

CHRISTMAS ISLAND 12c AND 14c AEROGRAMMES

Ian McMahon

The first Christmas Island aerogramme was issued on 17 May 1971 and was of a plain design with the stamp area depicting the value and name of the territory (Christmas Island Indian Ocean) with an orange background. 7,000 were printed by the Note Printing Branch in Australia. As a result of the postal rate increase in 1 October 1971 the aerogramme had to have an additional 2c in postage added and an order was placed for a replacement 12c aerogramme.



On 22 October 1971, the Postmaster (R Stone) wrote to the Official Secretary at Government House requesting advice as to the expected arrival date of the new 12c aerogrammes so that he could advertise an issue date for the aerogramme. He noted that the Post Office had been unable to advertise an issue date for the 10c aerogramme and that many clients had been disappointed at being unable to obtain first day of issue cancellations on the aerogramme as a result.

He also suggested that the new aerogramme be advertised in the next newsletter, that the issue date be 5 June 1971 and that the new 53c registered envelope be issued on the same day. His memo also requested that as supplies of the 10c aerogramme might not last until the new aerogramme was issued that the Australian Post Office be requested to return any surplus 10c aerogrammes to Christmas Island.

The 12c aerogramme was duly advertised in the Christmas Island Post Office Newsletter of 19 February 1972 with an issue date of 5 June 1972 along with the 54c [sic] Registered Envelope (53c imprinted stamp, sold for 54c). The printed stamp on the registered envelope covered the registration fee and surface postage to Singapore and Malaysia, additional postage needed to be added if the envelope was used to other destinations. The first day postmarker was available for use on both the aerogramme and the registered envelope provided orders were received before the date of issue (it was not the practice at the time to back-date first day cancellations). The newsletter also advised that the 10c aerogramme and the 26c [sic] registered envelope (25c imprinted stamp) would be withdrawn on 4 June 1972. Both the aerogramme and the registered envelope were the same design as the earlier aerogramme and registered envelope, the registered envelope having an embossed portrait of Queen Elizabeth II.

Besides being sold at the Christmas Island Post Office, supplies were retained by the Australian Post Office for philatelic sales and some were also sent to the Crown Agents (200 mint and 20 FDC). By 4 September 1972 580 aerogrammes had been sold at the post office and 1,620 through philatelic sales.

On 21 February 1973 the Postmaster wrote to the Note Printing Branch advising that supplies of the 12c aerogramme were low and ordering a further 10,000 aerogrammes which were expected to last for two years. The Postmaster requested that the design remain the same.

On the same day he also wrote to Harrison and Sons (Harrison) in London who had written to the Post Office on 10 November 1971 advising that they were able to print aerogramme forms with a very simple stamp design or with decorative panels depicting varied facets of the Territory. The Postmaster indicated that Christmas Island had just made an order of additional aerogrammes to the Note Printing Branch due to the low stock levels of the 12c aerogrammes and because he didn't have an alternative design or quote. While he indicated to Harrison and Sons that he had ordered a supply from the Note Printing Branch and was not at this stage ordering aerogrammes from them, he asked them to prepare some designs and provide a quote for printing approximately 10,000 aerogrammes.

Harrison replied on 15 May 1973 with two rough designs for the aerogramme, two rough designs for the stamp and with a quote for £422.75 pounds for producing the finished artwork, three printing plates, paper and for printing 10,000 aerogrammes. Printing would be in three colours, by lithography, punched to shape 317 mm x 240 mm, with tropical gummed flaps on paper described as "S/o 45 G/M2".

Christmas Island was sufficiently impressed by the designs that the order with the Note Printing Branch was immediately cancelled. The cancellation was confirmed by the Department of Territories in a telegram dated on 8 June 1973 indicating that the cancellation was without charge, presumably because the Note Printing Branch had not yet commenced work. On 18 June 1973 the Administrator wrote to Harrison advising that they were impressed with the designs and that he had cancelled the order with the Note Printing Branch.

One of the two designs provided by Harrison was based on two Golden Bosun Birds (tropic-birds) in flight with a vertical stamp while the other depicted coconut trees with a horizontal stamp depicting an aircraft.

While the administrator (F Evatt) originally favoured the design featuring the bosun birds, the Postmaster was able to persuade him that the other design was preferable as the bosun bird 'had been over used in the past as a symbol for Christmas Island'.

The Administrator wrote to Harrison on 11 July 1973 advising that that Christmas Island had selected the design with the coconut trees and the horizontal stamp design provided a number of changes were made. These included changes to the positions of the instructional markings and the removal of a flower design on the middle fold as well as the use of a darker shade of blue. The letter also requested a copy of the amended design before the work proceeded and asked if an issue date of 4 February 1974 could be achieved. Harrison provided three photo-blocks of the amended design in a letter dated 1 October 1973 along with a sample of a Malaysian aerogramme recently produced by them as an example of the paper and gum to be used. They also advised that they could not guarantee supply of the aerogrammes by the proposed issue date.



