



******FORERUNNERS*

JOURNAL OF THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY FOR GREATER SOUTHERN AFRICA

Affiliated with the American Philatelic Society and the Philatelic Federation of Southern Africa

Volume XXI, Number 3, Whole No. 61

March-June 2008



The smallest butterfly occurring in Southern Africa, the Dwarf Blue, was included in the 2007 Botswana definitive butterfly stamp series.

Highlights

Women in the Cape Colonial Post Office

A Miserable Kanye Cover

Absentee Exhibiting and EXPONET

Look after your Collection

The Helderberg Disaster

Postal Due Markings

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Front Illustration:

The smallest butterfly occurring in Southern Africa, the Dwarf Blue, appeared on a stamp part of the 2007 definitive Botswana series featuring butterflies. The stamp design was based on a photograph taken not far from Gaborone. The Dwarf Blue was once thought to be the smallest butterfly in the world, but a slightly smaller butterfly has now been found in Afghanistan. The standard postage denomination is a first for Botswana.

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Table of Contents

Editorial Notes	81
Society Affairs	82
President's Corner	83
Feature Articles	
Women in the Cape Colonial Post Office by Franco Frescura.....	87
A Miserable Kanye Cover by Peter Lodoen.....	93
How to look After Your Collection - A Basic Guide by David Beech.....	97
The 'Helderberg' Disaster - The Aerophilatelic Aspects by Neville Polakow.....	100
Speciality Columns	
Postage Due Markings of South Africa Related to Weight by Jan Stolk	106
Items of Interest	
Subject and Author Index to Volume XXI	85
South African Postal Order Used in Bechuanaland by Peter Thy	91
Absentee Exhibiting and the EXPONET by Peter Thy... 94	
UPU Centenary Reply Coupon by Peter Thy.....	103
South African "Easy Letter" by Wayne Menuz.....	111
Forerunners Forum	
Questions, Comments, and Answers	112
The Atkinson Correspondence	112
Cape and Natal Philatelic Journal	113
News from Boyswana by Peter Thy.....	113
For the Record	114
New Books	114
The Editor's Most Urgent Wantlist	114
Book Review	115
Society Auction Manager	116
Market Place	116

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Absentee Exhibiting and the EXPONET

by Peter Thy

If you are exhibiting your collections, you may have been in the same situation and dilemma as myself. Recently I prepared two of my collections for a national show. One was a multipage exhibit containing the postal card section of my Bechuanalands stationery collection. The other was a one frame collection concerned with the postal history of the African Pioneer Corps in World War 2. I entered both exhibits at a stampshow on the east coast and later decided that I could not attend the show in person. Thus, I became in effect an absentee exhibitor according to current exhibit terminology.

I must admit that this surprised me a bit at first. I had always thought that the majority of exhibitors would not attend in person and would only be represented by their exhibit(s). The fact, I now understand, is that stampshows are organized and structured with the premise that exhibitors mostly attend in person.

As an absentee exhibitor, I will be unable directly to interact with judges and other visitors and will not attend or give seminars. Therefore, I will not contribute to all what makes stampshows philatelic successes. What is perhaps more important, considering that dealers basically pay for the show, I will not be able to visit and spend my money at the commercial bourse. At the personal level, however, I miss the opportunity to attend the judges critique and award ceremony and eventually to drag an otherwise innocent judge to my exhibit frames to complain and plead a perceived unjust medal level. Written award justifications are strangely still not provided for multi-frame exhibits. This is in contrast to literature and single frame exhibits for which written justifications are provided (despite very brief). Thus an absentee exhibitor is often intentionally left in the dark.

In my case the result was that I had literally no clue to why my five frame exhibit was significantly downgraded compared to previous shows. In contrast, I knew pretty much why my one frame had been upgraded and also what I could do to improve the award level next time around. If it had not been for one of the judges that, despite having not directly been involved in the judging of my exhibit, was graciously enough to detail his impressions in an subsequent email to me, I would still have had no idea of what went wrong.

