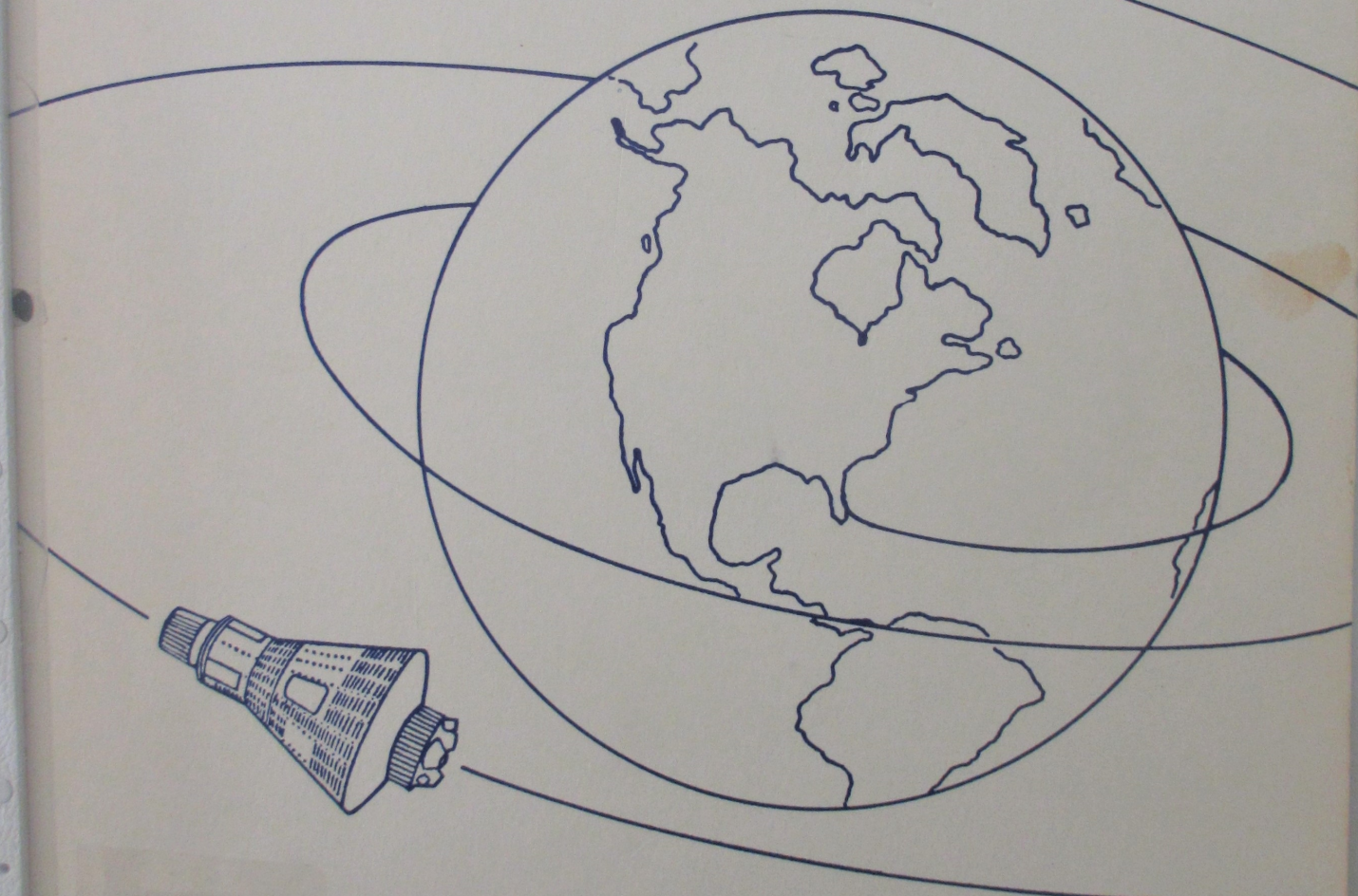
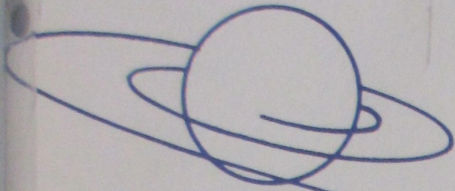


# PROJECT MERCURY

*...one step into space*



LD O. SCHULTZ

## FORWARD

ONE STEP INTO SPACE is not meant to be a detailed observation of every minute phrase of Project Mercury. It does not deal with every experiment conducted or word spoken on each flight for I shall leave these to those commissioned who know to make that record. This record is set down for the specific purpose of recording naval data and to show the importance of the U.S. Navy in our great American Space Effort.

We, as Naval Buffs and also philatelic Naval collectors are continuing to seek a memorabilia in any great event the Navy does. Project Mercury was such a milestone.

J. D. Nevins, Cdr. USN, Public Information Officer for COMCRUDESFLT FOUR started a service to those interested in securing recovery ship names. Cdr. Nevins made available a tentative listing of the ships which were first announced as selected for a given flight. He continued this service until MA-6 (Glenn's flight) when W. R. Skelley, W.O., USN took over for the remainder of the Mercury program and some of Gemini.

The lists that were tentatively given on each flight was just that - tentative. I found in checking into the actual participation of each flight that in many cases there were many differences from the participation and tentatives because of the holds or delays; and the ship replacements because of break-downs, fuel requirements, and availability. In some cases for Project Mercury which did not happen frequent on Gemini, the Mercury Philatelic Coordinator, placed covers on board the tentative ships and if that ship was scratched or did not take part in the recovery, the postal clerk on board that scratched ship did not forward the covers to the ship that replaced her. Possibly this was caused by misunderstanding or poor communication between the Coordinator and the individual ship postal clerk, I am not aware. However, these "replaced" ship covers years later together with those ships who honored certain flights by cacheting or postmarking covers who were never on any tentative or actual recovery of a Mercury flight are causing many collectors and buffs trouble in determining if that ship did or did not actually take part in the recovery. Because of this problem, this booklet is aimed.

This writer has received valuable assistance in compiling and form of this record from Joseph Felt, Cdr. USN, (former P.I.O., USS DECATUR DD-936 on the recovery MA-4); F. Kent Loomis, Capt. USN, Retired, Asst. Director Naval History, Washington, D.C.; John C. Stonesifer, Head, Current Operations Section, Landing and Recovery Division, Manned Space Center, Houston, Texas; Howard Benedict, Associated Press, Cape Canaveral Bureau; and the countless Public Affairs Officers on board individual ships to whom I addressed correspondence.

As I mentioned that there were several sources from which data was compiled from and as a result, I came across several discrepancies between these records and from my own sources as a mere collector. Therefore, I had no choice but to track down the correct information from individual ship Logs. The individual flights are listed as they actually were and the discrepancies are to be found under separate heading later in the booklet.

This writing is not to note differences or to embarrass anyone, but to try and set forth an accurate account in the Naval Space Effort and to list all known recovery ships. It might be noted that in some early recoveries, no Naval or NASA ship recovery list was kept. This can be seen by none listed.

All data set down here is accurate with reference to each event unless in the course of recording, a human error occurred. All support and form is credited to the U.S. Navy, and those mentioned above.



*Alan B. Shepard*    *Walter M. Schirra*    *John A. Glenn, Jr.*  
*Vigil L. Lusk*    *M. Scott Carpenter*    *Donald W. Slayton*    *Lucy S. Cooper*

The seven original Mercury astronauts in photo addressed to the author and signed by each in their own handwriting.

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## IMPORTANT EVENTS LEADING TO THE U.S. FIRST STEP IN SPACE PROJECT MERCURY

In the spring of 1945, the Auxiliary Flight Research Station (AFRS, later known as the Pilotless Aircraft Research Division) was opened on Wallops Island, Virginia, with Robert R. Gilruth as its director.

- 07-04-45, AFRS launched its first test vehicle, a small two-stage, solid fuel rocket to check on the installation's instrumentation.
- 10-14-47, the XS-1 rocket plane made the first supersonic manned flight by traveling 700 mph (mach 1.06 at 43,000 ft. altitude) over Muroc Dry Lake, California, with Capt. Charles E. Yeager at the controls. It was the first time the sound barrier was broken.
- 06-11-48, A V-2 rocket named ALBERT in honor of the primate passenger was launched at White Sands, New Mexico. ALBERT was the first American primate in space. ALBERT died of suffocation.
- 06-06-49, ALBERT II was launched into space but died on impact. During 1949 two other flights by primates were made and in each case survived the flight, but died before the capsule was located. It might be noted that on May 11, 1949, President Harry S. Truman signed a bill authorizing the Atlantic Missile Range at Cape Canaveral, Florida.
- 09-20-51, the first successful recovery of animals from a rocket flight in the Western Hemisphere was made when a monkey and 11 mice survived an Aerobee launch to an altitude of 236,000 feet. (Recovered on land)
- 08-20-53, the first Redstone missile was test-fired by the Army at Cape Canaveral. This rocket first researched in 1950 was later used in Project Mercury suborbital flights and other developments of the Project.
- 10-14-54, the first four-stage American rocket was launched from Wallops Island.
- 05-03-56, the world's first five-stage rocket, solid fuel test was made to mach 15 speed from Wallops Island.
- 06-11-57, the first launch of the Atlas missile was made at Cape Canaveral, but the missile exploded after takeoff at an altitude of about 10,000 feet.
- 08-07-57, a Jupiter C with a scale model nose cone, was fired 1,200 miles down range. The nose cone reached an altitude of 600 plus miles, and its recovery was one of the proving steps of the ablative re-entry principle. The nose cone was displayed by President Eisenhower to a nation-wide television audience on November 7, 1957. (During September 1957, the second attempt to launch an Atlas missile was made unsuccessfully. The missile was destroyed.)
- 10-04-57, Russia launched Sputnik I, the world's first artificial earth satellite. This action spurred the American public to support active roles in space research and exploration.
- 01-10-58, the fourth Atlas launched made a limited successful flight from Cape Canaveral.
- 01-31-58, a Jupiter C missile boosted EXPLORER I, America's first artificial earth satellite into orbit. Besides achieving orbital conditions, the discovery of the Van Allen Radiation Belt, named for Dr. James A. Van Allen, head of the physics department at State University of Iowa was made.
- 07-29-58, the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 was signed into law by President Eisenhower (NASA). (NASA became operational October 1, 1958.)
- 10-58, drop tests using full scale capsules were started from a C-130 airplane to check parachute deployment and spacecraft stability. A preliminary series was made from a helo at West Point, Virginia involving concrete filled drums to see of mechanical systems of deploying the parachutes were adequate. C-130 drops were made from Pope Field

North Carolina at low level to perfect means of extracting the spacecraft from the aircraft. Full scale spacecraft were used. The next phrase was carried out at Wallops Island to study stability of the spacecraft during free fall with parachute support; study shock input to the spacecraft; and study and develop recovery operations.

