

# CUBA

## POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT

### OCTOBER 1939

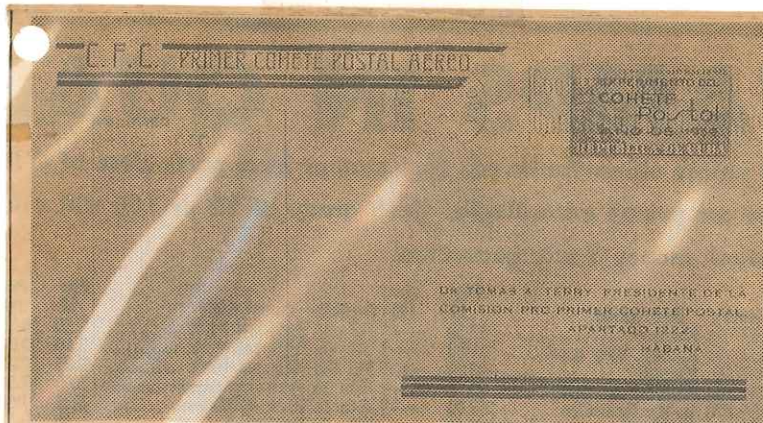
PRESIDENTIAL DECREE No. 2330 OF SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1939  
 AUTHORIZED CHANGING THE COLOR AND SURCHARGE OF 200,000 10¢  
 DOMESTIC AIR MAIL STAMPS, AS REQUESTED BY THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE



# CUBA

## POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT

### OCTOBER 1939



An October 1, 1939 first day cover of the world's first rocket stamp as described by the author. It was addressed to him at the time, and duplicates were sold generally at a whopping 60c each following the flight. Today's figure is almost that many dollars.

## Background And Development Of The Cuban Postal Rocket Experiment Of October 1939

LINNS STAMP MAG. Dr. Tomas A. Terry, Dec. 12-1966

The day is not far distant when after depositing our letter in a special mailbox and hearing a little while later an infernal noise, we will know that our message has arrived at its destination in Europe. This would be perfectly possible this very moment, since the remotely controlled projectiles can cross the Atlantic in less 30 minutes. It would only be necessary to add a packet of letters to it in order to obtain this result in the postal system.

These demonstrations might at present astonish many people, but this was exactly what The Philatelic Club of Cuba foresaw and commemorated in advance 27 years ago.

We do not pretend of course, to have invented the process which goes back to the limits of prehistory, which as a principle we owe to Newton in his third law for motion of bodies.

Neither was it practiced originally by us as a system of postal transportation which was carried out for the first time in Austria in 1931 based on the correspondence of scientists Franz Von Moefft and Hermann Oberth concerning the possibilities of transporting letters at speeds above the 600 miles indicated as the limit of speed of propeller-driven airplanes.

Not taking into account some suggestions and even attempts to transport messages by rocket carried out during the last century, we can fix as an example and point of departure for present demonstrations the work carried on since 1928 by Dr. Frederick Schmiedel of Graz, Austria.

He actually went so far as to plan and even propose a regular mail route in the Austrian Alps for rapid postal communication of two towns separated by a mountain range nearly 10,000 feet high which although just over a mile apart by air required eight hours on the road for land communication. For this purpose he carried out his first trial on February 2,

1931 sending 102 letters. This was followed by other trials with greater or less success.

Finding it impossible to obtain official support for this enterprise he proposed to continue in his costly experiments by making use of new models of seven-pound rockets in which he sent in each case some 150 to 200 covers franked with a series of stamps and very showy private labels which were sold for this purpose, and by means of which he underwrote a portion of the cost of said trials.

In later years these mailings were carried out almost exclusively for financial gain by unscrupulous promoters in Germany, England, India, France, Holland, Belgium, and in some cases the United States, which commercialism soon did away with the great popularity and enthusiasm which had existed among philatelists for that new aerophilatelic material.

