

U.S. PACIFIC ISLANDS BULLETIN

A Quarterly Newsletter about U.S. Post Offices in the Pacific area (including Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and the successor administrations in the Caroline, Marshall and Line islands)

ISSUE NUMBER THIRTY NINE

DECEMBER, 2002

JOHNSTON ISLAND

NAVY 309 - PALMYRA ISLAND - 1946

Cy Kitching has been going through his files and has sent me three photocopies, which he believes were sent to him by Robert Murphy in the 1980's. The cover and the letter definitely belong together (same date and addressee) and it is probable that the newspaper cutting is also from the same period and was possibly the report which prompted Miss Maloney to write to Navy 309 at Palmyra. The stamp on the cover is cancelled by Murphy 3.2.4 which Bob Murphy records in his book "A Postal History/Cancellation Study of the U.S. Pacific Islands" as known from November 1 1945 to August 7 1946 - the date of the cover and letter - and almost certainly the source used in his study. The newspaper cutting is dated May 21 - no year but by 1946 with the Pacific war won and the USSR beginning to flex its muscles in Europe no doubt the USA would be reviewing its commitments in the Pacific. The cutting does indicate that the Navy Base on Palmyra was listed for closure. According to Robert Murphy the U.S. Navy constructed an Air Base in 1939 which was used throughout the war and after the war as a weather station and CAA station - the latter was closed in 1949. Bob records that Navy 309 closed on December 15 1947 - presumably the date the Naval Air Station closed - but no cancellations are recorded in "A Postal History/Cancellation Study" after Aug 7 1946.

U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION
Navy 309 (Class Zero Nine)
Care of Post Office
San Francisco, California

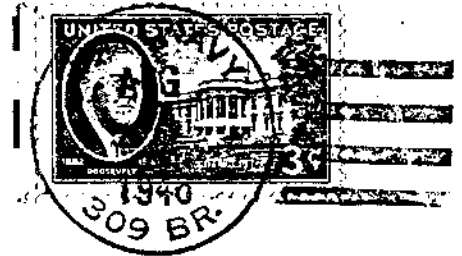
7 AUGUST 1946

DEAR MISS MALONEY,

IT SEEMS THAT IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS OUR LITTLE ISLAND HAS TAKEN ON MUCH PUBLICITY AND WE FEEL THAT OBLIGING STAMP COLLECTORS IS THE LEAST WE CAN DO IN WAY OF REPAYING YOU FOR THINKING OF US. LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT ANYTHING I MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU WITH WILL BE NO TROUBLE AT ALL FOR MYSELF. I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO BECOME A STAMP COLLECTOR BUT SOMEHOW NEVER MANAGED TO FIND THE TIME ALTHOUGH THE INCLINATION TO DO THINGS SUCH AS THAT IS STRONG.

DID YOUR SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON THE CONTINUATION OF NAVAL BASES GIVE THE PEACE TIME COMPLIMENT OF OUR ISLAND? IF NOT, PERHAPS YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED TO LEARN THAT WE HAVE AT PRESENT ONLY 47 MEN STATIONED HERE. THE ISLAND IN ITSELF IS QUITE INTERESTING IN THAT WE ARE SURROUNDED BY CORAL REEFS, ALSO THAT 97 SMALL ISLANDS CONNECTED BY CAUSEWAYS MAKE UP WHAT IS KNOWN AS PALMYRA ISLAND. MOST OF OUR SUPPLIES ARE FLOWN IN BY ARMY AND NAVY AIRPLANES, BUT OCCASIONALLY WE HAVE A SMALL FRIEGHTER THAT CAN NAVIGATE THE NARROW CHANNELS.

OUR POSTAL FACILITIES ARE FEW AND LIMITED BUT WE SOMEHOW MANAGE TO GET BY. PLEASE NOTICE THAT I MAILED THE POSTAL CARDS AND STAMPED ENVELOPE TOGETHER AFTER CANCELLING THEM ALL. IF I MAY BE OF ANY HELP IN THE FUTURE PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO DROP ME A LINE.



D Maloney
441 Sackman
BKlyn 12 NY

Illustration 39/2

Illustration 39/1
50% of actual size

SINCERELY
G. F. Placentia
G. F. PLACENTIA PW 2C USN
NAS PALMYRA

1 Bases for Pacific to 19

From THE NEWS Bureau
Washington, D. C., May 21.—
Substantial revisions in the status of Pacific bases required by the Navy for national security, necessitated by lack of funds and personnel, were revealed today in secret testimony by naval officials, made public by the House Appropriations Committee.

The Navy cut its list of required bases from 23 to 19, eliminating entirely in its request for funds, Wake, Ulithi in the western Carolines, Palmyra, Canton, Iwo and Johnston. Added to the list since it was made public were three Philippine bases.

6 Islands Dropped.

It was reported that while the navy dropped six islands, the Army may seek to maintain small bases on some of these. Air strips on all where the Navy now desires to keep no personnel would still be available for emergency landings.

