

The Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town hosted a most successful National Stamp Exhibition, Cape Town 2011, in October, as part of the celebrations to mark its centenary 1911–2011, as Peter Jennings FRPSL, FRGS, reports from Cape Town, South Africa.

Alan Rogers and Brian Fenemore pictured outside the Goodwood Civic Centre, the exhibition venue



Cape of Good Hope, 1855–63, 1s. deep dark green. Perkins Bacon printing. Purchased by the author from Stanley Gibbons on his return from Cape Town in October 2011

Good Hope for Stamp Collecting in the Cape

By Peter Jennings FRPSL, FRGS

Stamp collecting is very much alive and well in the Cape Province and indeed throughout the Republic of South Africa. The hobby is encouraged and supported by the South African Post Office that has an enlightened policy that all topics featured on new stamp issues must be related directly to South Africa.

I was pleased to have had the opportunity to visit Cape Town and take part in the three-day National Stamp Exhibition, Cape Town 2011, Thursday 13 to Saturday 15 October 2011, and celebrations to mark the centenary of the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town, of which I am proud to be an overseas member.

Formal records of the Cape Town Philatelic Society and Exchange Club were formulated at a first meeting on 3 May 1911, in the drawing room of the YMCA in Cape Town.

Keen interest

It is good for our hobby to be able to report that visitors of all ages took a keen interest in the wide range of material on show in the exhibition frames. This is particularly pleasing as exhibits at many national and international stamp shows throughout the world are often largely ignored by visitors who spend their time with the stamp dealers.

I was delighted when, during their visit to England for the London 2010 International

Stamp Exhibition, Alan Rogers, President of the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town, and Chairman of the Organising Committee of Cape Town 2011, and his wife Mary, Honorary Secretary for the past 14 years, invited me to show three frames of material from my collection of Pioneer Airmails, 1902–1936 in the Court of Honour.

Later, Alan Rogers, President of the Philatelic Federation of South Africa, 2010–11, invited me to officially open the 73rd Congress of the Philatelic Federation of South Africa, held on 14 October 2011, during the exhibition.

Warm Cape sunshine

I left London during the evening of Monday 10 October 2011—coincidentally the 50th anniversary of the evacuation of the entire population of Tristan da Cunha, situated in the mid-South Atlantic Ocean, on 10 October 1961, following a volcanic eruption. The islanders were first taken by ship to Cape Town, my own destination.

Having flown almost 6000 miles overnight on a full British Airways flight from London Heathrow Terminal 5, I emerged more than 11½ hours later in the warm spring sunshine of Cape Town to be met by a smiling Mary Rogers. A big plus is that Cape Town is only one hour ahead of London time.

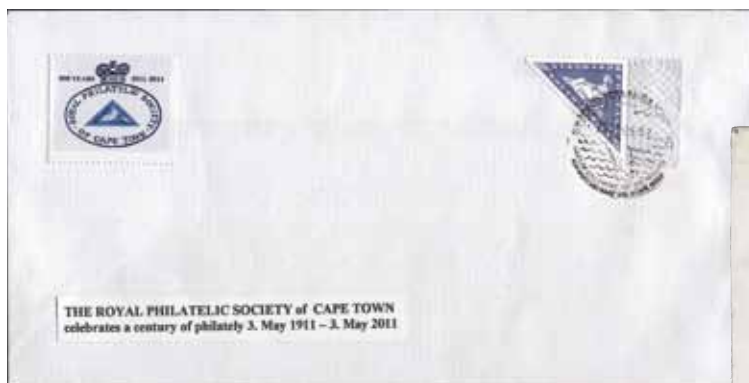
Generous hospitality

After a drive into Cape Town, now a city of more than 3.5 million people, we arrived in the Northern suburb of Welgelegen where Alan and Mary Rogers live. Despite the extra workload Alan and Mary incurred before and during the exhibition they had most generously and graciously invited me as their house guest for the duration of my stay in Cape Town. I am extremely grateful to them for their hospitality and hope that in return I was able to help and encourage them.

Soon we were in the car again on the way to the nearby Goodwood Civic Centre, venue of the exhibition. This provincial hall was used by the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town when it hosted the National Stamp

Below left: The author pictured with Ms Vuyo Mahlati, Chairperson of Board of Directors, South African Post Office, and Adv L P Nobanda, Chairperson of the South African Post Office Stamp Advisory Committee
Below: Peter Bale, official distributor of all Stanley Gibbons accessories and publications in Southern Africa, pictured at his stand at Cape Town 2011. Peter told *GSM* that he was 'delighted' with sales of the recently published Stanley Gibbons Part 1, *Commonwealth & British Empire Stamps, 1840–1970*





Special souvenir Centenary cover produced by the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town

Exhibition in 2005. It was an ideal out of the centre of Cape Town venue for a medium-size exhibition.