A cable was duly sent to Harrison accepting the designs but advising that the postage rate needed to be changed to 14c due to a postage rate increase in October 1973. The administrator also asked that the Crown Agents approve the colour proofs before printing commenced and sought advice on when Harrison could guarantee delivery. The Post Office decided that the issue date would be set once they had advice from Harrison as to the

date they could guarantee supply of the aerogrammes.

Harrison replied on 28 November 1973 with a copy of a proof of the aerogramme which was accepted by the Administration subject to the Crown Agent's response although one member of the Philatelic Committee commented "I can't say that I like the red washy sea and the round dome in the background. Could be an oasis in a desert". Harrison was advised of the acceptance on 28 December 1973 and asked to provide a further six proofs for publicity purposes. The Crown Agents wrote on 11 December 1973 advising that the design should be approved subject to the removal of the red on the wing of the aircraft and requesting 350 mint and 50 aerogrammes cancelled on the first day of issue. This recommendation was accepted by the administrator on 31 December 1973.

In a letter dated 2 January 1974 the Administrator confirmed the approval subject to the change suggested by the Crown Agents and asked that 350 aerogrammes be provided directly to the Crown Agents, 3,000 directly to the Australian Philatelic Bureau and 6,650 to the Island.

16 January 1974 Christmas Island issued a news release advising that a 14c aerogramme would be issued as a result of the October 1973 postal rates increase and should be available in 2-3 months. In addition it advised that the 12c aerogramme would be sold with additional 2c stamp until sold out which was expected to occur within the next 4 weeks.

In a letter dated 2 January 1974 Harrison confirmed that they had commenced work on printing the aerogrammes. This was followed by a letter dated 25 January 1974 confirming that the aerogrammes would be ready for dispatch by 1 March 1974 and asking whether the aerogrammes should be air freighted or should be sent by sea mail. Given that supplies of the 12c aerogramme were by this time almost exhausted and that the Postmaster was keen to have the new aerogrammes issued as soon as possible, Christmas Island replied requesting that the 3,000 aerogrammes for the Australian Philatelic Bureau be air-freighted to Melbourne and the 6,650 aerogrammes for the Island be air freighted to Singapore to the Australian High Commission with a request for forwarding to Christmas Island 6 February 1974. The issue date was then set at 16 April 1974.

The Administrator wrote to the Australian Postmaster General on 7 February 1974 advising of the issue of the new aerogramme, its issue date, that 3,000 aerogrammes would be sent by air freight directly to Melbourne and including a description "Blue is the overall colour of the aerogramme with black palm trees and a red sunset featured on the front page. The value is printed in stamp form containing a modern aircraft in flight and in the background is a global map." The letter also requested that the APO withdraw any stocks of the 12c aerogramme on 16 April 1974, destroy them and provide a certificate of destruction. In addition the 54 cent [sic] registered envelope was also to be withdrawn and any remaining stocks destroyed, noting that no further issues of registered envelopes were to be issued by Christmas Island.

The new aerogramme was announced in the Christmas Island Post Office's newsletter of 11 February 1974 which included details of the issue date, a description and details of how to obtain First Day cancellations (requests for first day cancellations were to be honoured up until 19 April 1974). It also advised of the withdrawal date of the 54c registered envelope (16 April 1974) and the expected exhaustion of supplies of the 12c aerogramme in March 1974. On 2 April 1974 the Australian Philatelic Bureau advised that the Christmas Island press statement had arrived too late to make Stamp Preview No 2 which contained details of the April issues.

On 19 February 1974 Harrison wrote enclosing the 6 proofs requested by Christmas Island with the aerogrammes arriving in Christmas Island on 3 April 1974. The packing slip indicated that 6,644 aerogrammes had been included. Harrison returned the artwork to Christmas Island on 5 April 1974 and the first design on 3 April 1974. On 2 April 1974 Christmas Island forwarded 1,000 CTO aerogrammes to the Australian Philatelic

Bureau while 30 were sent to the Crown Agents on 3 April 1975.

The genesis of the two aerogrammes demonstrate the difficulties imposed by the slow communications between the Island and the UK (email is so much quicker) and the tensions between philatelic and post office requirements. It is also interesting to note the scale of the philatelic sales of the aerogrammes.