In addition to Hawaii, the Navy now desires to keep in full operational status only the bases at Guam and Saipan, according to Rear Admiral J. J. Manning.

Changes in Status.

The complete revised list of Pacific bases and the status planned for them by the Navy, excluding Hawaii, follows:

- * Kodiak, Alaska, maintenance;
- Adak, Alaska, reduced operations;
- Attu, Alaska, maintenance;
- Dutch Harbor, Alaska, caretaker;
- Guam, full operations; Saipan, full operations; Tinian, caretaker; Ryukyu (Okinawa), maintenance;
- Manus, caretaker; Midway, reduced operations; Samoa, caretaker; Subi (Philippines), reduced operations; Leyte-Samar, reduced operations; Puerto Princessa (Philippines), reduced operations; Eniwetok, maintenance; Kwajalein, maintenance; Truk, maintenance; Palau, maintenance; Majuro, caretaker.

LOST INFORMATION:

Any information you send to me is added to my computer file at least monthly. While inputting material in mid November I noticed that material input at the end of October was missing. I believe that I have reconstructed the lost material from my paper records but if you sent me anything during October which does not appear in this edition of the "Bulletin" please let me know.

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

KOLONIA, POHNPEI FM 96941: I am grateful to New York dealer Steven Zirinsky (P.O. Box 49 Ansonia Station, NY, NY.) for allowing me to see a selection of commercial covers from Kolonia dated between January and September 2002. The January (5th, 17th & 23rd), April (10th & 19th) were cancelled by illustration 32/12 (the large pictorial cancellation with a comma following the word Kolonia) using black ink. The Feb 2 & 16 2002 covers were similarly cancelled but the Feb 16 date-stamp had a bulge to the right. (This falls within the series of distorted date stamps illustrated in Bulletin # 37 - page 4.) The May (2nd, 7th & 20th) were also cancelled by Illustration 32/12 or an identical date-stamp using red ink - but there were no signs of the bulge noted on the February 2002 covers. Two further covers from the 2nd & 6th of May were cancelled using Illustration 32/11 (the latest APDS) in black. The June (6th, 12th, 22nd & 27th) were cancelled by clear undistorted examples of illustration 32/12 using red ink, as was a Jul 6 2002 cover. However covers dated Jul 3, 5th, 23rd & 25th 2002 and two covers dated Aug 2 2002 - also in red - showed clear signs of distortion. **Illustration 39/3, Illustration 39/4 & Illustration 39/5**, in the next column, show some of the variations but I guess the 'faceplate' of the date-stamp is flapping loose and almost every impression will be different.

Are there two or more of these date-stamps in use or are the distortions shown here and in Bulletin # 37 page 4 simply due to the rubber 'faceplate' of the date-stamp temporarily coming partly free from the base of the date-stamp?

I believe that there must be at least two separate date-stamps in use. None of the impressions seen are on packets, which may, due to an uneven surface, produce distorted impressions. Two of the July examples and both of the August date-stamps are on standard business type envelopes bearing a 22c (the local 1 oz rate) or 34c stamps so it is unlikely that the envelope was bulky.

All the 2002 covers in this batch cancelled by clear measurable impressions of the pictorial date-stamp (and also Illustration 37/26) appear to be slightly different to Illustration 32/12. They are only 39 mm when measured across the dateline while Illustration 32/12 is 40 mm at the same point. However variations of 1 mm could be caused by the force applied when using the date-stamp. Almost certainly two or more date-stamps were produced at the same time and are consequently virtually identical.

APDS..... August 10th, 15th & 20th 2002 again show use of Illustration 32/11 (the APDS) in black while on September 3rd two covers are also cancelled by Illustration 32/11 on these occasions in muddy red. Two September 6 2002 covers are cancelled by Illustration 32/11 in

bright red.



Illustration 39/3

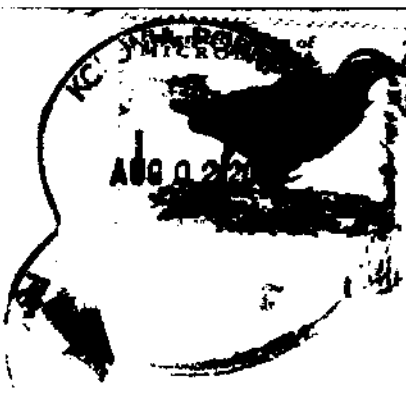


Illustration 39/4



Illustration 39/5

Stamps..... Three covers used the 34c current fish definitive stamps and two the 34c 2001 Christmas issue - these covers were addressed to Guam or were window envelopes. One cover addressed to Chuuk used the 34c Japanese Iris Garden + 3 x 1c current fish definitive. Fifteen covers used the 22c brown coloured Corncrake stamp, one 17c + 5c current fish definitive and one 20c + 2 x 1c current fish issue (all the local 1 oz rate). A June 27 2002 cover bears 30c shell definitive + 5c Bird Commemorative + 4c current fish definitive = 39c - the 2 oz local rate. An Aug 10 2002 cover to Guam bears 60c Kennedy - the 2-oz U.S. rate while an Aug 15 2002 window envelope bears a 60c Kennedy + 23c Hooded Merganser commemorative = 83c - the 3 oz U.S. rate. An August 15 2002 window envelope bears 2 x 30c shell definitive = 60c - the 2 oz U.S. rate.