I was warmly greeted by Alan Rogers, a straight-talking, no-nonsense Yorkshireman who with his wife Mary, also from Yorkshire, have lived and worked in South Africa since 1976. Alan and members of his hard-working organising committee and other helpers were busily mounting album sheets into the glass-fronted exhibition frames.

Court of honour

I took my three-frame Court of Honour exhibit, 48 pages, titled: 'A Miscellany of Pioneer Air Mails, 1902-1932', to the bin room. Part of my introductory page read as follows: 'The Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town is sharing its Centenary Year with three significant and major Pioneer Aviation Centenaries: in India, Great Britain and South Africa.'

'In these three frames rare items are shown from the World's First Aerial Post, Allahabad, India on 18 February 1911; The First UK Aerial (Coronation) Post, on 9 September 1911, London-Windsor; and the First South African Aerial Post, Kenilworth-Muizenberg, during December 1911.

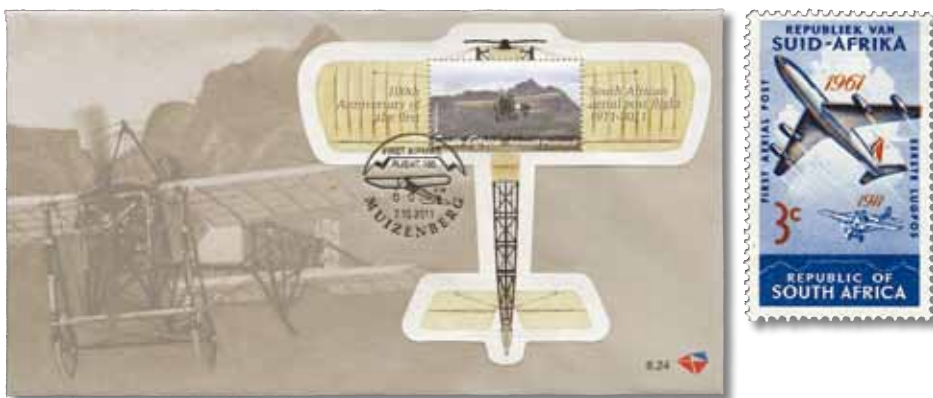
'All the items on show in these frames have been carefully selected to capture

The First South African Aerial Post, Kenilworth-Muizenberg, during December 1911, cover shown by the author in the Court of Honour



Below left: Miniature sheet issued on 7 October 2011 by the South African Post Office to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the first South African aerial post flight 1911-2011—printed in offset lithography by Cartor Security Printing, France—used on first day cover with special cancellation

Below right: Stamp issued by South Africa in 1961 to mark the 50th Anniversary of the flight. South Africa was one of four countries that pioneered the carriage of mail by air in 1911. The others were India, the United Kingdom and the USA



Below left: Mr Alan Rogers, President of the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town, and Chairman of the Organising Committee of Cape Town 2011

Below: The three-frame Court of Honour exhibit by this author



G.S.M. December 2011



the attention and interest of three distinct groups of people: first, the specialist and knowledgeable aero-philatelist; second, the general stamp collector; and third, members of the ordinary public here in Cape Town in whom we hope to kindle an interest in the absorbing hobby of philately.

I concluded: 'Narrative information about the intrepid pioneer aviators, their flying machines and the routes they took to carry these cards and covers is included.

'Famous aviation meetings and historic pioneer and survey flights to and from countries in the Continent of Africa will be found in frame three.'

Exhibition catalogue

Alan Rogers, also a member of the Royal Philatelic Society London, kindly gave me his copy of the 92-page exhibition catalogue (price R10, about 90p). The catalogue, thoughtfully produced by Martin and Marilyn Crawford, included helpful information, including an alphabetical index of exhibitors as well as colour illustrations and several interesting articles. These included: 'The First South African Airmail Post, 1911' by Brian Fenemore, 'A brief history of The Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town' by the same author, 'The Royal Today' by Brian Dennis, Immediate Past President and 'Cape of Good Hope Postcards, 1897–1900' by Gerald Flack.

David Beech FRPSL, Curator and Head of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library, contributed an article: 'How to look after your collection—a Basic Guide', based on a paper he gave at the 87th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain in 2005.

Caught my eye

During the day I had an opportunity to look at several of the exhibits that caught my eye. Overall the standard was good. I looked first at the magnificent eight-frame exhibit: 'South African Airmails', by Barry Smith (Fish Hoek Philatelic Society) in the Championship Class.

This 128-page exhibit, deservedly awarded a large gold medal, has been made into an excellent DVD: 'Great Collections of South African Philately, Volume 1, Barry Smith, South African Air Mail'. This slideshow and 15-minute talk, was produced and edited by Volker Janseen, Peninsular Publishers.

