

U.S. PACIFIC ISLANDS BULLETIN

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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DECEMBER, 1997

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

THE CANCELLATIONS OF PINGELAP BRANCH P.O. POHNPEI FM 96941:

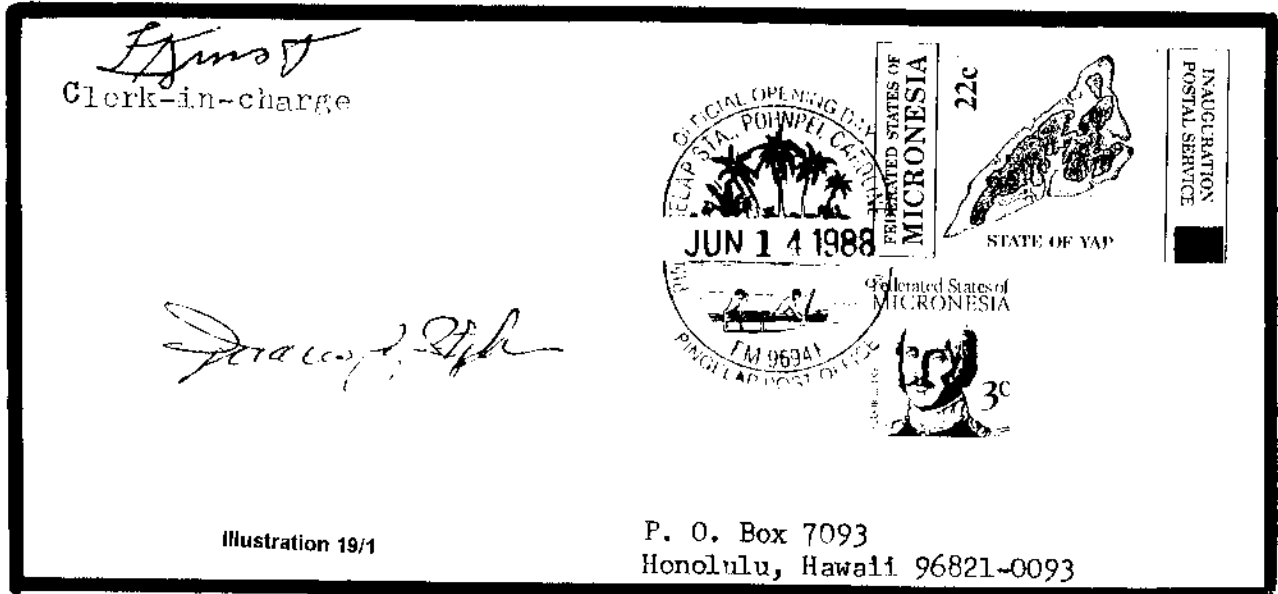


Illustration 19/1

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Pingelap is an island which lies almost midway between Pohnpei and Kusiae. The 1970 census gave the population as 661. However the April, May & June 1990 edition of "Philatelically Yours" the bulletin of the combined Guam stamp clubs reporting on the 1989 Christmas Air drop to outlying area of the Northern Mariana and the Caroline Islands by planes from Anderson AFB Guam gave the population of Pingelap as 813.

The Post Office opened on June 14, 1988. This is confirmed by the George L. Machado Jr. cover shown here as **Illustration 19/1** signed by the Clerk in Charge, Ellice Ernest and Ignacio R. Stephen the Assistant Postmaster of the Federated States of Micronesia. This cover is cancelled with a datestamp including the words "Official Opening Day" at the top of the cancellation. Subsequently a similar datestamp but without the "Official Opening Day" legend was used at Pingelap. The "opening day" datestamp was used again on Sep 07, 1996 - but with the '6' of 1996 added in manuscript.

No covers are known to me from this station between Feb 12, 1990 and Sept 7, 1996 other than three with illegible dates. One was sent to Pingelap by a collector on June 22, 1991 and received back on July 25, 1991. A further two, sent out by a collector on July 13, 1992, were received back separately on August 10, 1992 and August 11, 1992. Covers sent out in November 1992 and June 1993 were returned with Pohnpei datestamps. Was the office closed during this period? The office was included in a list of FSM Post Offices and Branches supplied on September 14, 1993 by Sintaro K. Ezra, the Pohnpei Philatelic Bureau Manager and also on a further list dated June 11, 1997 supplied by the Pohnpei P.O. It is possible that the office is operative but has no useable datestamp.

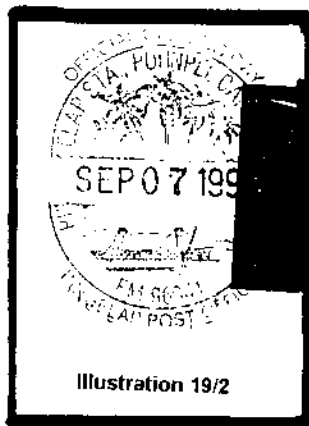


Illustration 19/2

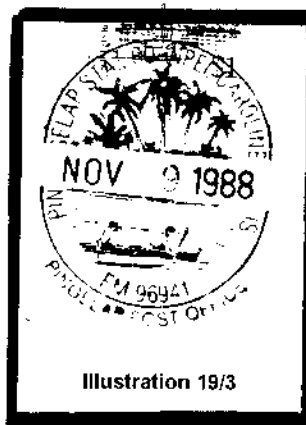


Illustration 19/3

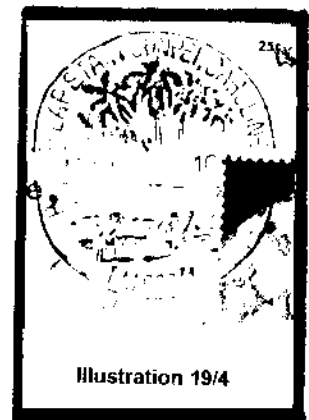


Illustration 19/4

- Illustration 19/1:** Used on Opening Day June 14, 1988.
 - Illustration 19/2:** **Illustration 19/1** [with final figure of year in manuscript] seen used on Sep 7, 1996.
 - Illustration 19/3:** Seen between Jun 15, 1988 and Feb 12, 1990 [The Jun 15, 1988 datestamp was on a commercial cover over stamped with the same datestamp but showing the date Nov 9, 1988]
 - Illustration 19/4:** Seen on philatelic covers known to have been datestamped during 1991 and 1992. Appears to be **Illustration 19/3** but mis-shapen and with the dateline illegible
- (I am grateful to George L. Machado Jr., George M. Baka & William S. Tufts for their help in preparing the above.)

POSTAGE RATES - QUERY ?: Michael Sewell asks about a Registered cover in his collection. The cover was posted at Pohnpei on Mar 25, 1997 to an address in Guam. The cover bears FSM postage stamps to the value of \$5.27. Michael asks if this is the correct registered postage rate? I understand the current Registration fee to be \$4.85 and the basic postage rate to be 32c making a total of \$5.17 NOT \$5.27. I understand the next weight level above the 32c rate is 52c. Can any of our U.S. readers comment on the postal rate on Michael's cover?