

APOLLO/SOYUZ TEST PROJECT

PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON
ON VISIT TO MOSCOW
U.S. - U.S.S.R. SPACE TREATY



It was on May 24, 1972 when A.N. Kosygin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, and President Richard Nixon, signed the agreement to undertake this joint effort.

The purpose of this exhibit is to show the primary highlights of this, the only U.S. manned space project for a single flight. From the agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union as a sign of détente, to the successful completion of this joint mission, the story can be told in a single frame. It could be extended to three frames by including all of the tracking, observation and earth communications stations around the world, but the essentials are all here in just one frame.

The primary objective of Apollo/Soyuz joint mission was to check technical requirements and solutions for rendezvous and docking of future manned spacecraft and stations. The performance of this mission included:

- a) the testing of a compatible rendezvous system in orbit; b) testing of U.S. & Soviet docking assemblies; c) verifying the techniques of transfer of cosmonauts and astronauts; d) performance of certain activities of U.S. and USSR crews in docked flight; e) gaining of experience in conducting joint flights by U.S. and USSR spacecraft, including, in case of necessity, rendering aid in emergency situations.



The clever design of the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project by R. Streibow, allowed both nations to get together. The Apollo & Soyuz capsules are near the corresponding test.

1.1 ASTP Planning Meetings



The first meeting of US and USSR delegates took place in Houston on July 9, 1973. A second, pictorial hand cancel after the conclusion of the program tests the beginnings and end of the program together on this cover.

APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT Soviet spacemen arrive at JSC



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1.2 Training & Testing Begin

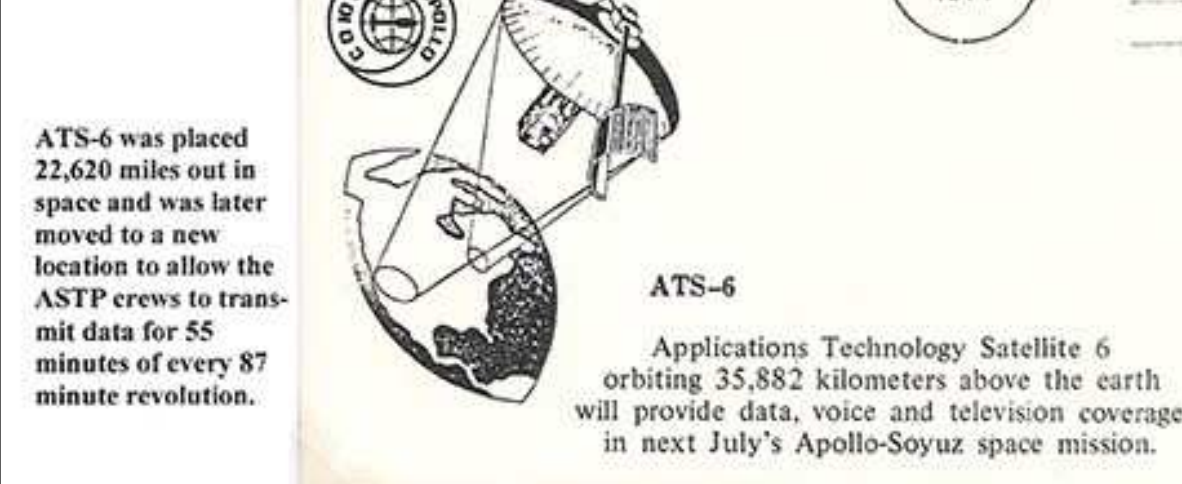
APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT Cosmonauts Begin 3-Week U.S. Training



The 3 astronauts and 2 cosmonauts had to learn each other's language. Project Mercury astronaut, Deke Slayton was chosen to fly on this mission.



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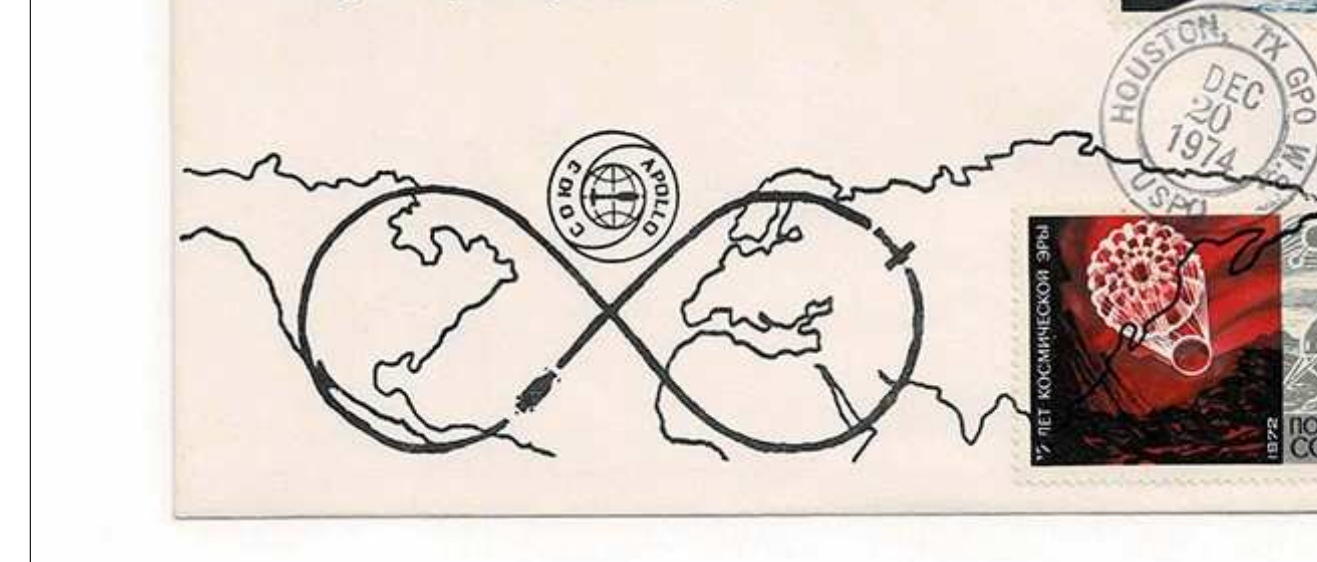
Application Technology Satellite 6 orbiting 25,852 kilometers above the earth will provide data, voice and television coverage in next July's Apollo-Soyuz space mission.