Certified Mail... Two covers from Pohnpei to Chuuk are stamped as follows - 2 x \$1 United We Stand + \$5 Shell definitive + 5c Mallefowl = \$7.05 (\$2.30 Certified Mail Rate + \$4.75 postage for the 3lb Priority Mail Rate which applies to First Class Mail over 13 oz) This cover was cancelled by Illustration 32/11 on August 20

2002. The second cover bears 2 x \$3 + 10c Current Fish definitives + 5c Mallefowl = \$6.15 (\$2.30 Certified Mail Rate + \$3.85 - the 1 lb Priority Mail Rate). This was cancelled on Jul 25 2002 by a distorted version of Illustration 32/12 in red.

2002 covers.....A group of covers posted by one particular Government Office in Pohnpei to a Chuuk address during the July to September 2002 period have stamps affixed on what might kindly be described as the "Best Guess" principle!

Two covers bearing 2 x 22c Corncrake = 44c (? the 37c rate) two covers bearing 2 x 34c Japanese Bathhouse = 68c (? the 60c 2 oz rate). One cover bearing 3 x 80c current fish definitive + 2 x 22c Corncrake = \$2.84 (nearest rates \$2.67 - 11 oz or \$2.90 - 12 oz). Another cover bearing 2 x 80c current fish issue = \$1.60 (nearest rates \$1.52 - 6 oz and \$1.75 - 7 oz). Lastly a cover bears \$1 current fish issue and 34c Japanese Bathhouse = \$1.34 (nearest rates \$1.29 - 5 oz rate or \$1.52 - 6 oz rate). A May 20 2002 cover from the same source to Guam is similarly stamped on the "Best Guess" principle. It bears a 1c Shell Definitive + 60c Fairy Wren + 34c Christmas 2001 making a total of 95c (? 80c - the 3 oz rate at that time)

Covers from 2000 to 2001...

Steven has also shown me a batch of covers from Pohnpei to Chuuk dated during December 2000 and March/April 2001, all cancelled by nice clear impressions of the APDS Illustration 32/11. Most are stamped using 2 x 22c current Fish definitives or 32c + 2c fish definitives. However one has 2 x 33c fish commemoratives, one has 1 x 33c fish commemorative + 1c Shell definitive, one has 1 x 33c Fish definitive, a third has a 33c traditional costumes stamp and lastly one has a 34c definitive. (I guess they were intended to cover the 33c or 34c rate - they are all from the "Best Guess" Office mentioned earlier - The 34c rate applied from January 7 2001 but I've seen many commercial covers from the FSM stamped at the 34c rate in late 2000)

Steven also reports use of an Oval Date-stamp Illustration 25/12 on May 16 2000 on a cover addressed to Chuuk and bearing a 32c Research vessel + 2c current fish definitive.

FSM PHILATELIC BUREAU, P.O. Box 1376, KOLONIA, POHNPEI, FM 96941:

The Pohnpei based Philatelic Bureau has sent me (unsolicited) a copy of their current stock list of stamps, postal cards and pre-stamped envelopes and an invitation to join their Standing Order Deposit Account. The latter offers free postage and handling and requires an Initial Deposit of \$10.00. An additional \$7.50 fee is to be paid on "all foreign checks of less than \$600.00". The earliest stamps in stock are 1985 \$10.00 definitive and 1986 22c definitive. I note an unidentified "Pre-Stamped envelope" dated 22 SEP 1991 at 35c and 4 unidentified "Postal Cards" dated 8 Nov 1996 at 20c each.

Postmark..... The stamps on the envelope were cancelled by Illustration 25/11 - the large single circle pictorial date-stamp without a comma after Kolonia. This is evidently the current Philatelic Bureau date-stamp.

KOSRAE FM 98944: NY dealer Steven Zirinsky has shown me three commercial covers from this

office cancelled by Illustration 27/32 during March 2002 - immediately before the first of the distorted versions of this date-stamp reported in Bulletin # 38. The first date-stamp, dated Mar 1 2002, appears to be in good condition but on Mar 12 2002 slight distortion shows - see Illustration 39/6 and this became more severe by March 28 2002. A further cover dated Jun 20 2002 has the date-stamp in a state similar to Illustration 38/12.

