

Cinderella Corner

Space Covers

Space: its seemingly infinite void has fascinated humankind for generations. In the world of philately, the landscape involving Australian 'space-themed covers' (including rockets and satellites) is diverse, with 100s of different ones that exist. Cover collector from Victoria, Simon Cronk, established and maintains an excellent online resource that documents many Australian space covers: <https://www.simoncronk.com/space-australia/>. He categorises this interesting thematic area into sections, including *rockets* and *missions*. Within this broad breadth of covers exist a handful of different cinderella labels affixed to their fronts. These are now explored, with some drawn from Simon Cronk's collections, with his approval.

Apollo NASA

The 16 July 1969 postmarked cover illustrated in Figure 1 was issued to help recognise the 1969 Apollo Three Man Spacecraft. The blue, red and white label affixed on this cover is imperforate and measures 48mm on all four sides. It features the text: *APOLLO NASA / CARNARVON TRACKING STATION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA*. The Carnarvon Tracking Station in Western Australia was located 10 kilometres south of Carnarvon. It was built in 1963 for use by NASA as part of their Gemini Project.

A second Apollo NASA label, with similar features to the cinderella featured in Figure 1, is illustrated in Figure 2. Measuring 51mm x 48mm and imperforate on all four sides, the label has rounded corners, unlike Figure 1's sharp ones. Coloured blue, cream and gold, it features the text: *Apollo NASA / HONEYSUCKLE CREEK TRACKING STATION / AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY*. Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station was a NASA Earth station located near Canberra. It operated for nearly 15 years, from its opening in 1967 until 1981. It was known for relaying the first televised footage of Neil Armstrong setting foot on the moon, to the rest of the world, on 20 July 1969. The 1 February 1971 postmarked cover on which the label is affixed features the signature of the Apollo 14 Station Director.

NASA - AWA

The scarce label illustrated in Figure 3 dates to 1968. It is large, measuring 82.5mm x 51.5mm, and is imperforate on all four sides. Coloured white, blue and red, it features the text: *NASA / AWA / Carnarvon Tracking Station / Lewis F. Wainwright / STATION DIRECTOR / Station Director*. The AWA referred to Amalgamated Wireless Australasia, an Australian contractor designated to the operating and maintaining of the Tracking Station at Carnarvon. The Station Director at the time, Lewis F. Wainwright, held several positions in the space industry over his career. I extend my thanks to Simon Cronk for providing the scan and dimensions of this wonderful label and cover. Simon has also provided the information that the reverse of the cover has an important '15OC68' postmark at Tailem Bend, South Australia.

Top to bottom : Figures 1 - 4



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Stadan Station And Orroral Valley

The Orroral Valley Tracking Station, Australian Capital Territory, was created as a member of the Satellite Tracking and Data Acquisition Network (STADAN). STADAN's primary function, from 1966, was to track several Earth-orbiting satellites. Orroral Valley then closed nearly two decades later in 1985. Its 26 metre antenna was then relocated to Tasmania.

The cinderella illustrated in Figure 4 measures 41mm x 67mm and is imperforate on all four sides. Coloured black and cream, it features the text: *STADAN STATION / ORRORAL VALLEY / AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY*. The label is affixed to a 11 April 1970 postmarked cover. It also features the signature of then Station Director and a *LAUNCH OF APOLLO XII* handstamp.



A slightly earlier variant of the STADAN label illustrated in Figure 4 is illustrated in Figure 5. Measuring 41mm x 67mm and also imperforate on all four sides, the cream and black label features the text: *STADAN FACILITY / ORRORAL VALLEY / AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY*. It also presents the satellite pictured at a different angle from the one illustrated in Figure 4. The cinderella is affixed to a cover postmarked 3 April 1968, two years after Orroral Valley's establishment.

The cinderella in Figure 6 serves as a natural extension to the previously two illustrated ones. The simplistic label measures 43mm x 63mm and is coloured cream and black. It is imperforate and features the text: *STADAN STATION / ORRORAL VALLEY / AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY*. The label is affixed to a 17 April 1972 postmarked cover and features the handstamp *APOLLO 16*.