1.2 Training & Testing Begin



The two-man Soviet crew of Soyuz 16 tested a docking ring and other systems to be used in the joint flight. This was the final rehearsal and first manned mission in the ASTP program.

JOINT US/USSR PROCEDURES SIMULATION for configuring the two control centers and the network tracking stations to permit communications with each orbiting spacecraft during the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project



This was a simulation of the tracking network stations to ensure that the communications between the ground and the five men from both countries in space would work as planned

1.2 Training & Testing Begin

APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT Soviet ASTP Groups Gather For Final Meetings in U.S.



Final meetings of US and USSR Working Group Specialists in Houston as the year 1975 got underway. The Soviet stamp on this cover is an artwork painted by ASTP Commander, cosmonaut Alexei Leonov.



Several problems were uncovered in the ASTP simulations with Centers in both the Moscow and Houston. Another simulation was undertaken. This is an ASTP pictorial Mailer's Postmark Permit from Houston on the date of this event.



This was the date of the final series of mission simulations.

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2.2 Launch of the Apollo Spacecraft

Patrick AFB, Florida participated in the launch by doing all of the weather related tasks, keeping ships and planes out of the restricted areas, and launching Air Rescue & Recovery Aircraft.



Barstow, CA was home to the Goldstone Communications Station, one of the primary Tracking and Communications sites for the U.S. during this mission.



Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (MSFC) built the Saturn Rocket. This was an "Official" cachet from that facility on a cover addressed to the designer of those cachets. This cachet received the first of these with Skylab and contacted MSFC to determine the origins. He has just made a study of all of those cachets and has published an illustrated listing of them for the Space Unit.



Link-up & docking of the two spacecraft took place on July 17, 1975. The USPS created this circular pictorial hand cancel of the event. This cachet was by Marie Beck and would normally be found only on Navy events tied to the splashdown.



Two days after docking, the Apollo and the Soyuz capsules undocked, each to return to its respective country. Cover cancelled at Gorokod (Star City), USSR.



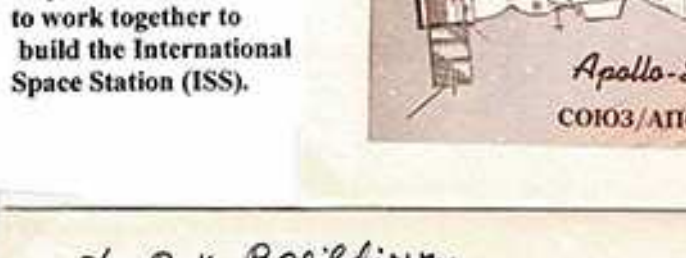
Seven days after undocking and three days after the Soyuz craft returned to Earth, the US crew splashed down in the Pacific Ocean where they were recovered by the USS New Orleans on July 24, 1975. The USPS chose to return covers with a pictorial machine cancel reading "San Francisco, California, disappointing astrophiliac collectors to whom no prior notice was given. This is a Beck cachet for that event."



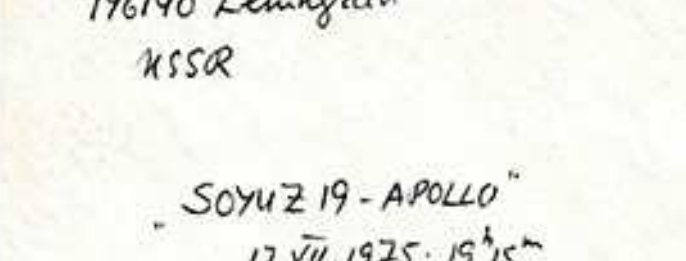
Starting with the Apollo 16 mission, the post offices on Primary Recovery Ships (PRS) were closed on the splashdown dates and the post offices that had been left behind in Hawaii, cancelled and cancelled covers there. However, the post offices for those that did for this mission prepared on the day after the event. These "day after" covers are somewhat difficult to obtain with the July 14, 1975 postmarks and the USS New Orleans cancel.



When the Apollo capsule splashed down, control of the mission was relinquished from the Johnson Space Center in Houston to the U.S. Navy for the recovery and return to the United States.



As the Americans did, Soviet observatories watched the docked vehicles from various ground locations.