Refere

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National Archives of Australia N16 P1972/47 Christmas Island Aerogramme 12c 1972, 14c 1974

May 2010

CHRISTMAS ISLAND 1975 25C AEROGRAMME

Ian McMahon

On 20 March 1975 C J Humphreys, the Christmas Island postmaster, advised the Administrator of Christmas Island that there were approximately three months' supply of 14c aerogrammes on hand and recommended that 10,000 aerogrammes be ordered from Harrison and Sons bearing the new value of 20c. The request was approved by the Administrator on 19 May 1975 and the aerogrammes ordered from Harrison on 19 May 1975:

the current 14 cent pictorial aerogramme which was supplied by your firm during Aril 1974 is now nearly exhausted and a new supply is required. Would you please arrange for supply to this Administration of 10,000 aerogrammes. The only change necessary is the embossed stamp [from] 14 cents to 20 cents. As our issue date for the new Aerogramme is the [2nd] October, 1975 your efforts in assisting early completion and dispatch would be greatly appreciated.

This letter was acknowledged by him in a letter of 5 June 1975. Christmas Island also confirmed with the Australian Philatelic Bureau in Melbourne that the Bureau would need 3,000 mint and 1,000 CTO aerogrammes and with the Crown Agents of their requirement for 300 mint and 50 FDI.

Harrison provided a quote dated 21 July 1975 for 20c aerogrammes, 317 x 240 mm, punched to shape, tropical gummed flaps, packed in cartons of 1,000 aerogrammes and sealed in a metal lined wooden packing case, on blue airmail S/0 45 g /m² paper for £465 FOB London. They also advised that they were proceeding with the printing the 20c aerogrammes as requested.

On 31 July Christmas Island sent an urgent telegram to Harrison requesting that they delay the printing of the aerogrammes for a few days pending advice of a new value. This was followed by another telegram on 7 August stating *AEROGRAMME FORMS PLEASE PRINT VALUE AS 25 REPEAT 25 CENTS LETTER FOLLOWS.*

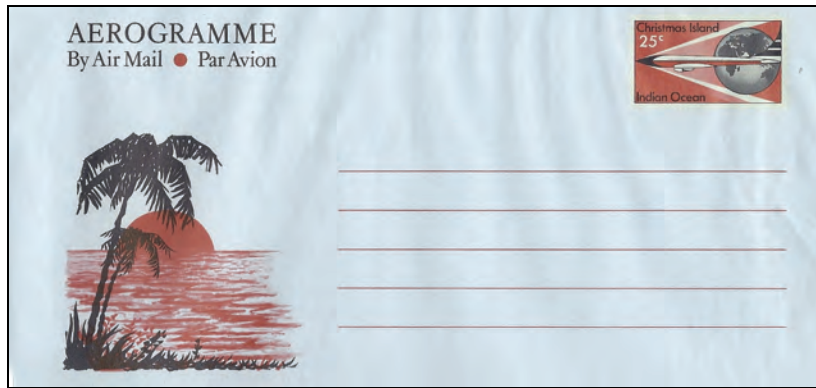
The follow-up letter from the Postmaster dated 7 August explained that the sudden change in the value of the aerogramme was due to *the sudden announcement of Postage increases by the Australian Government. As our postage prices are allied with those in Australia, it is necessary to follow suit and increase Aerogramme prices from 20 cents to 25 cents.*

Harrison replied by telegram on 9 August 1975 stating that *AEROGRAMMES HAVE ALTERED ARTWORK TO READ 25CENTS STOP NOW PROCEEDING PRODUCTION.*

A follow-up telegram from Christmas Island dated 9 September 1975 requested that Harrison dispatch the aerogrammes by airfreight addressed to the Administrator care of Australian High Commission Singapore and requested advice of the date of dispatch and the consignment number. Harrison replied that the aerogrammes would be dispatched in the second week of October and that they regretted the delay due to the alteration of the value. On 4 October 1975 Harrison asked if they needed to send supplies urgently to the Philatelic Bureau in Melbourne. Christmas Island replied on 8 October 1975 requesting that they sent either an interim supply or the full supply of 3,000 aerogrammes to the Philatelic Bureau in Melbourne.

On 21 October 1975 Harrison advised that 7,000 aerogrammes would be shipped to Christmas Island via Singapore on 22 October by air. The Administration advised the Australian High Commission to divert the package to Christmas Island via MV Hoiying leaving Singapore on 24 October. The High Commission advised that the package had left Singapore as requested on 24 Oct 1975 and that the freight charge including reshipping at Singapore was \$266. Harrison's bill came to £325 plus £15 for alterations to the value.

Postal Stationery Collector



The Postmaster advised the Australian Philatelic Bureau of the release of the 25c aerogramme on 5 November 1975 “although previous notification was given of our 20 cent Aerogramme being issued as from 2nd October 1975 there will now be issued instead a 25 cent aerogramme, *Printing had not commenced in London when the new Postal increases were announced in Australia and we were able to arrange of the new price of 25 cents to be substituted.* On 13 February 1976 Christmas Island sent a telegram to the Crown Agents apologising for not advising them previously of the change in value to 25c.