Such was the situation when Fred Kessler edited the first special catalog (1935) and in our Philatelic Club it was a question of carrying out that dispatch in a different form or manner and free of any idea of profit, since we believed that the possibilities of private mailings and the patience of the ever-fleeced collectors reached their limit.

Here there arose the plan to do that mailing officially which desire became possible with the cooperation of understanding officials.

As a first step, it was agreed by Presidential Decree No. 2330 dated September 1, 1939 to surcharge 200,000 stamps of the domestic air-mail 10c (Scott No. C13) with a color change to emerald green.

At the same time the construction of the rocket proceeded in charge of a well-known pyrotechnician who to the best of his knowledge and understanding did all he could within the limits of the resources at his disposal.

When the rocket was finished, three preliminary trials were carried out on the first, third, and eighth of October (two of which were completely successful). They contained respectively 60, 21, and 15 covers franked with stamps and private labels which today constitute great rarities.

The official launching took place on the morning of Sunday, October 15 at the shooting range of the Sports Casino with the symbolic transportation of 2581 covers franked with the referred to special stamp. That first trial did not result in success.

Already it was called "experiment" in the very surcharge of the new stamp which was added with foresight and the same pessimism as in the first official air-mail (Experimento del Cohete Postal).

For the first time those who neither knew nor

the significance of a symbolic act, that trial mailing which we might call futuristic was considered a failure as was even that of the rockets, but years later there rained upon London many rockets of great size coming from the coasts of Belgium and Holland — some with propaganda material and even correspondence from English prisoners in Germany.

These gigantic vehicles were the model when peace came for the rapid succession of great rockets like Viking, Atlas, Mercury, Hermes, and Jupiter, whose great capacity made people think of the possibility of establishing space communications — and thus made a reality one of the greatest and oldest dreams of humanity.

A little while later, there was established a race or competition for control of routes of space and the utilization of the above mentioned apparatus for the purposes of attack and defense.

Naturally, and as was to be presumed, this great extra-terrestrial competition was not long in being reflected in the numerous issues starting with the IGY of 1957-1958, and today it constitutes an extensive and popular topical collection called "space" which has at its disposal several hundred very artistic examples, and more than six specialized catalogs.