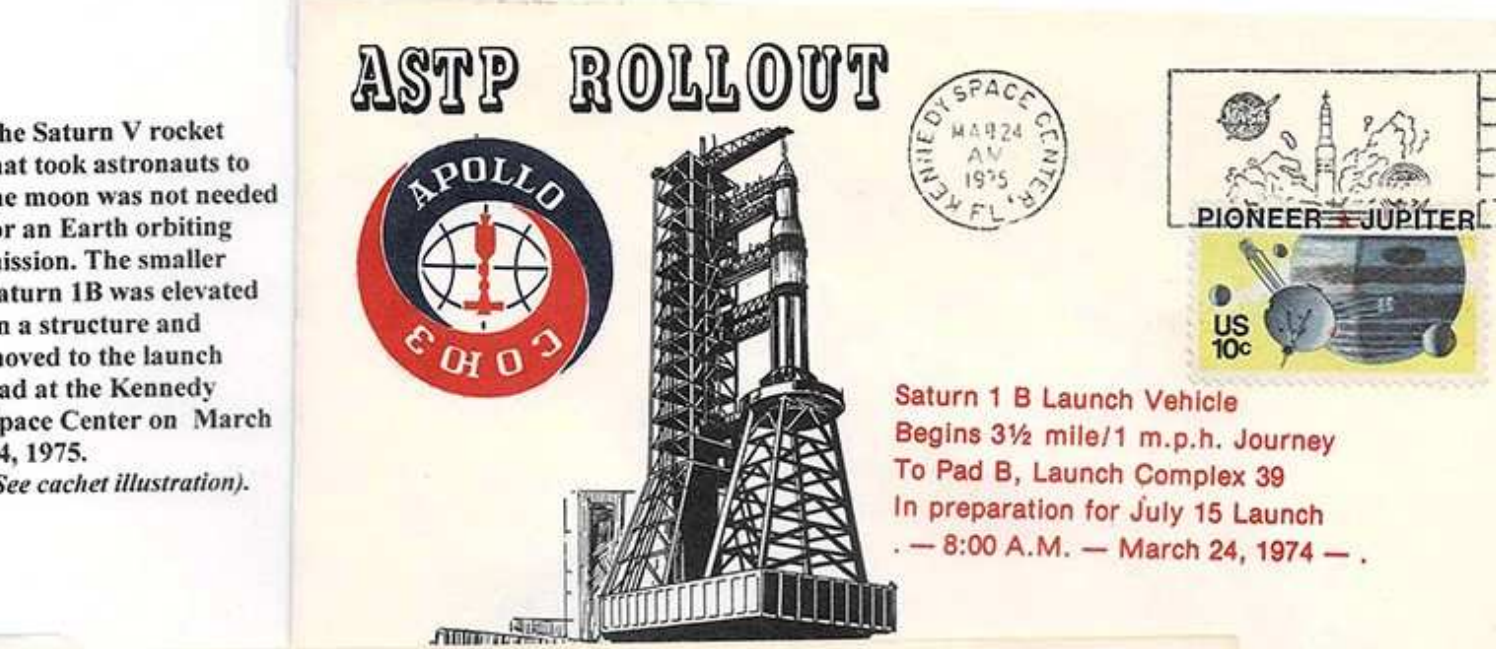


Two days later, on July 21, 1975 the Soviet crew of two had their "thump down" or hard landing safely on the ground near Kazakhstan. Cover cancelled in Gorokod.



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1.3 Saturn 1B Roll Out and Final Simulations



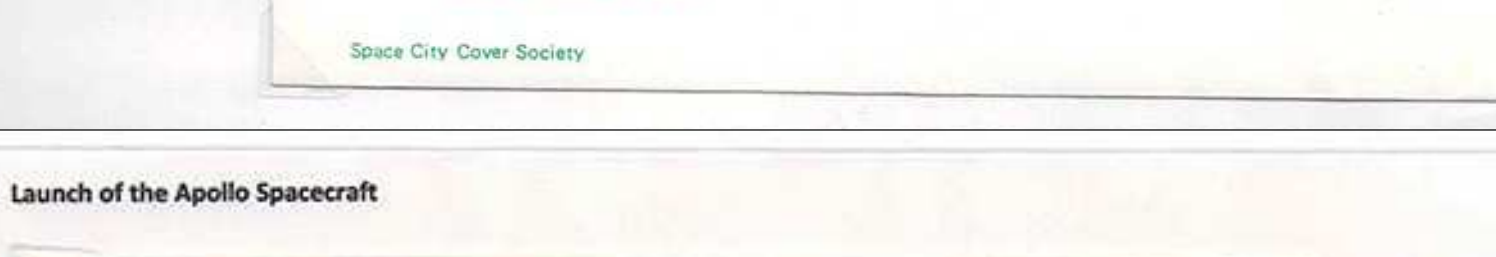
The Saturn V rocket that took astronauts to the moon was not needed for an Earth orbiting mission. The smaller Saturn 1B was elevated on a structure and moved to the launch pad at the Kennedy Space Center on March 24, 1975.



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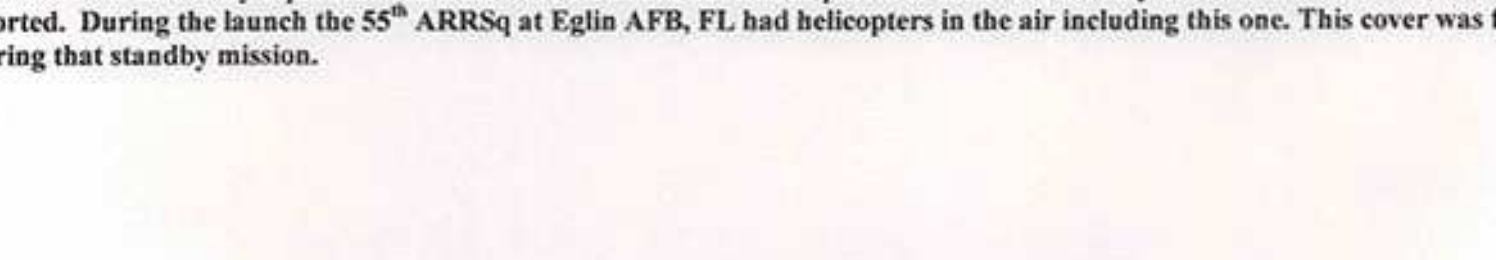
This was the date of the final series of mission simulations.



Tracking ship, the USS Redstone, was on standby duty near Cape Canaveral during the ASTP launch. This bears the corner card of the ship's Captain. Neither of the two tracking ships shown on this page had on-board post offices, resulting in them being left behind to be postmarked on the recovery date while the ship was elsewhere.



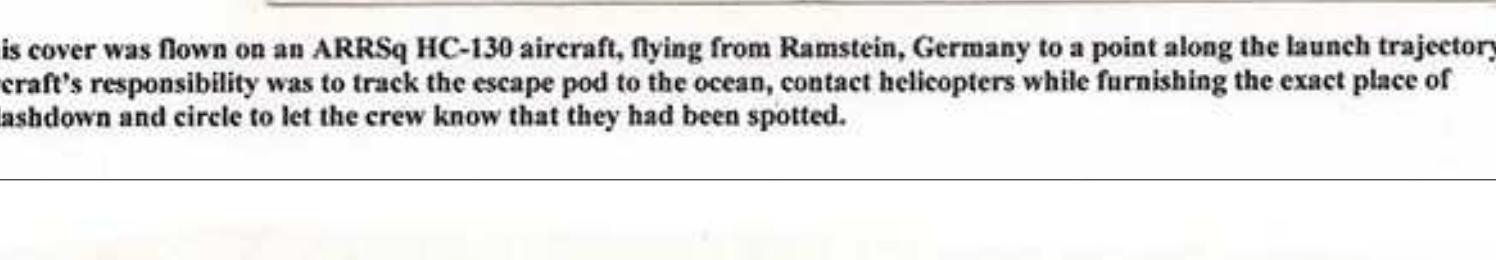
USNS Vanguard cover cancelled in the Canal Zone on the date of the ASTP launch. But this ship was located at 25 degrees south and 155 degrees west during launch. That is a location in the south-western corner of French Polynesia.



