

CANCELLATIONS FROM BAIKONUR COSMODROME

This exhibit shows the cancellations from the Baikonur Cosmodrome starting from 1975.

History:

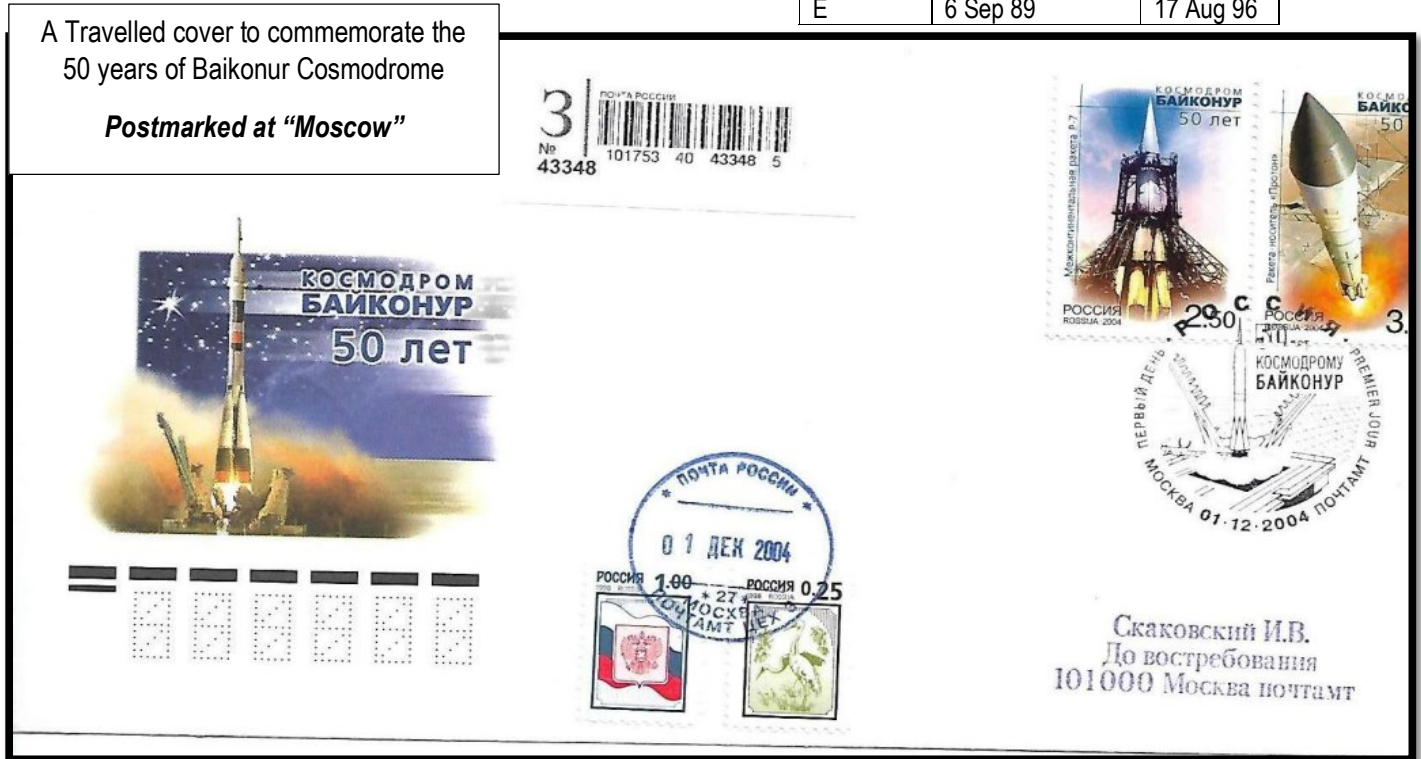
The **Baikonur Cosmodrome** is a spaceport operated by Russia within Kazakhstan. Located in the Kazakh city of Baikonur, it is the largest operational space launch facility in terms of area. All Russian crewed spaceflights are launched from Baikonur. Since the launch of Sputnik-1, Astro philatelists have strived to ensure that they document every significant space event with a philatelic cover cancelled at the postal facility closest to the where the space event occurred. The location at first was known as Tyuratam which later in 1961 given its name as Baikonur Cosmodrome to record the historic flights of Yuri Gagarin in the world record books. Because of the launch site secrecy, Collectors of philatelic material related to soviet space events had to be satisfied with covers at postmarked at non-launch-site cities around the USSR. None of the cities are near the launch site. The earliest known postmark cancel with the post office name "Baikonur Cosmodrome" is dated 27th April 1975.

This exhibit Covers Standard Postmarks and Special postmarks from the post office "Baikonur Cosmodrome" and the Evolution of the postmarks in Chronological order.

STANDARD POST MARKS		
Style	First Use	Last Use
A	27 Apr 75	11 Apr 80
B	12 Apr 80	11 Apr 82
C	12 Apr 82	11 Apr 88
D	12 Apr 88	2 Sep 89
E	6 Sep 89	17 Aug 96

A Travelled cover to commemorate the 50 years of Baikonur Cosmodrome

Postmarked at "Moscow"



A Travelled Cover Commemorating the Establishment of Baikonur Cosmodrome, cancelled at Moscow

PLAN OF EXHIBIT

Sl No	Particulars	Page No
1	Title and Plan of Exhibit	1-1
2	Standard Postmarks(Style A to Style H)	1-13
3	Special Postmarks from Baikonur Cosmodrome	14-16

Bibliography:

1. Orbit Magazine – Article by Jim Reichman
2. Orbit Magazine – Article by Julius Cacka
3. <https://www.fimych.com/russian-covers>