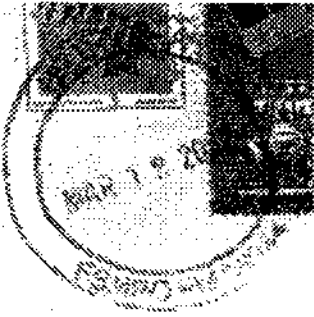


Illustration 39/6

Evidently the deterioration started in early March 2002.

Stamps... All the covers are addressed to Guam and originate at the Social Security Administration. Three of them bear stamps to the value of 57c (the 2 oz rate) - in two cases a 55c IBRA commemorative + 2c current definitive and in one case a 55c IBRA commemorative + 2 x 1c 1984 definitive. The other cover is stamped at 34c made up of 25c + 3 x 3c shell definitives. Evidently Kosrae P.O. (or the Social Security Administration) still have lots of older stamps in stock.

COLONIA YAP FM 96943: Steven Zirinsky has shown me a cover from the Acting Chief Justice of Yap to Chuuk bearing a nice clear impression of Illustration 13/7 (the small APDS in red) dated Jun 23 2000. The last known date of use of this date-stamp is August 11 2002.

WENO CHUUK FM 96942: NY dealer Steven Zirinsky has shown me five commercial covers from Weno, Chuuk dated Apr 19 01, Sep 18, 01, May 1 02 and Jul 31 02. All are cancelled by clear impressions of Illustration 33/11.

One, the September 18 01, cancellations is clear of the stamps and consequently is a better impression than that appearing as Illustration 33/11. It is shown here for the record as Illustration 39/7.

April 19 2001 is the earliest reported use of this date-stamp. Has anyone seen an earlier date?



Illustration 39/7

Steven Zirinsky has shown me a cover bearing a late impression of Illustration 25/17. (The large

Pictorial Date-stamp) dated June 9 2000 and bearing a 22c current Fish definitive. The last reported date of use of this stamp in June 26 2000. Have you a later date to report?

Steven has also shown me several covers dated during 2000 and 2001 and cancelled by Illustration 14/5a (the old TRUK APDS). All are window envelopes and bear either the 22c current fish definitive, 20c Shell definitive + 2c Fish Definitive or 2 x 10c + 2c current fish definitives. The latest is dated March 9 2001 - the last reported date for this date-stamp. Have you a later date to report?

Stamps.... Amongst the recent covers is one from a private individual addressed to Guam. It is date-stamped on May 1 02 and bears stamps to the value of 37c (33c flower commemorative + 3c 1984 definitive + 1c Shell definitive) despite this rate not coming into force until Jul 30 2002. Another cover dated Jul 31 2002 - also from a private individual and addressed to Guam - has a 33c flower commemorative + 1c shell definitive + 2c current definitive + 1c 1984 definitive. Chuuk evidently also has supplies of older low value stamps on sale. The remaining covers are local and stamped either by the 22c current fish definitive or 20c + 2c current fish definitives. The "UNCLAIMED" marking shown below as Illustration 39/8 appears on a cover from Pohnpei to Chuuk postmarked at Pohnpei by Illustration 32/12 in red on May 20 2002.

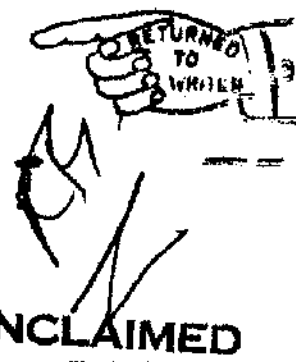


Illustration 39/8

POSTMASTER - WENO CHUUK: A letter from the Weno, Chuuk Postmaster dated October 10 2001 is signed by Kinchiro Kincho.

PALIKAR, POHNPEI FM 96941: Steven Zirinsky has shown me a cover postmarked at this office by Illustration 32/14 in red on June 23 2001. The cover originates at the Department of Finance & Administration, Division of Budget, P.O. Box PS-52 Palikar and is addressed to Chuuk. The cover bears a 33c Chinese History stamp + 1c current fish definitive.

REPUBLIC OF PALAU:

KOROR PW 96940: NY dealer Steven Zirinsky reports a couple of covers cancelled by Illustration 34/5 (a 4-Bar Cancellation) or an almost identical date-stamp on May 21 2002 and June 13 2002. The date is more closely set than on Illustration 34/5 so that the year appears at a level higher than the bottom bar rather than below it as on Illustration 34/5. See Illustration 39/9.