Normally frowned upon for Astrophiliac exhibits, there were three events for which First Day Covers were valid as they were in concurrence with space events that occurred on those dates. May 5, 1961: First Day of the Mercury stamp; August 2, 1971: FD Decades of Achievement stamps; & July 15, 1975: launch of ASTP.



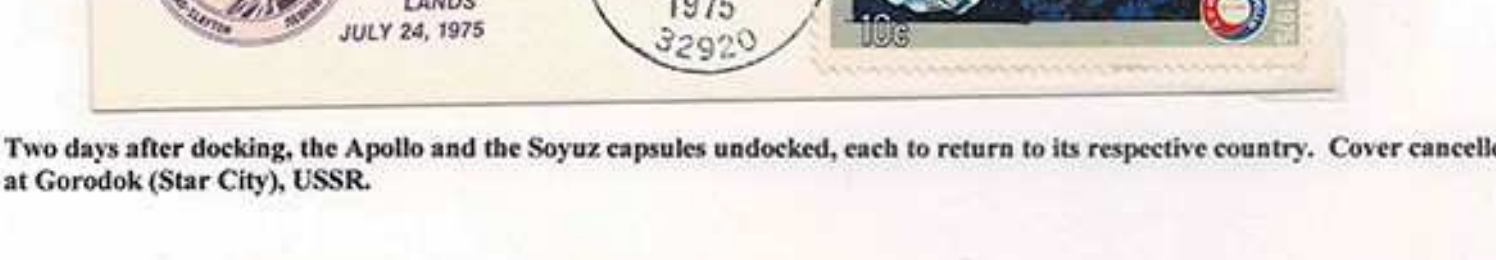
Stamp Artist: Robert McCall



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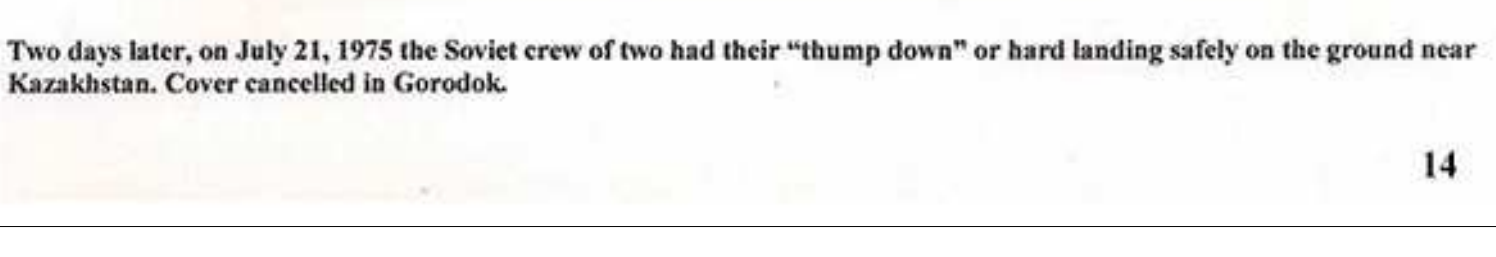
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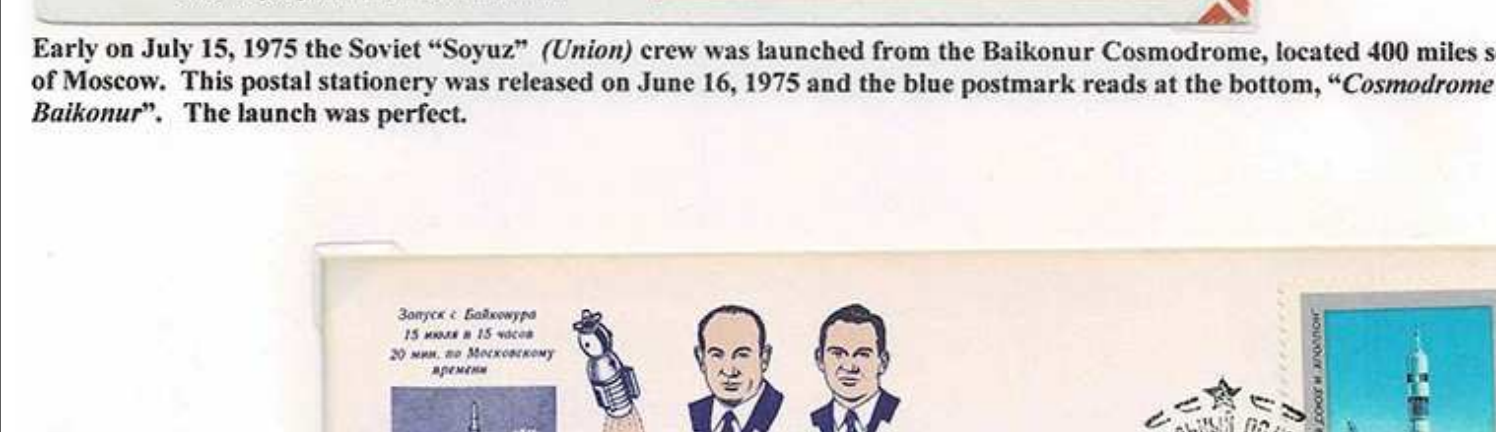


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2.1 Launch of the Soyuz Spacecraft



Early on July 15, 1975 the Soviet "Soyuz" (Union) crew was launched from the Bakhour Cosmodrome, located 400 miles south of Moscow. This postal stationery was released on June 16, 1975 and the blue postmark reads at the bottom, "Cosmodrome Bakhour". The launch was perfect.