On 5 October 1977, Christmas Island sent a telegram to Harrison asking for a quotation for printing 5,000 and 10,000 aerogrammes, the same as currently in use. Harrison’s quote dated 18 October 1977 of £430 for 5,000 and £510 for 10,000 was accepted on 27 October 1977. The aerogrammes were sent by air via Singapore and a charter aircraft to Christmas Island on 26 January 1978. Surprisingly the Christmas Island postmaster also sent a letter dated 21 October 1977 to Mr Ng Chin Seng of Singapore authorising him (or his representative) to act on the Christmas Island Post Office’s behalf to seek quotations for the printing of an official stamped aerogramme.

Reference

NAA File N16 P1975/47 Part 1

PSSA FORUM

New Issues

Australia Post issued a PSE on 23 March 2010 for the 50th anniversary of the VIEW Clubs of Australia which offer companionship and help to women, particularly those in rural communities. Sold for 65c, designed by Jo McAlpine and printed by lithography by GEON, Tasmania.



Another PSE was issued on 9 February 2010 for the 100th anniversary of the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices, Victoria's peak membership body representing Justices of the Peace and Bail Justices (collectively called "Honorary Justices"). Sold for 65c, designed by Simone Sakinofsky and printed by lithography by GEON, Tasmania.

February 2019

CHRISTMAS ISLAND 1980 33C AEROGRAMME

Ian McMahon

In 1975 Christmas Island issued a 25c aerogramme (*PSC* May 2010) which depicted a jet over a globe in the stamp area and the sun over the sea and palm trees on the left-hand side of the form. In late 1979, the Postmaster of Christmas Island realised that the stocks of the 25c aerogramme would soon be exhausted and began the process of producing a new aerogramme.

Aerogramme Design Competition

The Stamp Advisory Committee decided that rather than using the same design as the 25c aerogramme, a competition would be conducted with all local residents being eligible to prepare and submit designs. To this end, the Postmaster of Christmas Island, G Verco, wrote to the Principal of the Christmas Island Area School asking them to inform their students of the competition and its guidelines:

- Two designs are required, one to appear on the left-hand side of the Aerogramme the other is for the stamp
- The two designs need not necessarily be the same subject
- Designs can be prepared in either black and white or colour
- The designs should have some association with Christmas Island eg scenes, trees, wildlife etc
- Size of designs should be approximately: General design 8-10 x 8-10 cm Stamp Design 5 x 3 cm
- There is no need to show any denomination on the stamp design
- All designs submitted should bear the student's name and class number
- Designs need to be provided by 3 pm Friday 7 December 1979
- A current aerogramme was provided as a sample.

In all 73 entries were received in the competition. The Stamp Advisory Committee agreed that while no designs, as submitted, were suitable, the design submitted by Ng Teo Hui had 'good concept' and was selected as the basis for the stamp imprint. She was awarded \$25 for her entry and provided with a free copy of the new aerogramme when it was issued.. The final nine designs were placed on display at the Philatelic Bureau.

Designing a New Aerogramme

On 2 January 1980, the Postmaster wrote to the Crown Agents in London advising that the current stocks of aerogrammes will only be sufficient to cover the next twelve months. As the aerogramme had already been reprinted once and the denomination was now out of step with the current postal rates, it had been decided to design and print a new aerogramme. At the Stamp Advisory Committee meeting of 28 December 1979, the Committee had agreed on a new design with the pictorial portion being a locality map of South East Asia showing the location of Christmas Island while the stamp imprint would show a 'shape' of the island with a Boeing 727 aircraft similar to a recent Nauru stamp which was enclosed.

For the locality map the Postmaster enclosed two samples; the map on a FDC with the 'Comberford' map used for the Famous Visitors' series and the map on an information booklet which had been used for the Ship series presentation folder. The Committee agreed that either map could be used on the aerogramme with the following minor changes:

- Comberford Map: If this map is used Christmas Island should be more prominent and Borneo should be named.
- Information Booklet: If this map is used only the left-hand half of the map should appear as shown.

The final design of the map should be elongated. The denomination of the aerogramme could not be advised at this stage as the postmaster was awaiting advice from Australia Post on possible increased postal charges, writing to Australia Post on 27 November 1979 requesting advice on the denomination.

As Christmas Island required the new aerogramme ready for use by early October 1980, the Postmaster requested that Crown Agents engage an artist to prepare the necessary designs as quickly as possible. Three colours should be three as the blue paper would be the fourth colour. Quantities to be printed were to be advised with the return of the approved artwork.