- 12-13-58, a primate squirrel monkey named GORDO, was launched aboard a Jupiter missile nose cone. Nose cone recovery efforts failed because the float mechanism attached to the nose cone did not function, telemetry data provided useful biochemical information and had disclosed the monkey withstood space flight and re-entry without any adverse effects. GORDO was in a state of weightlessness for 8.3 minutes. He experienced 10g pressure at liftoff and 40g pressure at re-entry at 10,000 mph. (GORDO also called LITTLE OLD RELIABLE)
- 02-01 to 14-59, some 508 prospective pilot candidate records were reviewed and found that 110 appeared to qualify. These remaining were divided in two groups and 69 were selected for interview. 32 of these were selected for a physical to become America's first astronauts.
- 03-06-59, an abort test was conducted from Wallops Island on a full-scale model of the spacecraft using a Recruit escape rocket. The configuration did not perform as expected (it had an erratic motion), and as a result small scale models were used on future tests.
- 03-11-59, Wallops Island conducted the first full-scale test simulating a pad-abort. Full weight and size spacecraft was used. For the first 50 feet of the flight was straight, thereafter the spacecraft pitched and turned which resulted in impact near shore. The malfunction was traced to loss of graphite insert from one of the three abort rocket nozzles which caused misalignment of thrust.
- 04-02-59, seven astronauts were selected to participate in Project Mercury. Also, the Chief of Naval Operations directed the Atlantic Fleet to support Project Mercury in the area of Wallops Island and in the Atlantic Test Range. The seven astronauts selected on 2 April were announced on 9 April in Washington. They were: (Please note their rank at selection) LCDR. ALAN B. SHEPARD, JR., Navy; CAPTAIN VIRGIL I. GRISSOM, Air Force; LT. COL. JOHN H. GLENN, JR., Marines; LT. MALCOLM SCOTT CARPENTER, Navy; LCDR. WALTER M. SCHIRRA, JR., Navy; CAPTAIN DONALD K. SLAYTON, Air Force; CAPTAIN LEROY GORDON COOPER, JR., Air Force.
- 05-28-59, primates Able and Baker, aboard a Jupiter missile nose cone, were launched 300 miles into space and landed 1,700 miles down range from Cape Canaveral. Telemetry data showed that responses of the animals were normal for conditions. During boost when higher g-loads were sustained, body temp, respiration, pulse rate, and heart-beat rose but were in tolerable limits. During the weightless period, the responses of both primates were near normal--so near that Baker appeared to doze according to telemetry. Upon re-entry, responses rose again but in a settled state. (Recovery ships - naval tug KIOWA and two destroyers)
- 06-25-59, Navy surface and aircraft were used in a recovery test after an airdrop of a spacecraft off the coast of Jacksonville, Florida. The spacecraft was purposely dropped 40 miles from the predicted impact point and 45 miles from the nearest ship. Recovery was effected in 2-1/2 hours.
- 07-22-59, the first successful pad abort test of a boilerplate spacecraft was made from Wallops Island. This was the first test of this component. A second flight was made on 28 July.

MISSION: LITTLE JOE I (LJ-1)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 21 August 1959  
DATE OF LANDING: 21 August 1959

LENGTH OF FLIGHT:  
NO. OF REVS: One mile off shore  
POSIT. OF LANDING: Five miles

DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: In pieces by SALVAGER ARSD 3  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

2 Marine HUS helos  
2 chartered fishing boats  
3 swimmers of UDU2

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: The rocket fired prematurely and the parachutes did not function properly. The capsule and pylon descended at an excessive speed and entered the water about a mile off shore. The capsule broke up and sank with the pylon imbedded in the bottom. The USS SALVAGER ARSD 3 was sent to recover the pieces of the capsule.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To evaluate the escape system designed to pull the capsule free of the rocket in case of an early abort.

MISSION: BIG JOE I (BJ-1)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 9 September 1959  
DATE OF LANDING: 9 September 1959  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 13 min., 1300 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS: 490 nautical miles  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 38 minutes  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: STRONG DD 758  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

TURNER DDR 834  
POWER DD 839  
STRONG DD 758 (Recovered)  
BORIE DD 704  
H. R. DICKSON DD 708  
SPIEGEL GROVE LSD 32 with 2 MAG-26 HUS helo  
7 Atlantic Missile Range Recovery craft  
P2V's of PatRon 5  
AMP C-54's and Air Rescue Service aircraft

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: The capsule landed 490 n.m. short of the planned landing point and about midway between two destroyers. Two P2V's received SARAH beacon indications and homed in on the capsule, sighting it at 3 hours and 31 minutes after lift off. They maintained surveillance of the capsule until the arrival of USS STRONG DD 758, a DESFLOT FOUR destroyer, which recovered the capsule 7 hours and 54 minutes after lift off.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To evaluate the ability of the capsule to withstand the stresses it receives during re-entry. The booster was an Atlas missile.

MISSION: LITTLE JOE 6 (LJ-6)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 4 October 1959  
DATE OF LANDING:  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 5 min., 10 sec., 69.00 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING: Destroyed after apex  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS:  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To check LITTLE JOE booster performance. Eight solid propellant rockets were used which developed 250,000 pounds of thrust at lift off. The mission validated the aerodynamic and structural integrity of the booster and the use of the command destruction system.

MISSION: LITTLE JOE 1A (LJ-1A)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 4 November 1959  
DATE OF LANDING: 4 November 1959  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 8 min., 11 sec., 10 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: PRESERVER ARS 8  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

PRESERVER ARS 8 (Recovered)  
2 MAG-26 HUS helo  
2 chartered fishing boats

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: None, mission successful.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Repeat of LITTLE JOE 1

MISSION: LITTLE JOE 2 (LJ-2)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 4 December 1959  
DATE OF LANDING: 4 December 1959  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 11 min., 6 sec., 169 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 2 hours after launch  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 2 hours after launch  
ASTRONAUTS: Primate rhesus monkey - SAM  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: BORIE DD 704  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

BORIE DD 704 (Recovered)  
STRONG DD 758  
FORT MANDAN LSD 21 with 2 MAG-26 HUS helo  
PAPAGO ATF 160 with swimmers UDU2  
2 P2V of PatRon 8  
2 shore-based MAG-26 HUS helo

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To test the effectiveness of the escape system and effects on the capsule under conditions of abort when the missile had reached a considerable altitude, and to test the effects of an abort flight on a primate.

NOTES: The recovery was commanded by CTF 140 in his flagship, USS NORFOLK DLG-19 at Norfolk, Va. Weather conditions were marginal with winds of 30-35 knots in the recovery area. Due to the rough weather, helos could not be launched. A P2V received SARAH and ECM radiation from the capsule and homed in on it, sighting it 30 minutes after launch time. P2V's remained on top of the capsule until USS BORIE DD 704 arrived and recovered it in very rough seas about 2 hours after launch. SAM was removed from the capsule onboard BORIE and found to be in good condition.

MISSION: LITTLE JOE 1B (LJ-1B)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 21 January 1960  
DATE OF LANDING: 21 January 1960  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 8 min., 35 sec., 10.20 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 5 minutes  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 5 minutes  
ASTRONAUTS: Primate rhesus monkey - MISS SAM  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: Helo (See notes)  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

OPPORTUNE APS 41  
2 MAG 26 HUS helo

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Similar to those of LITTLE JOE 1, with the addition of testing effects on a primate under the LITTLE JOE stresses.

NOTES: Normal flight and successful. MISS SAM recovered by MAG-26 helo with OPPORTUNE recovering submerged escape tower in two pieces.

MISSION: BEACH ABORT TEST (BA)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 9 May 1960  
DATE OF LANDING: 9 May 1960  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 1 min., 16 sec., 1,000 yards from launch pad  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 18 minutes  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Wallops Island, Va.  
LAUNCHED FROM: Helo  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

RECOVERY ARS 43 with 3 swimmers UDU2  
3 shore-based HUS helo of MAG-26  
2 chartered fishing boats

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To demonstrate the capabilities of the escape system, parachute system, and other landing equipment during an off-the-pad abort. No booster was used.

NOTES: The escape system was fired and landed 1,000 yards from the stand. The spacecraft was recovered by a HUS helo 20 minutes after lift off and returned to Wallops Island. All objectives achieved. This was the first test using the McDonnell Aircraft Corp. Mercury spacecraft. All previous tests had used boiler plate capsules.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS I (MA-1)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 29 July 1960  
DATE OF LANDING: 29 July 1960  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 3 min., 18 sec., 4.85 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: 4.85 nautical miles east of launch pad  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS:  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: (See notes)  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

HAILEY DD 556  
POWER DD 839  
VESOLE DD 878  
MANLEY DD 940  
MCCARD DD 822  
CASA GRANDE LSD 13  
ESCAPE ARS 6

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: After the first minute of the actual test, the booster apparently suffered structural failure, and the spacecraft and booster impacted about 5 miles east of the launch point. Salvage of the components was accomplished by the Air Force Missile Test Center.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To test the structural integrity of the Mercury capsule and its heat protection elements during re-entry from a critical abort condition.

NOTES: This was the first test using the Atlas booster. A rehearsal recovery exercise was conducted for the test on 18 May 1960. Two destroyers, a P2V and an Air Force Missile Test Center aircraft were the recovery force. A third destroyer deposited a spacecraft in the area of the other forces unknown to them. The recovery of this test was made just as in an actual test.



MISSION: LITTLE JOE 5 (LJ-5)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 8 November 1960  
DATE OF LANDING: 8 November 1960  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 2 min., 22 sec., 11.80 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: (See below)  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

OPPORTUNE ARS 41  
3 shore based MAG-26 helo  
2 chartered fishing boats

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: The spacecraft and booster did not separate and impacted about 12 miles from the launch point in 68 feet of water. Salvage operations were conducted by OPPORTUNE ARS 41, and the services of BITTERN MHC 43 were requested to assist in recovery. 60% of the booster and 80% of the escape tower were recovered, providing NASA with the principal desired information.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To demonstrate the performance of the spacecraft and the escape system under the most adverse loading conditions to be expected during an Atlas launch.

MISSION: MERCURY/PEDSTONE I (MR-I)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 21 November 1960  
DATE OF LANDING: 21 November 1960  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: Inches  
NO. OF REVS: Back on the pad  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

Mission scrubbed

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: An unscheduled engine cutoff resulted in premature jettisoning of the escape rocket when the booster was only about one inch off the pad. The booster settled back on the pad and was suitable for further use on MR-IA. A previous attempt to launch MR-I on 8 November was also unsuccessful.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To qualify the spacecraft and flight system for a primate flight.

MISSION: MERCURY/REDSTONE 1A (MR-1A)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 19 December 1960  
DATE OF LANDING: 19 December 1960  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 15 min., 45 sec., 204 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: Suborbital  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 47 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: Unmanned  
ASTRONAUTS: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
LAUNCHED FROM: Helo to VALLEY FORGE CVS 45  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

VALLEY FORGE CVS 45 with MAG-26 (PRS)  
CONWAY DDE 507  
CONY DD 508  
WALLER DDE 466  
EATON DDE 510  
BACHE DDE 470  
BEALE DDE 471  
MURRAY DDE 576  
PERRY DD 844  
ESCAPE ARS 6

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Same as MR-1

NOTES: The flight was normal. A MAG-26 helo from the VALLEY FORGE recovered the spacecraft using the Shepard's Crook method and returned it to the carrier 47 minutes after landing. This test was the first in which CTF 140 used the new Recovery Room in the NASA Project Mercury Control Center at Cape Canaveral to direct Recovery Force operations.

The first attempt on 7 November was canceled because of a helium leak in the spacecraft reaction control system relief valve and also on 21 November because of a premature cut-off of the launch vehicle engines.

MISSION: MERCURY/REDSTONE 2 (MR-2)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 31 January 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 31 January 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 16 min., 39 sec., 363 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: Suborbital  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 100 nautical miles  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 1 hr., 14 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 37 pound chimpanzee - HAM  
ASTRONAUTS: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
LAUNCHED FROM: Helo to DONNER LSD 20  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

DONNER LSD 20 with MAG-26  
MANLEY DD 940  
ELLISON DD 864  
CONE DD 866  
MCCARD DD 822  
WARRINGTON DD 843  
BORIE DD 704  
OPPORTUNE ARS 41  
Aircraft from PatRon 18, Airborne Early Warning Squadron 4, and AFMTC

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: The over-acceleration of the launch vehicle coupled with the velocity of the escape rocket caused the spacecraft to attain a higher altitude and a longer range than planned.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To qualify additional spacecraft systems not exercised in MR-1 and to obtain physiological and performance data on the occupant during ballistic flight.

NOTES: Launch occurred at 11:55 A.M. EST. A VP-18 P2V and WV-4 gained contact at 12:08, from SARAH, and another P2V obtained visual contact at 12:38. The ELLISON arrived at the landing point at 2:35 P.M. EST. When a MAG-26 helo arrived on the scene for recovery, the spacecraft was tilted at about 90° from normal. The helo recovered the spacecraft at 2:42 and brought it to the DONNER where HAM was found to be in good condition.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 2 (MA-2)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 21 February 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 21 February 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 17 min., 56 sec., 1,244.00 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: Suborbital  
POSIT. OF LANDING: Eyesight  
DIST. FROM PRS: 2 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: Unmanned  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
ASTRONAUTS: Helo to DONNER LSD 20  
LAUNCHED FROM:  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

DONNER LSD 20 with MAG-26  
GREENE DDR 711  
BORDELON DDR 881  
JOSEPH P. KENNEDY DD 850  
BORIE DD 704  
OPPORTUNE ARS 41

Aircraft from Airborne Early Warning Squadron 2 and  
4, AFMTC

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To qualify the Mercury-Atlas combination in flight and evaluate spacecraft performance under near maximum re-entry loads and maximum afterbody heating.