Also cancelled at Bakhour, the size and shape of the date and the lettering in this postmark from the Cosmodrome, are the most obvious in showing that it is a from different hand cancel. The stamp used was also painted by the Soyuz Commander, Alexei Leonov.



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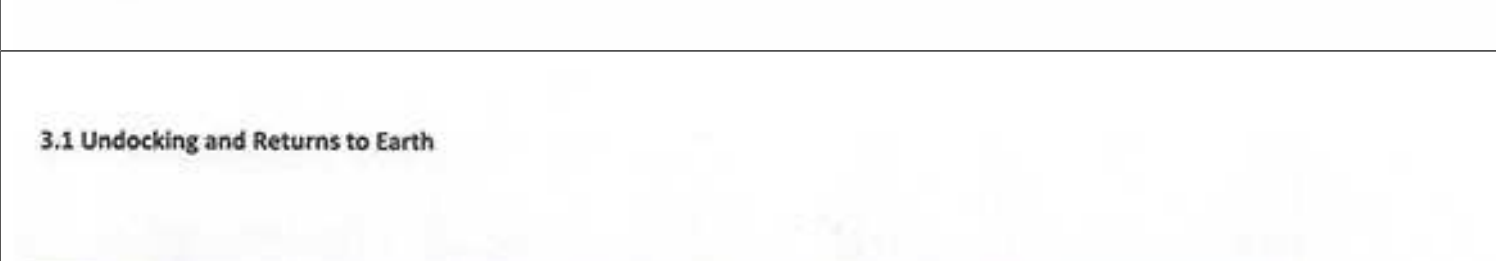
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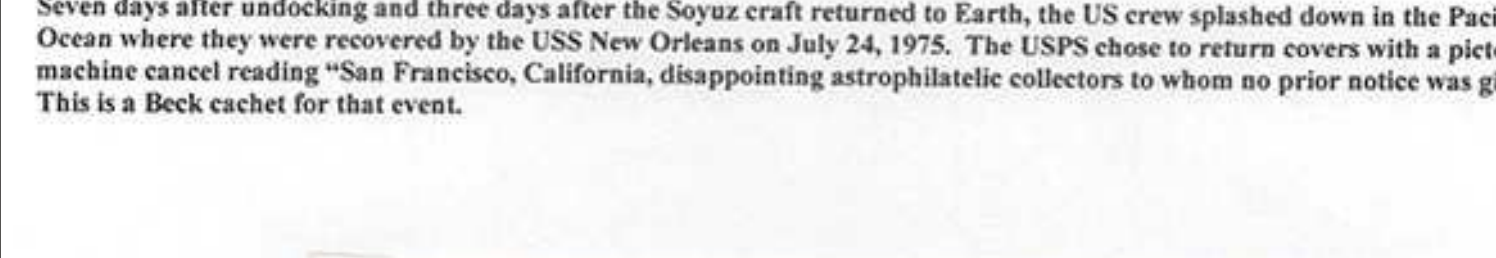
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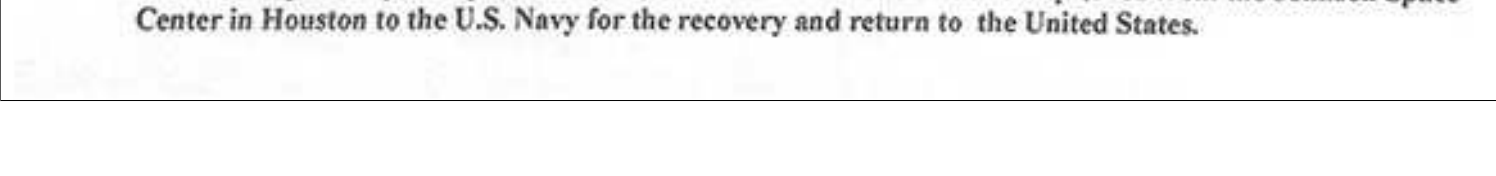
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2.2 Launch of the Apollo Spacecraft



Kennedy Space Center (KSC) Official Rubber Stamp Cachet, designed, paid for, and applied by the KSC Post Office. That makes it an official cover marking. Postmarked for the launch of the Saturn 1B that put the Apollo crew into Earth Orbit.



Cancelled at Cape Canaveral. This was the actual launch site of this Saturn 1B rocket. The much larger Saturn V rockets that took men to the moon were all launched from KSC.



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The Madrid Earth Network Station was one of the most prominent overseas communications facilities for the ASTP.



Carman Station in Canberra, Australia was the other.



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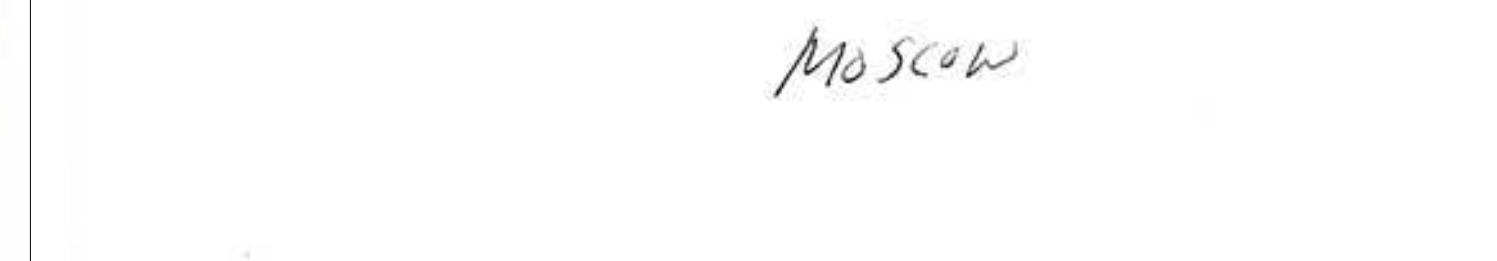
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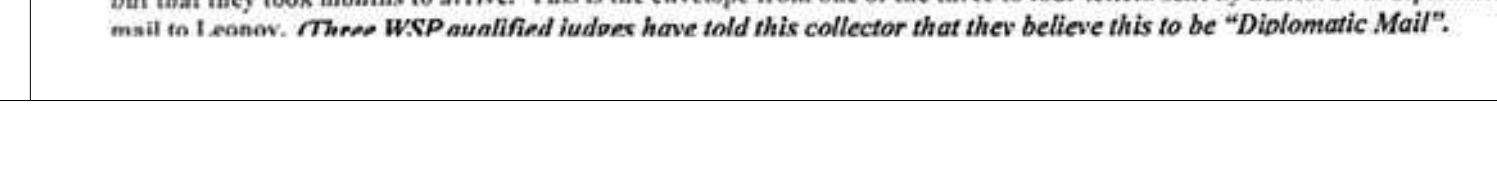
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APOLLO/SOYUZ TEST PROJECT

**PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON
ON VISIT TO MOSCOW
U.S. - U.S.S.R. SPACE TREATY**



MAY 24, 1972

**AGREEMENT TO DOCK AN APOLLO
SPACECRAFT WITH A RUSSIAN
SOYUZ SPACE LABORATORY IN 1975**



Heinz Vogel
D-53 Bonn-Oberkassel
Simonsstr. 18
West Germany

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The clever design of the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project by R. Strelnikov, allowed both nations to get top billing. The Apollo & Soyuz capsules are near the corresponding text.

APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT Soviet Cosmonauts Visit Johnson Space Center



Cosmonaut Leonov, USSR

Astronaut Stafford, USA

A Russian space delegation of 34, including 10 cosmonauts, arrived at JSC Monday for three weeks of briefing on the US-Soviet space flight set for mid-July 1975. The cosmonaut team is headed by Alexei Leonov, first man to walk in space, during the Voshkod II flight.



The first meeting of US and USSR delegates took place in Houston on July 9, 1973. A second, pictorial hand cancel after the conclusion of the program ties the beginnings and end of the program together on this cover.

Cosmonaut Alexei Leonov and Astronaut Tom Stafford first met here and both became the Commanders of their teams and bonded as personal friends thereafter. (Leonov's first name can be spelled Alexei, Alexey or Alexi since it is a phonetic translation to English).

APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT Soviet spacemen arrive at JSC



SPACE CENTER, Houston, April 15, 1974 - Soviet cosmonauts and space engineers arrived at the Johnson Space Center today to begin three weeks of meetings on the planned US-USSR mission set for next year. The delegation of 77, headed by Prof. Konstantin D. Bushuyev, was welcomed by officials of JSC, then began discussions with American engineers on the joint mission. In the front row above are cosmonauts V. N. Kubasov and Alexsei Leonov, USSR prime crew for ASTP; Astronaut Thomas P. Stafford, US crew commander; Soviet cosmonaut Valery Bykovsky; and US astronaut Vance Brand, crew member.



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APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT

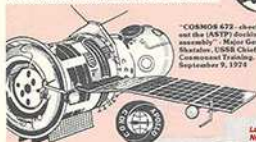
Cosmonauts Begin 3-Week U.S. Training



Slayton Brand, Stafford, Lennov and Witkauer



COSMOS 672 - LAUNCHED AUG. 12, 1974
APOLLO - SOYUZ - "TEST BED"
UNMANNED TEST OF APOLLO-SOYUZ HARDWARE



"COSMOS 672 - checked out the (ASTP) docking assembly" - Major General Shatalov, USSR Chief of Cosmonaut Training, September 9, 1974

Launched - SATVICH Nov. 26, 1975

Biological Satellite Carries Eleven USA Scientific Experiments Studying Effects Of Weightlessness On Plants, Fish, Fruit Flies & Rats

U.S.-U.S.S.R. COOPERATION



INTERNATIONAL AIRMAILS
AND AIRMAILS REGIONS

The launch of Cosmos 672, an unmanned test of the U.S. & Soviet docking hardware on August 8, 1974.

This cachet was later added to include Cosmos 782, the 1st joint biological experiments by both nations.

NASA-JSC TESTS APOLLO-SOYUZ SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS RELAY



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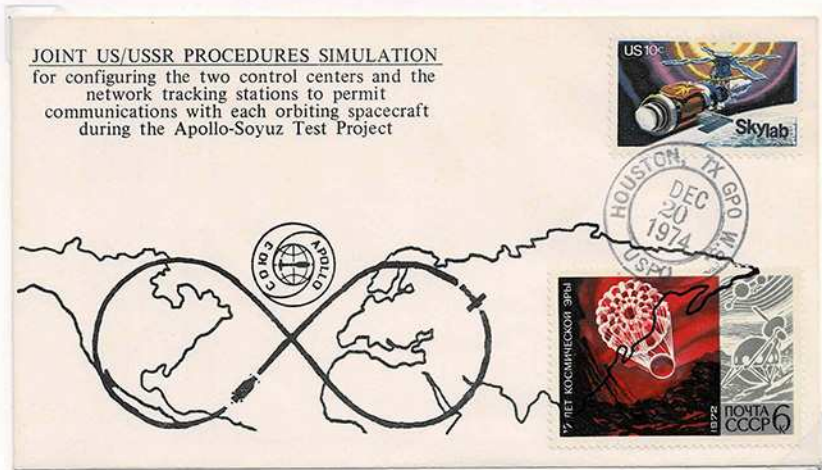
ATS-6

Applications Technology Satellite 6 orbiting 35,882 kilometers above the earth will provide data, voice and television coverage in next July's Apollo-Soyuz space mission.

1.2 Training & Testing Begin



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This was a simulation of the tracking network stations to ensure that the communications between the ground and the five men from both countries in space would work as planned



Союз - Аполлон
**APOLLO-SOYUZ
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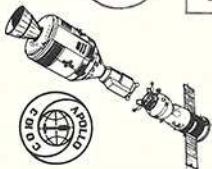
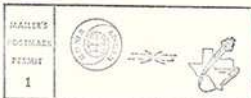
**Soviet ASTP Groups Gather
 For Final Meetings In U.S.**



Academician Boris N. Petrov addresses an assembly of American and Soviet ASTP Working Group Specialists at JSC for the final meetings before the July ASTP mission.