On 8 January 1980, Australia Post replied saying that it will advise the aerogramme rate once it had been approved as a rate increase was anticipated and suggested holding-off on printing the aerogramme until the new rate had been approved. The Australian Philatelic Bureau would require 4,000 mint and 1,000 CTO copies of the new aerogramme. The Australian aerogramme rate was increased to 33c on 1 April 1980 so the value shown on the aerogramme was 33c.

On 26 January 1980, the Crown Agents advised (by telex) against using the Comberford map as it relied 'on colours for effect' and queried what was meant by the 'elongation' of the design. In addition, a 'photo of [the] island from [a] similar view to [the] Nauru stamp' was required as the map provided 'gave no indication of hills' etc and confirmation was sought of the inclusion of the words 'Christmas Island Indian Ocean 6798' [on the sender's address panel] which

had been typed on the sample provided. They also queried whether the Boeing 727 in the design needed to bear a particular livery. The postmaster replied on 29 January (again by telex) that the aircraft should not show any particular livery, confirmed the text CHRISTMAS ISLAND INDIAN OCEAN 6798 should be added to the sender's address panel on the reverse of the aerogramme, confirmed that only the outline of the island should be shown in the stamp area with the aircraft flying over the island (noting that if the artist wishes to portray more than island outline then they should portray the map as it appears on the Famous Visitors presentation pack but omit locality) and explaining that by 'elongate the map' he meant that the size of the sample map should be increased so that it takes up as much room as the pictorial design on the sample aerogramme include wording. The designer of the aerogramme was Tony Theobald, a British stamp designer.

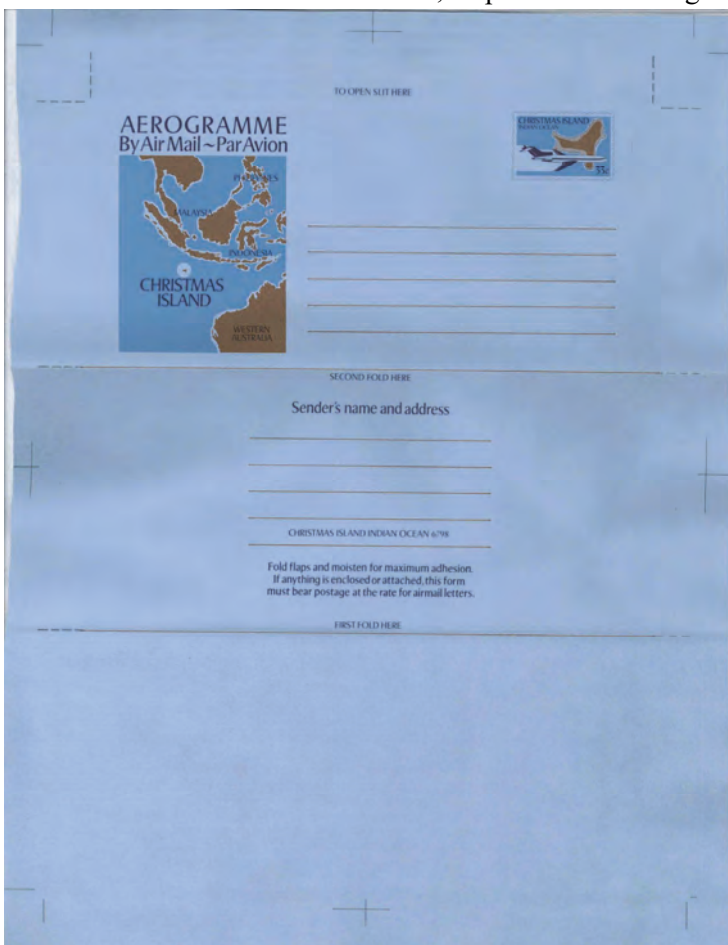
The Crown Agents advised on 13 April 1980 that the aerogramme artwork had been approved and they were ready to commence production and asked for advice on the quantities.

Production of the New Aerogramme

On 14 April 1980, the Postmaster advised the Crown Agents that the quantities required were 12,000 (including 1,000 to be CTO for Australia Post) for Christmas Island and 4,000 for the Australian Philatelic Bureau. In determining the number needed for local sales the Postmaster took account of rate changes every 2-3 years meaning he should order no more than 3 years supply and average past sales making two calculations: 13,068 rounded up to 14,000 based on 363 per month based on average sales over the period 1974-1980 (3 April 1974 to 13 August 1975 6,250, 27 October 1975 to 16 February 1977 (7,000), 10 February 1978 to 12 February 1980 7,100) and 11,000 based on average sales of only 296 per month over the period 1978-80. He decided to go with lower figure of 11,000 plus 1,000 to be CTO for the Australian Philatelic Bureau who also had asked for 4,000 mint for a total of 16,000. The Crown Agents ordered a further 800 for their own sales.

