

ENEWETAK APO 96333: The history of this Military Post office is fully covered in "A Postal History/Cancellation Study of the U.S. Pacific Islands (including the Trust Territories)" by Robert T. Murphy. In Bulletin # 12 I asked if any reader could supply copies of covers from Enewetak dated after the Post Office closed on 28th March, 1980. [Bob Murphy reported that personnel remaining on Enewetak after closure of the P.O. were able to receive and send mail via a pouch service operated by the base contractor, Holmes and Narver Inc. The pouch was apparently carried by military aircraft to and from Hawaii, where outgoing mail was cancelled.] No reader has been able to supply such a cover but Bernd Neuhaus [with the help of George Cosentini Secretary of the Military Postal History Society (12421 Banuelo Cove, San Diego, CA 92130)] has been able to identify the source of covers cancelled with an APO 96333 datestamp during 1986. I am most grateful to Bernd and George Cosentini for their help. The explanation is quite simple. On Dec 29, 1981 the APO 96333, being then unused, was allocated to Sachon Air Base, Korea and on Feb 26, 1987 APO 96333 was reallocated to Kimhae Air Base, Korea. The APO 96222 datestamp was used by APO 96333 personnel during troop manoeuvres. This explains why APO 96333 and APO 96222 cancellations are seen on covers sent to APO 96333, Enewetak for philatelic processing during the early and mid 1980's.

An example of an APO 96333 datestamp used on 10 Mar. 1986, I presume at Sachon, is shown below as **Illustration 17/10**. The return address on this cover reads "Det 3, 6005 AIRFS, APO SF 96274". By January 1988 96333 was no longer in use as an APO number. A cover addressed to APO 96333 is known which has been returned from APO Yokota AMT, 96328 on 4 Jan, 1988 noted "NO SUCH APO". Oddly APO 96222 was also allocated to Air Bases in Vietnam during the same period.

One postal marking not listed by Murphy is a P.B. postal meter seen on a cover dated Oct. 8, 1979 and addressed to Michael Mochizuki in Hawaii. However the value tablet reads 00 and is thus obviously a sample supplied to Michael. The Meter number appears to be 388388. The words in the datehead read "AIR FORCE POSTAL SERVICE/ APO 96333". Unfortunately it is too faint to reproduce here. Was it ever actually used and if so by whom?

During 1982 the Mid-Pacific Marine Laboratory was active on Enewetak. Covers are known bearing various identification markings and posted at Kwajalein. One such a cover is shown here as **Illustration 17/11**.

No covers originating from Enewetak have been reported since 1982. Currently Air Marshall Islands has a weekly flight to Enewetak each Tuesday. [Majuro - Kwajalein - Enewetak - Kwajalein - Majuro.] It is not known if there are any permanent residents or whether scientific studies of the island continue.

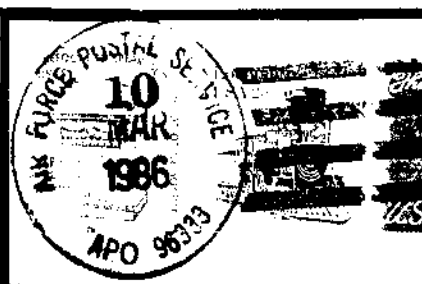


Illustration 17/10

Illustration 17/11

CHRISTMAS ISLAND - APO 915 Br.: Steven Zirinski sends **Illustration 17/12** and asks if anyone can identify the datestamps?. Robert T. Murphy in "A Postal History/Cancellation Study of the U.S. Pacific Islands" lists APO 915 as located at Christmas Island during WW 2 and illustrates several 4-Bar datestamps used at this APO. However no Utility/APDS are shown. Similar details are given by D.H. Vernon in "Philatelic Handbook of the Gilbert & Ellice Islands". Given this, it does seem that Corporal J.E. Devine and APO 915 were indeed on Christmas Island in April 1942 and that he had to hand the two datestamps shown here. One appears to be a Money Order datestamp while the other is a Registered datestamp. Perhaps the relatively low usage of these services explains why no examples have been reported previously. Steven (and I) would appreciate your comments and reports of other dates of use for these datestamps.

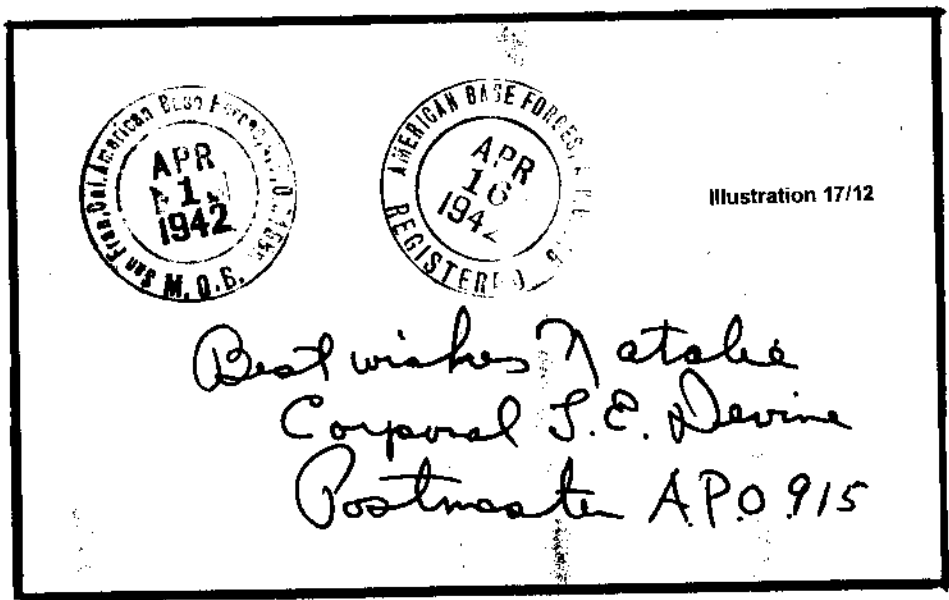


Illustration 17/12