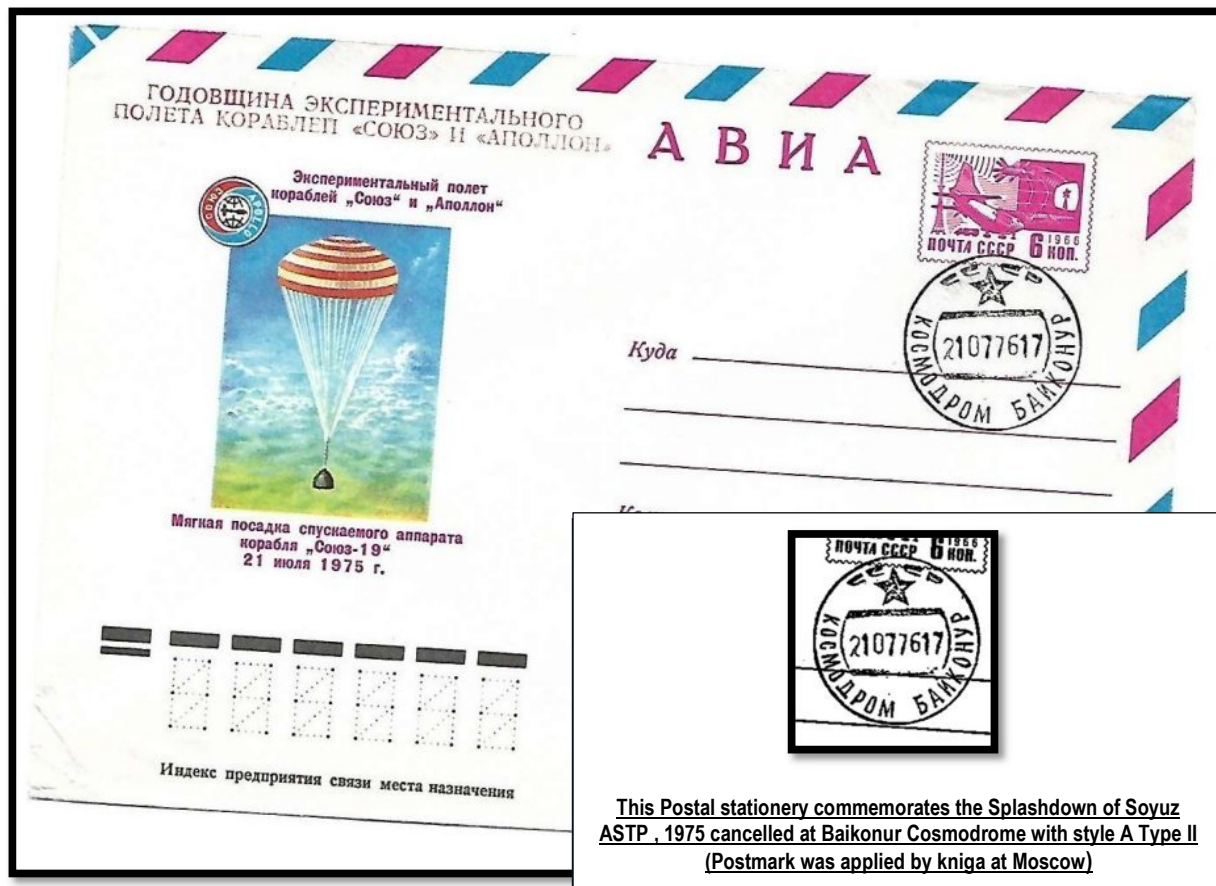
STYLE A POSTMARKS

Style	First Use	Last Use
A	27 Apr 75	11 Apr 80

STYLE A TYPE I



STYLE A TYPE II



STYLE B POSTMARKS

Style	First Use	Last Use
B	12 Apr 80	11 Apr 82

April 12, 1980 a new Baikonur postmark appeared, this time it was cloned officially to be used by Kniga in Moscow, that differed in some small details from the Baikonur source. Many western covers were processed by Kniga and received this postmark. The last day of this type of postmark application was Sergey Korolev 75th anniversary. Being used together with dedicated special cancellation the couple produced a lot of well-known covers.



Baikonur Postmark



Kniga postmark

Differences in Style B Postmarks

	Type I	Type II (Kniga)
Cyrillic "Y" in Baikonur	у	у
USSR Country Symbolic Star Design		

The main difference are in star and Y letter

Type I – Applied at Baikonur

Type-II – Applied at Moscow by Kniga



STYLE C POSTMARKS

Style	First Use	Last Use
C	12 Apr 82	11 Apr 88

On April 12, 1982 a "launch-pad" postmark appeared. As its predecessor it had a clone in Moscow used by Kniga for servicing all-around-the-globe requests. In 1984 a date mechanism has been replaced resulting in small date format layout.



Cover with Type C Cancellation on stamp at the time of Launch of Soyuz T-6 on 24/06/1982

Differences in Style C Postmarks

Type	I	IA	II (Kniga)
Missing Gantry Element			
Date Font Height	3 mm	2 mm	3 mm
Text Font Height	2.5 mm	2.5 mm	2.0 mm
Overall Size	32 x 36 mm	32 x 36 mm	31 x 35 mm



**Венера-Галлей 1
Launch VEGA 1
15-12-1984**

A cover depicting launch of Vega-1 on 15-12-1984 from Baikonur Cosmodrome having Type C cancellation

STYLE D POSTMARKS

Style	First Use	Last Use
D	12 Apr 88	2 Sep 89

On Cosmonautics day of 1988 a "launch-pad" postmark was replaced by a "monument" successor together with Kniga clone. The new one lived briefly until September 1989 and has been replaced by a "transporter", this time having two duplicates in Moscow and subsequent fakes. One of the duplicates became a real rarity as it was used briefly in 1990 and disappeared – officially lost.