The Crown Agents then sought tenders (including paper but not air freight) for the printing of the aerogrammes which came back on 20 June 1980 as:

- Enschede £2,714, dispatch date 20 August
- McCorquodale £830, dispatch date 11 August
- Moore and Matthes £2726, dispatch date 14 August



They advised the Postmaster that they had awarded the contract to McCorquodale and were expecting proofs in a week. Not surprisingly, the Postmaster telexed back on 23 June 1980 "Tender from McCorquodale pounds 830 seems excessively low please confirm figure". The Crown Agents replied on 24 June 1980 that 'price correct agree price very low hence we double checked when tender received seems high turnover enable such low price". The Crown Agents sent a more detailed reply on 25 June 1980 accompanied by a proof of the 33c aerogramme:

As advised in my cable of 19 June, I have no hesitation in awarding the printing of the above items to McCorquodale. I was not surprised that this printer won the tender, but was only surprised at how low their price was. It seems that by specialisation, McCorquodale have virtually a monopoly in the stamped-aerogramme market, since their prices are kept low, but their quality is invariably good. You will be able to judge the quality of their printing from the accompanying proof [left], which I have approved subject to: a. Removal of registration mark approximately 1cm to the right of the stamp. b. Ensuring that only those areas on the Island Map which appear solid on the artwork are actually printed solid (there should be two different grades of shading). Apart from these two faults, which are admittedly rather careless, I consider that the overall effect is very good. In fact, the Managing Director went

out of his way to comment favourably on the design which Tony Theobald has produced. I hope very much that you agree with these comments.

The Postmaster replied on 7 July saying

The proof of the new aerogramme together with your letter arrived on 2 July. I have shown the proof to numerous of the locals and all comments made have been most favourable. I agree with your comments that the quality of printing is very good, considering the unexpectedly low cost of McCorquodale's quote, we will certainly get value for money. I look forward to receiving supplies of the aerogramme in the not too distant future. The aerogramme will be released for sale on Monday 6 October 1980. This release data will be published in our Newsletter 4/80, copies of which I will forward to you when they are received from the Printer.



The Crown Agents advised that the aerogramme had been dispatched on BA009 on 16 August 1980 in 2 cases. The cost of the aerogrammes was £829.92 . The postmaster advised the Australian Philatelic Bureau (on 2 September 1980) and the Crown Agents (on 8 September 1980) that the issue date of the 33c aerogramme was set as 6 October 1980 and confirmed that he had sent them 1,000 and 200 CTO aerogrammes respectively. He also advised the local Philatelic Bureau that a suitable display of the aerogramme should be set up at the philatelic bureau and two copies of the aerogramme were needed for a display at the local post office. The Crown Agents advised on 3 December 1980 that all reference material used for the production of the aerogramme had been returned except for 3 pieces of finished artwork which were retained for the life of the aerogramme to compare printing quality against the artwork.

On 7 October 1980, the Postmaster wrote to Miss Ng Teo Hui: *You will no doubt recall that the entry you submitted for the aerogramme design competition was selected and your design in part has been incorporated in the new Aerogramme. I have enclosed one new aerogramme which I would like you to accept*

with my compliments. He also wrote to Mr William Speldewinde of Canberra: *You will no doubt recall that during our discussions in the design stage you suggested that the words Christmas Island Indian Ocean 6798 be incorporated on the aerogramme and this in fact has been done. I have enclosed one new aerogramme*

In April 1981 the Crown Agents requested a further supply of 100 CTO and 400 mint aerogrammes for their own sales. These were duly provided by the Postmaster.

The aerogramme was printed '4-up' with the positions distinguishable by the length of the brown 'line under 'FIRST FOLD HERE' (Ref: Barnes 1995).

1982 Reprint

By November 1981, a reprint of the 33c aerogramme was needed with the Postmaster writing to the Crown Agents requesting advice on the cost of printing a further 4,000 aerogrammes. The Crown Agents replied on 20 January 1982, that McCorquodale had advised that the aerogrammes would cost £186.40 per thousand or £745.60 for 4,000. The Postmaster advised the Crown Agents on 4 February 1982 to proceed with the order. McCorquodale provided 4,500 aerogrammes which the Crown Agents accepted and agreed to pay for 400 of the additional aerogrammes as the contract allowed for the 'normal trade tolerance' of a 10% overrun. The total price to Christmas Island was, therefore, £820.16. The Crown Agents advised the Postmaster on 22 March 1982 that the aerogrammes had been sent by air freight. The reprint was released on 15 April 1982 and can be identified as the blue of the sea on the panel at left is significantly deeper (Ref: Barnes 1995).