NOTES: The unoccupied spacecraft was launched at 9:11 A.M. EST. After a normal flight it landed in the high probability landing area 1300 miles downrange. WV aircraft received SARAH indications shortly after main parachute deployment at ranges up to 140 nautical miles. Observers on DONNER and GREENE, and two search aircraft sighted the spacecraft visually. The spacecraft was sighted in the water at 9:36 A.M. EST by a WV search aircraft and at 9:51 by the recovery helo. The spacecraft was recovered in two minutes and delivered aboard DONNER at 10:06.

MISSION: LITTLE JOE 5A (LJ-5A)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 18 March 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 18 March 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 23 min., 48 sec., 17.20 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: RECOVERY ARS 43  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

RECOVERY ARS 43 (Recovered)  
3 shore-based MAG-26 helo  
2 chartered fishing boats

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: After the escape maneuver had been executed, the main and reserve parachutes deployed prematurely. On landing, the parachute remained attached to the spacecraft, precluding helo recovery. RECOVERY recovered the spacecraft using Shepard's Crook method one hour and nine minutes after launch. The escape tower was not located.

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

MISSION: MERCURY/REDSTONE BD (Booster Dev. Flt)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 24 March 1961  
DATE OF LANDING:  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 8 min., 23 sec., 267.10 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Boiler Plate spacecraft used was one previously test flown on LITTLE JOE IB which provided the proper configuration and weight. Booster development test objectives were met and were successful.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 3 (MA-3)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 25 April 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 25 April 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 7 min., 19 sec., .25 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 2,000 yds. from launch pad  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: Helo to NASA  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

GREENE DDR 711  
GYATT DDG 1  
FURSE DDR 882  
BASILONE DDE 824  
STEINAKER DDR 863  
JOSEPH P. KENNEDY DD 850  
PURDY DD 734  
HYMAN DD 732  
BEATTY DD 756  
BRISTOL DD 857  
DONNER LSD 20  
CHUKAWAN AO 100  
RECOVERY ARS 43

27 aircraft deployed along the ground tracking from Cape Canaveral to the Canary Island

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: Abort shortly after lift off. Reason unknown.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To demonstrate the overall Mercury system (booster, spacecraft, and tracking network) capability of accomplishing orbital flight.

NOTES: Contingency recovery units were deployed for the first time for this test. Two exercises were conducted prior to the tests. One was a simulated countdown and launch exercise, with a recovery exercise using a spacecraft deposited in a preplanned position. Communications tests with contingency recovery commanders were conducted.

The actual mission was aborted 27 seconds into powered flight. The spacecraft landed in the water about 2,000 yards from the pad. A MAG-26 HR2S helo from the launch site recovery group recovered the spacecraft and delivered it to NASA.

MISSION: LITTLE JOE 5B (LJ-5B)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 28 April 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 28 April 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 5 min., 25 sec., 7.80 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: Helo  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Third test of the escape system under maximum exit dynamic pressure conditions. The tests objectives were met and the spacecraft recovered.

MISSION: MERCURY/REDSTONE 3 (MR-3)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 5 May 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 5 May 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 15 min., 22 sec., 263.10 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: Suborbital  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 27-13.7N, 75-53W  
DIST. FROM PRS: 8 n.m.  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 24 min., 33 sec.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: Simultaneous  
ASTRONAUTS: ALAN B. SHEPARD, JR.  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: Helo to LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS 39  
SPACECRAFT NAME: FREEDOM 7

UNITS ATLANTIC:

LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS 39 with MAG-26 (PRS)  
DECATUR DD 936  
WADLEIGH DD 689  
ROOKS DD 804  
ABBOT DD 629  
THE SULLIVANS DD 537  
NEWMAN K. PERRY DDR 883  
RECOVERY APS 43  
ABILITY MSO 519  
NOTABLE MSO 460  
Aircraft from PatRon 5, Air Rescue Service,  
and AFMTC

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To familiarize the astronaut with space flight and re-entry, and to determine the astronaut's ability to perform various functions during flight and to obtain physiological data concerning the astronaut.

NOTES: The spacecraft was launched at 9:34 A.M. EST. The first SARAH contact was obtained by search aircraft at 9:43 and the first sighting occurred shortly thereafter. MAG-26 helos were on hand when the capsule landed at 9:49 about 8 miles from LAKE CHAMPLAIN. One helo lifted the spacecraft while another hoisted CDR. SHEPARD into a sling to be brought aboard. Both spacecraft and astronaut were brought to the carrier at 10:00 A.M. EST. SHEPARD was recovered by helo #44 piloted by WAYNE E. KOONS and co-pilot GEORGE F. COX.

MISSION: MERCURY/REDSTONE 4 (MR-4)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 21 July 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 21 July 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 15 min., 37 sec., 262.50 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: Suborbital  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 27-34N, 75-44W  
DIST. FROM PRS: 2 n.m.  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 15 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: Not recovered  
ASTRONAUTS: VIRGIL I. GRISSOM  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: Helo to RANDOLPH CVS 15  
SPACECRAFT NAME: LIBERTY BELL 7

UNITS ATLANTIC:

RANDOLPH CVS 15 with MAG-26 (PRS)  
CONY DDE 508  
CONWAY DDE 507  
STOPMES DD 780  
LOWRY DD 770  
ALACRITY MSO 520  
EXPLOIT MSO 440  
RECOVERY ARS 43  
Aircraft from PatRon 5, Air Rescue Service,  
and AFMTC

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: Spacecraft and after premature actuation of side hatch. Helo hooked spacecraft but added weight of flooded interior exceeded helo limitations. Spacecraft jettisoned in 2500 fathoms of water. Astronaut recovered from water by helo.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Same as MR-3

NOTES: Lift off occurred at 7:21 A.M. EDT and the flight was normal. A PatRon 5 aircraft made SAPAH contact at 7:32 A.M. and the first visual sighting was made from RANDOLPH one minute before landing at 7:36, two miles from the carrier. GRISSOM was taken by helo to the RANDOLPH at 7:55 A.M. EDT. Recovery helo #30 was piloted by PHILLIP UPSCHUTTE and co-pilot GEORGE F. COX.

Two attempts were made previous to this date to launch MR-4, once on the 18th and again on the 19th but unfavorable weather forced mission postponement.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 4 (MA-4)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 13 September 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 13 September 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 1 hr., 49 min., 20 sec., 22,630 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: 1  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 32-10N, 61-53W  
DIST. FROM PRS: In primary landing area  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 1 hr., 5 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: Unmanned  
ASTRONAUTS: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
LAUNCHED FROM: DECATUR DD 936  
RECOVERED BY:  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

PLYMOUTH ROCK LSD 29 (PRS)  
DECATUR DD 936 (Recovered)  
GLFNNO DD 840  
LIND DD 703  
BORIE DD 704  
CONY DDE 508  
SARFIELD DDE 837  
ZELLARS DD 777  
BIGELOW DD 942  
ESCAPE ARS 6

Aircraft from Airborne Early Warning Training Unit;  
Airborne Early Warning Squadron 4; PatRons  
5, 18, 45, and 49; ARS and AFMTC

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Same as MA 3

NOTES: After several delays, the launch was made at 9:04 A.M. EDT on 13 September. The test was successful and the spacecraft landed in the Primary landing area east of Bermuda at 10:54 A.M. An AFMTC C-54 telemetry aircraft sighted the spacecraft at 11:04 A.M. and maintained contact until a surface unit arrived. MAG-26 helos from PLYMOUTH ROCK maintained surveillance of the spacecraft until DECATUR arrived and recovered it at 12:14 P.M. EDT. DECATUR delivered the spacecraft to NASA at Bermuda.

MISSION: MERCURY/SCOUT 1 (MS-1)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 1 November 1961  
DATE OF LANDING:  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT:  
NO. OF REVS:  
POSIT. OF LANDING:  
DIST. FROM PRS:  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS:  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C:  
ASTRONAUTS: Unmanned  
LAUNCHED FROM: Wallops Island, Va.  
RECOVERED BY: Broken up  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

UNITS PACIFIC:

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCHING/LANDING: The test was terminated shortly after lift-off due to erratic booster oscillations which continued to increase in magnitude until the missile apparently broke up.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To orbit a communication package in order to additionally evaluate the radar tracking capability of the Mercury Tracking Network.

MISSION: MERCURY ATLAS 5 (MA-5)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 29 November 1961  
DATE OF LANDING: 29 November 1961  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 3 hr., 20 min., 59 sec., 44,104.00 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: 2  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 28-52.8N, 65-42W  
DIST. FROM PRS: In primary landing area  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 1 hr.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 1 hr.  
ASTRONAUTS: Chimpanzee - ENOS  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: STORMES DD 780  
SPACECRAFT NAME:

UNITS ATLANTIC:

UNITS PACIFIC:

LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS 39 with MAG-26 (PRS)  
STORMES DD 780 (Recovered)

NONE

CONE DD 866  
CHICKASKIA AO 54  
FISKE DDR 842  
LOWRY DD 770  
LAFFEY DD 724  
HAWKINS DD 873  
WITEK DDE 848  
PERRY DD 844  
COMPTON DD 705  
BIGELOW DD 942  
BLANDY DD 943  
VOGELSANG DD 862  
JOHN WILLIS DE 1027  
FORT MANDAN LSD 21  
HOIST ARS 40  
FIDELITY MSO 443  
DAVIS DD 937  
Aircraft of PatRons 16, 18, 44, 45, and 49; Airborne  
Early Warning Squadron 4: Airborne Training Unit;  
ARS and AFMTC

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: After two Revs, the spacecraft inverter temperature was excessive and the flight was terminated with landing in area 8.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To determine the effects of orbital flight of the occupant.

NOTES: This test was planned as a three-orbit flight. After several delays which necessitated replacing some of the forces, the launch was made at 10:07 A.M. EST on 29 November. The spacecraft landed in the planned landing area for the end of the two orbits at 1:35 P.M. The spacecraft was sighted by a P5M of VP-49 as it descended on its parachute. STORMES proceeded to the landing point while the P5M maintained surveillance of the spacecraft, and recovered it at 2:49 P.M. EST. ENOS was removed from the spacecraft onboard and found to be alive and well. STORMES delivered the spacecraft and ENOS to NASA at Bermuda.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 6 (MA-6)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 20 February 1962  
DATE OF LANDING: 20 February 1962  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 4 hr., 55 min., 23 sec., 65,763 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: 3  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 21-26N, 68-41W  
DIST. FROM PRS: 6 miles from NOA DD 841  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 20 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 20 min.  
ASTRONAUTS: JOHN H. GLENN, JR.  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: NOA DD 841  
SPACECRAFT NAME: FRIENDSHIP 7

UNITS ATLANTIC:

ANTIETAM CVS 36  
RANDOLPH CVS 15 with MAG-26 (PRS)  
FORRESTAL CVA 59  
NOA DD 841 (Recovered)  
STRIBLING DD 867  
NORFOLK DL 1  
CHUKAWAN AO 100  
BLANDY DD 943  
CHARLES S. SPERRY DD 697  
BARRY DD 933  
KENNETH D. BAILEY DDR 713  
TURNER DDR 834  
GOODRICH DDR 831  
HUGH PURVIS DD 709  
GLENNON DD 840  
BROWNSON DD 868  
CONE DD 866  
STORMES DD 780  
BEARSS DD 654  
WITEK DDE 848  
SARFIELD DDE 837  
OBSERVER MSO 461  
EXPLOIT MSO 440  
RECOVERY ARS 43  
Aircraft from PatRon 16, 18, 44, 45, and 49; Airborne  
Early Warning Squadron 4; Airborne Early Warning  
Training Unit; MAG-26; ARS and AFMTC

UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: To familiarize the astronauts with orbital space flight, and re-entry to determine the astronaut's ability to perform various functions during flight and to obtain physiological data concerning the astronaut.

NOTES: After repeated slippages, the launch was made at 9:48 A.M. EST on 20 February. The mission was successful and the spacecraft was sighted in its descent by NOA at 2:37 P.M. It landed six miles from NOA at 2:43 P.M. EST. NOA made the recovery, maintaining continuous voice communications with the Astronaut. Glenn was transferred by helo from NOA at 5:45 P.M. to RANDOLPH and later, from the carrier to Grand Turk Island via carrier aircraft.