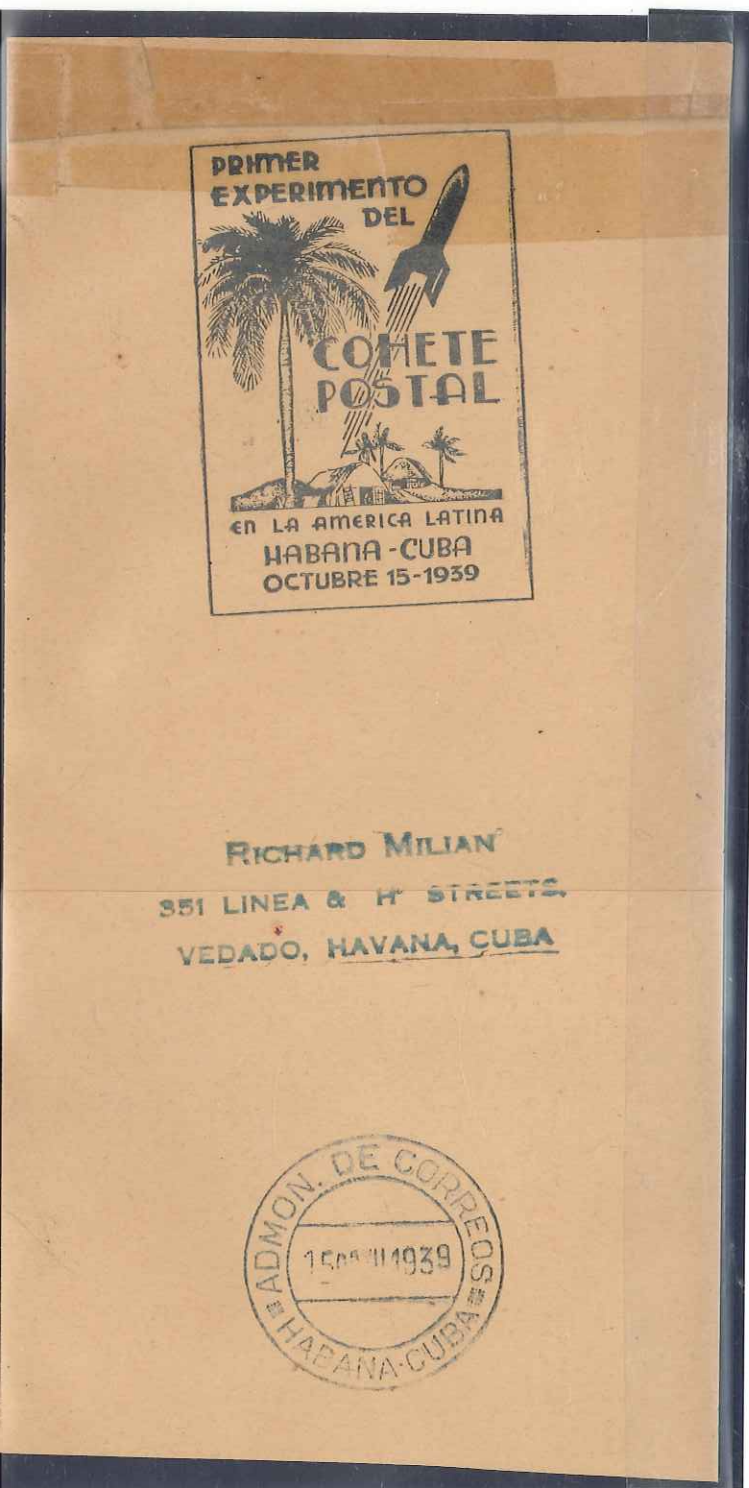
This area of philately has been considered by many, and with good reason, an additional continuation of the first postal rockets, because in principle it is a matter of the same means of transportation. This great demand had its origin in our stamp of the Postal Rocket Experiment, the first official issue for this purpose, which was originally sold just 27 years ago for 10c. Today it is difficult to obtain one for less than \$40-50, and it is still increasing in value and demand.





**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

WRAPPERS WITH SPECIAL CACHET AND  
 FIRST DAY CIRCULAR DATED STAMP



**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**



THIS IS THE FIRST ROCKET STAMP OFFICIALLY CATALOGUED IN THE WORLD  
 200,000 STAMPS WERE PRINTED



First day cover.  
 Experimental Rocket Flight.

