crew for a moon landing mission. Young, 40, and Duke are scheduled to be on the moon for about 67 hours and will take three moon walks for a total of about 12 hours of lunar exploration. They will also have the use of the second lunar rover, a jeep-like carry-all.

U. S. COULD LOSE SPACE LEAD

The United States could lose its clear lead over the Soviet Union in space unless proposed programs for the 1970's move forward, the acting head of the space agency said in early March. George M. Low, acting chief of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, gave this assessment in urging Congress to set a \$3.27 billion spending ceiling for the space program in the year beginning July 1. "I am concerned with our long-term position in aeronautics and space relative to the Soviet Union", Low told the House Science and Astronautics Committee. "Today we have a clearly established position of leadership as evidenced not only by Apollo, but by many other achievements in space science, space applications, and aeronautics".

In 1970, Low said the Soviets launched 88 payloads into space as compared with 36 for the U. S. He also said the Russian research budget continues to increase. Both Low and Dr. Wernher von Braun, deputy associate NASA administrator, emphasized the significance of the proposed space shuttle for the 1970 decade. The shuttle, for which \$100 million is sought, is projected as a reusable, two-stage vehicle that can land and take off like an airplane.

RED CHINA ORBITS 2nd SATELLITE

Communist China launched its second space satellite into an egg-shaped orbit around the earth at 6:55 a.m. CST on March 4, 1971, the North Defense Command reported. NORAD said its radars were tracking the new satellite, which soared into space from Shanug-Cheng-Tzu, the site from which China launched its first satellite. The new satellite was circling the earth every hour and 46 minutes, NORAD said. There was no information as to whether the satellite was broadcasting any information back to earth or what size it was.

JOHN GLENN IN THE NEWS

Former astronaut John Glenn Jr has been named by Ohio Gov John J. Gilligan to head the governor's task force on environmental protection. If you collect autographs, you might want his on the space-theme-cachet that was used on the SCCS first day covers for the Anti-Pollution stamps.

PAGO PAGO

After splashdown of Apollo 14, the crew of Shepard, Roosa and Mitchell were picked up by the prime recovery ship, the USS New Orleans. Their first stop was the one at Pago Pago, where the crew, still in quarantine, were flown to Houston. We thought you might want a little more information about Pago Pago and here is some that might be included in a write-up. Samoa is 2,570 nautical miles northwest of Sydney, Australia, which makes it a long way from anywhere. American Samoa consists of seven islands. One of these is Tutuila. Pago Pago is on Tutuila and is the capital of American Samoa. Pago Pago has been described "as only six by 18 miles, and you can drive around it, over good coral topped roads in two hours".

NEW SATELLITE FOR 1975?

MCI Lockheed Satellite Corp has proposed to build and operate a domestic satellite communications system costing \$168 billion. The company said the network could be in operation by 1975 to provide television relay, business and data services throughout all 50 states. MCI Lockheed said its system, using advanced techniques, would provide two to four times the information-carrying capacity of other proposed networks, such as that submitted recently by the Communications Satellite Corp.

The MCI Lockheed proposal involves placing two large satellites in synchronous orbit, 22,300 miles above the equator. Each satellite would have 48 radio receiving and transmitting devices called transponders. This would provide the capability for each satellite of handling 48 television channels, or more than 33,600 business or data circuits, simultaneously. The satellites would have dimensions of six feet, eight feet and five feet, would weigh more than 3,900 pounds each, and would measure 106 feet from tip to tip of their extended solar cell arrays.

HOUSTON POST WRITER WINS AWARD

Jim Maloney, aerospace writer for The Houston Post has won the 1971 Aviation Space Writers Association writing award for space writing in newspapers with more than 200,000 circulation. Maloney, a veteran space writer, won for his series entitled "Tarnished Crescent" which appeared in The Houston Post March 29 through April 2, 1970. The Space City Cover Society salutes Jim Maloney.