A cover cancelled with Type D Postmark , postmarked by Kniga dated 12.07.1988

Differences in Style D Postmarks

Type	I & IA	II (Kniga)
Cyrillic Letter "Y"		
Country Symbolic Width	9 mm	8 mm
Country Symbolic Font Height	1.5 mm	1 mm



Baikonur



Kniga Postmark



Differences

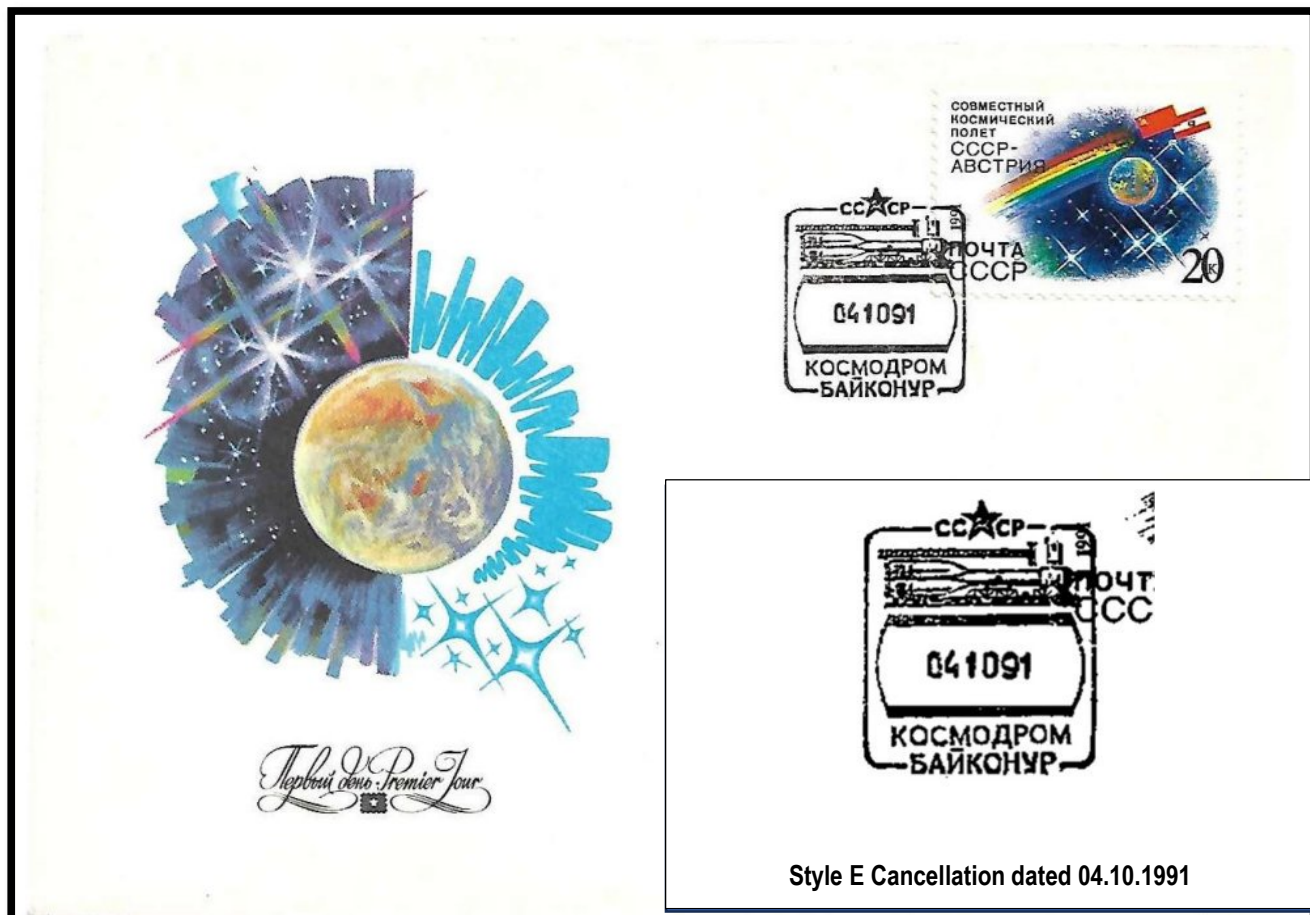
STYLE E POSTMARKS

In 1994 an agreement has been signed and Russian Federation Post became responsible for all postal operations in Baikonur Cosmodrome. In 1995 Leninsk was officially renamed and became BAIKONUR. On March 1, 1996 new Russian Federation postmarks have been introduced to replace the old ones for five post offices plus a central hub (numbers 1-5 and unnumbered). All but one (except Baikonur-2) were located at the 10th launch-pad premises. The second affiliate was placed on 95th launch-pad. Each post office had several devices marked by different letters – А, Б, В Actually the old postmarks were not forgotten and due to the lack of appropriate devices can be seen used after 1996.

