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Space Mail from Chinese Shenzhou 10 Manned Spacecraft and Tiangong 1 Target Spaceship

by Lin Da An

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The Shenzhou-10 manned space flight tested an improved rendezvous and docking technology and optimised the protocol for automatic and manual rendezvous and docking to resolve some problems encountered during the previous Shenzhou-8 and Shenzhou-9 missions.

Shenzhou 10 spent 15 days in space and the taikonauts entered Tiangong 1 to conduct short-term supervised scientific experiments, science lectures and other interactive projects.

Three taikonauts (Jing Haipeng, Zhang Xiaoguang and female taikonaut Wang Yaping) were launched on 11 June 2013 from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre aboard the modified LM-2F/Y10 rocket, and successfully achieved automatic rendezvous and docking with Tiangong 1 on the same day.

The Shenzhou 10 re-entry capsule returned to the spacecraft's main landing site in the A-Mu-Gu-Lang Grassland west of the Sunite Right Banner in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region on 26 June 2013.

I present some of the space mail from the Shenzhou 10 manned spacecraft and the Tiangong 1 target spacecraft.

Each flown space item is accompanied by a notary certificate (*Fig. 1*) issued by the Beijing Fang-Yuan Notary Office. In addition, each flown space item carries a steel seal or red cachet of the Beijing Fang-Yuan Notary Public Office.



Fig 2: Cover issued by BITTT.

Only 11 items exist (numbered from 001 to 011) of the cover flown on Shenzhou 10 manned spacecraft issued by BITTT (Beijing Institute of Tracking and Telecommunication Technology) (*Fig. 2*). The front side of the cover was tied with the “flown-proof” postmark of “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 1 June 2013 8:00 PM, loaded in the cabin of spacecraft”, and another postmark: “China Post Space Post Office 1, 21 June 2013 8:00 PM”. A space mail label was added, issued by the China Manned Space Engineering Office. The cover was then sealed with the dry steel seal of “Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office”.

On the reverse side, the cover was tied with the Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark: “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 11 June 2013, 6:00 PM)” and the Shenzhou 10 landing day

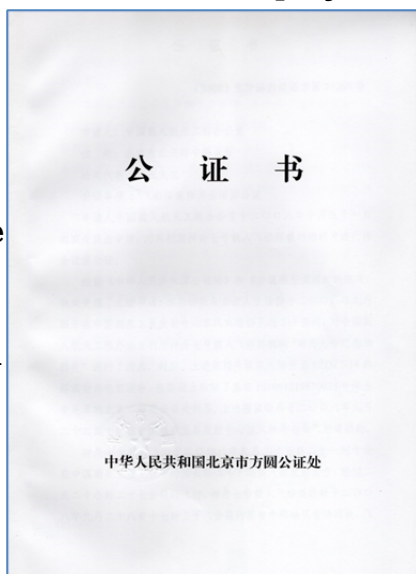


Fig. 1: Notary Certificate.



Fig 3: Reverse of cover issued by BITTT.

postmark: “Si-Zi-Wang-Qi, Inner Mongolia Hongge’er, 26 June 2013 9:00 AM”. A recovery postmark was added with the date of the opening of the capsule cabin: “Beijing Space City 1,28 June 2013 3:00 PM” (Fig. 3).

The BITTT successfully put into Shenzhou 10 a total 19 covers (numbered from 001 to 019) “2013-1 Gui-Si Year (Year of Snake) - Special Stamp”, issued by the China Philatelic Corporation. The front side of the cover was tied with the “flown-proof” postmark of “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 1 June 2013 8:00 PM, loaded in the cabin of spacecraft”, and another postmark: “China Post Space Post Office 1, 21 June 2013, 8:00 PM”. A space mail label was added, issued by the China Manned Space Engineering Office. The cover was then sealed with the steel seal of “Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office”. The cover was signed by the three taikonauts Nie Haisheng, Zhang Xiaoguang, Wang Yaping (Fig. 4).



Fig 4: Cover signed by Nie Haisheng, Zhang Xiaoguang, Wang Yaping.



Fig 5: Reverse of cover issued by China Philatelic Corporation.

On the reverse side of the cover was put the Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark: “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 11 June 2013, 6:00 PM” and the Shenzhou 10 landing day

postmark: “Si-Zi-Wang-Qi, Inner Mongolia Hongge’er, 26 June 2013 9:00 AM”. A recovery postmark was added with the date of the opening of the capsule cabin: “Beijing Space City 1,28 June 2013 3:00 PM” (Fig. 5).

Another set of 19 BITTT “2013-1 Gui-Si Year - Special Stamp” covers (numbered from 001 to 019) issued by the China Philatelic Corporation was signed by the ten taikonauts: Nie Haisheng, Zhang Xiaoguang, Wang Yapin, Yang Liwei, Fei Junlong, Zhai Zhigang, Liu Boming, Jing Haipeng, Liu Wang, Liu Yang. (Fig. 6).



