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Hon Life President: David Sinclair

President 2020/2022: Ida Potgieter

Hon Sec: Victor Millard (royalphilct@gmail.com)

**The last meeting for 2020 at the Athenaeum, Campground Road,
Newlands on 14 December at 7.30 for 8pm**

This is the last RPSCT Newsletter of 2020. What a year.!

The President & Committee hope to see you all at the President's Evening on 14 December 2020, 19h30 for 20h00 and wish you every happiness over the holidays and for a 2021 that in time brings Covid19 relief.

Contents of this newsletter

- Important Notices and Dates to diarise
- Editorial p2
- Review: Dr Heinz Wirz's *Transkei* p2
- Exchange sought p4
- Account of the meeting held on 9 November 2020:
 - (a) SGM report p4
 - (b) Jenny Siebert, Brian Fenemore & David Sinclair tributes and displays p5-8

Important Notices

1. We will try to broadcast all meetings in real time on Zoom; please let the Hon. Sec. know in advance of a meeting if you would like to join a particular meeting
2. SYLLABUS FOR 2021 Please let Hugh know what you will show (at the Athenaeum or at Bellville (see below for meetings in 2021)) and when; contact hugh.amooore@uct.ac.za
3. UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE Meetings will be held under Covid19 conditions: Face masks and hand sanitizing will be compulsory. Seating arrangements in the Newberry Hall will ensure social distancing.
4. THIS IS THE LAST call for items for the January Society Auction: there will be a live and postal auction on 25 January 2021. If you have material for this auction, please bring this to the December meeting or deliver it to Hugh Amooore before year-end.

Dates to diarise:

1. 14 December 2020 President's Evening A special evening devoted to: A short display by the President (10 or so pages) and a short display (10 or so pages) by each member of the Committee on a topic of his or her choice.
2. 25 January 2021: Society Auction.
3. 22 February 2021: AGM and Displays (tbc).
4. Diarise the 4th Monday of every month for Society Meetings in 2021 at the Athenaeum.
5. *9-13 November 2021 Cape Town 2021*

Editorial

We have less than 12 months left before **Cape Town 2021**. Please reserve the dates: we hope for a very strong local showing of exhibits, and the Local Organising Committee will need every pair of hands it can get, in the week leading up to the exhibition (to be held in the CTICC), during the exhibition, and of course, the wrap up after everyone else has gone home. So DIARISE the 1st two weeks of November 2021.

It is trite that the lockdown has brought a digital revolution to philatelic meetings. Victor has been able to relay parts of our recent meetings to members (and others) who join digitally but this will get better and only be effective if the display(s) for the evening is(are) accompanied by power point presentations; don't let this put you off - committee members can help with the digital presentation.

The RPST Library is an important resource. Brian Fenemore has recounted (see elsewhere in this newsletter) how he was advised by his philatelic mentors, the late David Crocker, and the late Douglas Roth, to READ EVERYTHING about the area(s) you collect. He followed their advice and has himself contributed to the literature on his areas of interest. In 2021 the Society plans to hold a Library meeting once a month; the Library will be open for use for several hours one weekday every month: details in future notices. We encourage members to use the opportunity to browse, ask questions, study journals or old catalogues, and have a cup of coffee! As the Covid19 virus will still be around, Covid19 precautions will be in force to ensure every member's safety.

The lockdown has seen a surge in philatelic publication: see for example the RPST website <https://www.rpst.org.uk/Publications>. A ground-breaking, local publication on the Transkei is reviewed in this newsletter. It is never too late to start building your own philatelic library. The books themselves will give much pleasure, and they may even prove to be good investments (not only because they will be the guide to better collecting, but also because many philatelic books command high prices in the 2nd hand trade).

Several collectors of the Cape have slavery-related material in their collections, a reminder of this grim part of our collective past. On 1 December we marked the day in 1834 on which slavery became illegal in the Cape. *Trading* in slavery had been abolished in the British Empire in 1806. Slaves were freed in terms of the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 which apprenticed slaves to their "masters" for a period of four years. The conditions of many were little better, and for some may have been worse. The legacy of that era lives on. In common with other atrocities, it must be remembered to prevent it happening again. Our slave letters are a potent reminder.

BOOK REVIEW:

"The Independent State of Transkei (26 October 1976 – 27 April 1994): A philatelic Inventory" by Heinz Wirz, published by Dr Wirz and available from Dr Wirz (wirz@global.co.za or 082 821 6914). ISBN 978-0-620-7638-4

Following on his ground breaking publications, similarly entitled, on Bophuthatswana (2015) and Ciskei (2017) Heinz Wirz, with contributions from many leading philatelists, has produced an important, lavishly illustrated (in full colour) monumental production, appropriately called a philatelic inventory that deserves a place on the bookshelf of every philatelist with an interest in the philately, marcophily, or postal history of the region.