FIRST DAY COVER  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

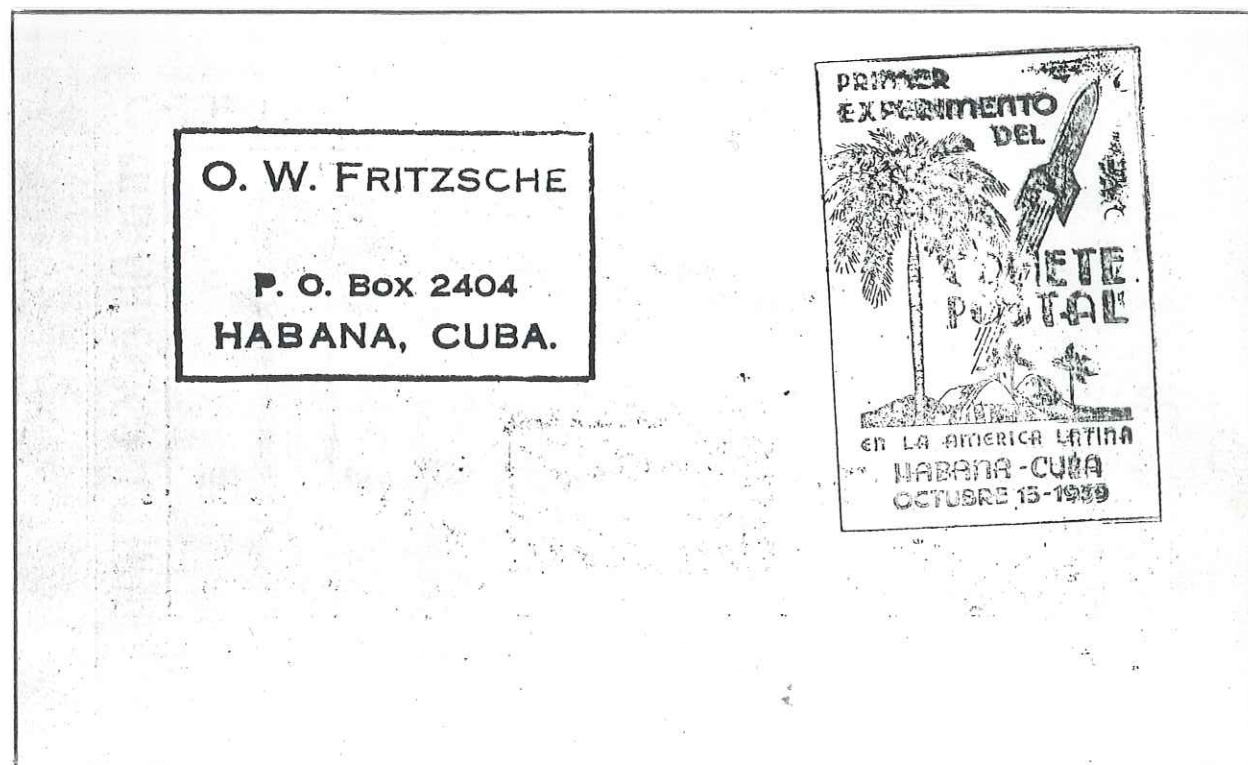


**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

SOUVENIR FIRST DAY POSTAL CARD



REVERSE SIDE



1/14

8

**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

ROCKET FIRST DAY SOUVENIR CARD



SPECIAL CACHET  
 USED FOR THAT EVENT



1/13



**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

FIRST ROCKET SOUVENIR SHEET  
 COMMEMORATING THE ROCKET LAUNCHING  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939



**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

FIRST DAY COVER  
 VIA CLIPPER TO NEW YORK





**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

FIRST ROCKET SOUVENIR SHEET  
 COMMEMORATING THE ROCKET LAUNCHING  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939



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**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

FIRST ROCKET SOUVENIR SHEET  
 COMMEMORATING THE ROCKET LAUNCHING  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939



SIGNED BY: DR. TOMÁS TEERY  
 AND RICHARD MILIÁN

PROMOTERS OF THIS EXPERIMENT

2/1



**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

OCTOBER 15TH, 1940

FIRST ANNIVERSARY  
 SOUVENIR SHEET



SIGNED BY: DR. TOMÁS TERRY  
 AND RICHARD MILÁN

**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

OCTOBER 15TH, 1940

FIRST ANNIVERSARY  
 SOUVENIR SHEET





*CUBA*  
*Postal Rocket Experiment*  
*OCTOBER 15TH, 1939*

OCTOBER 15TH, 1940

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

SMALL SOUVENIR SHEET

ISSUED BY THE  
CLUB FILATÉLICO DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA



*CUBA*  
*Postal Rocket Experiment*  
*OCTOBER 1939*

OCTOBER 15TH, 1940

FIRST ANNIVERSARY  
SMALL SOUVENIR SHEET





**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

OCTOBER 15TH, 1954

XV ANNIVERSARY SOUVENIR SHEET



COVER SIGNED BY: DR. TOMÁS TERRY  
 AND ERNESTO BELLO



**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

OCTOBER 15TH, 1954

XV ANNIVERSARY SOUVENIR SHEET

TETE-BECHE VARIETY

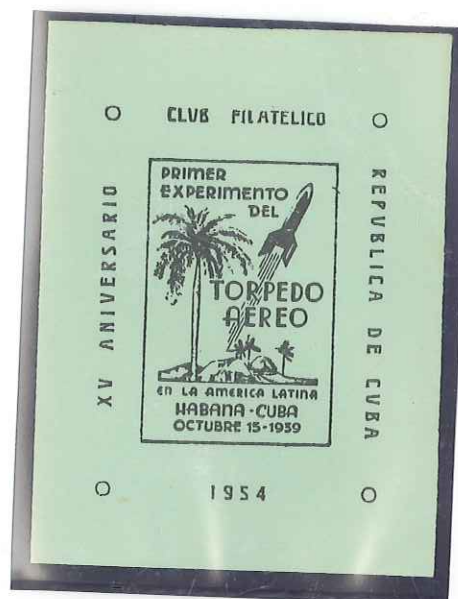




**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

OCTOBER 15TH, 1954

XV ANNIVERSARY SOUVENIR SHEET



**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

OCTOBER 15TH, 1954

XV ANNIVERSARY SOUVENIR SHEET ON COVERS





CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

1957

AEROGRAM WITH A ROCKET DESIGN



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CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

LAUNCHING OF A ROCKET FROM A JET AIRPLANE  
 FEBRUARY 25TH, 1956



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**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

SOUVENIR SHEETS ISSUED BY  
 CLUB FILATELICO  
 DE LA  
 REPUBLICA DE CUBA

APRIL 24TH, 1958

USED ON OCTOBER 15TH, 1959



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**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

SOUVENIR SHEETS ISSUED BY  
 CLUB FILATELICO  
 DE LA  
 REPUBLICA DE CUBA

APRIL 24TH, 1958



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CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

SOUVENIR SHEETS ISSUED BY  
 CLUB FILATELICO  
 DE LA  
 REPUBLICA DE CUBA  
 APRIL 24TH, 1958

INVERTED SURCHARGED  
 SOUVENIR SHEET  
 CANCELLED ON OCTOBER 15TH, 1959



Club Filatélico  
 de la  
 República de Cuba



EXPERIMENTO DEL  
 COHETE POSTAL  
 1939 15 de OCTUBRE 1959



Souvenir

Exposición Filatélica Nacional  
 Día del Sello 24 de Abril 1958



CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

SOUVENIR SHEETS ISSUED BY  
 CLUB FILATELICO  
 DE LA  
 REPUBLICA DE CUBA  
 APRIL 24TH, 1958

DOUBLE SURCHARGED  
 SOUVENIR SHEET  
 CANCELLED ON OCTOBER 15TH, 1959



Club Filatélico  
 de la  
 República de Cuba



EXPERIMENTO DEL  
 COHETE POSTAL  
 1939 15 de OCTUBRE 1959



Souvenir

Exposición Filatélica Nacional  
 Día del Sello 24 de Abril 1958



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2/11



CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

SOUVENIR SHEETS ISSUED BY  
 CLUB FILATELICO  
 DE LA  
 REPUBLICA DE CUBA

APRIL 24TH, 1958



EXPERIMENTO DEL  
**COHETE Postal**  
 1939 15 de OCTUBRE 1959  
 Club Filatélico  
 de la  
 República de Cuba



Souvenir  
 Exposición Filatélica Nacional  
 Día del Sello 24 de Abril 1958

2/15

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CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959