References

NAA File N16 P1975/47

Aerogrammes of Christmas Island (Indian Ocean) Rufous Barnes Pacific Islands Study Circle of Great Britain 1995

CHRISTMAS ISLAND AERORGAMMES 1990-1991: 1990 CHRISTMAS AERORGAMME

Ian McMahon

1990 Christmas Aerogramme

On 13 December 1989, Graeme Dennis, the Manager Postal and Philatelic Services of Christmas Island, wrote to Ramon (Ray) Honisett offering a commission to prepare artwork and designs for a Christmas aerogramme scheduled for release on 3 October 1990. The Commission also included the design work for four adhesive stamps and the related first day cover (Design commission number 05/89). Under the commission the final completion date was 18 April 1990 with designs required no later than 07 March 1990. A rationale was to be supplied with the designs and the proposed fee was \$6,500.00 for the whole work. Also enclosed were the aerogramme specifications used by Australia Post (see illustration on inside back cover). The specifications for the aerogramme were:

AEROGAMME: Open 328 mm x 205 mm; Folded 102 mm x 174 mm

Aerogrammes are printed multicolour photolithography. For the commemorative 'Christmas 1990' Aerogramme, the left-hand illustration must be no larger than 68 mm deep x 52mm wide, positioned as indicated on the format sheet included herewith. The 'theme' for the aerogramme must be compatible to that of the [adhesive] stamps and first day cover.

STAMP AREA: The words

CHRISTMAS ISLAND, INDIAN OCEAN and the postage rate, currently 60c, must be included in the stamp design. Selection of type faces should be based upon legibility and clarity. Size for the stamp area will be left to your artistic discretion, but factors such as the address panel, postmarker, etc., should be taken into account. (The everyday postmarker is 35mm in diameter.)

TYPOGRAPHY: All typography, except for the stamp area, is to be as shown on the attached example. Reference to 'Christmas 1990' must appear.

Ray Honisett provided the aerogramme and related adhesive stamp designs on 16 January 1990 and commented that when considering this design problem, it seemed we had two different themes with which to cope - the Christmas theme and the flower theme. Indeed, that would have been quite a difficulty had I treated the flowers in a conventional, botanical fashion. And while one could have combined the flowers with a Christmas device such as a Christmas star or Christmas-tree bauble, etc., I believe it would have been an awkward compromise. My solution, as you see, is to execute the flowers and backgrounds in a fresh, jolly and somewhat graphic manner, reminiscent of a Christmas card but replacing the traditional themes with the tropical flowers. Taking the illustration area right across to the perfs [on the adhesive stamps] heightens the look of a Christmas card, too. The use of pastels as the medium achieves the direct freshness and by applying them on black paper the colours derive a lift from the splinters of black showing through.

In the final art I would increase the size of the Hoya flower in the space but I think the others are generally right. The Aerogramme stamp and illustration are executed on a blue/grey paper a tint of which I would suggest for the overall Aerogramme colour. My reference for the Hibiscus bloom did not show the characteristic large Stamen - is that correct?

I feel we have the makings of an unusual and effective stamp series. I hope you and your committee agree.

On 19 January 1990, Ray Honisett wrote to Graeme Dennis saying that:

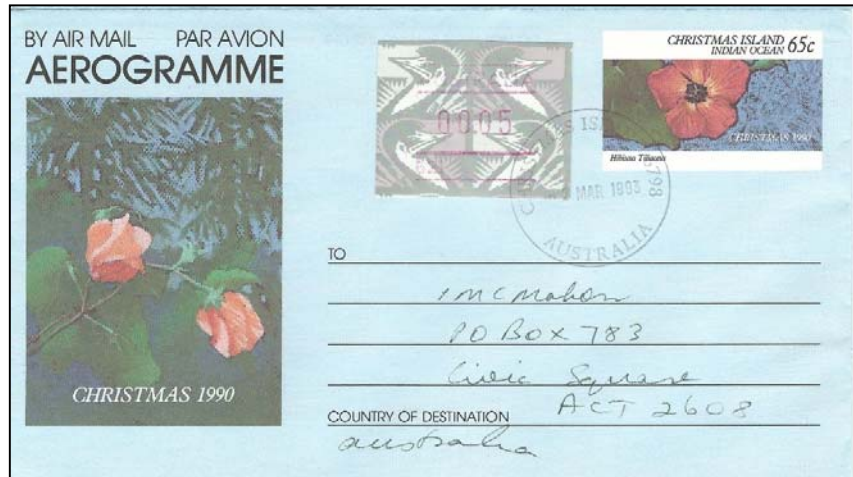
herewith the black and white of the Aerogramme design (Figure 2). The background of the Aerogramme stamp area is a pale Cobalt blue, applied to a blue/grey paper, a pale tint of which forms the overall colour of the Aerogramme. The large illustration is green and blue mostly.

