

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Virtual Presentations - IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (VP)

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A PERSONAL OUTREACH PROJECT OF WORLD SPACE WEEK

Abstract

This event was initiated as part of World Space Week (WSW) 2018 by a Fellow (member) of the British Interplanetary Society. It was awarded “Global Highlight” status by WSW that year.

In China, special envelopes are printed by individuals and societies with State permission, and posted to commemorate the launch of rockets and other space events such as acquisition of signal by ground stations. This practice differs from that of the West, where the matter of commemoration is of the first day of issue of the postage stamp. What looks similar is in fact, different.

In this project, ten postcards with the WSW motif were sent from England on 4 October to space enthusiasts and philatelic societies in China.

Each of the ten initial postcards contained this text: “(I’m a British man who loves collecting space mailing products.) and gave the author’s home address, inviting a reply.

A few days later, at the ESTEC open day, Astronauts Paulo Nespoli and Thomas Reiter each signed the “Ni hao” greeting on their personal autograph cards. These were included with other ESA postcards in another ten envelopes, sealed by ESTEC Open Day stickers , and sent again to the ten addressees in China.

Finally, at the BIS-Italia event at Maker Faire Rome, a further ten bespoke postcards were sent from Vatican City Post Office with Vatican stamps.

Replies from China show the participation of individuals and civil society in the promotion of space exploration by philately.

In one case, a representative of a space philately network, <http://www.htjyw.com> sent a commemorative postcard, and this is a developing relationship.

Another respondent asked the China Aerospace Philatelist Association for direct mail but was told this was not permitted for foreign customers.

Equally Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre has only a military post office, so cannot mail out to foreign addresses.

The Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center has only a very small post office, without international postal business.

Howver, although the Xichang Satellite Launch Center post office is very small, without international postal business, an envelope was postmarked in Xichang launch centre at the launch of a Baidou satellite, and taken to Xichang town post office for posting abroad.

The presentation will show illustrations of these commemorative covers where dates of events such as launches, and images of space facilities, are visible.

The project has succeeded in its aim of reaching out from Europe to space enthusiasts in China.