Final meetings of US and USSR Working Group Specialists in Houston as the year 1975 got underway. The Soviet stamp on this cover is from artwork painted by ASTP Commander, cosmonaut Alexei Leonov.



**JOINT ASTP FLIGHT CONTROLLERS
 SIMULATIONS IN U. S. AND RUSSIA**

Specimen
 Space City Cover Society

Several problems were uncovered in the ASTP simulations with Centers in both the Moscow and Houston. Another simulation was undertaken. This is an ASTP pictorial Mailer's Postmark Permit from Houston on the date of this event.

The Saturn V rocket that took astronauts to the moon was not needed for an Earth orbiting mission. The smaller Saturn 1B was elevated on a structure and moved to the launch pad at the Kennedy Space Center on March 24, 1975.

(See cachet illustration).

ASTP ROLLOUT



Saturn 1 B Launch Vehicle
Begins 3½ mile/1 m.p.h. Journey
To Pad B, Launch Complex 39
In preparation for July 15 Launch
— 8:00 A.M. — March 24, 1974 — .



Союз - Аполлон
APOLLO-SOYUZ
TEST PROJECT

MOSCOW/HOUSTON

CONTROL CENTERS CONDUCT JOINT SIMULATIONS



May 13, 1975, JOHNSON SPACE CENTER, HOUSTON, TEXAS. - Mission Operations Control Room in the Mission Control Center during ASTP joint simulation activity. Flight Director Donald R. Puddy is seated at console on the right. TV monitor is

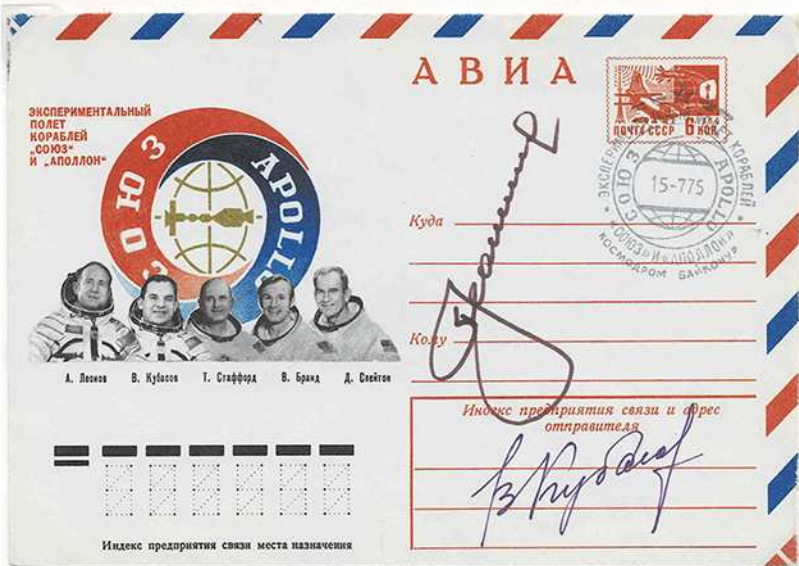
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This was the date of the final series of mission simulations.



ASTP FLIGHT CONTROLLERS
FINAL SIMULATION

2.1 Launch of the Soyuz Spacecraft



AU: Cosmonauts
Alexie Leonov
Valeri Kubasov

Early on July 15, 1975 the Soviet "Soyuz" (*Union*) crew was launched from the Baikonur Cosmodrome, located 400 miles south of Moscow. This postal stationery was released on June 16, 1975 and the blue postmark reads at the bottom, "Cosmodrome Baikonur". The launch was perfect.



Also cancelled at Baikonur, the size and shape of the date and the lettering in this postmark from the Cosmodrome, are the most obvious in showing that it is a from different hand canceller. The stamp used was also painted by the Soyuz Commander, Alexei Leonov.

2.2 Launch of the Apollo Spacecraft



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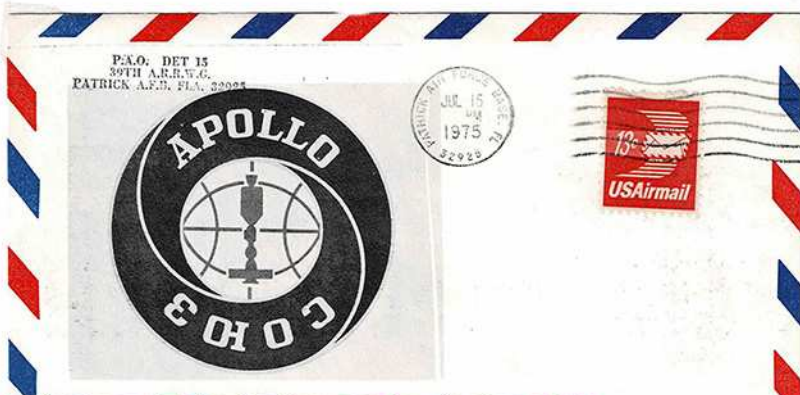


AU: US Astronauts: Tom Stafford; Donald "Deke" Slayton; Vance Brand
 USSR Back-up Cosmonauts: Shatalov & Eliselyev - USSR Dept. Chief Boris Petrov
 US Program Mgr. Glynn Lunney

Cancelled at Cape Canaveral. This was the actual launch site of this Saturn 1b rocket. The much larger Saturn V rockets that took men to the moon were all launched from KSC.

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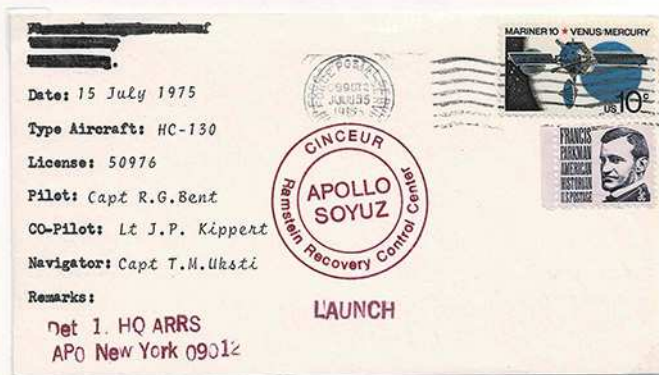
AU: Thomas Potter
Goldstone Station Dir.