Stamps.... The May cover is addressed to

Guam and bears a 34c Pickup Truck commemorative stamp while the June cover is addressed to the Marshall Islands and has an 80c Moorhen stamp (The 3 oz rate)



Illustration 39/9

GUAM:

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE - ADDITIONAL ZIP CODE/CANCELLATION - APO AP 96543:

I recently sent a cover to the Post Office at Andersen AFB as part of a check of Post Offices operating on Guam and was surprised to find it returned cancelled by an APDS reading APO AP 96543. (See Illustration 39/10) on Oct 2 2002



Illustration 39/10

I had not previously heard of this Zip code and in an attempt to identify its location I searched the Internet and came across of a couple of sites featuring a complete list of U.S. Military Zip Codes. These are:-
http://ribbs.usps.gov/files/addressing/military/MPO_LIST.TXT
 AND
<http://www.sover.net/~1pickup/countries.html>

The second site is intended to help commercial firms receiving orders from military addresses to prepare the correct customs documentation. It is easier to navigate and detailed enough for most purposes. There is however additional detail on the USPS site.

The sites reveal that Andersen AFB has two Military Zip Code addresses. 96542 is for general correspondence. 96543 is used "for the receipt and despatch of official mail only" (this information is only on the USPS site)

It appears that ordinary outgoing mail continues to be handled through the USPS system via Guam MPO or Andersen AFB Branch P.O. and that no mail is cancelled by an APO AP 96542 date-stamp because this is just a mailing address. However a Military Post Office apparently exists to handle both incoming and outgoing official mail and this office APO AP 96543 apparently does cancel mail - albeit only official mail.

Shown on page 4, as Illustration 39/11 is an example of the APO AP 96542 REDIRECTION date-stamp used in May 1992.

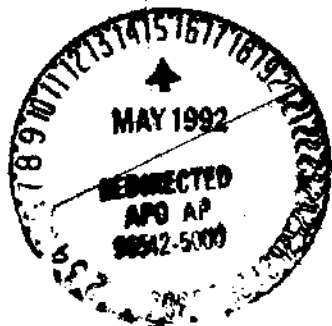


Illustration 39/11

POST OFFICE SERVICES - GUAM NAVAL ACTIVITIES (NAVAL STATION):

The following notice appeared in the Guam Navy newspaper "The Navigator" during October, 2002:-

First Class Stamps can be purchased on U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Support Activity at the Post Office and NEX Customer Service Counter. Drop boxes for outgoing mail, including personal mail are at Orote Point (Lockwood); Inlet (Jetty Cove); Dolphin (Harbor View); Navy Exchange; Chapel road, between Subway and Laundromat; NEX Autoport gas station; Building 4, in front of USPS Post Office and the Lobby drop box inside Post Office (during business hours).

The Saturday retail hours for the U.S. Naval Forces Marianas Support Activity post office will change on Oct. 19 2002. Window hours will now be from 11:15 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Backdoor operations for pickup of mail for ships and the battalion will be from 8:30 to 10 a.m. unless there is a conflict with arrival or departure. (I suspect that this is the military Post Office handling, primarily, incoming mail addressed to Navy Zip Code addresses throughout Guam and to Navy ships based at or calling at Guam)

The APDS used by the USPS Post Office Branch at the Naval Station, Guam read "NAVAL STA. BR." until at least April 1997. From at least November 1998 the postmark reads "NAVACTS BR" and later "NAVAL ACTIVITIES BR." It is evident that Naval Activities is now the official name of the place previously known as Naval Station.

The Web site www.sover.net/~1pickup/countries.html lists five Military Zip Codes for Navy facilities on Guam:-

AP 96536 COMNAVMARIANAS (The site of USPS P.O. MOU # 2 - Closed around 1998)

AP 96537 NCTAMS WESTPAC (Possibly the Naval Communications Station - site of the USPS P.O. MOU # 3)

AP 96538 U.S. Naval Hospital (Site of USPS MOU # 1)

AP 96540 Naval Station (Naval Activities?)

AP 96541 Naval Magazine (USPS P.O. Branch closed around 1988/89)

It's probable that with the exception of AP 96540 these are all mailing addresses only and that no current postal markings exist. I assume that all undeliverable mail and re-directed mail is handled by a Navy Post Office at Naval Activities and that this mail receives one of the two APO AP 96940 APDS and one 4-Bar seen. I suspect that this is the office mentioned in the second paragraph of the notice in "The Navigator" reproduced at the beginning of this item. This is the paragraph in

bold commencing "The Saturday retail hours...." I understand that all outgoing mail is handled by the MPO Guam other than that handed over the counter at the USPS Naval Activities Br. P.O.

CANCELLATION STUDY - USPS NAVAL ACTIVITIES BRANCH - (FORMER NAVAL STATION BRANCH) & THE NAVY FPO 96540 GUAM

Robert Murphy in "A Postal History/ Cancellation Study of the U.S. Pacific Islands" records postal markings from the USPS Naval Station Br. up to the early 1980's. Below is an update to Bob Murphy's study listing new cancellations and extensions of the dates recorded therein

Extended Dates of Use:

Murphy Fig 1.10

Known Sep 26 1979 to Feb 29 1988

Murphy Fig 2.5

Known Mar 28 1975 to 9 May 1986



Illustration 39/12

Known only on Aug 6 1983

This is Fig 2.7 in Robert Murphy's Addenda No. 1 to "A Postal History/Cancellation Study of the U.S. Pacific Islands."