Mr Smith also showed an interesting five-frame exhibit: 'South African Airmails from 1945' which was awarded a vermeil medal.



The first Airmail stamps issued by South Africa on 26 February 1925 carried on the first Cape Town–Durban service, 2 March 1925, together with a King George V 2d., datestamped 28 February 1925. The second Airmail stamps issued by South Africa on 16 August 1929

Special cash award

Then I looked at the superb eight-frame exhibit: 'Development of 'The African Airway 1911–1945', by J G Kilroe (Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town). This exhibit was awarded a gold medal, a trophy and also a cash award that I donated as a special prize for the best competitive aero-philatelic exhibit in the show. Unfortunately, Mr Kilroe was not present; a pity, as a new member of the Aerophilatelic Society of Southern Africa, I should very much have enjoyed talking to him about his wonderful material.

In the thematic class I particularly enjoyed a fascinating eight-frame exhibit: 'From Abacus to Internet' by Mr W O Vegter (Bellville Philatelic Society), awarded a gold medal and a special prize, also 'March of the Penguins' by Mrs J Bancroft (Pinelands Stamp Circle).

Official opening

The National Exhibition, Cape Town 2011, was officially opened by Dr Ivan Meyer, Minister EC for Cultural Affairs and Sport in the Cape Province, at 10a.m. on Thursday 13 October 2011. Dr Meyer, who was welcomed by Alan Rogers, spoke with great enthusiasm about the importance of stamp collecting. He was not in a hurry to leave and spent time touring the exhibits, meeting exhibitors and talking to some of the stamp dealers present in an adjoining hall.

International Jury

Among members of the international jury were: Emil Bührmann—Chairman, Howard Green RDPSA—Vice-Chairman, Jan van Beukering—Secretary, Richard Johnson

RDPSA, Colin Hoffman FRPSL, RDPSA, Harry Birkhead FRPSL, RDPSA, Patrick Flanagan FRPSL, RDPSA, Ross Wood, Hugh Amoore RDPSA, and Gerard Bodily FRPSL, a Vice President of the Royal Philatelic Society London, a well-known and distinguished stamp dealer.

Large gold

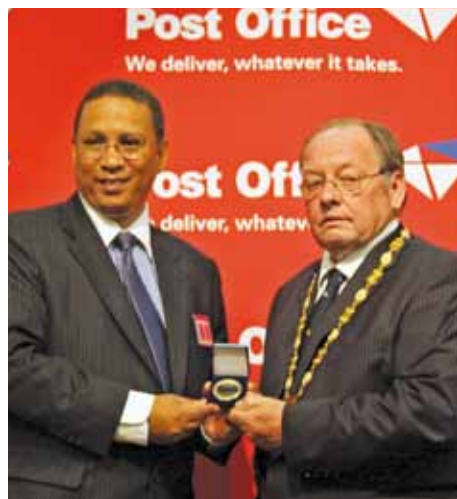
The jury awarded two large gold medals to the two exhibits in Class 12—Picture Postcards: 'The First Five Years: Southern African & Related Picture Postcards 1896–1900' by Mr G Flack (Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town) and 'Art Deco & Art Nouveau Postcards' by Ms M Broodryk (Fish Hoek Philatelic Society).

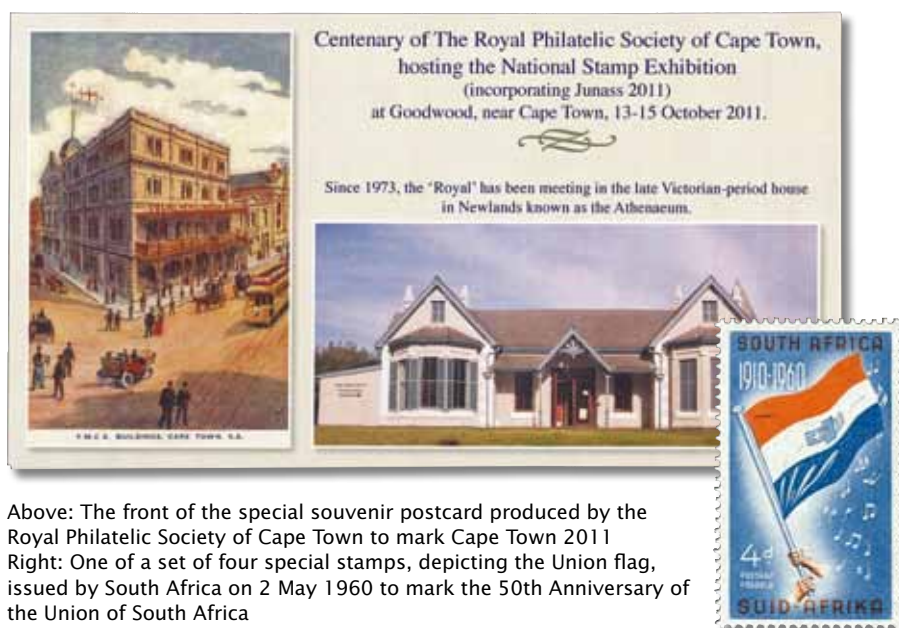
The only other large gold medal in the competitive classes was awarded to 'The Revenue Stamps and Documents of Rhodesia 1891 to 1980' by Mr A de Bourbon (Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town).