Flight postponements occurred on 30 January because of technical difficulties with the launch



MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 6 (MA-6) continued

vehicle and again on 14 February because of unfavorable weather conditions. There were 4 holds before final liftoff.

One of the interesting reports made on MA-6 was Glenn's report of "fire flies" when he entered the sunrise portion of an orbit. This remained a mystery until in Scott Carpenter's flight where Carpenter accidentally tapped the spacecraft wall with his hand, releasing many of the so-called "fire flies." The source was determined to be frost from the reaction control jets.

### THE MERCURY STAMP & NOA STORY

The U.S. Post Office Department issued a special commemorative postage stamp on the day of the MA-6 flight. The stamp was already being held in 305 selected cities around the nation to be placed on immediate sale when the United States achieved the orbital space goal.

During February 1961, I was Supt., Main Office Window Services, Post Office, Appleton, Wisconsin. One day in late fall of 1961, a Postal Inspector walked into our office and presented me with a large pouch (which I found out later contained the Mercury postage stamps) saying that under no circumstance should the pouch be unlocked until told to. Of course, this mystery pouch caused the rumor factory going as this was never done before in our office.

The afternoon of the 20th of February found me at home before my TV set watching the recovery of Glenn. I had asked for leave just so I could watch the flight. As I watched TV, the program switched to the home of Mrs. John Glenn where some officials presented her with a special folder of the very first Mercury stamps and right there, said to my wife that tomorrow I was going to order some of those stamps for our office. Having no more than said that when my phone rang and it was my Postmaster, Mr. Francis H. Sunnicht who said that he received a long distance phone call from the District Postal Inspector that we should open the mystery pouch in our care. I wasted no time in returning to the Office to assist in the sale of our mystery. Our pouch contained 50,000 Project Mercury commemoratives, a press release, and poster for the bulletin board. (See photo)

By 5:15 P.M. the night of the 20th, all but 8,000 of the Mercury stamps were sold. People were calling and coming in to buy stamps that normally would not look a second time except to see if it was sufficient for first class mail. By 10:00 A.M. of the next morning, all of our initial mystery pouch full of Mercurys were gone. Altogether, I ordered 250,000 additional Mercury stamps and these too were sold. This record, not counting Christmas commemoratives, still stands in our office for any commemorative sold. The day of the first sale, we notified our three radio stations that we had the Mercury stamp and also called many of the philatelic king pins who in turn called others.

Our Post Office lobby and my office looked like a First Day of Sale of an announced new stamp. Many of the people prepared First Day of Sale covers from Appleton so I know there are many available.

The purpose of describing my day on February 20th is unimportant, but this will give you the background of the Mercury stamp in 305 Post Offices around the nation. Later in the appendix you will find a listing of the 305 Post Offices shown as I copied it out from an announcement. I must say here that ONLY these 305 Post Offices had the Mercury Stamp on February 20, 1962 and no ship at sea did. There were several covers made by enterprising people who mailed their covers from other cities than those who had the mystery pouches. I know of several myself, but these are not true First Day of Sale covers at the real offices. The Washington Press of Maplewood, N.J. made available, the story behind the Mercury stamp on how it was made and the entire story behind the mystery. Every collector should have a copy in his collection. (See photo)

USS NOA DD-841 recovered John Glenn on 20 February 1962. All philatelic covers on board NOA on that date received NOA's postmark. The ship applied no cachet to the covers. These are the true philatelic recovery covers from NOA. NOA did not have the Mercury stamps on

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 6 (MA-6) continued

### THE MERCURY STAMP & NOA STORY

board nor did any of the other recovery ships in the MA-6 force. This statement is true and can be checked with the U.S. Post Office Department list.

NOA deposited MA-6 Mercury capsule to NASA on Grand Turk Island in the morning 21 February and then proceeded to Mayport, Florida destroyer base. This statement is born out by the printed brochure from NOA entitled, "Glad to Have You Aboard." NOA's Commanding Officer during MA-6 recovery was J. D. Exum, Cdr., USN and W. K. Hatcher, LCdr., USN was Executive Officer. LCdr Hatcher sent me a copy of the brochure on 29 August 1962 along with a short courtesy letter.

DD-841 could not have come in contact with the Mercury stamp until it reached Florida several days after the 21st. Perhaps two or three weeks later in the Philatelic Presses across the land, appeared for sale, a printed cacheted cover postmarked with NOA's postmark of 20 February across the Project Mercury stamp. (See photo of this cover and true NOA recovery cover.) As this stamp was not on board NOA during recovery, this cover is fraudulent. The only way this cover could be made was by back-dating the postmark on NOA. Fortunate for collectors there was a complaint made and the Navy Postal Clerk on NOA was punished and dispatched, according to the Navy Times newspaper. Now several years later, these same fraudulent NOA printed covers keep coming to the foreground to haunt the philatelic world. This written record is therefore for the unsuspecting to refer.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 7 (MA-7)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 24 May 1962  
DATE OF LANDING: 24 May 1962  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 4 hr., 56 min., 5 sec., 66,061.00 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: 3  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 19-27N, 63-59W  
DIST. FROM PRS: 244 n.m.  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 4 hr., 11 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 7 hr.  
ASTRONAUTS: M. SCOTT CARPENTER  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: JOHN R. PIERCE DD 753  
SPACECRAFT NAME: AURORA 7

#### UNITS ATLANTIC:

INTREPID CVS 11 (PRS)  
JOHN R. PIERCE DD 753 (Recovered)  
WREN DD 568  
REMEY DD 688  
HUNT DD 674  
ROBINSON DD 562  
BARTON DD 722  
SOLEY DD 707  
ENGLISH DD 696  
HANK DD 702  
FRED T. BERRY DDE 858  
MOALE DD 693  
MASSEY DD 778  
ELOKOMIN AO 55  
SPIEGEL GROVE LSD 32  
DONNER LSD 20  
DEWEY DLG 14  
SWERVE MSO 495  
STURDY MSO 494  
HOIST ARS 40

Aircraft from PatRon 7, 16, 17, and 49, Airborne Early Warning Squadron 4, Airborne Early Warning Training Unit; ARS and AFMTC

#### UNITS PACIFIC:

NONE

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: Long overshoot resulted in night retrieval.

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Same as MA 6

NOTES: Liftoff was at 7:45 A.M. EDT. After completing 3 orbits, the spacecraft landed outside the third orbit Planned Landing Area about 240 miles beyond the center at 12:41 P.M. USS FARRAGUT DLG 6, operating in the area but NOT assigned to the recovery force, a Coast Guard cutter, and a merchant ship were requested to be prepared to assist in recovery. FARRAGUT, INTREPID, and JOHN R. PIERCE proceeded toward the splash point at flank speed. A VP-18 P2V sighted the spacecraft and CARPENTER in a rubber life-raft alongside it at 1:17 P.M. EDT. Air Rescue Service pararescue personnel parachuted from a C-54 and attached the auxiliary flotation collar to the spacecraft. HSS-2 helos were launched from INTREPID when within helo range and recovered the astronaut and pararescue team at 3:40. CARPENTER was delivered to INTREPID and after debriefing, flown to Grand Turk Island. FARRAGUT reached the spacecraft at 4:20, but not having special recovery equipment, did not recover it. She maintained surveillance of the spacecraft until JOHN R. PIERCE arrived and

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 7 (MA-7) continued

recovered it at 6:52 EST.

On 15 March, Carpenter replaced Donald Slayton to take part in MA-7 flight because Slayton was disqualified with a minor erratic heart rate. (Slayton did not take part in any Project Mercury or Gemini flights because of his heart.)

NASA announced on 7 May that several days delay would take place due to checkout problems with the Atlas launch missile. On 17 May, the second postponement came because of necessary modifications to the altitude-sensing instrumentation in the parachute-deployment system. The third delay came on 19 May due to irregularities detected in the temperature control device on a heater in the Atlas flight control system. There were 4 holds before final lift-off.

Two tests were conducted during the flight. One was to deploy a balloon to measure drag and provide visibility. (The balloon did not inflate properly.) And the other test concerned liquid behavior in a weightless state.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 8 (MA-8)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 3 October 1962  
DATE OF LANDING: 3 October 1962  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 9 hr., 13 min., 11 sec., 125,118.00 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: 6  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 32-05N, 174-28W  
DIST. FROM PRS: 5 n.m.  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 40 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 40 min.  
ASTRONAUTS: WALTER M. SCHIRRA, JR.  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: KEARSARGE CVS 33  
SPACECRAFT NAME: SIGMA 7

UNITS ATLANTIC:

LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS 39  
JOHN PAUL JONES DD 932  
BARRY DD 933  
INGRAHAM DD 694  
HAYNESWORTH DD 700  
HOIST ARS 40  
AFFRAY MSO 511  
ALACRITY MSO 520  
DECATUR DD 936  
FURSE DDR 882  
C. F. ADAMS DDG 2  
DYESS DDR 880  
BORDELON DDR 881  
KASKASKIA AO 27  
NORRIS DD 859  
SPERRY DD 697  
WILLARD KEITH DD 775  
WARRINGTON DD 843  
DUPONT DD 941  
HENLEY DD 762

UNITS PACIFIC:

KEARSARGE CVS 33  
(Recovered) (PRS)  
EPPERSON 719  
RADFORD DD 446  
WALKER DD 517  
PHILIP DD 495  
O'BANNON DD 450

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Same as MA 6 for prolonged period.

NOTES: Launch occurred 8:15 A.M. EDT. This six orbit flight was successful and was the first test to have a planned landing area in the Pacific. Cdr. SCHIRRA elected to remain with the spacecraft during recovery. A swimmer team placed the auxiliary flotation collar around the spacecraft and one of KEARSARGE's boats brought the spacecraft to the side of the carrier. The spacecraft was hoisted aboard by crane. The splash occurred at 3:29 P.M. EDT 295 miles northeast of Midway Island.

MA-8 was postponed on 10 September to allow additional time for flight preparation. The actual flight launch was relayed via Telstar satellite to TV audiences in Western Europe.

MISSION: MERCURY/ATLAS 9 (MA-9)

DATE OF LAUNCH: 15 May 1963  
DATE OF LANDING: 16 May 1963  
LENGTH OF FLIGHT: 34 hr., 19 min., 49 sec., 474, 607.00 nautical miles  
NO. OF REVS: 22  
POSIT. OF LANDING: 27-20N, 176-26W  
DIST. FROM PRS: 5 n.m.  
TIME TO RECOVER ASTROS: 36 min.  
TIME TO RECOVER S/C: 36 min.  
ASTRONAUTS: L. GORDON COOPER, JR.  
LAUNCHED FROM: Cape Canaveral, Fla.  
RECOVERED BY: KEARSARGE CVS 33  
SPACECRAFT NAME: FAITH 7

UNITS ATLANTIC:

WASP CVS 18  
ADROIT MSO 509  
STALWART MSO 493  
OPPORTUNE ARS 41  
HYMAN DD 732  
BEATTY DD 756  
MYLES C FOX DDR 829  
DAVIS DD 937  
COMPTON DD 705  
GAINARD DD 706  
HARWOOD DD 861

Aircraft from PatRon 7 and 49

SIGNIFICANT MISSION CHANGES AFFECTING LAUNCH/LANDING: None

MISSION DESCRIPTION: Same as MA 6

NOTES: During re-entry operations, COOPER fired the retrorockets manually, by pushing a button for the first of three rockets to start the sequence. COOPER landed the spacecraft 7,000 yards from KEARSARGE and elected to remain with the craft until hoisted aboard the carrier. Lift off came at 8:04 A.M. EST on the 15th and splash down at 6:24 EST on the 16th.

MA-9 was postponed from 14 May to the 15th because of a fuel pump difficulty in the diesel engine used to pull the gantry away from the launch vehicle. This delay took 129 minutes after count reached T-60 minutes. Then when the count again reached T-13 minutes, a computer at the Bermuda tracking station failed which caused the mission delay 24 hours.

