

HIGH ROAD TO CATHAY







Map cachet above shows Pan American Airways transpacific routes. The air road to Cathay (Pan American Airways' romantic term for China) made fairly regular air mail possible between continents and islands across the Pacific fewer than ten years after Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic. The simple act of carrying a letter meant meeting the challenge of creating island bases; the adversity of machines, weather, and people in the face of war; and the complex postal rates and lack of post offices.

While aerophilately includes a study of routes and rates, it also reveals the profound effect air mail has on individuals and history leading up to World War II. Therefore, this exhibit focuses also on the personal element or story of history-makers that transpacific air mail made possible.

This chronology traces the development of F.A.M. 14 and 19 flown by Pan American's *China Clipper* and other flying boats until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor ended this early stage of transpacific mail.

Exhibit includes:

Crew-Signed covers Route Extensions Official/Courtesy flights

Complex forwarding Military priority mail Survey flights

First passenger/mail flights

Round-the-world mail Disrupted flights

Private cachets

Flights with improved airplanes

Rate Changes

Reopening of routes

POW mail

Last regular flights

(Special attention covers are denoted with a red spot on lower right corner of page. Type of aircraft and ship carrying mail across the Pacific is shown in colored band at top of page.)