Princess Elizabeth

The convivial Jury Dinner was held at Mowbray Golf Club on Thursday 13 October 2011. It was here that I was reminded that Princess Elizabeth, now HM The Queen, made her first official visit overseas during 1947, when she accompanied her parents King George VI and Queen Elizabeth and her sister Princess Margaret on a tour of Southern Africa.

During this tour, she celebrated her 21st birthday, 21 April 1947. In a speech broadcast on the radio from Cape Town, the Princess dedicated her life to the service of the Commonwealth; a dedication which she





Above: The front of the special souvenir postcard produced by the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town to mark Cape Town 2011
Right: One of a set of four special stamps, depicting the Union flag, issued by South Africa on 2 May 1960 to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Union of South Africa

repeated five years later on her ascension to the throne, on 6 February 1952.

Shortly after the return of the Royal Family from South Africa came the announcement of the engagement of the Princess Elizabeth to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, son of Prince Andrew of Greece and a great-great-grandson of Queen Victoria, now His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, whom she had known for many years. Their wedding took place in Westminster Abbey on 20 November 1947.

Below from left:

Mr Ivan Meyer, Minister EC for Cultural Affairs and Sport in the Cape Province, pictured at the official opening of Cape Town 2011 with Alan Rogers President of the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town and Chairman of the Organising Committee

Mr Ivan Meyer and Mary Rogers, Hon Secretary of the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town

Emil Bührmann, Chairman of the International Jury with Harry Birkhead FRPSL, RDPSA Sugie Harijadi, Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia, Brian Fenemore, Mary Rogers and Jill Redmond RDPSA, Secretary of the Philatelic Federation of South Africa, pictured during the opening ceremony
All the RDPSA's present at the Palmares

Palmares

The black tie Palmares buffet dinner was held at the Belmont Square Conference Centre on Saturday evening 15 October with about 115 people present. These included a high level delegation from Indonesia*, together with senior board members of the South African Post Office and members of the Management Committee of the Philatelic Federation of South Africa.

The main speaker Marilyn Martin, former Director of Iziko Museums and a member of the Post Office Stamp Advisory Committee, was both interesting and informative—an excellent choice!

Centre of philatelic excellence

During his speech Alan Rogers said: 'There was a wide range of subjects on show in the frames, something for everyone's taste and stamps that appealed to specialists, casual visitors and the young people alike that visited the show.'

Mr Rogers then made a special presentation to Bob Goldblatt RDPSA in thanks for 48 years of service to the Royal Philatelic Society of Cape Town.

Mr Rogers concluded: 'This National Exhibition has been a memorable event and a fitting climax to our centenary year and has firmly confirmed the Cape's position as a centre of philatelic excellence.'

The next National Stamp Exhibition in South Africa, Centapex 100, celebrating the Centenary, 1912–2012, of the Port Elizabeth Philatelic Society, is being held in Port Elizabeth from 17 to 21 October 2012.

Philatelic Federation of South Africa

I was privileged to officially open the 73rd National Congress of the Philatelic Federation of South Africa, held at the Goodwood Sports Centre, Western Cape, on Friday 14 October 2011.

During a short address I told more than 34 delegates present something about my background in stamp collecting and my collecting interests. I then focused on the three aviation anniversaries mentioned in the introductory page of my Court of Honour exhibit.

Alan Rogers, President of the Philatelic Federation of South Africa, presented me with a beautifully engraved medal depicting Hope standing. The medal, like all those presented at Cape Town 2011 was engraved by the Pagliari Group, the best-known firm of engravers in Cape Town.

During the Congress, Vernon Mitchell, President of the Port Elizabeth Philatelic Society, was elected President of the Philatelic Federation of South Africa.

Postscript:

The Cape Town Club

Before I reluctantly left the vibrant and exciting City of Cape Town, I had an opportunity to entertain Alan Rogers and Brian Fenemore to lunch at Leinster Hall, home of the Cape Town Club, the premier Gentleman's and Ladies Club in South Africa—that has reciprocity with the East India Club, my London club.

We sat on the terrace that is situated immediately opposite the luxurious Mount Nelson Hotel, reflecting on Cape Town 2011 and the wonderful world of philately!

NOTE: All pictures in this article by Peter Jennings FRPSL, FRGS, except the one he is in.

*A feature article about the official launch of the joint stamp issue between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Indonesia by this author will appear in the January 2012 issue of *GSM*.