MORE ON THE 10¢ AIRMAIL MOON LANDING STAMP

FIRST DAYS, Journal of the American First Day Cover Society, has a six-page article on this stamp and it is titled "Moon Landing Stamp - Ceremonies, Covers, Cancellations & Cachets". It is authored by Richard H. Thompson, a regional vice-president and life member of the AFDCS. This article is "chock-full" of much information and many illustrations. And any of you that want to specialize in just one stamp could certainly do it on this 10¢ airmail. If you are not a member of the AFDCS you can write to the Membership Chairman, 14359 Chadbourne, Houston, Texas 77024, and be sure and include a stamped, addressed envelope. Information will be furnished on this international society whose membership now numbers in the 9,000 range. By the way, part of the article deals with the trip that we took to Washington to get a supply of the stamps, fly them back to Houston that same day in time to get them on covers and cancelled with the first day date in Houston. It also illustrated one of these covers.

APOLLO-SOVIET SPACE LINKUP SUGGESTED

At Cape Kennedy a team of space agency engineers has suggested flying surplus Apollos in earth orbit in the mid 1970's to avoid a four-year gap in U. S. manned spaceflight. One mission possibility open for future talks is an unprecedented linkup with a Soviet spaceship. The idea is to take \$55 million Apollo command ships and \$45 million Saturn 1-B rockets left over from the moon program and equip them with newly developed sensors and cameras to map the United States and survey earth's natural resources.

Dale D. Myers, associate administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, said the plan is being developed at the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston and has not yet been submitted to NASA's Washington headquarters for approval. He said the agency does not have the money to support such a project, but the House Space Committee has expressed an interest in a program for the mid 1970's. The Houston center's proposal calls for flying 3 modified command ships in earth orbit in the 1974-76 period. Each would be piloted by two Astronauts and remain in orbit for 16 to 30 days to support practical resources research on earth. As it now stands, the last planned and financed American manned spaceflight mission will end in early 1974 when the last of three Skylab Space Station crews returns to earth. Apollo moonflights will end in late 1972. NASA now is starting to develop its proposed space shuttle orbital transport for flight in 1978, leaving a gap of four years when no Americans are scheduled to fly in space.

HOMETOWN CELEBRATES STUART ROOSA'S RETURN

This former cattle town home of Will Rogers, with American flags flying from every store and every third parking meter, welcomed home the rusty-haired kid of the high school class of '51, astronaut Stuart A. Roosa, on Friday, March 27, 1971. Roosa, one of three space pilots who went to the moon aboard Apollo 14, and Claremore, Oklahoma, both enjoyed all the fuss. "Claremore is indeed proud to have produced such an outstanding American", said a banner headline in the Claremore Progress. At a large turnout for a banquet held in his honor, Roosa gave the town a flag and a plaque he took to the moon and back. Does anyone of our readers know of any covers that might have been done for this celebration? If so, we sure would like to secure one for the SCCS space research collection.

DO YOU HAVE ANY MINT U. S. SPACE STAMP DUPLICATES??? If you do, and would like to get rid of any of them we could use them at SCCS for future covers. This would include the Fort Bliss issue, the Project Mercury stamp, the Twin-Space stamp, and/or the Apollo 8 commemorative. Let us know what you have and how much you want for them. Many thanks.

APOLLO 14 MOON ROCKS

Some of the Apollo 14 moon rocks, by far the most complicated ever returned from the moon have been near the moon's surface "only 9 to 14 million years, a Manned Spacecraft Center geochemist said. This contrasts with the from 50 to 500 million years of the Apollo 11 and 12 rocks near the lunar surface.

Dr. Michael Duke, curator of the MSC Lunar Receiving Laboratory, began distribution of samples of the Apollo 14 moon rocks in early April to 176 scientists. They will perform from 500 to 1,000 experiments on the rocks, Duke said. So far, MSC scientists have found 23 minerals in the Apollo 14 rocks. Ten of these remain unidentified.

A FRENCH SATELLITE

A French Diamant B rocket fired from French Guiana put a 211-pound satellite in orbit April 16, 1971 to study solar radiation. It was the seventh scientific satellite sent aloft by France.

SOVIET MOON ROVER LUNOKHOD 1

The remote-controlled Soviet moon rover Lunokhod 1 has had its closest brush with disaster yet, hitting a patch of sandy soil in a lunar crater that nearly bogged it down. Tass news agency reported on April 15 that the eight wheeled craft had to utilize 80 to 90 percent of its "skidding coefficient" to get out of the loose soil that makes up the crater's inside wall. Tass then praised ground controllers for rescuing the craft.

