



## Publication Reviews

George B. Griffenhagen

### Astrophilately

*American Astrophilately: The First 50 Years*, by David S. Ball, A&A Publishers, 1312 Winchester Drive, Charleston, SC 29407. \$39.95 plus \$4 domestic shipping and handling. 8" x 10" Soft-bound, 344 pages, 2010. To order, go to [www.Americanastrophilately.com](http://www.Americanastrophilately.com).

The story of the conquest of space through the philatelic media, called Astrophilately, had its origin in 1957 with the launching of the first *Sputnik* by the Russians. The same year, 12 ATA members organized the ATA Space Satellite Unit. This unit was chartered by ATA in 1958, and changed its name to the ATA Space Unit in 1960. The latter action must have obviously led the author of this essential volume to celebrate the 50th anniversary of American Astrophilately.

The first 120 pages of this volume describe U.S. stratospheric balloon flights initiated on June 2, 1957, and unmanned satellites commencing with Explorer launched Jan. 31, 1958. This is followed by launching and tracking ship covers for *Mercury* (1961-63), *Gemini* (1963-19), *Apollo* (1966-19), *Skylab* (1973) and the Space Shuttle (1973-2004). These chapters have been authored in alphabetical order by Beatrice Bachmann, Morris Beck, Eddie Bizub, Chris and Paul Calle, Eberhard Coelle, Steve Durst, Sean Marsar, Owen Murray, Robert Pearlman, Reuben Ramkissoon, Ross Smith, Kris Stoever and Les Winick.

Part two of the volume illustrates, in full color, 45 unmanned flight covers, 48 Project *Mercury* covers, 66 Project *Gemini* covers, 90 Project *Apollo* covers, and 36 post-*Apollo* covers. They include the launch date as well as the recovery date. The author writes, "Collecting covers without cachets and autographs can be downright boring. Cachets are provided in a wide variety of methods. The signature can be printed, rubber stamped, secretarial signed, forged, signed by machine or autographed."

Part three illustrates more than 800 postmarks, divided into the aforementioned groupings. These postmarks commence with *Explorer 1*, launched in 1958, to the X-Prize civilian space flight in 2004. The volume concludes with a glossary of terms employed and a short bibliography. The volume also includes a DVD, consisting of an equivalent of 700 pages

that picture sample award-winning exhibits, explains International Philatelic Guidelines (FIP) regulations for exhibiting, APS judging regulations and the landmark article on NASA VIP cards authored by Ray Cartier.

As the introduction suggests, this landmark volume is essential for all space event cover collectors and budding astrophilatelists. It is our conviction that a copy should be included in all philatelic libraries.

### Foreign Thematic Periodicals Belgium

*Themaphilia*. Belgian Thematic Philatelic Association, No. 202, January 2010. Koenraad Bracke, editor, 13 Baerdonckstraat, B-9230 Wetteren, Belgium. 8-1/4" x 11-3/4" Saddle stitched. 56 pages.

## Buying Japan & China

See us at Booth 144 at Stamp Show

### Urgently needed PR China stamps

#566	\$600
#628	\$8,000
#782	\$1,200
#798a	\$1,300
#967-980	\$1,200
#996	\$2,000
#1383a	\$200

