

STAMPS

SOUTH AFRICA

ISSUE 1: March, 2021. A bi-monthly newsletter.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PFSA



Envelope, addressed to Rondebosch, with the Union of South Africa's first Commemorative stamp issued on 4 November 1910 cancelled at Cape Town on that date.

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THIS MONTH MARCH

round-up of information you won't want to miss

1 FOOD FOR THOUGHT

FIRST RSA DEFINITIVE SERIES OF 1961.

It was general practice during the Union period to print the ½d and 1d stamps for both postal and fiscal purposes by printing the words Postage/Revenue on the stamps:



1913



1930



1954



The only stamps of the Republic of South Africa that were issued for this dual purpose were the ½c and 1c stamps of the first RSA Definitive series of 1961.



OUR HOBBY IS ALIVE & THRIVING

Philately in a time of pandemic

Hugh Amoore RDPSA

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Marquez's novel *Love in a Time of Cholera* plays on the two meanings (especially in its original Spanish) of *cholera*: the disease, and the passion. So, too, there is more to philately in the time of the Covid19 pandemic: philately is a wonderful antidote to the social isolation, often devastating, so many of us feel in these times where the ordinary pleasures of the company of friends are denied to us.

These times, though, pose a challenge to those who are in leadership positions both to offer philatelic fare to advanced philatelists (a small number) and stamp collectors (there are many more collectors than some people think) and to explore ways of returning to fairs and meetings **that are safe**. The passion we share for our hobby has found increasing expression in digital philately – just witness the digital presence of our Federation on the web (<https://stampssa.africa>) and Facebook, or the website of the Rhodesia Study Circle www.rhodesianstudycircle.org.za on which among other things you can find online a complete handbook catalogue of the stamps of Rhodesia and Zimbabwe to 2020, or the South African Philately [online] Club at <https://southafricanphilatelyclub.com/>. All of these are free to the user: all you need is bandwidth. If you have not done so yet: explore them and spread the word!

These are also times to read, to study, and to work on collections.

The best advice I can give to any level of collector: find the next level catalogue or handbook that will help you.

If you are beginning your exploration, this will be a basic catalogue or book about our hobby; if you are an advanced collector don't balk at the cost of the newest handbook or monograph (some are not cheap). It will pay dividends in leading you to a better understanding of your area(s) of collecting.

We read too often that philately is a dying hobby; I recently acquired a copy (the original 1902 edition) of Edward J Nankivell's classic: ***Stamp Collecting as a Pastime***. In pointing to its enduring nature (remember this was written in 1902) he wrote:

“Ever since the collection of postage stamps was first started it has been sneered at as a passing craze, and it has been going to die a natural death for the past forty years. Indeed, it is very much more alive than it has ever been. Still the sneerers sneer on, and the false prophets continue to prophesy its certain end.”

By way of contrast: this month's edition of the **London Philatelist** carries an auction house advertisement inviting material for consignment: it reads

*“Consign your collection... With **the significant increase in demand**, 2-21 is the right time to sell your philatelic treasures and get top prices”.*

Our hobby is alive and thriving. But unlike Covid19, it is not a natural spreader. My message today: spread the word and let others know how much fun there is in the collecting of stamps, and in the highways and byways of philately.

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NICE TO KNOW

THE FIRST STAMP OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Union of South Africa is the precursor to the present-day Republic of South Africa.

At the close of the Anglo-Boer War in 1902, the two British colonies – Cape of Good Hope and Natal – as well as the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republic (ZAR), and the Republic of the Orange Free State (OFS), became British colonies and were for the first time under a common flag.

The most significant obstacle, which had prevented previous plans of unification, had been removed. Hence the long-standing desire of many colonial administrators to establish a unified structure for South Africa became feasible. The Union of South Africa came into being on 31 May 1910 with the unity of the four previously separate colonies namely the Cape Colony, Natal, Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. It was founded as a dominion, later a Commonwealth realm, but became an independent Republic on 31 May 1961.

PHILATELY

Undoubtedly every intention was to issue postage stamps on this date to commemorate the event. Unfortunately, with the death of King Edward VII on 6 May 1910, it necessitated the preparation of a new die showing the portrait of the new heir to the throne, King George V.

Time before the 31st May 1910 made preparation of a new die impossible and issues of the colonies were valid for use throughout the Union until they were demonetised on 31 December 1932.