There clearly is a need for improvement in judging procedures at stampshows. It is fair to expect prospective exhibitors to pay the frame fees and express mailing expenses (easily \$150-200 for a national show) and then simply to receive ones exhibit returned in the mail with a medal, but without explanations?

It is often argued that even the absentee exhibitor will benefit from show visitors that see the exhibit and provide personal feedback after the show. Admittedly, this happens occasionally but rarely. The fact is that I have had far more response to my writings in philatelic journals than in response to showing my collections at shows. The obvious question an absentee (or perhaps any exhibitor) will ask is whether it is worth the expenses and effort?

Recently, I have been thinking about how to further show my exhibits and to reach out to follow collectors with the same interests as myself. Some years ago, I produced an electronic version of my one-frame of Bechuanaland postal orders that won a gold at the 1998 AMERISTAMP EXPO in Houston. I made it into a printed booklet and also put a pdf version on the internet where it still can be downloaded from www.kronestamps.dk. The result is that my Bechuanaland postal order exhibit is very well known among similarly inspired collectors.

Several philatelic websites have exhibits posted on their sites. The most prominent of these is the EXPONET organized and maintained by a non-profit organization with close ties to organized philately in the Czech Republic. The purpose of EXPONET is to provide a "place you may use to present your virtual postal history and philatelic collections. It is intended as a public display of all philatelic areas and time periods in English, German, Spanish or other languages. The aim of the organizers of EXPONET is to provide a permanent presentation of high quality stamp and philatelic exhibits so as to facilitate on-line study for visitors throughout the world. We do not intend to compete with traditional classic exhibits, but rather to enable on-line viewing to everybody, regardless of distance, and thus take part in the support and propagating of philately."

The internet address is <http://www.exponet.info>. At present there are 300 exhibits on line from 33 different countries. Over sixty of these originated in the US. There are over 1,500 frames and 22,000 pages with an average of 80 pages per exhibit. The countries (origin of exhibitor) represented are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, and USA. The subject areas and thematic diversity of the exhibits are more difficult to evaluate because of the lack of an index and search feature (a shortcoming that the organizers are aware of). Some random subjects/areas include Argentina's Classic Issues, Willem III Issues of Netherlands Indies, East Saxony 1945-46, Variable Rate Stamps, Bangladesh Postal History, and the USS Oregon. The exhibits are organized into the classes Traditional Philately, Postal history, Postal Stationery, Aero- and Astrophilately, Thematic, Revenue, Literature, Youth, and an Open Class. There is no requirement that an exhibit on EXPONET has previously been shown at a national or international show.

First time I looked, there were no exhibits with direct southern Africa connections, but now my six exhibits have been posted (see next page) with hopefully others to follow.

But now what about my dilemma. Should I give up traditional philatelic exhibits and concentrate on electronic exhibits? It is about the same amount of work. Any comments to guide my decision?

EXHIBIT: THE POSTAL STATIONERY CARDS OF BECHUANALAND
EXHIBITOR: PETER THY, DAVIS, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



> >|

| FRAME 1 | FRAME 2 | FRAME 3 | FRAME 4 |

NOTES:

for open click on thumbnail





On the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899 direct communication between the UK and South Africa became essential. The Eastern Telegraph Company contracted the Telegraph Construction & Maintenance Company to manufacture and lay the cables. CS Anglia laid the 2065 nm first stage from Cape Town to St Helena completing it by 26 November 1899. While CS Anglia returned to the UK for more cable CS Seine laid the section from St Helena to Ascension a distance of 844 nm completing it by 15 December 1899. CS Anglia then laid 1975 nm of cable from Ascension to St Vincent, Cape Verde Islands, completing the task by 21 February 1900. At St Vincent the cable connected with the Western Telegraph Company's cables to Carcavelos, Portugal, then via Eastern to Porthcurno, England. In 1901 the Eastern Telegraph Company contracted the same company to manufacture and lay cables from St Vincent to Madeira and from there to Porthcurno. CS Anglia and CS Britannia (2) carried out the work. As an alternative route in case of cable failure CS Anglia laid a cable from Ascension to Freetown, Sierra Leone a distance of 1125 nm in 1901. From <http://www.atlantic-cable.com/>.

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