LAUNCH COMPLEX 14

Site preparation for construction of Complex 14 began in January 1956 and it was placed in use one year later. Final acceptance by the Air Force was not made until August 1957. The first Atlas ICBM missile launched from this complex was on June 11, 1957 and this flight was the first flight test of the vehicle at the range. There were 15 research and development flights of the Atlas from Complex 14.

Complex 14 was designed to support Atlas D operations. Since D models were used in Project Mercury, very little modifications were required for the Manned Space Program. Modification consisted of installation of the "white room" to house the spacecraft atop the service tower, inclusion of an egress tower, and changes to the internal configuration of the top of the gantry to accommodate the escape rocket tower. The environment of the "white room" was controlled to minimize the effects of humidity and dust on the spacecraft components. The emergency egress tower had an extending platform reaching to the door of the spacecraft as a means for astronauts to evacuate the spacecraft without external aid. In case of an incapacitated astronaut, the external egress crew could use the tower.

With the completion of the Mercury program, Complex 14 was programmed for modifications to support Atlas-Agena launches. Alterations included dismantling the egress tower and erecting a 101 foot umbilical tower to handle Agena; modify the existing service tower; installation of a liquid oxygen storage tank; and launch pad facilities additions. The "white room" now houses Agena fuel and pressure servicing units for pre-launch checks.

The complex consists of a block house, fuel and liquid oxygen storage, electrical power supplies, service tower, and launch pad. And all equipment necessary to check out each complex and launch vehicle.

The blockhouse is located 750 feet from the launch pad, constructed igloo-shaped and floated in sand for blast protection. The flooring and walls are in two section with sand inbetween. The walls are 10-1/2 feet thick at the base with 40 feet of sand around them. The dome is 5-1/2 feet thick with 10 feet of sand over that and a thin layer of concrete to hold the sand in place. The diameter of the floor is 60 feet.

Liquid oxygen is stored in a 28,000 gallon tank which has an aluminum liner. The fuel flows through stainless steel lines at 1600 gallons per minute. Fuel is stored in a 16,600 gallon tank.

The service tower is 145 feet high with 14 movable decks so a launch crew can assemble the vehicle. The tower is mounted on rails which moves it to a rail-mounted transfer table which carries the structure to an area about 300 feet from the launch pad.

The launch pad is constructed of concrete and steel with a 20 foot ramp to the top. Inside are two levels containing hydraulic and pneumatic pressure units, electrical junctions and power supplies, equipment for prelaunch checkouts, instrumentation room, air-conditioning equipment and shops. The pad has a hold-down capability - two arms attached to the base of the vehicle which are released through air pressure when thrust has been built up. There are water deluge and spray systems mounted for cooling purposes during launch. The flame bucket is water cooled by approximately 30,000 gallons per minute during engine operation on the pad.

UNITS PACIFIC:

KEARSARGE CVS 33  
(Recovered) (PRS)  
JOHN W. THOMASON DD 760  
TAUSSIG DD 746  
FLETCHER DD 445  
BOLE DD 755  
EPPERSON DD 719  
LOFBERG DD 759  
DUNCAN DDR 874  
DEHAVEN DD 727  
MANSFIELD DD 728  
KNOX DDR 742  
CHIPOLA AO 63  
KAWISHIWI AO 146

## DISCREPTANCIES BETWEEN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

NAME OF SHIP	MERCURY FLIGHT	DISCREPTANCY	DIVISION OF NAVAL HISTORY	DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REFERENCE	NASA	ACTUAL OPERATIONS ORDERS
VALLEY FORGE CVS-45	MA-1A	Wrong hull number	(X) CVS-49	CVS-45	CVS-45	CVS-45
BORIE DD-704	MA-2	Mis-spelled	(X) DORIE	BORIE	BORIE	BORIE
WADLEIGH DD-689	MR-3	Mis-spelled	(X) RALIEGH	WADLEIGH	WADLEIGH	WADLEIGH
MARIOS AO-57	MA-4	Listed as taking part	Not Listed	(X) Listed	(X) Listed	Did not take part in MA-4
CHICKASKIA AO-54	MA-5	Mis-spelled	(X) CHIKCAIKIA	CHICKASKIA	CHICKASKIA	CHICKASKIA
LOWRY DD-770	MA-5	Mis-spelled	(X) LOWERY	LOWRY	LOWRY	LOWRY
HAWKINS DD-873	MA-5	Mis-spelled	(X) HANKINS	HAWKINS	HAWKINS	HAWKINS
STRIBLING DD-867	MA-6	Wrong hull number	(X) DD-876	DD-867	DD-867	DD-867
ANTIETAM CVS-36	MA-6	Placed in wrong recovery force	(X) Pacific	Atlantic	Atlantic	Atlantic
WREN DD-568	MA-7	Placed in wrong recovery force	(X) Pacific	Atlantic	Atlantic	Atlantic
REMEY DD-688	MA-7	Placed in wrong recovery force	(X) Pacific	Atlantic	Atlantic	Atlantic
HUNT DD-674	MA-7	Placed in wrong recovery force	(X) Pacific	Atlantic	Atlantic	Atlantic
RENSHAW DD-499	MA-8	Listed as taking part	Not Listed	Not Listed	(X) Listed	Did not take part in MA-8
JOHN A. BOLE DD-755	MA-9	Mis-spelled	(X) BOLD	BOLE	BOLE	BOLE

Other discreptancies noted concerned the use by Naval History of the term nautical miles (especially in cases of SHEPARD and GRISSOM when their figures actually represented statute miles.

Mis-spelling is normally minor except in cases of ship names as there are other real ships by similar or mis-spelled names.

## PHILATELIC DISCREPANCIES, COMMEMORATIVE COVERS, AND FRAUDULENT

NAME OF SHIP	MERCURY FLIGHT	DISCREPANCY	PARTICIPATION	COMMENTS
ENTERPRISE CVN-65	MA-6	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-6	Chief Postal Clerk, W. W. Glenn on board CVAN-65 serviced and cacheted covers.
CONSTELLATION CVA-64	MA-6	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-6	CVA-64 forwarded covers to FORRESTAL CVA-59, but first cacheted covers with CVA-64 cachet. (ENTERPRISE also cacheted and forwarded covers to ANTIETAM). Thus both CVAN-65 and CVA-64 had cacheted covers but were postmarked on those carriers taking part, and this lends support to possible participation unless you know. CVAN-65 had both.
ALSTEDE AF-48	MA-6	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-6	Mercury Coordinator, W. R. Skelley serviced covers on this ship as craft was his last sea assignment.
NOA DD-841	MA-6	One true cover. One fraudulent cover	Participated	True covers on board during recovery received the postmark and there were no cachets whatsoever. The fraudulent printed NOA cover had the Mercury postage stamp (see MA-6 flight for details) and had a printed cachet and word explanation. The NOA did NOT have the Mercury postage stamp on board while on duty in the recovery force. This stamp was first purchased or came in contact with NOA six days after it turned the capsule over to NASA at Bermuda when it returned to Mayport, Fla. The Postal Clerk on board NOA back-dated his hand postmark to make the cover.
CONSTELLATION CVA-64	MA-7	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-7	CVA-64 used their Mercury cachet as they did on the MA-6 flight for all collectors' covers and then postmarked them instead of forwarding.
ENTERPRISE CVAN-65	MA-7	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-7	Chief Glenn on board CVAN-65 again cacheted and serviced covers.
ALSTEDE AF-48	MA-7	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-7	W. R. Skelley again serviced covers on his old ship.
COONTZ DLG-9	MA-8	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-8	COONTZ was a standby ship and never was called upon to take part, serviced covers and did not forward them. (Pacific)
RENSHAW DD-499	MA-8	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-8	RENSHAW was on tentative list but was scratched. DD-499 serviced covers and did not forward them. (Pacific)
VESOLE DDR-878	MA-8	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-8	Serviced covers and did not forward to ship taking part. (Atlantic)
ENTERPRISE CVAN-65	MA-8	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-8	Chief Glenn on board CVAN-65 again serviced and cacheted covers. (Atlantic)
MC CAFFERY DDE-860	MA-9	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-9	MC CAFFERY was on tentative list but was scratched. DDE-860 serviced covers and did not forward them. (Atlantic)
PURDY DD-734	MA-9	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-9	Same as MC CAFFERY. (Atlantic)
CORRY DDR-817	MA-9	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-9	Same as MC CAFFERY. (Atlantic)
NANTAHALA AO-60	MA-9	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-9	Same as MC CAFFERY. (Atlantic)
FOREST ROYAL DD-872	MA-9	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-9	Same as MC CAFFERY. (Atlantic)
CHARLES R. WARE DD-865	MA-9	Commemorative	Did not take part in MA-9	Same as MC CAFFERY. (Atlantic)

## OTHER DATA AND INFORMATION CHECKED

- REFERENCE: Operational Phrase of Project Mercury from PROJECT MERCURY (NASA), page 195 states that for MA-9, (COOPER FLIGHT), there was a Middle East recovery force, TASK FORCE 109 under the direction of Rear Admiral B. J. Semes, consisting of a seaplane tender and two destroyers.
- CHECKED : The MIDEASTFOR flagship and support; and aircraft at Aden were on standby only during this flight, thus not on the actual recovery force. (CTF 140 Operation Order 1-63 (MA-9), P.A.O. CTF 140
- QUESTION : If reference was true for above MA-9, what about a Middle East recovery force for MA-6 (GLENN FLIGHT); MA-7 (CARPENTER FLIGHT); and MA-8 (SCHIRRA FLIGHT) as all of these flights were also orbital?
- CHECKED : MIDEASTFOR ships were on a standby alert and were required to maintain a communications alert and were not required to be deployed to recovery stations. Recovery, if required, would have been a Search and Rescue operation. (P.A.O. CTF 140) OP Orders MA-6, 7, 8.

Commander Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla (COMCRUDESFLOT) FOUR was in charge of early space recovery. He was assigned the duties of Commander Manned Spacecraft Recovery Force, Atlantic which is known as Commander Task Force One Four Zero.

## PROJECT MERCURY TRACKING STATIONS

Before Project Mercury moonwatch teams were set up around the world. Many of these teams were in operation for tracking and did so for Mercury, Gemini, and will continue for Project Apollo. The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory stations were set up for Project Mercury around the world to track by Baker-Nunn cameras. These stations were located at:

Organ Pass, New Mexico	Arequipa, Peru
Olifantsfontein, South Africa	Shiraz, Iran
Woomera, Australia	Curacao, Netherland West Indies
San Fernando, Spain	Jupiter, Florida
Tokyo, Japan	Villa Dolores, Argentina
Naini Tal, India	Maui, Hawaii

The Department of Defense set stations for Tracking, Monitoring, and Control of Manned Space Flight at:

Cape Canaveral	Canton Island
Grand Bahama Island	Kauai Island, Hawaii
Grand Turk Island	Point Arguello, California
San Salvador	Guaymas, Mexico
Antiqua	White Sands, New Mexico
Bermuda	Corpus Christi, Texas
Canary Island	Eglin, Florida
Kano, Nigeria	Carnavon, Australia

In the early days of space, communication was handled by the American Telephone and Telegraph; American Cable and Radio; Western Union; and Radio Corporation of America. A Navy teletype machine (NTX) model 19 provided noncommercial contact with all government and military installations through the military network.



# OPERATION HUSH-HUSH

... or how the Project Mercury Stamp was planned and issued ...

by **JAMES F. KELLEHER**

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE POSTMASTER GENERAL

Operation "HUSH-HUSH" printed by the Washington Press, Maplewood, N.J.

## REGISTERED MAIL

SHIPPED BY BUR. ENG. AND PRTG.  
FOR POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

*Feb 20, 1962*  
ACCOUNTABLE PAPER  
*FAS*

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID  
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300

*215PM*

This label is not to be separated from the wrapper. It should be delivered intact with the package to which it is attached.

**TO: POSTMASTER**

APPLETON WISC

REGISTRY NO.

2 4 4 5 8 X

ITEM NO.

599

REG. NO.

931

P.O. NO.