EXPERIMENTO DEL  
**COHETE Postal**  
 1939 15 de OCTUBRE 1959



EXPERIMENTO DEL  
**COHETE Postal**  
 1939 15 de OCTUBRE 1959



SAN JOSE 1172 - APARTADO 678  
 HABANA



2/14



**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

SOUVENIR SHEETS ISSUED BY  
 CLUB FILATELICO  
 DE LA  
 REPUBLICA DE CUBA  
  
 APRIL 24TH, 1958



**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

SOUVENIR SHEETS ISSUED BY  
 CLUB FILATELICO  
 DE LA  
 REPUBLICA DE CUBA  
  
 APRIL 24TH, 1958





**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959



**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959





**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959

SMALL SOUVENIR SHEETS



**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959

SMALL SOUVENIR SHEETS





CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959



CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959





CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959



SIGNED BY DR. TOMÁS TERRY

CUBA  
 POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1939

XX ANNIVERSARY

FIRST WORLD OFFICIAL ROCKET MAIL  
 1939 15TH OCTOBER 1959

SOUVENIR SHEETS





**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XXV ANNIVERSARY  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1964

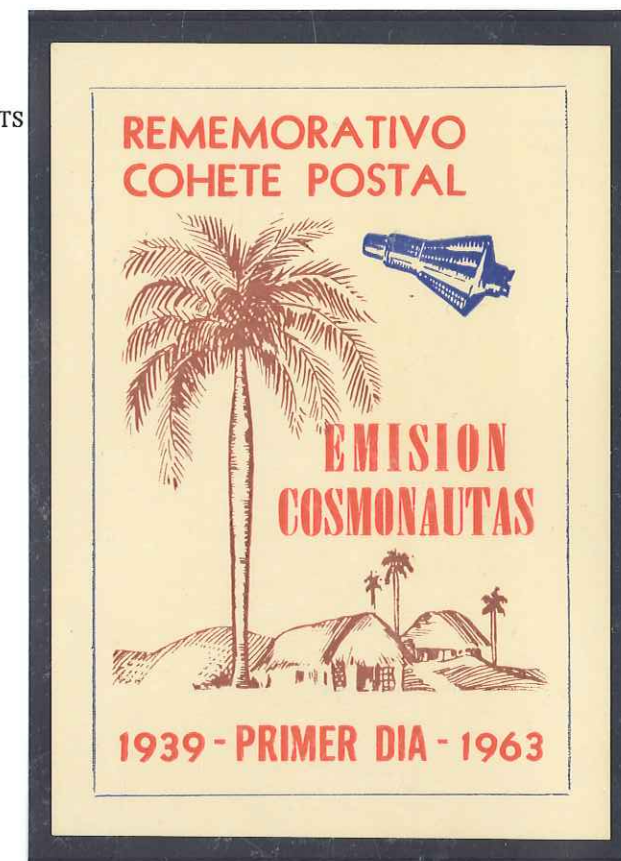
OFFICIAL STAMP TAKEN FROM THE SOUVENIR SHEET  
 AND USED ON A FIRST DAY COVER



**CUBA**  
**POSTAL ROCKET EXPERIMENT**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XXIV ANNIVERSARY  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1963

DIFFERENT SOUVENIR SHEETS





**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XXV ANNIVERSARY  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1964

SOUVENIR SHEET ON A FIRST DAY COVER



SIGNED BY: DR. TOMÁS TERRY  
 AND RAFAEL GARCÍA

**CUBA**  
**Postal Rocket Experiment**  
**OCTOBER 15TH, 1939**

XXV ANNIVERSARY  
 OCTOBER 15TH, 1964

SOUVENIR SHEET



SIGNED BY: DR. BUENAVENTURA CRUZ PLANAS  
 AND DR. TOMÁS TERRY



1¢ PERFORATE SHEET

001956

INF.D

1939

COHETE POSTAL CUBANO

25 ANIVERSARIO

1964

SUP.D

2/6

1939

COHETE POSTAL CUBANO

25 ANIVERSARIO

1964

11476



06884

SUP. b

3¢ PERFORATE SHEET



2¢ PERFORATE SHEET

06887

VARIO

MADE IN CUBA



INF. 1



006571

13¢ PERFORATE SHEET



VARIO

006527

9¢ PERFORATE SHEET



INF. D