

NEW ASTRONAUT CANDIDATES

NASA surprised everyone by making a quick selection of the "winners" and on May 29, 1980, the Johnson Space Center in Houston announced that 19 candidates had been chosen. They will report to JSC on July 7 for a year of training and for those that successfully complete it, will become astronauts.

This new group has 11 mission specialists and eight pilot candidates. Three of these are JSC employees, six are civilians, two are women and one is a black. One of the chosen applicants is really all smiles...he is William Fisher. His wife, Dr. Anna Fisher, is an astronaut mission specialist at JSC and she was among the 20 mission specialists selected as astronauts in 1978.

As usual, with the SCCS, we will give specialized coverage to this new event; coverage that space collectors have come to depend upon. Whether it is a single cover, or a specialized series, we always try to service what most collectors will want for their collection.

For May 29, 1980, we have a single cover, postmarked Houston with Mailer's Permit, with cachet matching the "Applicants Set of Six Groups." It is priced at 90¢. Then for July 7 (reporting date) we will have a single cover with a Houston machine cancel and price of 90¢.

As a special..we will have a cover that you will not be able to find anyplace else. It is a SCCS double cancel cover. The first cancel is the Mailer's Permit, Houston, of May 29 (selection date) and the second cancel is a Houston machine cancel July 7 (reporting date). Price of this cover is only \$2.00

And as we did on the first series of new Shuttle Astronauts back in 1978, we will have a specialized set of 20 covers. In addition to the 15¢ U. S. stamp and Mailer's Permit cancel of May 29, each cover will have a single of a new NASA Local Post featuring each of the new 19 trainees. The 20th cover in the set will feature the Space Shuttle. The NASA Local Post singles will be cancelled with the NASA Local Post commemorative cancel illustrating the Space Shuttle.

To accomodate the 20 different NASA Locals, we will print them in two different souvenir sheets of 10, bi-color. The first souvenir sheet will have 10 of the 19 new Astronaut Trainees; the second souvenir sheet will have the other 9 plus a single stamp of the Space Shuttle. The two NASA Local Post souvenir sheets will be sent at NO CHARGE to all that order the set of 20 different covers. The price of the set of 20 covers and two souvenir sheets is \$15.75

We are using past experience as a guide, so we know we will have our hands full in July with this series. Please allow about three weeks or so after the reporting date for delivery. If we can better that, we will certainly do so. And thanks for your support of the SCCS cover program. We keep saying that now is the time to get your Space Shuttle covers. After producing space covers for thirteen years we look back on a lot of those covers and say, "Sure wish we had some more of those." Don't let that happen to your collection in the upcoming years of the Space Shuttle. Interest is already beginning to pick up.