Fig 6: BITTT “Gui-Si Year” cover signed by 10 Taikonauts.

The front side of the cover was cancelled with the “flown-proof” postmark of “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 1 June 2013. 8:00 PM), loaded in the cabin of spacecraft”, and another postmark: “China Post Space Post Office 1, 21 June 2013, 8:00 PM”. The cover was then sealed with the steel seal of “Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office”. On reverse side, the cover was cancelled with the Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark: “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 11 June 2013 6:00 PM” and the Shenzhou 10 landing day postmark: “Si-Zi-Wang-Qi, Inner Mongolia Hongge’er, 26 June 2013 9:00 AM”. A recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date:



Fig 7 and 8: German rocket cards issued in the 1960s.

“Beijing Space City 1, 28 June 2013 3:00 PM” was also added.

The BITTT carried onboard Shenzhou 10 also 6 rocket cards (numbered from 01 to 06) issued in 1961 by the German rocket mail pioneer Gerhard Zucker. The rocket mail card shown in Fig. 7 is postmarked "Duren 7.3.61". The rocket mail card shown in Fig. 8 is postmarked "Duren 12.6.61".

On the back of the cards, there are two stamps commemorating the first successful flight of China's Shenzhou spacecraft to the Tiangong 1 spaceship. The cards were tied with the special JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and the postmark: “China Post Space Post Office 1” cancel. A space mail label was applied. The cards were then sealed with the steel seal of “Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office” (Fig. 9). The wording written in Chinese tells the story of WanHoo's space flight in ancient China.



Fig 9: Reverse of German rocket cards issued in the 1960s.

WanHoo was an official of the Ming Dynasty. He was the World's first Chinese pioneer to attempt to fly on a rocket. Additional four cards were tied with the “flown-proof” postmark of “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 1 June 2013 8:00 PM, loaded in the cabin of spacecraft”, and the postmark: “China Post Space Post Office 1, 21 June 2013 8:00 PM”



Fig 10: The cards were impressed with the dry seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office.

The cards were also cancelled with the postmark of the Shenzhou 10 launch day: “China Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, M.P.O., Lanzhou 27th Branch post office, 11 June 2013 6:00 PM”, with the Shenzhou 10 landing day postmark: “Si-Zi-Wang-Qi, Inner Mongolia, Hongge'er, 26 June 2013 9:00 AM”, and the

recovery postmark of the date of the capsule cabin opening: “Beijing Space City 1, 28 June 2013 3:00 PM”. A space mail label was applied. The cards were then impressed with the dry seal of “Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office” (Fig. 10).

BITTT also loaded into Shenzhou 10 2 additional covers (numbered 001 and 002) commemorating “The 10th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Taikonauts Brigade” issued by the China Philatelic Corporation.



Fig 11: BITTT cover commemorating the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese PLA Taikonauts Brigade.

The front side of the cover was cancelled with the JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and the China Post, Space Post Office cancel. It was labelled with the space mail tag and impressed with the dry seal of the Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office.

The cover was signed by seven taikonauts: Nie Haisheng, Yang Liwei, Fei Junlong, Zhai Zhigang, Liu Boming, Jing Haipeng, Liu Wang. (Fig. 11). The cover was cancelled on the reverse side with the JSLC postmark of the launch day of Shenzhou 10, and the Hongge'er landing day postmark. A recovery postmark of the capsule opening date in Beijing Space City was also added.



Fig 12: CAST flown cover.

A total of 195 covers (numbered from 001 to 195) were loaded on Shenzhou 10 by CAST (China Academy of Space Technology)(Fig. 12). The front side of the cover was cancelled with the JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and the China Post, Space Post Office cancel. It was labelled with the space mail tag, and impressed with the steel seal of the Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office. On its reverse side the cover was

cancelled with the JSLC postmark of the launch day of Shenzhou 10, and the Hongge'er landing day postmark. A recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date in Beijing Space City was also added.



Fig 13: The CTRTC flown cover.

A total of 50 covers (numbered from 001 to 050) were flown onboard Shenzhou 10 on behalf of CTRTC (China Taikonaut Research and Training Center) (Fig. 13). The front side of the cover was cancelled with the JSLC “flown-proof” postmark with the date of loading (1 June 2013) and the China Space Post Office cancel with the date of (21 June 2013). The cover was signed by the three taikonauts of the Shenzhou 10: Nie Haisheng, Zhang Xiaoguang, Wang Yaping. It was then impressed with the steel seal of the Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office.

On the reverse side the cover was cancelled with the JSLC postmark of the launch day of Shenzhou 10, and with the Hongge'er landing day postmark. A recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date in Beijing Space City was also added.



Fig 14: The CMSE flown cover.

A total of 1012 covers (numbered from 0001 to 1012) were loaded on behalf of CMSE (China Manned Space Engineering Office) (Fig. 14). The front side of the cover was cancelled with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and the China Post, Space Post Office cancel. On the cover was applied a space mail label issued by the China Manned Space Engineering Office, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office.