Illustration 39/13

Known Feb 9 1988 to Feb 29 1988



Illustration 39/14

Known only Mar 12 1990



Illustration 39/15

Known only Nov 16 1992 (See also Illustration 39/17)



Illustration 39/16

Known Oct 13 1994 to April 28 1995

This APDS is almost identical to Illustration 39/12 but USPS lies 1 mm nearer to "GUAM" and 1 mm further from "BR" on Illustration 39/12. Nevertheless it could be the same device.



Illustration 39/17

Known only Apr 16 1997

This APDS is virtually identical to Illustration 39/15 but it appears to be slightly more round and there are slight variations in the placing of the words. Nevertheless it remains possible this is the same APDS.



Illustration 39/18

Known Nov 9 1998 to Jan 8 1999



Illustration 39/19

Known Aug 6 1999 to Aug 28 2001

MILITARY DATE-STAMPS - FPO 96540



Illustration 39/20

Known Mar 16 1992 & Mar 6 1997 The 1992 APDS is on the reverse of an

undeliverable cover addressed to a Navy man at FPO 96630 (the former Zip code for Naval Station Guam). The 1997 APDS is on the same cover as the 1997 cover mentioned in the second paragraph below Illustration 39/21.



Illustration 39/21

Known Feb 26 1996 & Mar 6 1997

I have seen this date-stamp twice - The 1996 date on a philatelic cover sent for postmarking to the U.S. Naval Medical Facility FPO 96540.

The 1997 date is on a cover sent to The Postal Clerk at FPO AP 96540 and asking for the location of that office - the response was Naval Activities. It is almost certainly used at the Military Post Office at Naval Activities - the former Naval Station, probably mostly on re-directed mail.

**POSTAL DIRECTORY
 U.S. NAVAL ACTIVITIES
 PSC 453 BOX 0006
 FPO AP 96540-0006**

Illustration 39/22

Seen only on the 1997 cover mentioned in the second paragraph below Illustration 39/21 above.

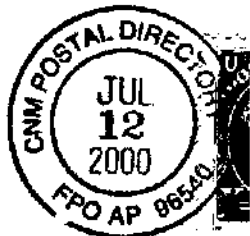


Illustration 39/23

Seen once on a philatelic cover sent to the address at Illustration 39/22 - I assume that "CNM" is an abbreviation of COMMANDER NAVY MARIANAS - Does anyone know otherwise?

[This cancellation study is no more than a very sketchy review of the postal markings used at Navy Station BR./Naval Activities BR. & Navy FPO AP 96840 since the early 1980's. If you can add to or correct anything in this study I'd be glad to hear from you. Remember - Nothing in the 'Bulletin' purports to be the last word on anything !]

GUAM MAIN FACILITY - BULK RATE PERMIT # 14. See Back Page for Illustration 39/25 & details.

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

DELAP MH 96960: I am grateful to Steven Zirinsky for allowing me to see two commercial covers from this office. One is dated Mar 7 2002 and is cancelled in black by Illustration 29/7 and bearing a 34c United We Stand stamp. The

other is dated May 14 2002 and is cancelled in red by Illustration 29/7. The stamp is the 34c Amata Kabua issued in 1997.

Bulletin # 29 describes a method of differentiating Illustration 29/6 from Illustration 29/7 using the relationship of the "I" of ISLANDS to the dateline. This is not possible on these covers because the "I" lies over a dark coloured area of the stamp. However the same method applies to the "I" of REPUBLIC and this method has been used in the case of these covers. Both methods assume that the position of the dateline is constant.

KWAJALEIN APO AP 96655 - METER MAIL:

Bernd Neuhaus reports receipt of a cover from Raytheon - the current main contractor on Kwajalein - bearing PB Meter # 8479417 dated 21 SEP 2002. The meter is too faint to illustrate but appears to be of the current USPO standard design - the date-head is single circle with "APO AP" around the top of the circle and "96555" at the bottom.

METER MAIL - MAJURO MH 96960: Thanks to Bernd Neuhaus the following additional Meters can be added to the list on the back page of Bulletin # 38:

Marshall Islands Social Security Administration, Majuro - Postalia Meter # 964657 dated Sep 17 1997

Moylans Insurance Underwriters (Marshall) Inc. - Postalia Meter No. 962555 - First Known Date of Use March 31 1997

Royal Insurance Agency - Postalia Meter # 966135 in 1990 - Bernd reports that this company has the same address as Moylans and was probably a predecessor of Moylans.

Bank of Hawaii - Postalia Meter # 61105? dated Sep 17 2001.

Nuclear Claims Tribunal - Meter # Unreadable used on April 19 1995 on a Certified Mail Cover. Bernd sent me a photocopy of this interesting cover which I would have liked to illustrate in the 'Bulletin'. Unfortunately it is too large to show full size and is not useable when reduced in size.