This was published in Government Notice 349 of 15 August 1910: *“It is hereby notified for general information that until further notice, postage and revenue stamps which were in authorised use on the 30th May 1910 in the four Colonies incorporated in the Union of South Africa, are recognized as available throughout the Union and their use is no longer limited within the territorial boundaries of the original colonies of issue...”*

The Union’s first stamp first appeared on 4 November 1910 with the opening of the Union Parliament when this lovely, engraved 2½d blue, was printed in Dutch and English. The 2½d value represented the Universal Postal Union unit of postage for foreign letters at the time. It was the only Union stamp until the King George V definitive issue were issued on the 1st September 1913.

DESIGN

The full faced portrait of King George V mounted by a crown and the name of the country in English and Dutch above and below the King’s head. Shields with the heraldic insignia of the four colonies, comprising of the Union, appear in the four corners. Designed by H S Wilkinson, distributor of stamps in Pretoria and printed by Thos. De La Rue & Co. Ltd. of London, England using a recess process.



Sheets consisted of 120 stamps in 10 rows by 12 columns with a centre indicated by crossed lines, perforated 14. In printing, blue is a very tenacious colour to the extent that difficulty is experienced in wiping the matrix/printing plate clean. This caused the surface of the paper to have a blueish tinge, and can be varied in depth of colour on different sheets of paper during production.

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SOMETHING TO LOOK FOR

First Decimal Stamps

Since inception, the Union of South Africa adopted sterling as its currency.

12 pence (d) = 1 shilling (/ -)

20 shillings = 1 pound (£)

When South Africa switched over from Sterling to the Decimal Rand, the first Decimal stamps were issued on 14 February 1961.

100c = R1.00

It was a short-lived Definitive Issue as it happened only three and a half months before the formation of the Republic of South Africa on 31 May 1961, when a new definitive set of stamps were issued.

Union Stamps of 1960 with new currency on stamp, old currency in brackets



(3d)



(4d)



(6d)



(1/-)

Union Stamps of 1954 with new currency on stamp - old currency in brackets below



(1½d)



(1d)



(1½d)



(2d)



(6d)



(1/3)



(1/6)*



(5/-)



(10/-)

* as there was no 15c stamp, the design of the 1/6 was used for the 20c stamp.

Interesting to note is that there was no 3½c postal rate. A week before introduction, the Decimalisation Board and Postmaster General agreed to reduce the Inland airmail letter rate to 3c and it was too late to print a 3c stamp. Also, one can use these Union stamps to frank current RSA mail as the stamps are still valid.

Although this is a beautiful set of stamps to have in your collection, they are readily available, more challenging is to look out for correctly franked envelopes, with appropriate postal rates, with these stamps used in the period 14 February to 30 May 1961!

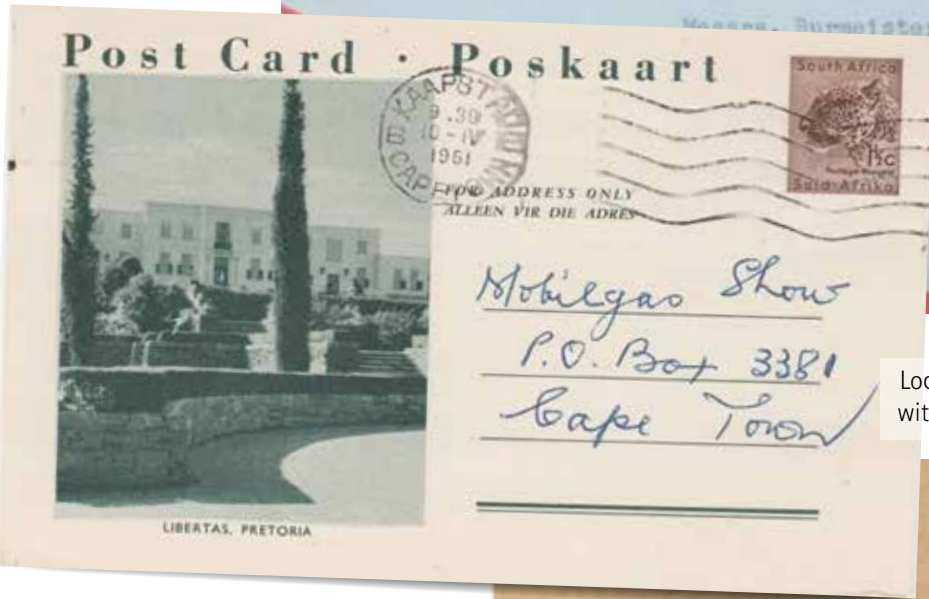
NB: Read more about this interesting period in our stamp history in Gerhard Kamffer's article "The Functioning of the Postal System in the Republic of South Africa since 1961" that appears in the April 2021 issue of *The SA Philatelist*.