Style	First Use	Last Use
E	6 Sep 89	17 Aug 96



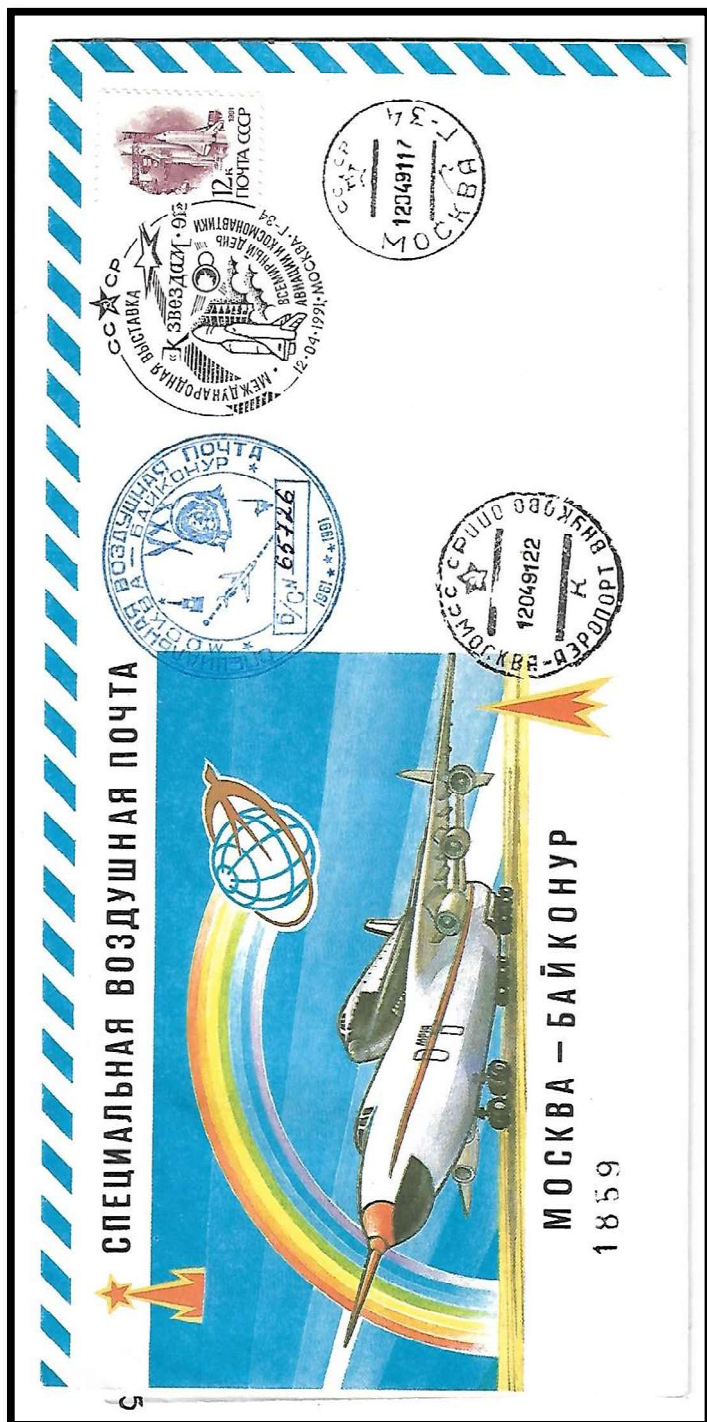
Cover from Baikonur Cosmodrome dated 01.01.1991 (Short Date)



Style E Cancellation dated 04.10.1991

Towards the exhibition TO STARS 1991 and 30th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin spaceflight a special inflight cover cancellation was done. 3000 covers were flown from Moscow to Baikonur and back on a special NPO Energia flights. The covers got Baikonur (Leninsk) postmark on the reverse, TO STARS 91 special cancellation, Vnukovo airport and Moscow postmarks and inflight cachet. The flight cachet was prepared by ITC Marka but it was not delivered to Baikonur as planned and the private cachet was used during the flight (crafted by Yuri Galkin). All the covers that were originated from Baikonur were cancelled in Baikonur post office on Cosmonautics day – Apr 12, 1991. All the Moscow covers were delivered to Baikonur only a day later – Apr 13 and got backdated postmarks in Leninsk. 200 covers were cancelled aboard the plane during the flight to Moscow. All the covers got Vnukovo airport post office postmark while in transition to Moscow via Vnukovo hub.

Note the Mriya – Buran complex has no connection to the project, the covers were flown by civil airplanes of NPO Energia.



From Moscow- Baikonur



From Baikonur to Moscow



Back side of the cover- Leninsk Delivery Cancellation

STYLE F POSTMARKS

From March 1st 1996 Russian Federation stamps began to be used in Baikonur for postage items according to Russian rates. The postage to Kazakhstan and to Russia can be also paid by Kazakh stamps according to CIS rate. There is no possibility to make mixed franking. Worth to mention the local Kazakh rate is used only for in-town postage. Worth to mention that up to 1993 the postage could be paid by Soviet or mixed Soviet-Kazakh stamps, as the official Kazakh currency was Soviet ruble. So we can some "awkwardly" franked covers for this period. But back in 1996 all the "lego" issues were ruled out.