The Transkei. Bophuthatswana, Venda & Ciskei (TBVC) study group has shown (see its reports in the SA Philatelist of October 2018, December 2018, June 2019 & October 2019) how much there is to be gained by a careful study and

further research into the philately of the *homelands*. The material remains readily available and is not (yet) expensive - it is cheap, though there are some rare items – and it is attractive. There is bound to come a time when we will rue the day that we did not make use of the opportunities now available to form collections of the *homeland* issues. Heinz Wirz's *Transkei* is a good starting point to understand what is available.

A short postal history *pre-independence* introduction, describing three distinct periods (Cape, from 1965 to 1910), Union of SA and RSA, the Bantustan (1962-1976) and the *Transkei State* sets the scene, with useful insights into the operations of postal agencies in trading stores. This is followed by a section in which Dr Wirz has researched and recorded the evolution of the designs for the philatelic material produced for the Transkei State. This involved many hours researching the records held by SAPO in the South African Postal Museum; the full colour reproductions of ALL the artwork held by the SAPO makes this an important record, and will be the sourcebook for generations of students, of these issues, to come.

Part 2 records – and illustrates - the commemorative postmarks used during the *Transkei State* period. Here, as elsewhere Dr Wirz attempts a rarity/price rating. This may prove interesting in 20 years' time when some of this material will be elusive! Date stamp cards were a feature of this period, and Part 3 lists the date stamp cards and covers issued.

Homeland postal stationery has been ignored by most collectors and, I suspect, by all dealers. But Part 4 does more than provide a catalogue of the postal stationery issues, as it records the postal rates of the period (in most but not every case the same as the rates that prevailed in the RSA) as well as Transkei Post Office stationery; as an example, this part illustrates the Transkei equivalent of the SAPO Greetings telegram, which must be an unusual if not a scarce item. Transkei postal orders are listed in detail.

Part 5 is in large measure based on the Putzel/Visser works on POs and postmarks but builds on this. It should prove invaluable to students of the postal history of the region during this period. So, too, will be the inclusion of the text of laws, especially that dealing with the re- incorporation of the TBVC posts & telecommunications departments (with effect from a date not in 1994 but in 1996, a fact that explains that Official Free mail from the former homeland areas is found after 1994, well after Official Fee mail privileges had been abolished in the RSA!)

The book is lavishly (and expensively) produced on high quality glossy paper (which enhances the colour images throughout the book) and expertly and attractively bound. The result: this book is not cheap. This, however, must be seen in context. It compares in price with recent RPSL publications in the range £100 - £120, to which add £20 for P&P! Any serious student of Southern African philately should add this to her or his library (and try to get the earlier Bophuthatswana and Ciskei publications at the same time).

HA 5 December 2020

EXCHANGE SOUGHT

My name is Aleš Fidler from Slovenia and I collect stamps, postcards, and other philatelic material. Anyone interested to exchange please write to me to at fidlerales@hotmail.com

Special General Meeting

Subscriptions for 2021 to remain at 2020 levels:

The Society Club in SGM resolved unanimously to set subscriptions for 2021 at the same level as for 2020 (i.e., that there be no increase and that the 2021 RPSCT Membership fees be:

- (i) R350 for members; or
- (ii) R100 for student members; or
- (iii) R50 for junior members.

plus, for home members in each category, the *Philatelic Federation of South Africa (PFSA)* affiliation fee (subsequently set as follows):

- (i) R70 for local home members who receive the digital South African Philatelist (SAP) (the default option);
- (ii) R300 for local home members who elect to have a hard copy SAP; or
- (iii) R750 for SADCC home members who get an Air Mail hard copy of the SAP;
- (iv) R1100 for overseas home members who get an Air Mail hard copy SAP.

Meetings in 2021

The Society in AGM decided, *nem con* with one abstention, that the Syllabus for 2021 shall provide for

- (a) an Athenaeum meeting on the 4th Monday of each month, at which one or more (members or guests) will present philatelic displays unless the evening is devoted to an auction;
- (b) additionally, and subject to demand, one day each month on which the Library will be open for members to borrow and use, library materials, at a time suitable to members (possibly from 2.00pm to 5pm on the 2nd Monday of each month);
- (c) additionally, meetings be held at the Bellville Cape Stamp fairs, at 12.30pm, at which one or more members will present on a previously advertised topic. (These will be talks supported by PowerPoint (or similar) presentations and may also include displays of material). These meetings will be open to all, take the form of a workshop or discussion forum rather than a classic exhibit, and be scheduled towards the end of the Fair, in order not to compete with the Fair of the meetings of the Thematic Society.

