

VIKING MISSION TO MARS



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The achievement of this U. S. unmanned space mission was so significant that President Ford declared July 20, 1976 as "Space Exploration Day". It was on that day that the first of two unmanned spacecraft made a soft landing on the planet Mars.

Viking 1 blasted away from Earth August 20, 1975 on a 505-million-mile journey to Mars. It was launched at 5:22 p.m. EDT from Cape Canaveral. It inserted into orbit around Mars June 19 and the space robot landed safely on July 20, 1976. The landing opened a new frontier in man's exploration of the solar system.

Viking 2 was launched at Cape Canaveral on September 9, 1975 at 2:39 p.m. EDT. Due to a different flight path, its journey was 440-million miles. It inserted into orbit around Mars on August 7, 1976 and landed on the Utopia dunes of Mars on September 3, 1976.

The two Viking spacecraft, the most complex unmanned space vehicles America has yet produced, carried out a comprehensive scientific research program and sent back historic photographs and data about Mars. The Viking Project cost \$1 billion and was more expensive by almost \$300 million than all of the 11 previous planetary explorations combined. It took almost seven years to get Viking from the drawing boards to the launch pad, with over 12,000 people working on the project.

To all space buffs, no better compliment could be paid to this historic mission than a U. S. space stamp. And it will come about on July 20, 1978, the second anniversary of the landing of Viking 1 on Mars. The first day of issue ceremony will be conducted at 11:00 a.m. at NASA's Langley Research Center. The central design feature of the Viking Missions commemorative stamp is a dramatic portrayal of the Viking 1 lander scooping soil from the surface of the Planet Mars. The work of noted space artist Robert McCall of Paradise Valley, Arizona, the design also included the phrase "Expanding Human Knowledge" which describes the purpose of the historic Viking space voyages. The standard-commemorative size stamp is of 15¢ denomination and printed in blue, red, yellow, maroon and black. There will be 50 stamps per pane and one plate number on each pane. The modeler was Ronald C. Sharpe and the engravers were Edward P. Archer (vignette) and Robert G. Culin, Sr. (lettering and numerals). All three are with the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Due to the scope of this space mission and especially since it involves two different craft, we will have a set of five covers, each with a single copy of the stamp and first day of issue cancel, with each having different complimentary designed cachets. The first will honor the Viking Project itself and the fact that it was declared "Space Exploration Day on July 20, 1976". The other four will be for launch of Viking 1, launch of Viking 2, landing on Mars of Viking 1 and landing on Mars of Viking 2. We did similar designs for Skylab since it did involve more than just one subject. By this, we feel that the Space City Cover Society is offering the collector complete coverage that is wanted.

For those that want not only the machine cancel "First Day of Issue" we will also do a limited number of the set of five covers with the desirable hand cancel reading "First Day of Issue". Since we will be limited to how many we can secure on the hand cancel, we advise an early order on them.

As we did on the issue for Pioneer Jupiter and Mariner 10 commemorative stamps, we will offer in advance covers with plate blocks of four and first day of issue cancel. On both of those issues we were sold out and refunds were made and we will fill orders for these in rotation as received. If we are out of them, a refund and not a credit slip will be made to you. You can purchase either a single plate block of four on cover (Position our choice) or you can get the matched plate blocks of four of all four positions of one number on a set of four different covers.

We will also offer for the specialist either single Mr. Zip blocks of four on cover or the four matched positions of Mr. Zip on four covers. In addition we will have for those that want them the "Copyright" blocks of four, either a single position (our choice) or the matched set of two positions (right and left sides) on two covers. Please do not send any money for these...they are priced the same as the plate blocks (either the one or matched set...except for "Copyright" and since its set has only two positions, that set will be \$3.50 for both positions). We will send these with your order of the other covers and invoice you for them at that time. We feel this would be better in that you could still get them and we would know how many to process but would not have to pay for them until you receive them.

Again, please bear in mind...we are offering all of these different items because there are collectors who expect us to service all of their covers for them and they are depending on us for their complete requirements. Just order those items that you feel fit into your collection. Remember...our hobby should be fun and not a hardship.

TO: SPACE CITY COVER SOCIETY, P. O. BOX 53545, Houston, Texas 77052

Please send me the following First Day Covers of the new Viking Mission To Mars Commemorative:

_____ Set(s) of five covers machine cancel @ \$3.75 per set	\$ _____
_____ Set(s) of five covers hand cancel @ \$3.95 per set	_____
_____ Cover with Plate Block of 4 @ \$1.75	_____
_____ Set(s) of Four covers with matched set of Pl Blk of 4 (all 4 positions) @ \$6.75 set	_____
_____ Please send one addressed gummed label with order. Thank you.	_____
_____ Postage and Handling30
_____ Total	\$ _____

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please send me the following and invoice with shipment
_____ Mr. Zip Blk of 4 (1 block on one cover) _____ Mr. Zip Blks of 4 matched set of 4 covers.
_____ "Copyright Blk of 4 (1 block on one cover) _____ "Copyright" Blks of 4 matched set of 2 covers

(July 1978)

Please allow about four to six weeks after first day of issue for delivery.

The details of the new space stamp and picture of it was very late in getting to us from the U. S. Postal Service and is the reason for getting this out in one of your file envelopes without an issue of The Space Log. Our printer is finishing up on a complete illustrated listing of all SCCS first day covers similar to the catalog section put out by us for the NASA Local Post issues. But we just could not hold up this mailing until it was completed. Everyone that orders from this list will be sent that illustrated catalog listing just as soon as it is completed. We know you will find it a handy reference.