MAJURO MH 96960: NY dealer Steven Zirinsky has shown me three commercial covers from Majuro - all cancelled by Illustration 39/24 in black.

The covers are date-stamped on Mar 20 2002, Sep 9 2002 and Sep 18 2002.

All three date-stamps are slightly oval and are probably Illustration 34/8 which has spread slightly. They measure 38 mm across the dateline. Illustration 34/8 has a large "1" (as in

18) in the dateline. The same applies to Illustration 39/24 below.



Illustration 39/24

Stamps....The March 20 and Sep 9 2002 covers bear the 34c 1997 Amata Kabua memorial stamps (Local address but the 12c rate is not applied) while the Sep 18 cover has 2 x 33c 2000 National Government Building stamps. This is also a locally addressed cover - the 66c rate could be either an overpayment of the 5 oz local rate (5 x 12c = 60c - assuming that the local rate has not changed) or the 2 oz U.S. first class rate - 60c - almost certainly the latter as the 12c local rate appears to be rarely applied in the RMI.

APDS.... Two further commercial covers included in Stevens stock are cancelled by illustration 38/4 in black (this is the new APDS) - dated Apr 24 2002 and Sep 24 2002. This APDS has previously been seen only on a philatelic cover and because of the misplaced date was assumed to be used in the Postmasters office.

Stamps...Both covers are local - The April cover has the 1993 Millennium of Navigation 35c German Warship stamps (? rate) while the September cover has a 54c volcano (?) stamp + 10c 1993 Millennium of Navigation Spanish Galleon stamps making 64c (? rate - perhaps the local rate has changed ?)

ROI-NAMUR APO AP 96657 - POSTAGE VALIDATION INDICATOR (PVI):

Bernd Neuhaus reports receipt of a cover from Roi Namur bearing a PVI. See Back Page for Illustration 39/26 & details.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS:

ROTA MP 96951: NY dealer Steven Zirinsky has shown me a commercial cover addressed to Guam and cancelled by Illustration 37/11 on March 12 2002. It is sometimes suggested that commercial mail from Rota is forwarded to Saipan un-cancelled. This is apparently not so

CAPITOL HILL RURAL BRANCH MP 96950:

Steven Zirinsky reports 3 commercial covers from this office dated during May 2002. The stamps are cancelled by Illustration 5/5 in red. This APDS was first reported on May 20 1992. The covers originated with the Prior Service Trust Fund Administration.

WAKE ISLAND:

WAKE ISLAND BASE RETURNS TO USAF CONTROL:

On 1 Oct. 2002 the U.S. Space & Missile Defense Command, who have been responsible for Wake Island since 1994, relinquished control of the Wake Island Base to the U.S. Air Force. Currently 20 U.S. Citizens and around 80 Foreign (mostly Thai) employees of the Base Contractor - CHUGACH - are on the Base. The USAF plan to upgrade the runway which amongst other things is currently used as a backup for Space Shuttle landings. (Kwajalein Hourglass 1 Oct 2002)

WAKE ISLAND HAS A MILITARY ZIP CODE

Wake Island still has a military Zip Code APO AP 96518 but it is almost 20 years since military date-stamps were reported in use there. At that time the Military Zip Code was APO 96501. The current Civil Zip Code is 96898.



Illustration 39/25

**GUAM MAIN FACILITY
GU 96921. - BULK RATE**

Dave Trutwin has e-mailed me a colourful Bulk Rate Permit No. 14 AGANA GU cover. Shown here as **Illustration 39/25** but with about 1" trimmed off the left side, this black and white illustration does not do justice to the striking combination of Red, Dark Green & Black. The date of use is not known but showing the office as AGANA GU rather than GUAM MPO, or even Hagatña, suggests it could be as early as the 1970's.

**ROI-NAMUR APO AP 96657 -
POSTAGE VALIDATION
INDICATOR (PVI):**

Bernd Neuhaus reports receipt of a cover from Roi Namur bearing a PVI. The PVI reads "U.S. POSTAGE/PAID/APO AP/96555/SEP 20 '02/ AMOUNT/ \$0.80/00032317-06"

The proof that this cover originated at Roi-Namur rather than Kwajalein lies in a cachet to the left of the PVI reading "DIRECTORY SECTION/APO AP 96557". (Bernd suggests that the software was supplied by Kwajalein). Readers will remember that Roi-Namur P.O. has used Kwajalein 4-Bars and APDS on more than one occasion.

The top part of this cover is shown here as **Illustration 39/26**.

No doubt Kwajalein P.O. also has the facility to use PVI's.