Correctly franked letter sent by Air Mail from Welkom in the OFS to England on 17.2.1961 Air Mail letter rate to UK: 12½c per oz.



Letter sent by Air Mail from Cape Town to East London on 28 February 1961 with correct franking of 3c for Inland Air Mail postal rate.



Local usage in Cape Town on 10 April 1961 correctly franked with Inland Postcard rate of 1½c.



Window envelope, usually used to send invoices/accounts, correctly franked with the open letter postal rate of 1c, dated 26 April 1961.



Correctly franked letter sent by Air Mail from Durban to Australia on 8 April 1961 with the correct Air Mail rate of 25c to Australia.



Receipt issued on 25 May 1961 bearing a 1c stamp with revenue cancel.

To view a list of the 1961 Postal Rates, please click and follow the link below, or scan the QR code on the right with a QR reader on your smartphone/device

<https://stampssa.africa/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Int-Postal-rates-1961-71-final.pdf>



STAMP FAIRS

WHERE TO BUY STAMPS

All fairs open at 09:00 with an auction at 11:00

❁ **PRETORIA STAMP FAIR AND MINI-AUCTION** - First Saturday, every month, held at the Greek Orthodox Church, Corner Lynnwood Road & Roper St, Brooklyn.
Contact: Paul van Zeyl (076 124 9055) paulvz@mweb.co.za

❁ **KYALAMI STAMP FAIR AND AUCTION** - Second Saturday, every month, at the Kyalami Country Club, Midrand,
Contact: Clinton Goslin (083 272 9367) atlasauctioneers@lantic.net
Kenny Napier (083 444 0249) kenny.napier@mweb.co.za

❁ **KYALAMI QSA** - Third Saturday, every month, Kyalami Country Club, Kyalami. Auctions run by Cedric Roché RDPSA and Paul van Zeyl, RDPSA.
Contact Paul van Zeyl (076 1249 055)
paulvz@mweb.co.za

❁ **EAST RAND STAMP FAIR**
- Fourth Saturday, every month
Edenvale Bowling Club, Sixth Avenue,
Edenvale Contact: Kenny Napier kenny.napier@mweb.co.za

❁ CAPE PROVINCE

Cape Stamp Fair. Usually first Saturday every month (09:00 - 12:30)
Bellville Valley DRC Hall, c/o Postma & St Andrews Streets, Bellville.
Organisers: **Ken Joseph** of Philatelic Friends (072 597 1287) ken@philatelicfriends.com & **Robert Harm** (082 925 7103) robertharm9@gmail.com

❁ NATAL

NATAL FAIR - First Saturday, every month
Fynnlans NG Kerk, Edwin Swales Drive/Lighthouse Road, Bluff, Durban
Contact: John Bracey (079 465 7468) bracon@eastcoast.co.za



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Expert Committee COMMENT



1840 was the year of issue of the world's first adhesive postage stamp, GB's 1d black. A primary concern for the authorities in the run-up to its introduction was to protect against forgery or imitation. Security features such as watermarked paper; a complicated design (difficult to replicate); use of fugitive inks etc. was to become the norm in much stamp production. Of course, the advent of the postage stamp also provided enormous opportunities for the ethically-challenged to make a quick buck through production of fakes, forgeries etc through which to defraud the Post Office of income; or by selling into the collector market. Individual experts and Expert Committees have long been a feature of the hobby bringing their own or collective experience to examining and certifying items with regard to correct identification; authenticity; condition etc. The most common questions to our local Expert Committee are: is this the good shade; the rare watermark; the right 'perf'; is it genuine; and (my favourite) exactly what is this?' The Philatelic Federation of South Africa's Expert Committee has a long history of dedicated service to the stamp community, being in continuous operation since 1953. Questions to me are welcomed on **dcrocker@lando.co.za**

The most interesting will hopefully be featured in future comments on this site.

Michael Wigmore RDPSA

7 THEMATIC COLLECTING

THEMATIC THEMES ON SOUTH AFRICAN STAMPS

“A thematic collection is constructed in a special and unique way. It is kind of extraordinary, it needs more than a usual touch, it comes from the heart, it asks for great patience, great perseverance, and great dedication...” *This sentiment was shared by the late Rev. Cassie Carstens.*



There are a number of ‘rules’, as with all aspects of stamp collecting, it is important when starting a thematic collection to begin with a good storyline.

Decide firstly on a specific theme or topic.