Tributes to Longstanding Members

Jenny Sibert: RPSCT Member, 1959-2020

Jenny was unable to be present – away in Gordon's Bay for the Covid19 lockdown - and her plaque will be presented to her at a future date

Brian Fenemore: RPSCT Member, 1970 - 2020

A plaque was presented to Brian to mark his 50 years as a member. Brian began collecting stamps at the age of 5 (we will not disclose the year, but it was in the first half of the last century!). His older cousin Gerald had a schoolboy collection and was happy to swap stamps with him. He remembers that in early youth he was particularly attracted to the triangular stamps of Mozambique, and the large sports stamps of Hungary. He still

has his original album. Then came a long gap in the teenage years, when teenage vices prevailed; at the time, absolutely no interest in philately!

But he began a humble collection of Great Britain in 1968 and joined the RPSCT in June 1970. This proved to be a turning point; he sold his GB collection and concentrated on GB overprints for as many countries of the world as used them (including GB itself). He joined the newly formed *GB Overprints Society* as a founder member. His schoolboy and enduring fascination with the [British] Empire anchored this new interest. He has never regretted this decision.

Two great philatelic mentors and friends - the late Douglas Roth and the late David Crocker - took him under their wings and encouraged him to collect the stamps of "The Bechuanalands", and both liked his choice of GB Overprints. Both advised: '**read as much as you can on your chosen subject and obtain all the literature available**'. This he has endeavoured to do, and it has served him well. He became a founder member of the *Bechuanalands and Botswana Society* in 1984 and wrote many articles in their journal.

While GB overprints and the Bechuanalands may have been his enduring interests, there have been ventures into side-lines. To mention just a few: his collections of post cards (when he joined the RPSCT in 1970, no one would have admitted to collecting postcards, *it simply was not done* by any self-respecting philatelist!) and his topical open class collection on the **Standard bank of South Africa**. Brian has been, and is, a leading light in the local postcard society.

Brian was President in 2000 – 2002, acted as auctioneer for 7 years, has been the Librarian, succeeding Peter Whitmore, since 2012, and has been a committee member for nearly half his 50 years as a member.

Brian admits that *his dear long-suffering wife* (his words, Glenda) has no interest in philately but respects his hobby, though she would like to have the dining room table, and another, back for its original purpose! True to form, Glenda was present at this SGM, providing support as always.

David J Sinclair, RPSCT Member, 1970 – 2020 and Honorary Life President of the Society

A plaque was presented to David to mark his 50 years as a member. David Sinclair does not, or claims not to, remember his first collection(s). He does remember that as a young boy in England during WWII, away at school, he was shown an album of stamps by an older (not much older) boy, was intrigued, but got a *klap* when he put his dirty fingers on some stamps that had taken his interest. He was some years short of ten at the time.

His first encounters with organised philately were in London. This was with what was then the BSAP (Rhodesian specialists note: this stands for British Society of Australian Philately). He was an active member of it, meeting at South Australia House. It is now *The Australian Specialists Commonwealth Society of Great Britain*. Thus, started his enduring love affair with Australian King's Heads.

That he was also interested in contemporary GB issues is clear; his stock books and several displays he has presented at this Society over the years attest to his ability to identify varieties on contemporary GB issues, whether late Wildings or early Machins, and even the varieties on commemoratives of the time. It is noteworthy is that he was the person to discover many of these and report them to Gibbons.

He joined the RPSCT in 1970. This was three years before the Society moved to the Athenaeum (in 1973). He does not remember who introduced him, who nominated him, or how he came to become a member. It was a different era. Mr Chapman would arrive early and put up the board at the entrance to the Newberry Hall. Dress was strictly

collar and tie – jackets could be dispensed with in summer months. He will be remembered for studies (the brown envelopes he was to show; the Buildings definitive issues, the Blue train; for studying and documenting finds on the sixth RSA definitives); and above all for his Australian displays – who can forget his pleasure at his find of the unique¹, censored WWI cover from Australia to the UK, censored because of the presence on a ship of a German barber! Or of the flaw on the 1d caused by the rat that urinated on the plate²! Some of this received recognition by the Club and he was awarded the Arthur V Jacob Cup for his display of the RSA 4th definitives (the buildings issue).

But perhaps more to the point; much of his effort has gone into his work with juniors, and this bore fruit in many ways, tangibly in the Junass held at the Sea Point Library a decade and more ago and in the mini Junass held at the Athenaeum in 2018, intangibly in the delight of so many young collectors whom he mentored and helped. This work received belated recognition by the PFSA which awarded him a plaque at the 2018 Congress. He served on the Royal Committee for many years and was President in 2003/2005. It was fitting that the Society elected him as Hon Life President.

