

U.S. PACIFIC ISLANDS BULLETIN

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A quarterly newsletter about U.S. Post Offices in the Pacific area (including successor administrations in the Caroline, Marshall and Line Islands)

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ISSUE NUMBER SEVENTEEN

JUNE, 1997

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REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

DELAP STATION, MAJURO MH 96960:

The village of Delap lies at the southern tip of Majuro Atoll. Originally a separate island it was joined, together with the islands of Darrit and Uliga, to the main island of Majuro after WWII by the U.S. Navy. These three 'islands', in their new form, and covering an area of 3 miles in length by less than 200 yards in width, became known as D.U.D. Municipality. The Municipality is currently the site of the Government of the Marshall Islands, the Alele Museum, the Hospital and a number of commercial enterprises.

In early 1988 the the MIPS was authorised to open a Post Office at Delap to reduce congestion at the Main Majuro P.O. The site chosen was in Gibson's chain store. Delap Branch P.O. opened for business on March 14, 1988. The first Clerk in Charge was Mr. Carter K. Lokejajak.

Initially 200 mail boxes were authorised, but Bernd Neuhaus believes that more were subsequently provided. Bernd speculates that all Delap P.O. Box numbers begin with the figure '3'. Bernd has a commercial cover from Box 3318. Initially Delap Post Office did not have a datestamp. The Oval Majuro datestamp was used to cancel mail originating at Delap, whether this was done at Delap or at the main Majuro P.O. is not known. A cover showing such useage on the first day of operation is shown here as Illustration 17/1. The cover is authenticated by Mr. Sailass Andrike the Marshall Islands Postal Controller and Mr. Carter K. Lokejajak the Clerk-in-Charge at Delap. The cover was produced by Honolulu dealer George L. Machado Jr.

Over a year was to pass before Delap received a datestamp. Oddly, the first datestamp bearing the office name also bore the slogan "Postal Station Opening Day". Whether this indicated some change in the status of the office or just simple muddle following late receipt of the datestamp is not known. This datestamp was used, for one day only, on May 15, 1989. This datestamp is shown here as Illustration 17/2. A George L. Machado Jr. cover signed and authenticated by Sailass Andrike and Carter K. Lokejajak is shown as Illustration 17/2a. Mr. Sailass Andrike has confirmed, via George L. Machado Jr., that there were no official opening ceremonies for the opening of Delap Branch P.O.

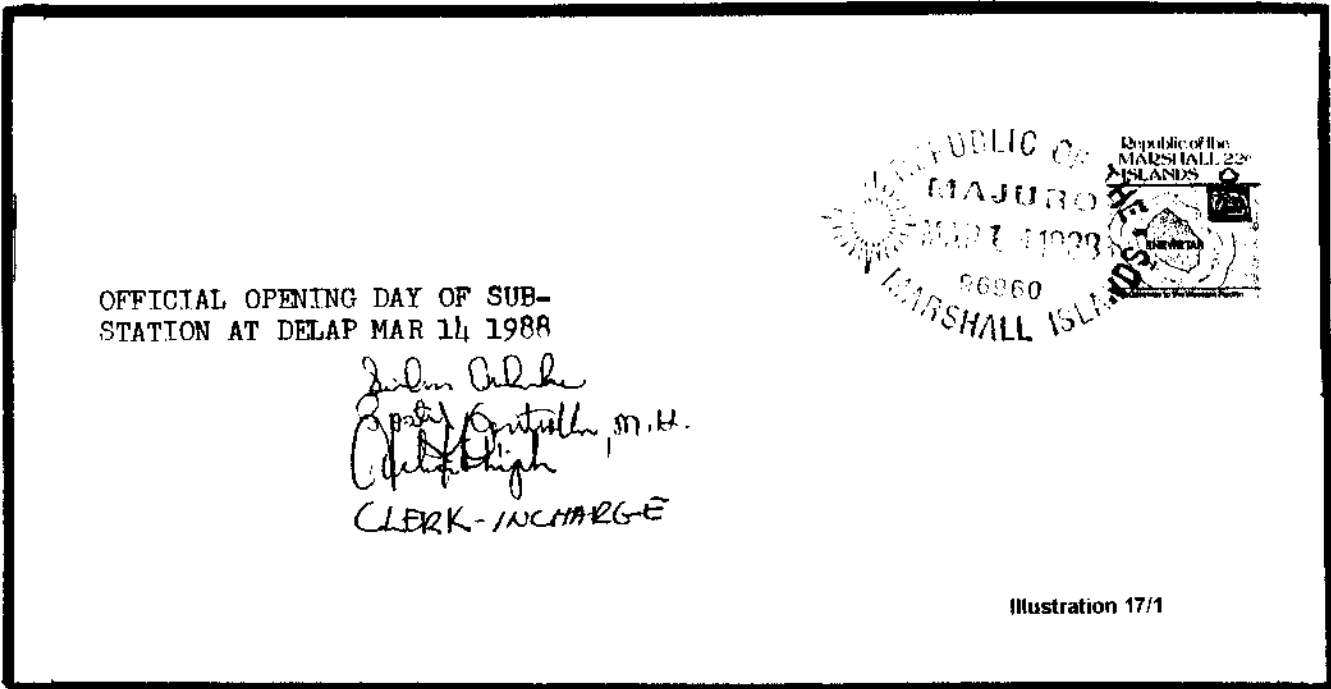


Illustration 17/1

Subsequently mail originating at Delap was cancelled with Illustration 17/3. This may be Illustration 17/2 with the "Opening Day" wording removed, or a separate datestamp. In view of the recent re-appearance of the "Opening Day" datestamp at Jaluit reported in the "Bulletin" Issue # 16 it seems likely to be a separate datestamp. The art-work and design for datestamps 17/2 & 17/3 were produced by Mr. William Hanson who was also responsible for the Bikini Atoll datestamp Illustration 11/1.

Illustration 17/3 continued in use until at least February 8, 1994. This datestamp is almost always seen applied in red ink, but was seen used with black ink on July 4, 1990 and August 20, 1993. However on May 3, 1991 Delap started to use a new datestamp in the standard MIPS double circle and star design concurrently with Illustration 17/3. A George L. Machado Jr. cover confirming the First Day of Use and signed by the Clerk, Carter K. Lokejajak, is shown here as Illustration 17/4. Illustration 17/4 is a self inking device as can be seen by the 4 "corner" markings which have appeared on most examples of this datestamp seen in the past year or so - See Illustration 17/4a - though given the appearance of these corner markings it may be that the internal ink pad is dry and it is currently being inked from a traditional ink pad. Illustration 17/4 has only been seen in black. Bearing in mind the remarks made by Mr. Sailass Andrike, Postal Controller MIPS, reported via George L. Machado Jr. in the "Bulletin" # 16, that the MIPS always placed orders for 2 of each handstamp, there will be two versions of this datestamp. So far I have not been able to identify the two datestamps, if indeed two have been used.



Illustration 17/2