Make sure it is something you want to collect, something of interest to you, something nice to have, something fascinating or a theme that brings you joy and satisfaction.

Research is a vital component of any collection - do as much as you can on your theme or topic - it is of vital importance, as well as adding value to your philatelic knowledge.

Looking at RSA stamps, a lot of themes can be identified. By simply listing the RSA stamps **from 1961 up to 2000**, it is interesting to note a number of possible themes, to name a few, and the number of stamps available in that theme: Culture (paintings, sculpture, literature, artifacts, etc) there are 125 stamps; for Flowers - 91; Birds - 61; History - 76; Architecture - 57; Important people - 54; Wild animals - 51; Sport - 50; Nature - 45; Religion - 39; Industry - 35; Science & technology - 34; Ships - 32 and so much more.

Add to this list many other SA stamps from Union, pre-Union and the last ‘modern’ issues

in the recent years, and take a close look as well at the so called, ‘TBVC’*countries... the list is endless

You name it, and you will find a South African stamp relating to every conceivable theme!

Thematic collectors have a saying that it is important not to look **at** a stamp, but rather **into** it. Take for example “*Our Family in Church*” by Elizabeth Nel, 9 years old from Bloemfontein from the *Children’s art series* of 1994.

On this stamp the following themes can be identified: Family, worship, children, clothing, shoes, hats, music (hymnal) religion, Christian symbols, Afrikaans culture, money, handbags and with a little imagination even more!

In depth information is that the cloth on the pulpit depicts the Christ-monogram (xhirho) and is used during Common Time in the church year. This way of ‘delving’ opens an incredible number of topics in a stamp and its usage in various themes.

South African stamps are indeed beautiful, thematically user-friendly, and quite easy to obtain. So, why not start to collect South African stamps - you certainly will enjoy it!

Petra Heath - Pretoria

**the four Bantustans which were declared nominally independent by the government of the Republic of South Africa*

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what's up at the post office

Touching Base

Post Office
South Africa



Here is an update received from SAPO detailing the countries to which postal services - to and from - are available from 17 February 2021:

Argentina	Austria	Botswana
Canada	China	Czech Republic
France	Great Britain	Hong Kong
India	Israel	Italy
Japan	Lesotho	Mozambique
Namibia	Netherlands	Peru
Poland	Romania	Russia
Seychelles	Singapore	South Korea
Spain	Swaziland	Sweden
Switzerland	Thailand	
United Arab Emirates (Dubai)		
USA		

It is worth taking note:

International transport is still not running normally owing to the worldwide lockdown regulations.

As a result, SAPO cannot accurately projected how long an item will take to reach its destination.

9 WANTED

Postal history items – used covers, postcards, letter cards – of ZAR and Transvaal from inception to 1910

Request from: Johan Bezuidenhout
Email: johanblue777@gmail.com

Union of SA – SG 42. 1/2d. control blocks

- (1) Issue 1 Bottom and right arrow block of 4
- (2) Issue 1 Pairs or blocks with UHB Varieties 1
(Green arrow in top left corner)
- (3) Issue 2 (cleaned plate printing) – Bottom arrow block
- (4) Issue 2 (Splintered Horn printing) – Top arrow block
- (5) Issue 3 Top and right arrow blocks
- (6) Issues 1 – 3 UHB Variety 38. (One much paler vignette)

Request from: Moody Titwell
Email: rudolph912@gmail.com

Johannesburg postcards

Request from: Franco Frescura
Email: frescuraf64@gmail.com

Any pre 1910 telegraphic material, forms stamps and cancels

Request from: Ian Paterson
Email: ian@smc-sa.com

Collector or specialist

You will find something of interest at one of my twice monthly auctions

- Kyalami Country Club. 11:00 every 2nd Saturday of the month
- Edenvale Bowling Club. 11:00 every last Saturday of the month

Kenny Napier

083 444 0249
kenny.napier@mweb.co.za

There is no buyer's commission

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1901 BSAC £ 5 deep blue
horizontal strip of three

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After a lifetime of collecting and trading stamps my motto is simple if it is out there I will find it. Areas of expertise include revenue stamps of Southern Africa and Southern Africa varieties.

Regular auctions are held as part of on going joint ventures, I also have international sellers on ebay and local sellers on Bid or Buy. Placement of product is key.

For any inquires please feel free to email me on atlasauctioneers@lantic.net.

My Facebook group Atlas Auctioneers keeps everyone up to date as to new finds or local auctions, join today

My WhatsApp number is 083 272 9367.

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