Baikonur
letter A



Baikonur
number 2



Baikonur
letter B



Letter V



Letter A



Letter B

ZARYA LAUNCH



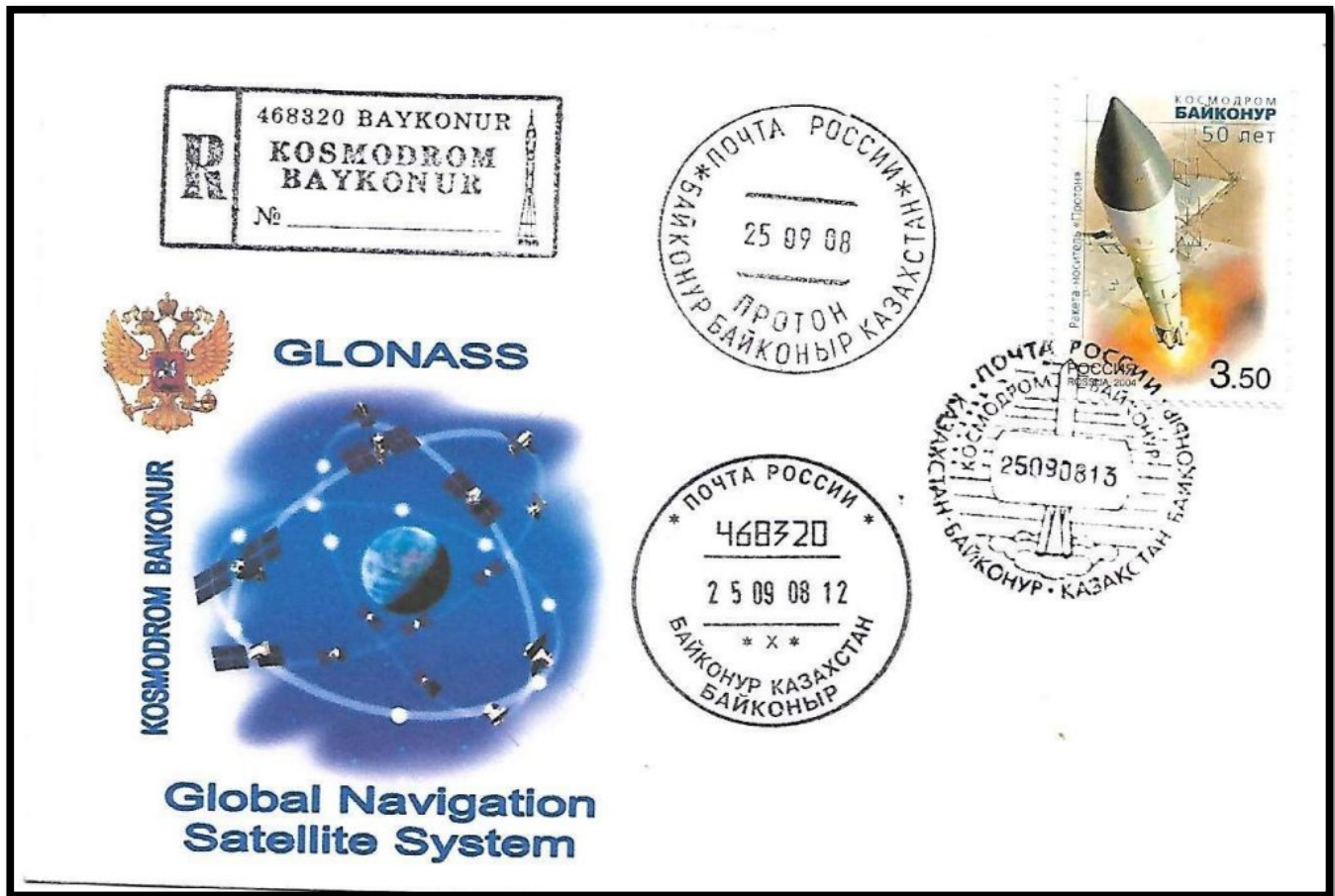
ZARYA LAUNCH



Cover posted from Baikonur with letter B cancellation.

STYLE G POSTMARKS

In 1994 an agreement has been signed and A new “rocket” postmark was introduced on August 17, 1996 – the day of Soyuz TM-24 launch, replacing the “transporter” used in Baikonur from 1989. We can find this postmark with two types of date format – long year and short year with hours. **Additional postmark – “international flights” appeared on August 5, 1997 – the day of Soyuz TM-26 launch.** Both postmarks were used on the days of launches and special events at stationary post-offices and by mobile station at Cosmodrome press-center. These and many other Baikonur cancellation and cachets were produced with the assistance of Fedor Zemskov.



Differences in Style G Postmarks:



long date format



Short Date Format



Missing Number in Date

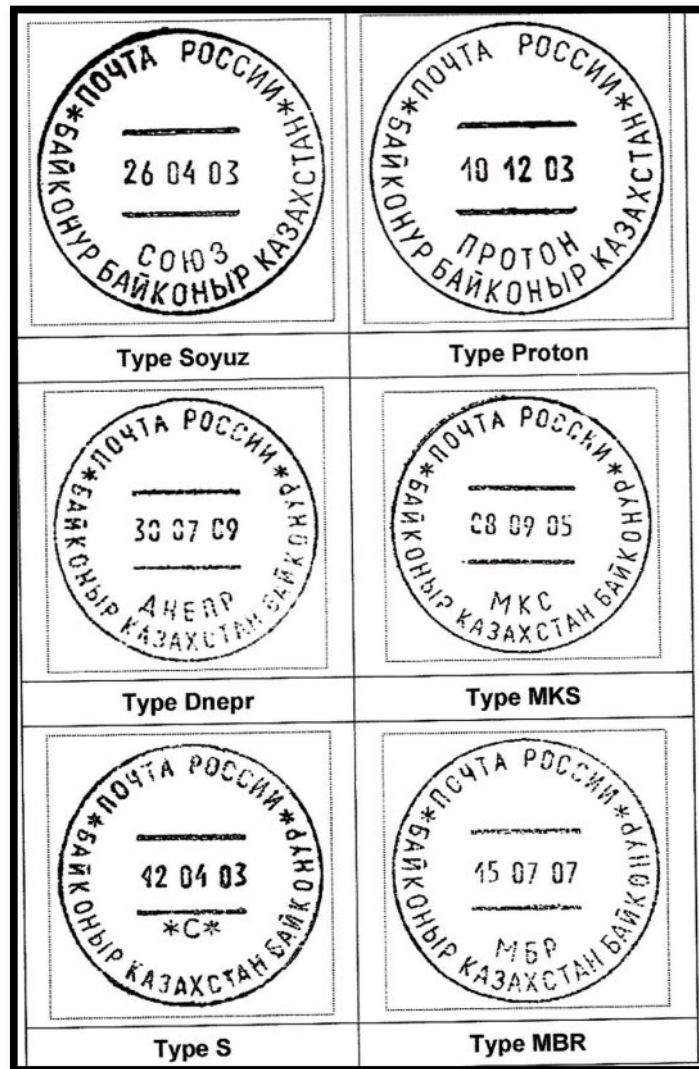


Purple Ink

STYLE H POSTMARKS

In June 2000, towards a 45th anniversary of Cosmodrome, a new set of Baikonur postmarks began its career. There were 5 letter variations plus a couple for each of the affiliates. Interestingly that all the devices were ordered from Perm factory and a small financial glitch led to appearance of additional 14 postmarks.

The order for original postmark and the subsequent payment have been sent to Perm by the Baikonur postal authorities but when the devices came to the customer a copy of the bill was attached that has been properly paid once again by the finance. When the double payment issue has been revealed, Perm workers admitted their mistake but instead of returning the money they proposed to produce something else. After a couple of days of meetings and considerations Baikonur Municipal Telecommunications and Post Enterprise (МПТЭП) Director decided to order additional 14 devices with special inscriptions. The story seems to me quite vague but in a result we have quite a number of different postmarks some of them were widely used (like SOYUZ, MKS, PROTON) the other are barely seen (MBR, MIR, NAVRUZ).

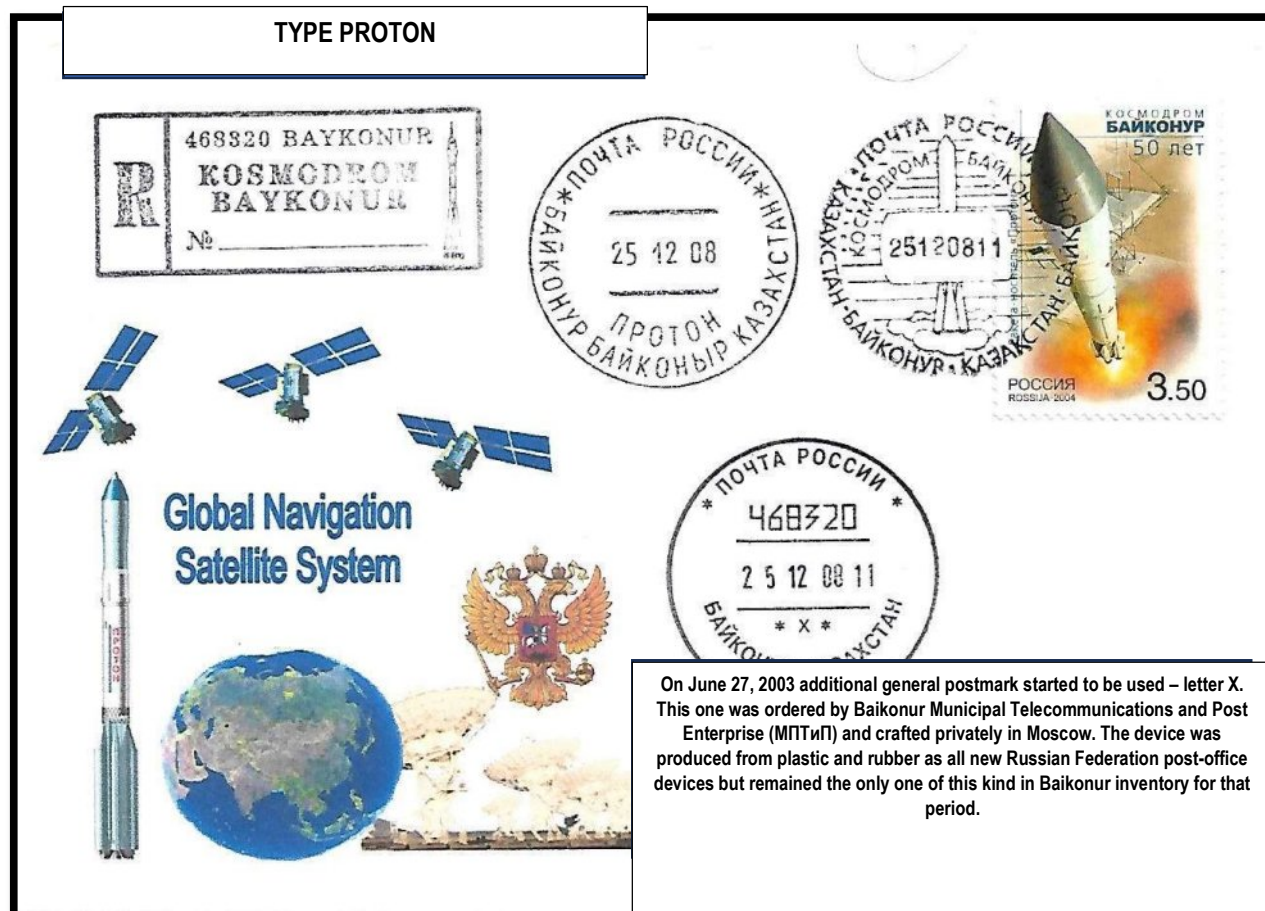


These postmarks became available for cancellations one by one during the two year period beginning from June 12, 2000 with PROTON-type used for marking ISS Zvezda module launch. The last one used was DNEPR-type to mark converted SS-18 ICBM launches with small satellites. The one that remains questionable is ROKOT-type postmark planned to be used on Dec 24, 2004 to mark the 10th anniversary of Rokot launch vehicle (UR-100N ICBM). I do not know whether it was actually used? These postmarks can be found for the events as late as 2009.