ASTRONAUT SPEAKS FOR EARTH

Apollo 9 astronaut Russell Schweickart testified for the planet Earth Sunday April 19 to persons attending Earth Week meeting at the University of Houston. He showed colored slides of Earth as seen from space and explained how the March 1969 earth orbital mission had changed him. He told how he became involved in conservation and environment. After orbiting the earth every 90 minutes for 10 days, seeing it from 200 miles up, he said something happened to him. "At first it was merely a spectacular view", he said. Speeding over northern Africa, a vast area usually clear of clouds, and seeing the fields, mountains and jungle areas around the ground, all were terrific sights, he said.

Schweickart might be another good possibility for autographing your first day covers of the SCCS Anti-Pollution covers.

MSC TO END QUARANTINE?

After two Apollo crews were subjected to the quarantine, MSC officials felt that it was unnecessary, yet yielded to scientific opinion that an additional quarantine of Apollo 14 be made. One MSC official has said, "People here feel that after six men have spent long periods on the moon, and nothing has happened, the probability of there being anything there that would be harmful to people on earth is very low indeed". The MSC officials will make their recommendations to end the quarantine to the Interagency Committee on Back Contamination (ICBC) and to the director of space medicine at NASA headquarters. The ICBC, composed of representatives of several federal agencies having to do with man's physical welfare, and the space medicine director will make a recommendation to the acting administrator of NASA.

THE SPACE SHUTTLE

Development of the Space Shuttle, or "space plane" as it is often called, is of importance to the national defense whether it is used by the civilian space agency or not, the Air Force's ranking space technologist said recently. At the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Space Shuttle Development, Testing and Operations Conference held in March in Phoenix, Arizona, Lt Gen Samuel C. Phillips further stated, "If this country does not continue to develop the technology and the capability to operate in space, we could find ourselves against a threat that we are not prepared to deal with. As Col John C. Albert, director of the space programs for the Air Force put it, "The Department of Defense is putting its faith in the shuttle". He further stated that the Air Force will not develop a family of launch rockets beyond the Titan III-C because of its decision to go along with the shuttle.

The shuttle is a two-stage, reusable, airplane-like spacecraft whose missions will be as varied as those of aircraft. The booster stage of the shuttle will be about the size of a Boeing 747 aircraft. The orbiter stage, about the size of a Boeing 707, will ride piggyback on the booster stage at launch. Pilots will bring the booster stage to a landing after it has completed its work of getting the orbiter stage on the way to earth orbit. The orbiter stage would have a crew of two or three and could carry about passengers. It would have a cargo bay about 15 x 60 feet that would carry about 50,000 pounds. Albert said the shuttle, scheduled to be flying operational missions by 1979, will be used for all the Air Force's space missions - from placing communications and navigation satellites in orbit to orbiting spy satellites. One NASA official, Charles I. Donlan, estimated the total cost of the program at \$6 billion to \$10 billion.

Where will the Space Shuttle be launched?.....If NASA accepts the recommendations of major aerospace companies, Cape Kennedy will continue to be the nation's main space-launch site. Both McDonnell-Douglas Astronautics Co. and North American-Rockwell favor the Cape for launches but differ on testing sites. McDonnell favors Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., while North American concluded that Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico would be the best place for testing the shuttle in horizontal flight. NASA will make the final decision and as yet their study is incomplete.

NOW ABOUT AN ARTICLE, NOTE OR WHAT -HAVE-YOU?

We welcome an article from you regarding space philately or just a note on any comment that you would care to make on the space theme. And just to make it interesting, we will offer \$25 (in cash) for the best article that is submitted for 1971. How is that? You can't lose! You may win the money but more than that, you will have the thrill of passing along some information that you have to other interested collectors. Send 'em in!!!!

HOW ABOUT A FREE COVER FOR A COLLECTOR-FRIEND?

Do you have a collector-friend that does not know about Space City Cover Society? If so, how about sending us a large stamped, envelope with his or her name on it and we will send them information along with a free cover for them. And we will tell them that it is a gift from you.