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Air Rescue & Recovery Squadron Aircraft were stationed at various places to assist in recovery of astronauts if launches were aborted. During the launch the 55th ARRSq at Eglin AFB, FL had helicopters in the air including this one. This cover was flown during that standby mission.



This cover was flown on an ARRSq HC-130 aircraft, flying from Ramstein, Germany to a point along the launch trajectory. This aircraft's responsibility was to track the escape pod to the ocean, contact helicopters while furnishing the exact place of splashdown and circle to let the crew know that they had been spotted.

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Captain L. Couch
USNS Redstone (T-AGM 20)
c/o Fleet Post Office
New York, N. Y. 09501

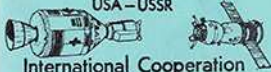


USNS REDSTONE (T-AGM-20)



MASTER
USNS VANGUARD (T-AGM-19)
FPO NEW YORK 09501

APOLLO-SOYUZ TEST PROJECT USA-USSR



International Cooperation
In Space For Mankind

USNS VANGUARD



PIONEER * JUPITER



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ANDREW P. DAVIDSON
Post Office Box 8802

TAGM-19 VANGUARD
ON STATION
APOLLO-SOYUZ MISSION



SOUVENIR COVER



This has a launch dated postmark from the Vanguard, postmarked at Cape Canaveral. Also on this Cover is a July 24 postmark for its return to port in Hawaii. These postmarks indicate that the Vanguard was in the Canal Zone, and at Cape Canaveral on the same day that it was in French Polynesia. The two dated on the 15th must have been left behind for cancels on that date.

The Madrid Earth Network Station was one of the two most prominent overseas communications facilities for the ASTP.



Carnarvon Station in Canberra, Australia was the other.

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Robert T. McCall



Link-up & docking of the two spacecraft took place on July 17, 1975. The USPS created this circular pictorial hand cancel of the event. This cachet was by Morris Beck and would normally be found only on Navy events tied to the splash down.

PETER BARRETTA,
P. O. Box 59
Mount Vernon, Virginia



АЛЕКСЕЙ ЛЕОНОВ A. LEONOV
СОЮЗ В КОСМОСЕ
Аполло-Союз FIRST INTERNATIONAL LINK-UP
ПЕРВАЯ МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ СТЫКОВКА В КОСМОСЕ

ВАЛЕРИЙ КУБАСОВ V. KUBASOV

July 17,
1975
7:12 pm
(Moscow)



Docking dated cover from Gorodok, or Star City, USSR, where the cosmonauts trained. The ASTP helped the US & USSR to work together to build the International Space Station (ISS).



СТЫКОВКА

Dr. B. K. Bagildinsky
Pulkovo observatory
196140 Leningrad
USSR

"SOYUZ 19 - APOLLO"
17.VII.1975; 19^h15^m



Dir: USSR Pulkovo
Observatory, Dr. B. K.
Bagildinsky

Just as the Americans did, Soviet observatories watched the docked vehicles from various ground locations.

3.1 Undocking and Returns to Earth

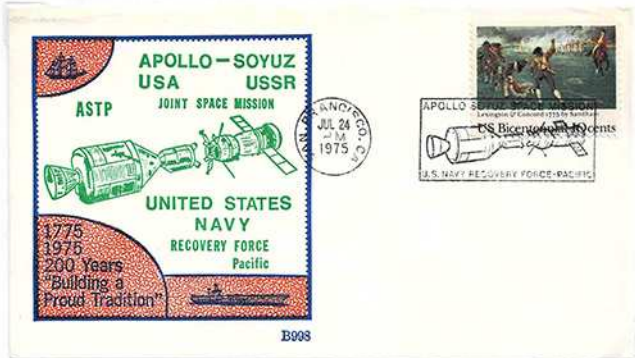


Two days after docking, the Apollo and the Soyuz capsules undocked, each to return to its respective country. Cover cancelled at Gorodok (Star City), USSR.



Two days later, on July 21, 1975 the Soviet crew of two had their "thump down" or hard landing safely on the ground near Kazakhstan. Cover cancelled in Gorodok.

3.1 Undocking and Returns to Earth



Seven days after undocking and three days after the Soyuz craft returned to Earth, the US crew splashed down in the Pacific Ocean where they were recovered by the USS New Orleans on July 24, 1975. The USPS chose to return covers with a pictorial machine cancel reading "San Francisco, California, disappointing astrophilatelic collectors to whom no prior notice was given. This is a Beck cachet for that event.



When the Apollo capsule splashed down, control of the mission was relinquished from the Johnson Space Center in Houston to the U.S. Navy for the recovery and return to the United States.

3.1 Undocking
and Return to
Earth



Starting with the Apollo 16 mission, the post offices on Primary Recovery Ships (PRS) were closed on the splashdown dates and the postal clerks who had been left behind in Hawaii, cacheted and cancelled covers there. However, the post offices for those and for this mission reopened on the day after the event. These "day after" covers are somewhat difficult to obtain with the 11:14, 1975 postmarks and the USS New Orleans cancel.

Major Gen. T. P. STAFFORD
AFFTC
Edwards AFB,
Calif 93523,
U.S.A.

MAJOR GENERAL ALEXI LEONOV
STAR CITY
MOSCOW

AU: Major General: Thomas Stafford, ASTP Astronaut

Apollo Commander Tom Stafford was promoted to Major General and placed in command of Edwards AFB, California. Soyuz Commander Alexei Leonov was promoted to Major General and placed in command of Star City (Gorodok), USSR. In his book, "We Have Capture" Stafford relates that he sent one or two letters each year (late 1975 through late 1977) to Leonov but that they took months to arrive. This is the envelope from one of the three to four letters sent by Stafford via diplomatic mail to Leonov. (These WSP qualified judges have told this collector that they believe this to be "Diplomatic Mail".)