On reverse side of the cover was tied with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark. and with the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel.

20 covers (numbered from 000001 to 000020) were loaded on behalf of CAPA (China Aerospace Philatelic Association) (Fig. 15). The front side of the cover is tied with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and with the China Post - Space Post Office cancel. On the cover was applied a space mail label issued by the China Manned Space Engineering Office, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office. The cover was cancelled on the reverse side with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark. and with the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel.



Fig 15: The CAPA flown cover.

Also the Association of the “PLA Rocket Force” (officially the “Chinese people’s Liberation Army Second Artillery Philatelic Association”) was successful in loading on the Shenzhou 10 manned spacecraft 60 covers (numbered from 001 to 060) (Fig. 16).

The front side of the cover is tied with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and with the China Post - Space Post Office cancel. On the cover was applied the space mail label, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office.-On the reverse side, the cover was cancelled with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark, with the the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel and with the recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date.



Fig 16: The PLA Rocket Force flown cover.

8 covers (numbered from 001 to 008) flew on behalf of the Heilongjiang Astrophilately Research Association.(HARA) (Fig. 17).

The front side of the cover is tied with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and with

the: China Post, Space Post Office cancel. On the cover was applied the space mail label, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office. On the reverse side, the cover was cancelled with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark, with the the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel and with the recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date.



Fig 17: The HARA flown cover.

China Beijing Space City loaded on the Shenzhou 10 manned spacecraft 62 covers (numbered from 001 to 062) (Fig. 18). The front side of the cover is tied with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and with the: China Post Space Post Office cancel. On the cover was applied the space mail label, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office. On the reverse side, the cover was cancelled with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark, with the the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel, and with the recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date (Fig. 19).



Fig 18 and 19: The flown covers by China Beijing Space City.

16 covers (numbered from 01 to 16) flew on behalf of SAPA (Sichuan Aerospace Philatelic Association). The front side of the cover (Fig. 20) is tied with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and with the: China Post Space Post Office cancel. On the cover was applied the space mail label, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office. On the reverse side (Fig. 21), the cover was cancelled with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark, with the the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel, and with the recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date.



Fig 20 and 21: The flown covers by SAPA.

Mr. Chen En Sheng provided 4 covers (numbered respectively 001, 002, 003 and 005) of “China Post - Space Post Office opened to commemorate” issued by China Post - Space Post Office (Fig. 22).



Fig 22: Flown cover by Mr Chen En Sheng.

The four flown covers bear the signatures of all 14 taikonauts in the first group and all seven in the second group. The front side of the cover is tied with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark and with the China Post Space Post Office cancel. On the cover was applied the space mail label, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office. On the reverse

side, the cover was cancelled with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark, with the the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel, and with the recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date.

In addition also some seals from the Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office flew into space onboard the Shenzhou 10 spacecraft. There is a paper seal that “Beijing Fang Yuan Notary Office security”. Fig. 23 features a rectangular Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office “evidence preservation special seal”, signed by notaries Xiong Ling, Wang Sida, who added. the date May 21, 2013 (Fig 24).



Fig 23 and 24: Notary seals.

Shenzhou 10 spacecraft also brought back to Earth some flown items launched into space onboard the Tiangong 1 target spaceship.



Fig 25 and 26: CPC flown cover commemorating the 90th Anniversary of the Communist Party.

Among these were the 50 special commemorative covers (numbered from 001 to 050) loaded into Tiangong 1 target spaceship by BITTT to commemorate the “90th Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist Party of China” issued by the China Philatelic Corporation (CPC) (Fig. 25).

The front side of the cover is tied with the usual JSLC “flown-proof” postmark dated 28 July 2011 (the date in which the items were

loaded into the cabin of the spaceship) and with the: China Post Space Post Office cancel of 21 June 2013. On the cover was applied the space mail label, and the steel seal of Beijing Fang-Yuan Public Notary Office. On the reverse side, (Fig. 26) the cover was cancelled with the JSLC Shenzhou 10 launch day postmark, with the the Hongge'er Shenzhou 10 landing day cancel, and with the recovery postmark of the capsule opening cabin date.



Fig 27: The flown cover by BITTT.

Among the items loaded into Tiangong 1 were also additional 18 covers (numbered from 001 to 018) provided by BITTT (Fig. 27).

The front side of the cover was tied with the JSLC “flown-proof” postmark, 28 July 2011 8:00 PM, loaded in the cabin of spacecraft”, and “China Post - Space Post Office, 21 June 2013. On the reverse side, the cover was cancelled with the usual 3 postmarks.

The China Aerospace Philatelic Association(CAPA) put into Tiangong 1 target spaceship a total of 93 covers (numbered from 0001 to 0093) (Fig. 28 and 29). The front side and reverse side of the cover bear the usual cancels, label and seal.



Fig 28 and 29: The flown cover by CAPA.