02500

FORM 3842-DC (7M) REV. JULY 1960

The top of the box of Mercury stamps in the mystery pouch.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT  
CHIEF POSTAL INSPECTOR  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

TO: POSTAL INSPECTOR  
% POSTMASTER

*Appleton, Wisc*

DO NOT OPEN IN TRANSIT

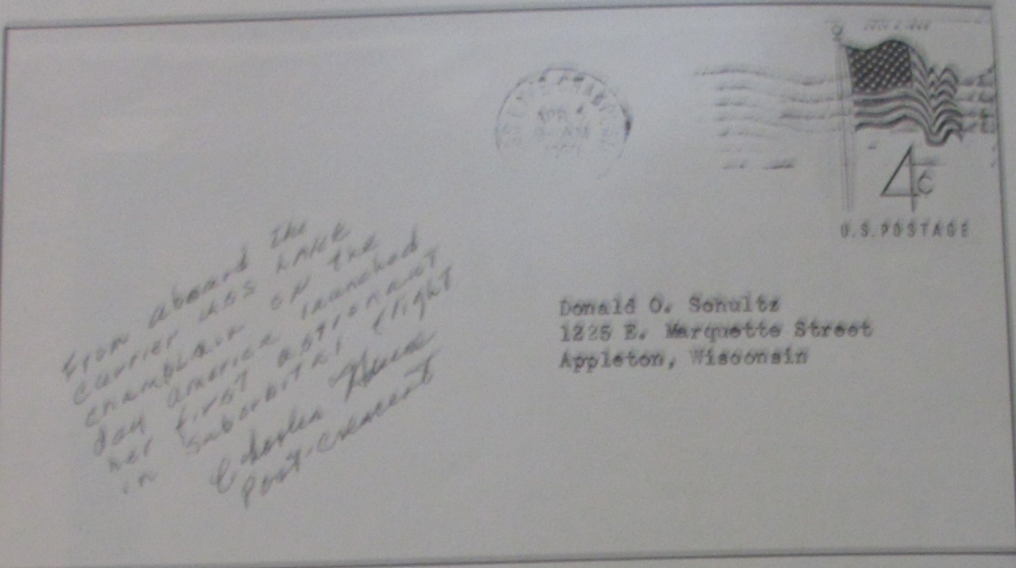
**CLASSIFIED MATERIAL**

**DO NOT OPEN**

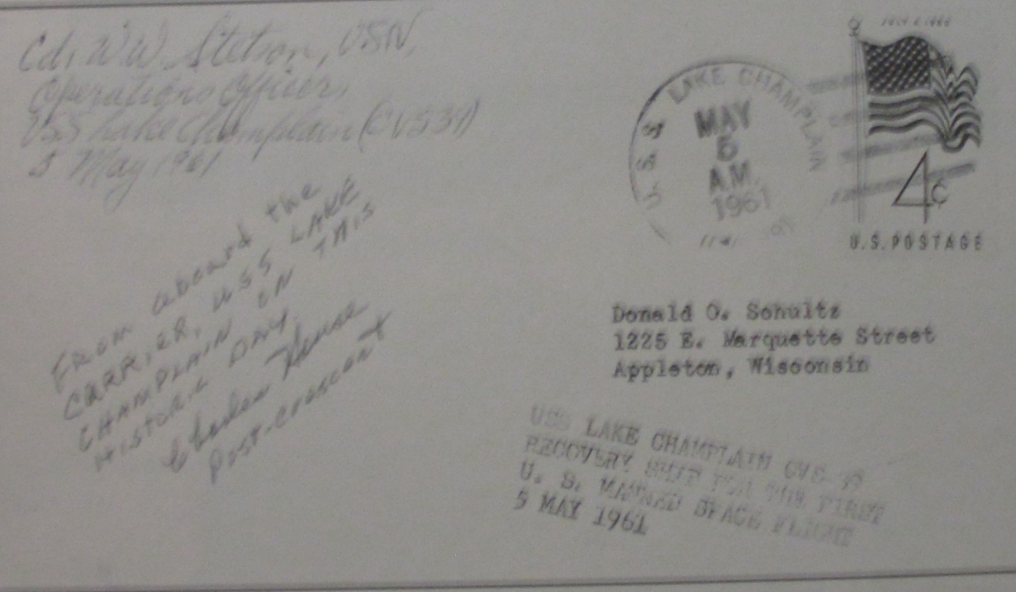
The two outside tags attached to the mystery pouch.



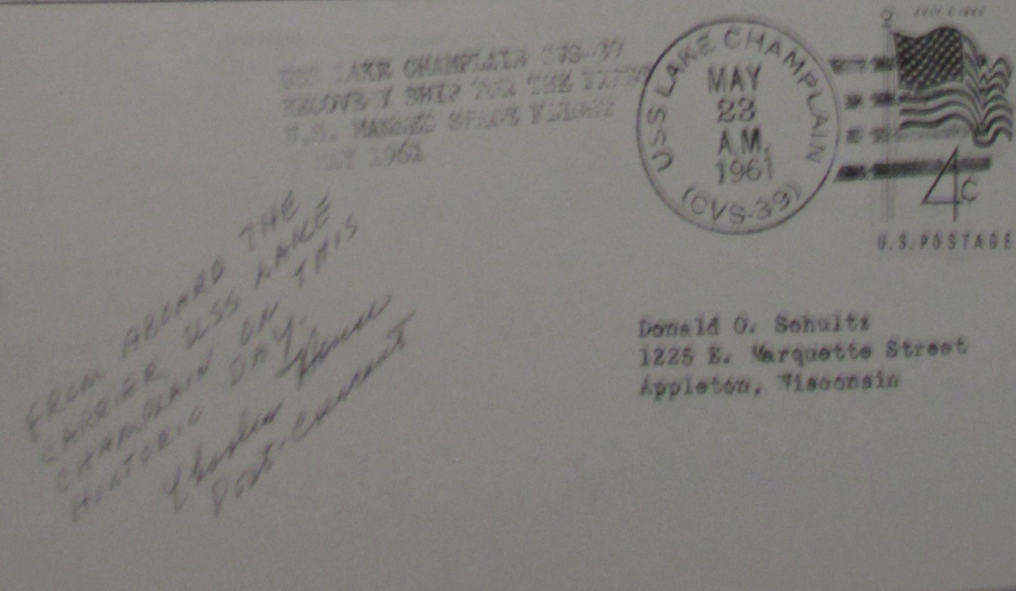
The three covers carried on board LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS-39 by Appleton Post Crescent columnist, Charlie House. Note cover marked Apr. 5, 1961. Mr. House wrote author that the Postal Clerk on board LAKE CHAMPLAIN forgot to change the die in month but placed the correct day in. He explained that they used the hand postmark more than the machine and used the machine on that day so author could have both types of cancels. The last cover and postmarked was made on the day LAKE CHAMPLAIN docked on the East Coast.



Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin



Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin



Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

*Kangaroo*

U.S.S. RANDOLPH  
JUL 21 1961  
A.M.  
(CVS-15)



MR-4 Grissom Prime Recovery Ship

U.S.S. RANDOLPH  
CVS-15



FLAGSHIP  
ASW GROUP ALFA

*Max Evans*  
Captain USN

Commanding Officer  
USS RANDOLPH (CVS-15)



SPACE CAPSULE RECOVERY SHIP

U.S.S.  
FEB 20  
P.M.  
1962  
RANDOLPH (CVS-15)



U.S. POSTAGE

MA-6 Glenn Prime Recovery Ship

DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. MARQUETTE ST.  
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

U.S.S. NOA  
FEB 20  
1962  
(DD-841)



MA-6 Recovery Ship, NOA Authentic Cover

U.S.S. NOA, DD-841  
Recovery Ship for the First  
U.S. MAN IN SPACE



U.S.S. NOA  
FEB 20  
1962  
(DD-841)



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

MA-6 NOA Fraudulent Cover

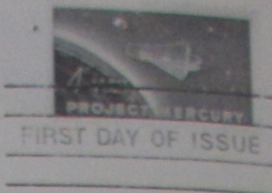
THIS COMMEMORATIVE COVER WAS A PART OF THE FIRST MAIL DISPATCH FROM THE DESTROYER U.S.S. NOA FOLLOWING RECOVERY OF U.S. ASTRONAUT LT. COL. JOHN H. GLENN, JR., USMC, AND MERCURY SPACE CAPSULE "FRIENDSHIP 7" EVEN.

**FIRST U.S. ORBITAL FLIGHT**

LT. COL. JOHN H. GLENN, JR., U.S.M.C.

SPACE CRAFT "FRIENDSHIP 7"

FEBRUARY 20, 1962



*John H. Glenn, Jr.*

LIFT OFF TIME 0947—SPLASH 1443

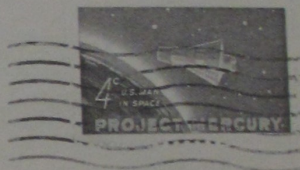
PICK UP BY U.S.S. NOA AT 1504

THE DESTROYER U.S.S. NOA (DD-841) WAS THE RECOVERY SHIP FOR THE U.S. MAN IN SPACE, ASTRONAUT LT. COL. JOHN H. GLENN, JR., U.S.M.C., AND THE MERCURY SPACE CAPSULE FRIENDSHIP 7.

Same Cachet Background as NOA Fraudulent used for Mercury FDC



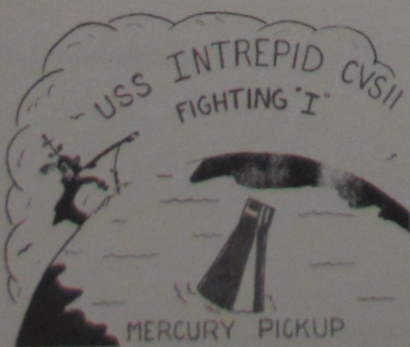
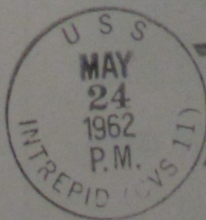
Original FDC from Cape Canaveral of Mercury Stamp



FIRST DAY

First Day Cover from Appleton, Wisconsin

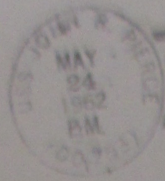
*Scott Carpenter*



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. MARQUETTE ST.  
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

MA-7 Carpenter Prime Recovery Ship

27085



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. MARQUETTE ST.  
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

MA-7 Capsule Recovery Ship



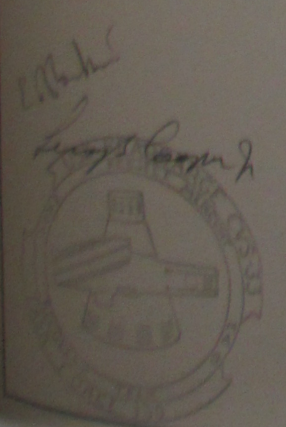
USS JOHN R. PIERCE (ID-753)  
RECOVERS AURORA SEVEN  
MAY 24, 1962

Back of Capsule Recovery Ship showing cachet



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

MA-8 Schirra Prime Recovery Ship



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

MA-9 Cooper Prime Recovery Ship

U. S. S. RANDOLPH  
CVS-15



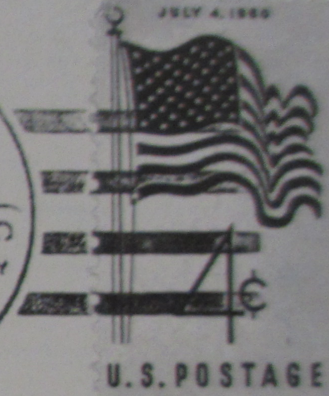
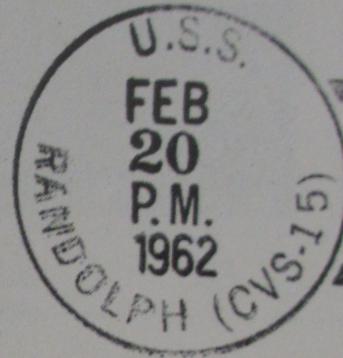
FLAGSHIP  
ASW GROUP ALFA

*Max Burns*  
*Captain USN*

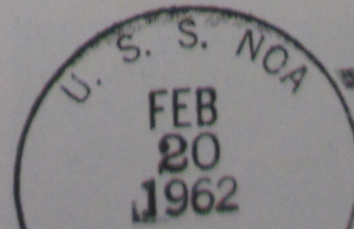
Commanding Officer  
USS RANDOLPH (CVS-15)