Interesting point is about the mistakes in postmarks used in Baikonur and Kazakhstan in general. One good example is EPAS (ASTP) type that appeared second in turn on July 15, 2000 to commemorate 25th anniversary of Apollo-Soyuz flight. The postmark came with erroneous inscription ЭПОС (instead of ЭПАС) and letter O has been corrected a bit before usage. This postmark was used one additional time only in 2005 for 30th ASTP anniversary.

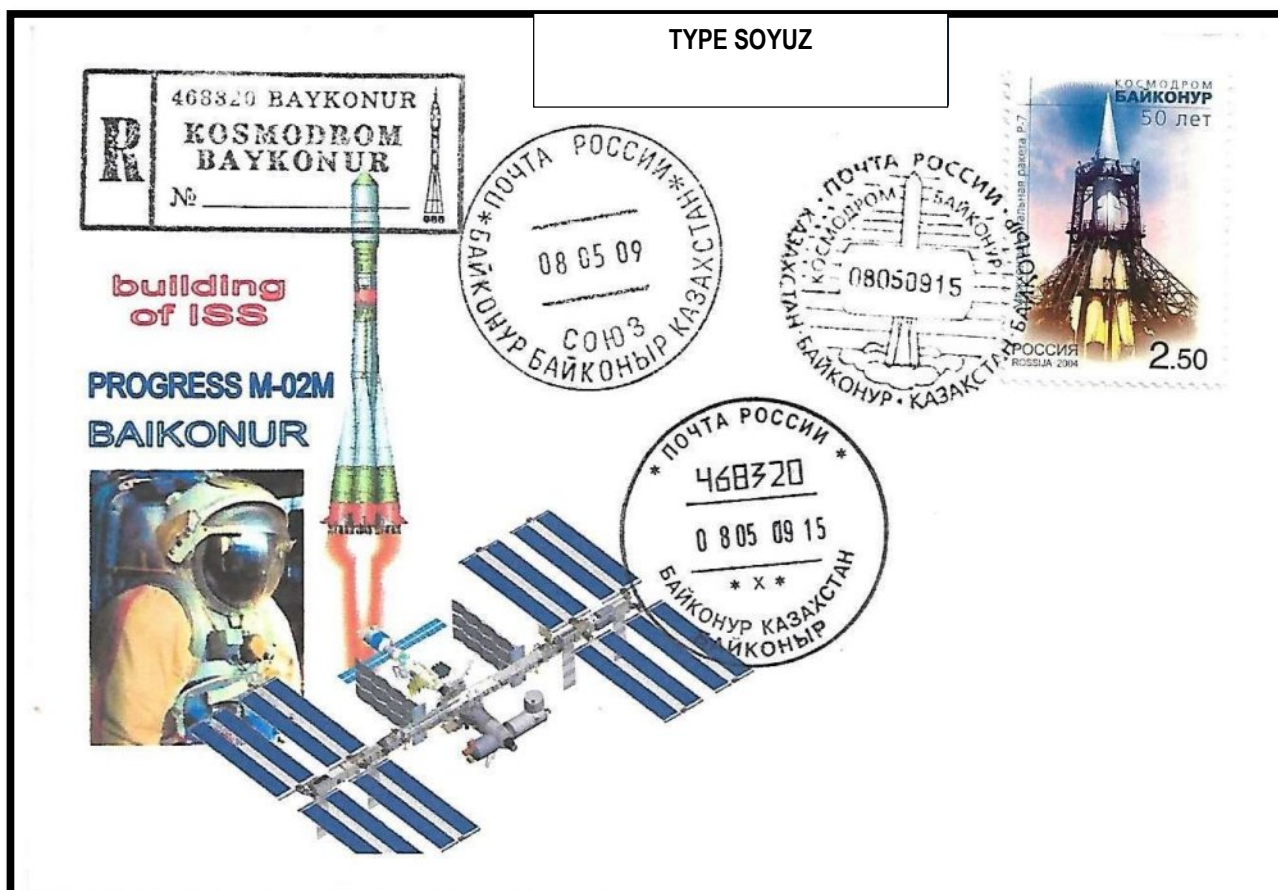
In 2003 Russian Space Agency prepared five dedicated cancellations to be used in Baikonur post office for event commemorations. Four postmarks were dedicated to particular launch-vehicles and the fifth to the Baikonur city. According to the information I have, only two have been used once each – SOYUZ and PROTON. Around 50 postcards were cancelled on each day of respective launches.