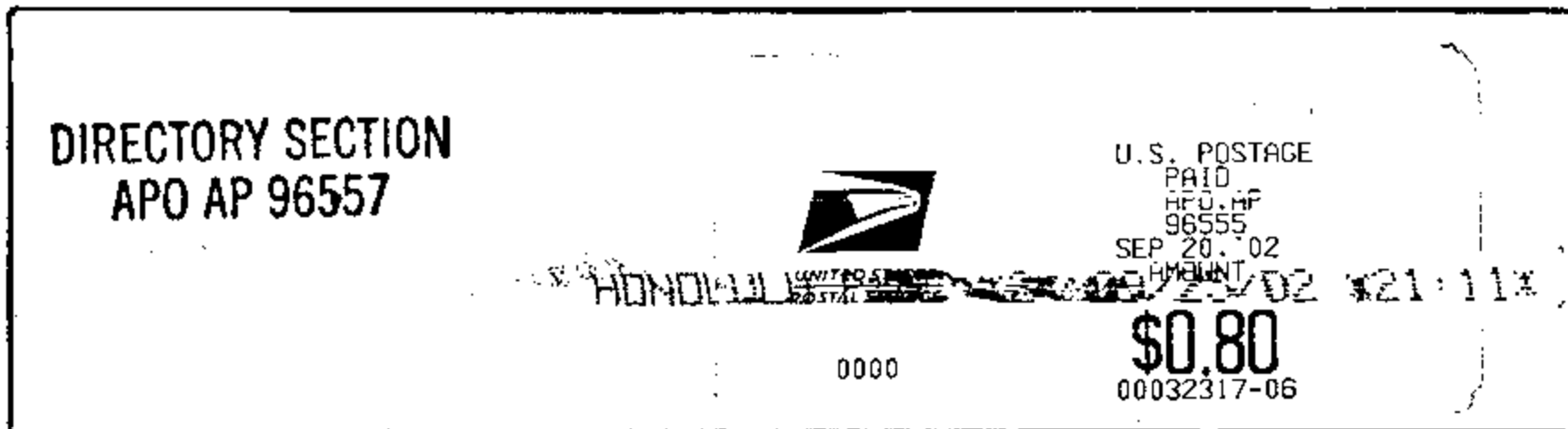


Illustration 39/26

TYPHOON HITS GUAM, CNMI & CHUUK:

Typhoon Pongsona struck Guam, CNMI & Chuuk during the weekend of 7th December, 2002 with 170 mph winds causing extensive damage to Power, Communications, Housing, Anderson AFB and Guam hospital. The Guam fuel depot caught fire and petrol (gas) supplies were unavailable for a week delaying recovery. Hagatña & Tamuning Post Offices were temporarily out of order due to water damage. Later they opened for restricted hours. Up to a week later Guam MPO could not be contacted by phone and the extent of damage was not known. (If, as it seems, the power was out it is likely that off-island mail was sent to Hawaii for machine cancellation. I have seen examples of this following previous typhoons.) Rota lost 100% of its agricultural output and 80% of Government facilities. Power was still off a week later, petrol (gas) was rationed and most of the 4000 population were displaced. Tinian and Saipan were also affected to a small extent. (Distilled, in part, from PDN w.e. 15 Dec 2002)

**MARSHALL ISLANDS - COMPACT
NEGOTIATIONS - POSTAL SERVICES &
RELATED PROGRAMMES:**

The text of the agreement was agreed to and initialled ad referenda in June 2002. The USPS has agreed to phase in special cost-related postal rates beginning no sooner than 2006 over a 5-year period. If USPS does decide to phase-in

international rates, the effective date will be after 2011. Special services such as money order, priority mail, etc. will be addressed in a separate agreement to be negotiated with USPS because these concern local management issues. (Briefing Paper - Compact Negotiations as of Oct 2002.)

Later clarification suggests that the revised agreement will apply to mail from the U.S. to the Marshall Islands. Mail from the Marshall Islands to the U.S. (and I guess the rest of the former Trust Territory) will continue to be carried at U.S. Domestic Rates unless the RMI Post Office deems otherwise.

It's likely that the U.S.P.S. will be keen to apply the same conditions to the FSM and Palau when their compact agreement comes up for review.

**AN HONORABLE ACCORD - THE COVENANT
BETWEEN THE NORTHERN MARIANA
ISLANDS AND THE UNITED STATES**

is the title of a 496 page book by Attorneys Howard Willens and Deanne Siemer. The book examines the complex negotiations, which took place between 1977 and 1985 between the Marianas Political Status Commission and the U.S. negotiating team. Willens was the legal counsel to the commission and both attorneys advised the 1976 Constitutional Convention. The authors wrote the book after five years of extensive litigation invoking the Freedom of Information Act to gain access to more than

70,000 pages of classified Government documents.

David Hanlon, General Editor of the Pacific Islands Monograph Series said "In short the authors present a rich, nuance and sophisticated treatment of a very critical period in the recent political history of the Northern Marianas" The book has been nominated for the "Bancroft Prize" an award that recognises exceptional books in American History & Diplomacy. The prizes are awarded annually by Columbia University in NYC and will be announced in spring 2003.

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