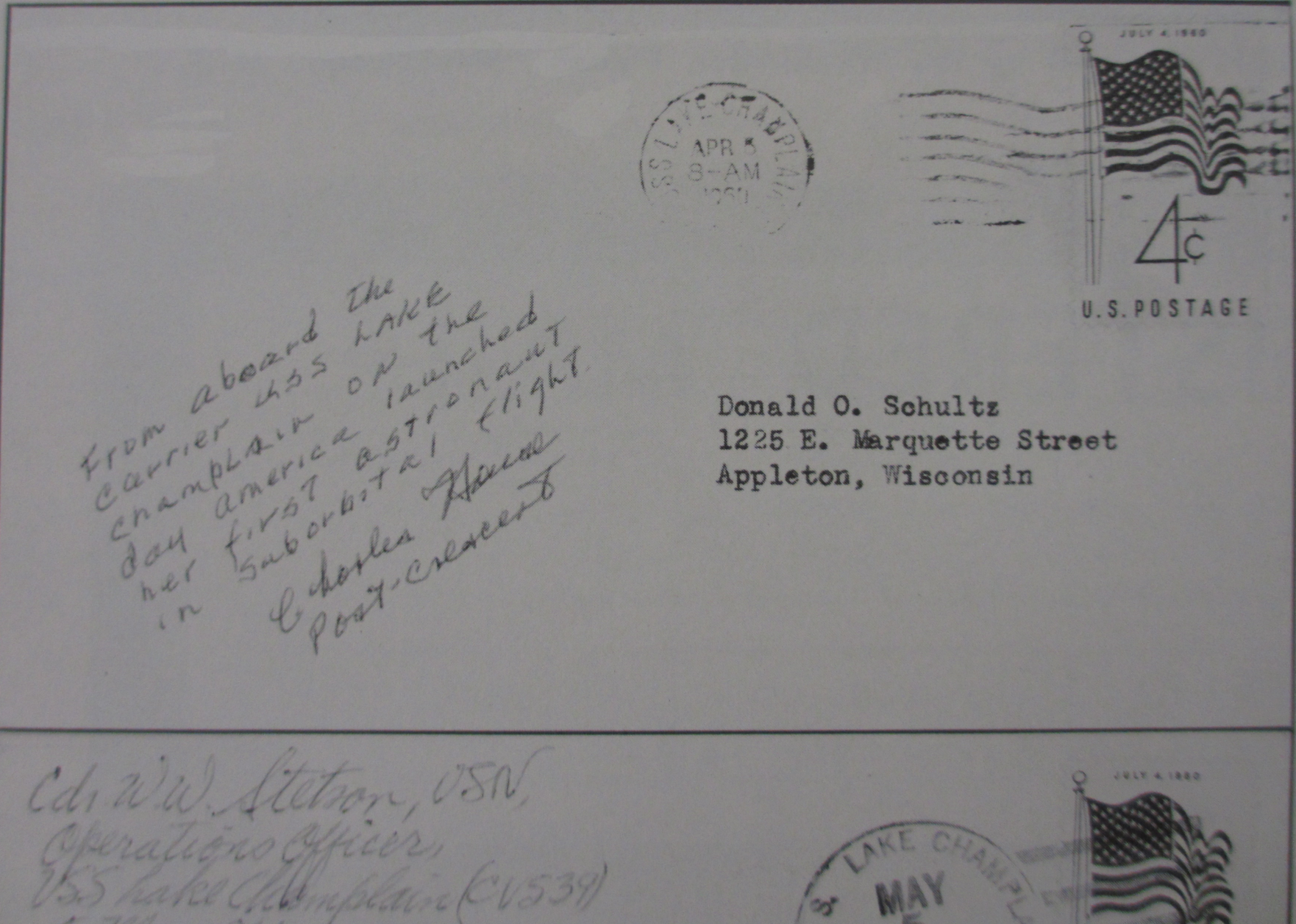
SPACE CAPSULE RECOVERY SHIP



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. MARQUETTE ST.  
APPLETON, WISCONSIN



the correct day in. He explained that they used the hand postmark machine used the machine on that day so author could have both types of cancelled postmarked was made on the day LAKE CHAMPLAIN docked on the



LAKE CHAMPLAIN  
APR 5  
8-AM  
1951

JULY 4 1960  
4c  
U.S. POSTAGE

From aboard the  
carrier USS LAKE  
Champlain on the  
day America launched  
her first astronaut  
in suborbital flight.  
Charles H. ...  
Post-Crescent

Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

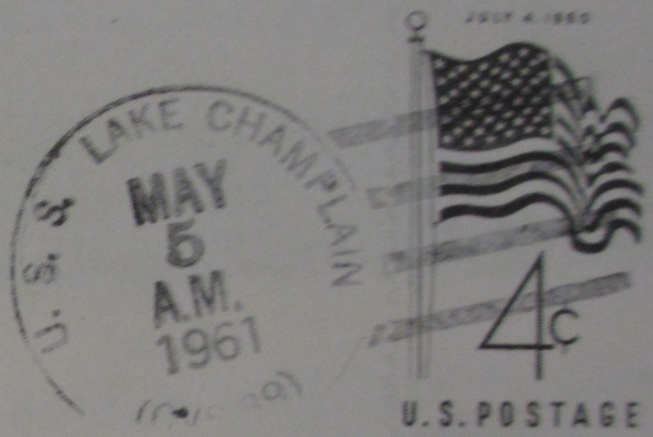
Cdr W.W. Stetson, USN,  
Operations Officer,  
USS Lake Champlain (CV 539)

LAKE CHAMPLAIN  
3 MAY  
JULY 4 1960

ena day  
her in  
first  
subor  
Charles  
Post-Crescent

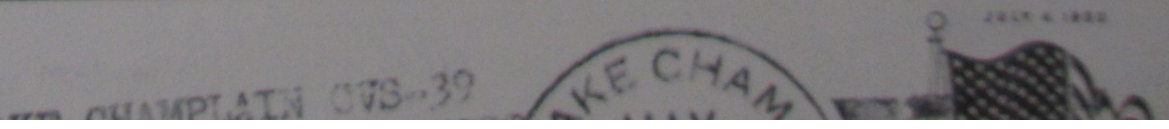
Cdr. W. Stetson, USN,  
Operations Officer,  
USS Lake Champlain (CV539)  
5 May 1961

From aboard the  
CARRIER, USS LAKE  
CHAMPLAIN ON THIS  
HISTORIC DAY,  
Charles House  
Post-Crescent



Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN CV5-39  
RECOVERY SHIP FOR THE FIRST  
U. S. MANNED SPACE FLIGHT  
5 MAY 1961

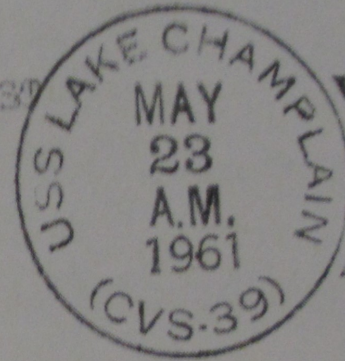


*FILE  
CARRI  
CHAMPLA  
HISTORIC  
Charles M  
Post-Crescent*

Appleton, Wisconsin

USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS-39  
RECOVERY SHIP FOR THE FIRST  
U. S. MANNED SPACE FLIGHT  
5 MAY 1961

USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS-39  
RECOVERY SHIP FOR THE FIRST  
U.S. MANNED SPACE FLIGHT  
5 MAY 1961



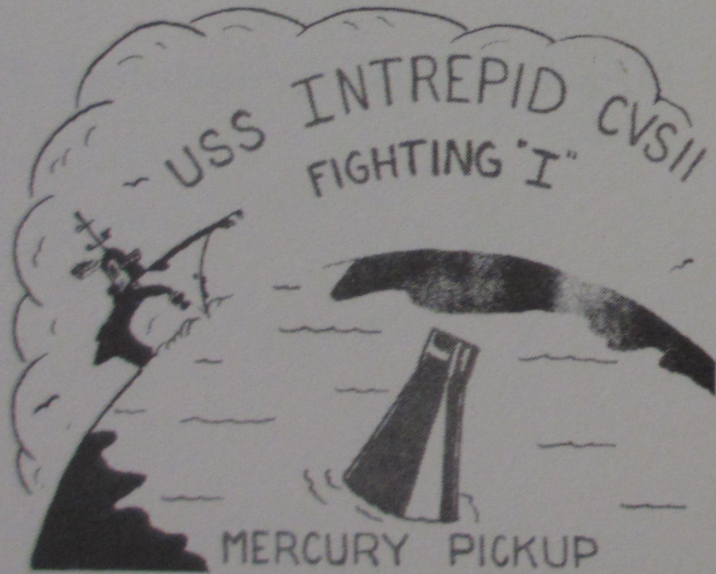
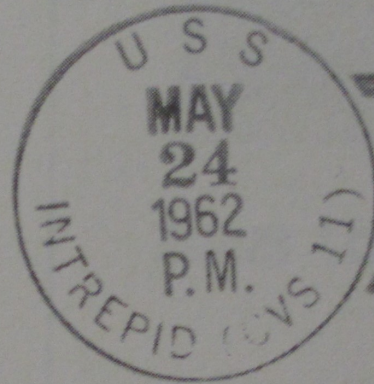
U.S. POSTAGE

*FROM ABOARD THE  
CARRIER USS LAKE  
CHAMPLAIN ON  
HISTORIC DAY:  
Charles M  
Post-Crescent*

Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

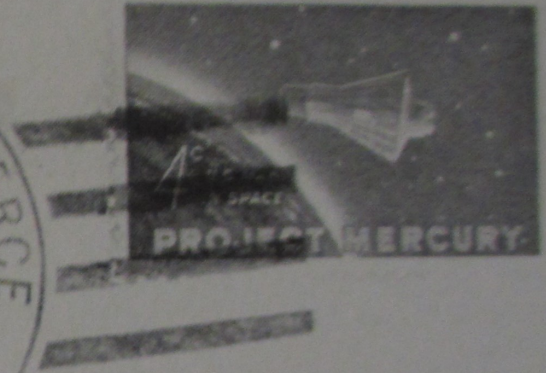
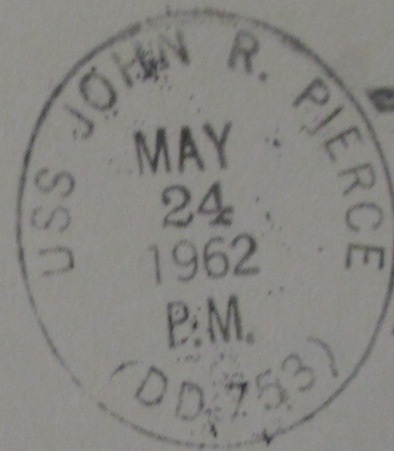


Scott Carpenter



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. MARQUETTE ST.  
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

27065



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. MARQUETTE ST.  
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

*Hany E. Cooley*

U.S.S. RANDOLPH  
JUL  
21  
1961  
A.M.  
(CVS-15)