Account of Displays by Brian Fenemore & David Sinclair

Selections from a collection of overprints on GB issues



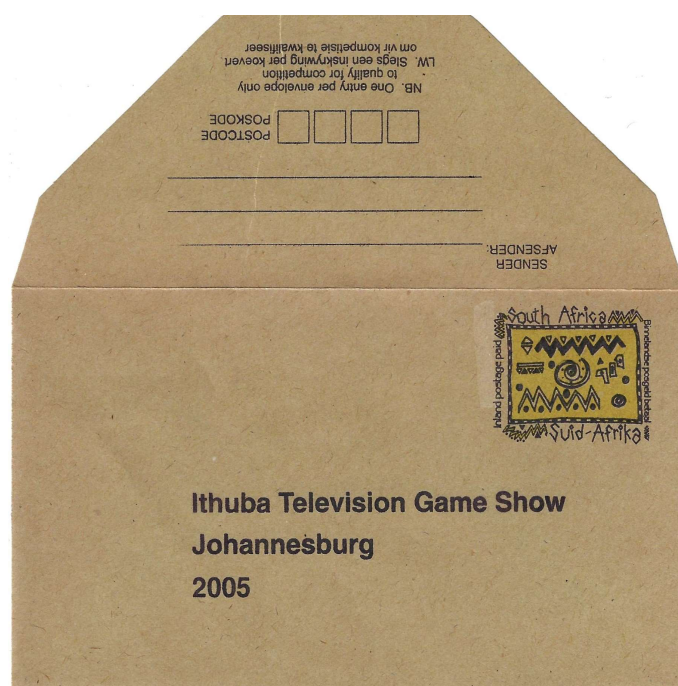
Bradbury Wilkinson seahorses overprinted for use in the Bechuanaland Protectorate

¹ Unique in that mail from Australia to the UK during WWI was not subject to censorship; the mail from this voyage is unique in this regard: the presence of a German national on the ship led to fears that the convoy's route might be compromised.

² Pane iv Nos 34 & 35. The printing took place after the plates had been left in storage for some time, and that during that time the protective coating on the plates was eroded. The clichés 34 & 35 were rusted and substitute clichés replaced them. Brusden-White's George V Specialists Catalogue notes that "these flaws were not identified until many years after issue and in consequence they are scarce".

Brian's display went around the boards; it comprised a selection of his **A-Z collection of overprints** on the stamps of GB, for postal and for fiscal purposes. It was a *tour de force*. Items that this reviewer liked included an extensive study of overprints on the $\frac{1}{2}$ d **Vermillion (SG 197)**, some stunning overprints on the **QV Jubilee** issues for Bechuanaland (including a complete mint pane of the **4d, SG64**), studies of the **MEF** overprints on **George VI** issues including high values, a clandestine overprint by the **Irish Republican Army** on a **GB George V** issue, the rare **OPDA overprint for Palestine**, and the array of **Seahorses** overprinted for several territories & colonies not least a superb mint 10/- in a rare shade with a double overprint. This was a fine display of a selection of stamps collected over a period of 50 years. It was enjoyed by all, and more than one attending was moved to covet many superb items!

The 'brown envelope' postal stationery issues of South Africa from 1993



David's display could not have been more different.

I wager that his study of the 'brown envelopes' postal stationery issues is unique, and made an important statement: David has been an indefatigable student of anything philatelic that came his way, and he formed collections that no one else had studied, sometimes (as with this studies of the RSA Buildings definitives) setting the pace for others to follow. These "brown envelope" postal stationery issues first appeared in April 1993. Quik³ describes the illustrations – clearly and deliberately attempts to show aspects of indigenous design – as "primitive" (the ceramic pot illustrated on the envelopes Quik describes as a "primitive drawing of a jug" and the drawing on

³ Quik, WJ. (1998) "The postal stationery of South Africa." Filastenvereniging Zuidelijk Afrika. Rotterdam.

the 2nd design as “a primitive drawing of a lizard”). (There is a wonderful irony, obvious to anyone following current debates on decolonization and the need for an indigenous, decolonized curriculum, in the description in a European publication (Quik’s) of these local, and locally inspired, designs as “primitive”.) These envelopes were made from recycled paper, contained (on the reverse side) the recycled paper logo and a statement that “**The Post Office supports a better environment/Die Poskantoor ondersteun ’n beter omgewing.**” They appeared in several different formats in a predictable range of shades. The popular *Ithuba Television Game* show, which in those pre-digital days required entries to be submitted by post, arranged with the Post Office for pre-addressed “brown envelopes” to be produced and placed on sale to make submitting entries easy. Again, these came in differing papers and colours of paper, initially a grey brownish colour and, later, on smooth beige paper. David’s display took us through these issues and the inevitable varieties. It was an object lesson on how to collect, study, and write up something new.

Celebrations

The evening ended with refreshments – albeit with Covid19 social distancing rules dominant – generously provided by the two members whose long membership the Society was honouring.