Deep Space Station

The Deep Space Station 41 (DSS-41) was the first Deep Space Tracking Station constructed outside of the USA. This station, located in Woomera, commenced construction in 1959, and was operational on 3 November 1960. It closed just over a decade later in December 1972.

The cinderella illustrated in Figure 7 measures 58mm x 51mm and is imperforate on all four sides with rounded corners. It is coloured cream, silver and dark blue, and features the text: *DEEP SPACE NET / DSS 41 / SPACETRACK PTY. LTD. / ISLAND LAGOON / WOOMERA SOUTH AUSTRALIA*. It is affixed to a 13 April 1970 Woomera postmarked cover.

The Deep Space Station 42 (DSS-42) was a 26-metre antenna built in 1964. It provided many dozens of robotic deep space missions and was operational for over 35 years, ceasing its function in 2000.

The cinderella illustrated in Figure 8 echoes design similarity to the one featured in Figure 7. It measures 76mm



Top to bottom : Figures 5 - 8

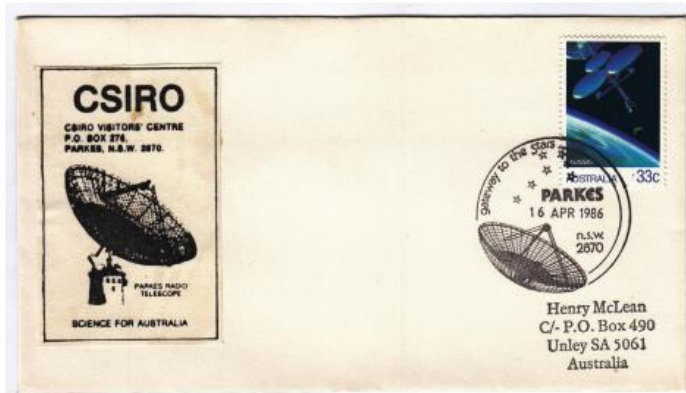
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x 64mm and is imperforate on all four sides with rounded corners. Also coloured blue, silver and cream, it features the text: *DEEP SPACE NET / DSS 42 / TIDBINBILLA AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY / STATION DIRECTOR*. The signature of Station Director, Don Gray, is also provided. The label is affixed to a 15 November 1969 Canberra City postmarked cover.

CSIRO

The Parkes Radio Telescope is a part of the Australian Telescope National Facility. It commenced operation in 1961 and has an impressive diameter of 64 metres. As recent as 2012, it played a supporting role in tracking NASA's Curiosity rover.

The cinderella illustrated in Figure 9 measures 46mm x 69mm and is imperforate on all four sides. Coloured white and black, it features the central image of the Parkes Radio Telescope, along with the text: *CSIRO / CSIRO VISITORS' CENTRE / P.O. BOX 276, PARKES, N.S.W. 2870. / PARKES RADIO TELESCOPE / SCIENCE FOR AUSTRALIA*. The label is affixed to a 16 April 1986 Parkes postmarked cover.