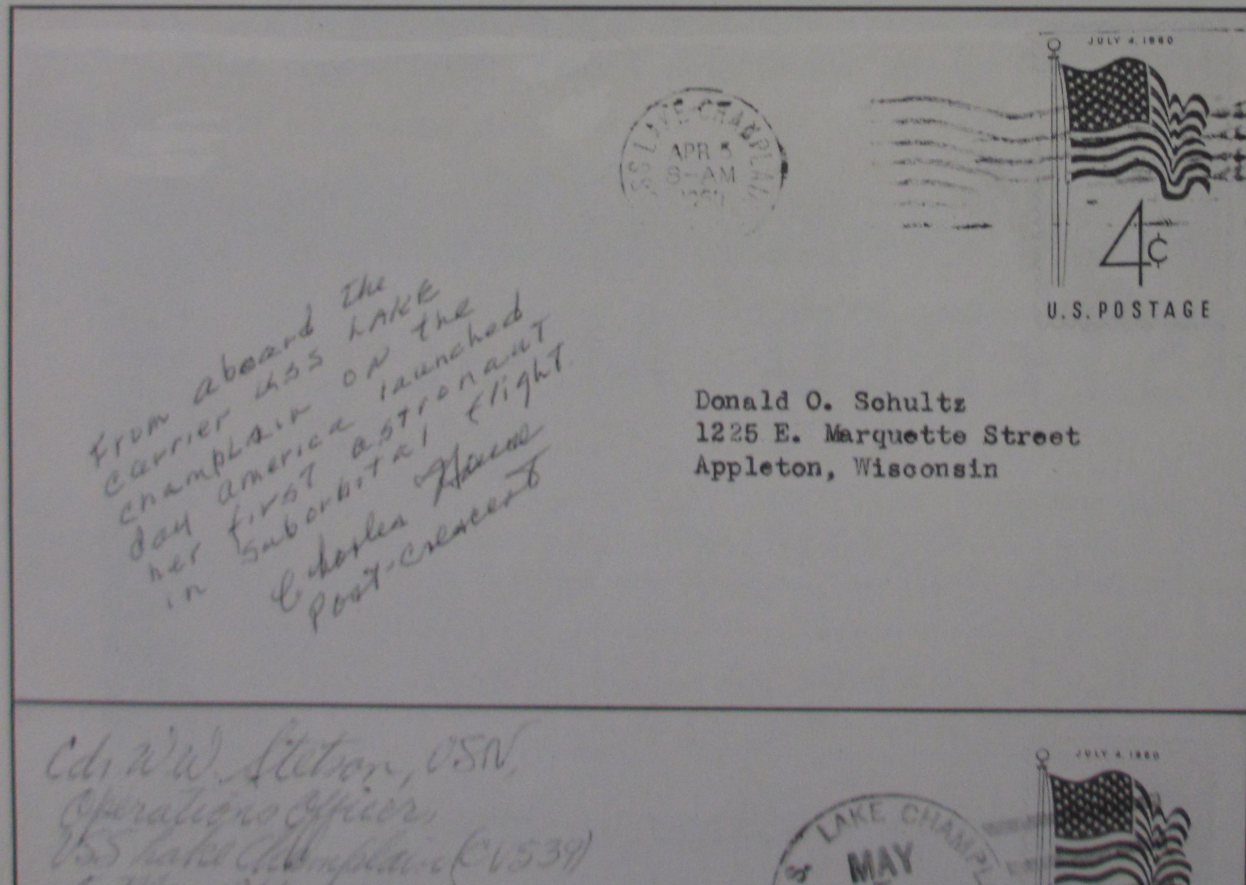


U.S.S. RANDOLPH

U.S.S.  
FEB  
20



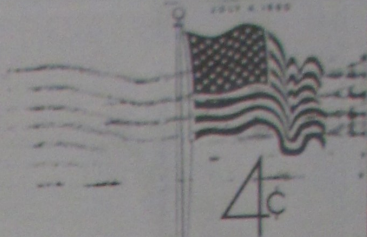
The three covers carried on board LAKE CHAMPLAIN CVS-39 by Appleton Post Crescent columnist, Charlie House. Note cover marked Apr. 5, 1961. Mr. House wrote author that the Postal Clerk on board LAKE CHAMPLAIN forgot to change the die in month but placed the correct day in. He explained that they used the hand postmark more than the machine and used the machine on that day so author could have both types of cancels. The last cover postmarked was made on the day LAKE CHAMPLAIN docked on the East Coast.



the Postal Clerk on board LAKE CHAMPLAIN used the hand postmark more the correct day in. He explained that they used the machine postmark more used the machine on that day so author could have both types of cancels. postmarked was made on the day LAKE CHAMPLAIN docked on the East

*From aboard the carrier USS LAKE Champlain on the day America launched her first astronaut in Suborbital flight  
Charles House Post-Crescent*

APR 5 8-AM 1961




U.S. POSTAGE

Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

*Cdr W. Stetson, USN,  
Operations Officer,  
USS Lake Champlain (CV539)  
5 May 1961*

*From aboard the carrier, USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN ON THIS HISTORIC DAY.  
Charles House Post-Crescent*

U.S. LAKE CHAMPLAIN  
MAY 5 A.M. 1961  
(CV-39)



U.S. POSTAGE

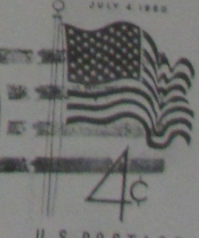
Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN CV5-39  
RECOVERY SHIP FOR THE FIRST  
U. S. MANNED SPACE FLIGHT  
5 MAY 1961

USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN CV5-39  
RECOVERY SHIP FOR THE FIRST  
U. S. MANNED SPACE FLIGHT  
5 MAY 1961

*FROM ABOARD THE CARRIER USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN ON THIS HISTORIC DAY.  
Charles House Post-Crescent*

U.S. LAKE CHAMPLAIN  
MAY 23 A.M. 1961  
(CVS-39)



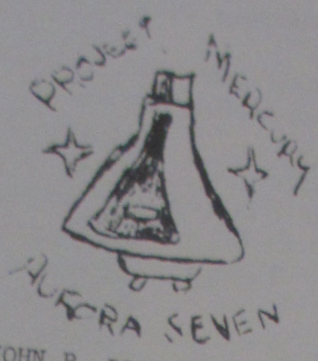
U.S. POSTAGE

Donald O. Schultz  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

...TON, WISCONSIN

...om Cape  
...rcury Stamp

Back  
St



USS JOHN R. PIERCE (DD-753)  
RECOVERS AURORA SEVEN  
MAY 24, 1962

...er from  
...consin

MA-  
R

*E. Rankin*  
M. P. RANKIN  
Captain, U. S. NAVY  
Commanding Officer  
*M. Schindler*

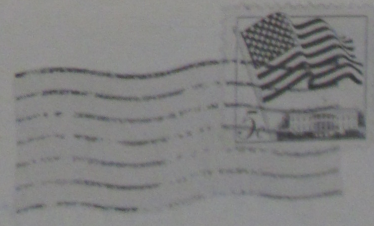


DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

...ter Prime  
...y Ship

MA-  
R

*E. Rankin*  
*Frank Schindler*



DONALD O. SCHULTZ  
1225 E. Marquette Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin

The preceding pages of cover photos are only of the Prime Manned Mercury Recovery Ships, The NOA Story, and actual recovery ships if different. There are many other fine recovery cacheted covers from the different flights that could have been shown as well as the lift-off and tracking stations examples. One could also mention the tie-in material such as ship photos, brochures, Astronaut signatures and memorabilia of the day. If this material was gathered, it would make a sizeable volume of many hundreds of pages.

Many have asked, does anyone have all the Project Mercury Naval Recovery covers? The answer is NO. This is because of the last minute ship changes where replacement ships were already at sea and covers could not be forwarded to them in time. And in case of the early flights, the recovery plans were not announced in advance so no one knew of the event to send covers. This lack of news was still evident for MR-3 (Shepard Flight) because the Warrant Officer who shared his state room with Appleton Post Crescent columnist Charlie House on the LAKE CHAMPLAIN on 5 May 1961 said only 44 philatelic covers were postmarked. After this flight with Cdr. Nevins' help, there was an ever increasing amount of covers serviced.

We, as collectors and buffs can be thankful for the gentlemen our Navy produces and the time and understanding that must be spent to give us such a wonderful hobby.

REFERENCES: Project Mercury, A Chronology. NASA (early space data)  
DOD, Support of Manned Space Flight Programs (support material)  
Division of Naval History, Washington, D.C. (format and data)  
Manned Space Flight Center, Houston, Texas (data and support)  
Howard Benedict, Associated Press (space data and support)  
J. A. Felt, Cdr. USN (format and data)  
Robert Ekas, Chicora, Pa. (tracking data)  
Office of CTF 140 (conformation and data)

All data and information set forth was gathered from above references and full credit is given. The author claims only bringing all sources together with comments added.

POD NAMES 305 "MERCURY" CITIES

The Post Office Department announced the names of the 305 post offices to which the 4¢ Project Mercury commemorative stamps were distributed in advance of Col. John Glenn's successful orbital flight of February 20.

ALABAMA - Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery.

ALASKA - Anchorage

ARIZONA - Phoenix, Tucson.

ARKANSAS - Little Rock.

CALIFORNIA - Anaheim, Bakersfield, Berkeley, Beverly Hills, Burbank, Burlingame, Culver City, Fresno, Glendale, Inglewood, Long Beach, Los Angeles, McClellan AFB, Modesto, North Hollywood, Oakland, Palo Alto.

ALSO - Pasadena, Richmond, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Mateo, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Ana, Santa Barbara, Santa Monica, Stockton, Van Nuys, Whittier.

COLORADO - Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver.

CONNECTICUT - Bridgeport, Bristol, Greenwich, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Stamford, Waterbury.

DELAWARE - Wilmington.

D.C. - Washington.

FLORIDA - Cocoa, Cocoa Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Pensacola, Saint Petersburg, Tallahassee, Tampa, West Palm Beach.

GEORGIA - Atlanta, Augusta, Columbus, Macon, Savannah.

HAWAII - Honolulu.

IDAHO - Boise.

ILLINOIS - Aurora, Bloomington, Chicago, Decatur, Elgin, Evanston, Joliet, Melrose Park, Moline, Mount Morris, North Chicago, Oak Park, Peoria, Rockford, Skokie, Springfield, Waukegan.

INDIANA - Crawfordsville, Elkhart, Evansville, Fort Wayne, Gary, Hammond, Indianapolis, Kokomo, Lafayette, South Bend, Terre Haute.

IOWA - Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Des Moines, Sioux City, Waterloo.

KANSAS - Kansas City, Shawnee Mission, Topeka, Wichita.

KENTUCKY - Lexington, Louisville.

LOUISIANA - Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Shreveport.

MAINE - Portland.

MARYLAND - Baltimore, Hagerstown, Silver Spring.

MASSACHUSETTS - Boston, Brockton, Clinton, Fall River, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Springfield, Worcester.

MICHIGAN - Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Dearborn, Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Muskegon, Pontiac, Royal Oak, Saginaw.

MINNESOTA - Duluth, Minneapolis, Saint Paul.

MISSISSIPPI - Jackson.

MISSOURI - Jefferson City, Kansas City, Saint Joseph, Saint Louis, Springfield.

MONTANA - Billings.

NEBRASKA - Lincoln, Omaha.

NEVADA - Las Vegas, Reno.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Concord, Manchester.

NEW JERSEY - Atlantic City, Bayonne, Camden, Clifton, East Orange, Elizabeth, Englewood, Fairview, Hackensack, Jersey City, Kearny, Newark, New Brunswick, Passaic, Paterson, Plainfield, Princeton, Rahway, Rutherford, Trenton, Union, Union City, West New York.

NEW MEXICO - Albuquerque, Roswell.

NEW YORK - Albany, Binghamton, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Elmira, Flushing, Freeport, Garden City, Great Neck, Hempstead, Hicksville, Jamaica, Long Island City, Mineola, Mount Vernon, Newark, New Hyde Park, New Rochelle, New York City, Niagara Falls, Pleasantville, Port Washington, Poughkeepsie, Rochester, Rockville Centre, Schenectady, Staten Island, Syracuse, Utica, White Plains, Yonkers.

NORTH CAROLINA - Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, High Point, Raleigh, Winston-Salem.

NORTH DAKOTA - Fargo.

OHIO - Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Lima, Lorain, Mansfield, Marion, New Concord, Springfield, Toledo, Youngstown.

OKLAHOMA - Lawton, Oklahoma City, Tulsa.

OREGON - Eugene, Portland, Salem.

PENNSYLVANIA - Allentown, Bethlehem, Chester, Easton, Erie, Hanover, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Norristown, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Reading, Scranton, Sharon, Upper Darby, Warren, Wilkes Barre, Williamsport, York.

PUERTO RICO - San Juan.

RHODE ISLAND - Pawtucket, Providence.

SOUTH CAROLINA - Charleston, Columbia, Greenville.

SOUTH DAKOTA - Sioux Falls.

TENNESSEE - Chattanooga, Kingsport, Knoxville, Memphis, Nashville.

TEXAS - Abilene, Amarillo, Austin, Beaumont, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Lubbock, San Antonio, Waco, Wichita Falls.

UTAH - Ogden, Salt Lake City.

VERMONT - Burlington.

VIRGINIA - Alexandria, Arlington, Falls Church, Hampton, Lynchburg, Norfolk, Richmond, Roanoke.

WASHINGTON - Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma.

WEST VIRGINIA - Charleston, Huntington.

WISCONSIN - Appleton, Chippewa Falls, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Racine, Superior.

WYOMING - Cheyenne.