TYPE PROTON



The illustrated cover shows the Launch of GNSS from Baikonur Cosmodrome on 25.12.2008

TYPE SOYUZ



TYPE DNEPR

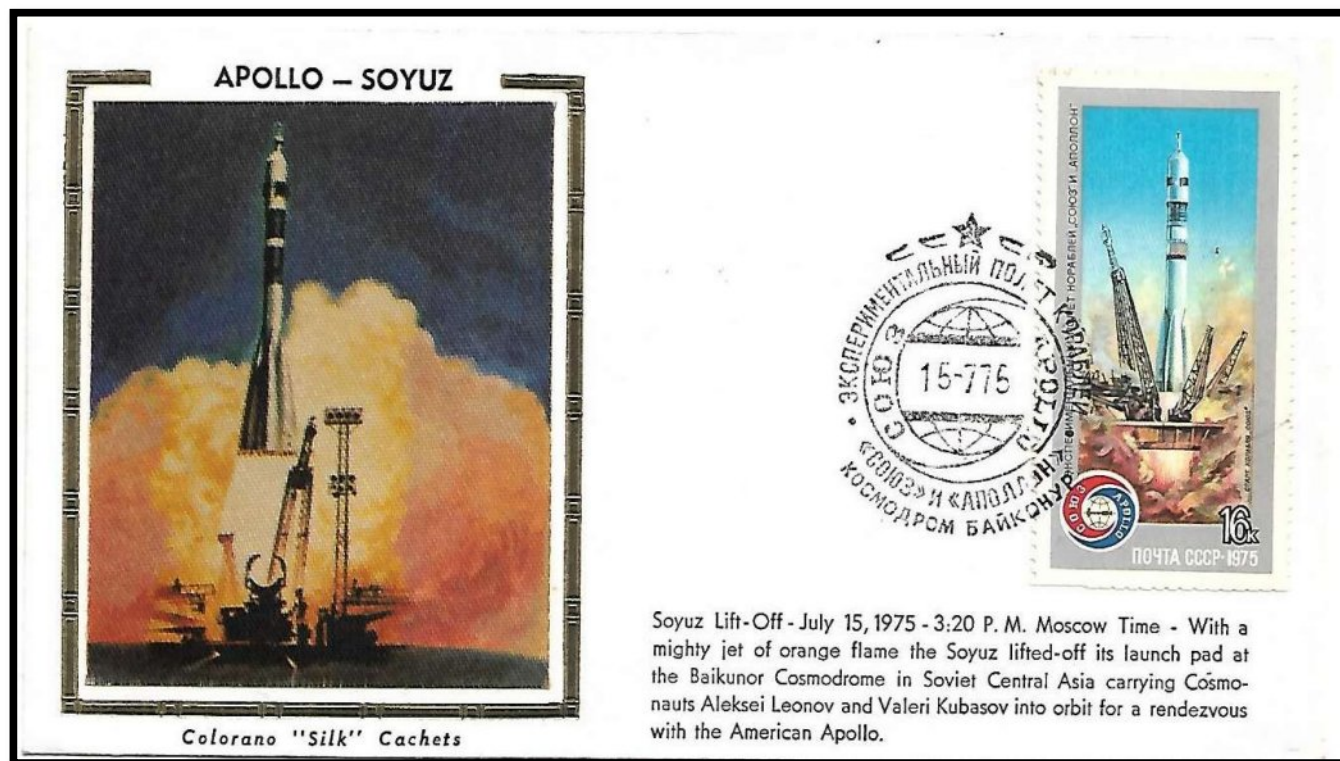


TYPE MBR



FIRST SPECIAL POSTMARK AT THE TIME OF LAUNCH OF ASTP PROGRAMME

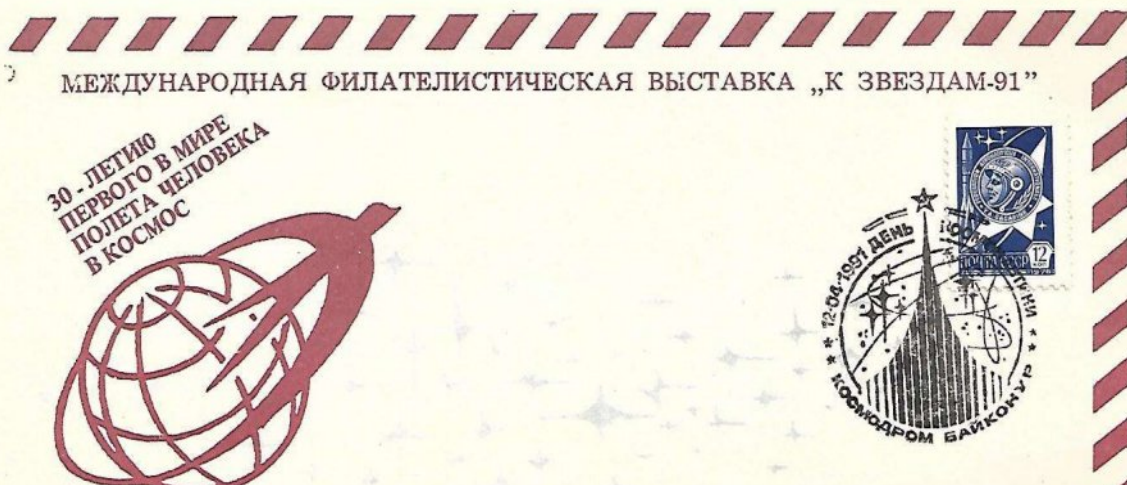
Need to mention that this was the first ever Baikonur special cancellation that preceded by the opening of official post office in Baikonur and first usage of Baikonur postmarks in April 1975.



Launch of Soyuz at Baikonur Cosmodrome, With Long Date Special Cancellation dated 15.07.1975



Soyuz splashdown cancelled (Short date format) at Baikonur Cosmodrome dated 21.07.1975



Special Postmark Commemorating 30 years of Yuri Gagarin's Vostok Flight dated 12.04.1991 from Baikonur Cosmodrome



ОРГКОМИТЕТ ВЫСТАВКИ „К ЗВЕЗДАМ - 91”
103009, МОСКВА, ТВЕРСКАЯ, 12.



Special Postmark from Baikonur Cosmodrome at the time of launch of Soyuz TM-13 dated 02.10.1991

Special postmark from Baikonur Cosmodrome during the commemoration of 20 years of space age dated 04.10.1977