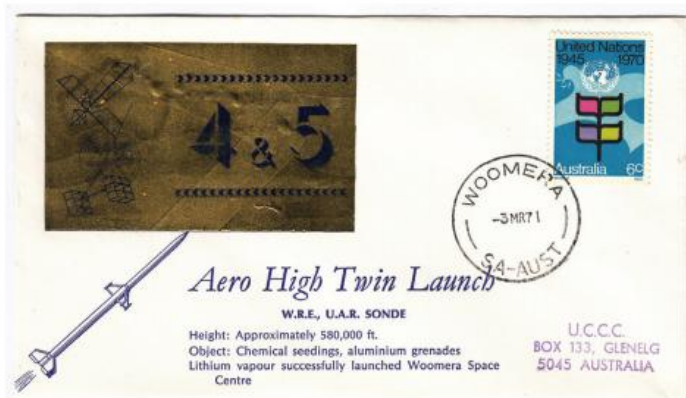
ELDO Launch

Europe's cooperative venture in space was marked with the launch of the Europa rocket in June, 1964, from Woomera, Australia. The large photographic cinderella illustrated in Figure 10 celebrates the 1970 launch of Europa. It measures 63.5mm x 82.5mm and is imperforate on all four sides. Black and white, the label features the image of the Europa Rocket in launch, along with the text: *BOELKOW PHOTO / ELDO LAUNCH EUROPA ROCKET / WOOMERA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA*. It is affixed to a 12 June 1970 Woomera postmarked cover. I again extend my thanks to Simon Cronk for providing the scan and dimensions of this scarce label on cover.



Aero High

Aero High was an Australian sounding rocket first launched in 1964 and retired in 1972. The foil cinderella illustrated in Figure 11 celebrates the 1970 twin launch of the rocket from the Woomera Space Centre, South Australia, to a height of approximately 580,000 ft. The label measures 76mm x 46mm and is imperforate on all four sides. Coloured gold and navy, it features the text: *4 & 5*. The label is affixed to a 3 March 1971 Woomera postmarked cover.



Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication Complex

The Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication Complex (TDSCC), later known as the Canberra Deep Space Com-

Top to bottom : Figures 9 - 12



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munication Complex, was opened in 1965. It is located south west of Canberra and originally served as a Deep Space Tracking Station. The labels illustrated across Figures 12 to 15 are identical, except for different handstamps offered on each. The navy and white cinderella measures 87mm x 81mm and is imperforate on all four sides. It features the text: *tdscc / Tidbinbilla / DEEP SPACE COMMUNICATION COMPLEX / CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA*. Each cover is postmarked at the Australian Capital Territory between 1976 and 1979. The additional handstamped texts are as follows:

Figure 12 – *VIKING / 4 SEP 1976*

Figure 13 – *PIONEER – VENUS / Multiprobe Launch*

Figure 14 – *VOYAGER / 20 AUG 1977*

Figure 15 – *VOYAGER – 1 / CLOSEST APPROACH TO JUPITER*

Many thanks, once again, to Simon Cronk for providing scans of the labels and covers illustrated in Figures 12, 14, and 15.

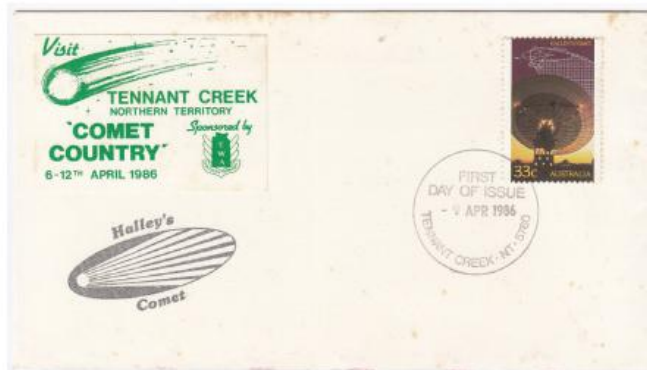


Viking '75

A Viking '75 cinderella is illustrated in Figure 16. Measuring 66mm x 90mm and imperforate on all four sides, the black and white label features the text: *VIKING '75 MARS LANDING / Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication Complex Canberra, Australia / PROJECT VIKING MISSION TO MARS*. The label and cover were issued to help mark and commemorate the 1975 launch of the Viking mission to Mars. This, in particular, included the first Mars landers.

Comet Country

The final cinderella explored in this article is illustrated in Figure 17. Imperforate and coloured white and green, it features the text: *Visit TENNANT CREEK NORTHERN TERRITORY / 'COMET COUNTRY' 6 – 12TH APRIL 1986 / Sponsored by CWA NORTHERN TERRITORY*. Tennant's Creek is located more than 500 kilometres north of Alice Springs and several meteor showers have been recorded by individuals there.



Top to bottom : Figures 13 - 16. Above : Figure 17