On 6 February 1990 Graeme Dennis wrote to the Administrator of Christmas Island seeking approval for the adoption of the Christmas 1990 design recommended by the [Christmas Island] Stamp Advisory Committee:

The theme for 1990 is 'Christmas Blooming Flowers' with recommended subjects and reference provided by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. The designs are the work of Mr Ramon Honisett of Melbourne,



who was also responsible for the 'Navigators' commemorative series issued on 31 January 1990. Mr Honisett has chosen to present the designs in the most unusual medium of pastel on black paper which has allowed him to achieve a freshness that would not be otherwise obtainable. With the splinters of black showing through the background colours, additional 'lift' is gained to further highlight the bright colours of the stamps. He has elected to graphically represent the various flowers, rather than provide a truly botanical representation as he believes the graphic treatment is more related to the Christmas 'theme' having a 'Christmas Card' look about them. The background colour has been allowed to run right across the stamp and through the perforations, heightening the 'Christmas Card' appearance even more. The selection criteria was [sic] simply that they be either endemic or native. All flowers will be identified on the stamps and aerogramme with their botanical name. The stamp area on the Aerogramme depicts a 'Hibiscus Tiliaceus'. printed on a pale cobalt blue toned background, whilst the aerogramme itself will be of a blue/grey colour. The major illustration area which shows a Hibiscus in bud, will be mostly green and blue.



On 13 February 1990, Graeme Dennis wrote to Ray Honisett saying:

As advised on the phone, the Administrator has approved the Christmas 90 Stamp and Stationery designs, subject to the enlargement of the 'Hoya' as you indicated as being necessary, and the inclusion of the botanical name of the flowers. The 60c Commemorative aerogramme stamp depicts the 'Hibiscus Tiliaceus' and I think the selection of background colour for the stamp area and of the aerogramme will be absolutely appropriate when the main illustration area is seen in the mostly blue and green you have described. The aero will be manufactured by Mercury Walch.

On 26 June 1990 Graeme Dennis wrote to Mercury Walsh: *I am unable to find evidence that Sam [Chhetri] has invited you to submit quotations on the manufacture of the 'Christmas 90' Aero and First Day Cover. Therefore, I would be very grateful if you could please provide quotes, as a matter of some urgency.*

Aeros		Proofs:	To GCD or Liz Innes
Quantity:	8000	Despatch: (ex Perth)	21.8.90
Size:	Standard A.P.	Distribution: Caphco [Crown Agents]:	500
Colours:	4 process+ one	Publicity (Caphco):	550
Stock:	Aerogramme white 65gsm	Australia Post:	3000
Process:	Lithography	Christmas Island:	3500
Art:	Camera-ready (to come)		

Artwork will come from Ray Honisett, should your quotations be successful and will be ready very soon, hence your urgent quote would be appreciated.

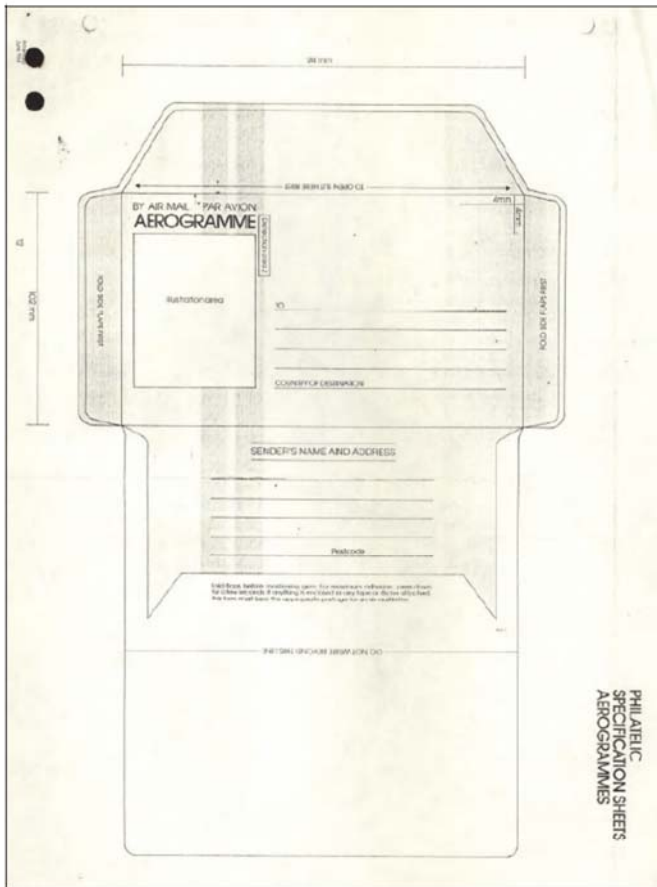
On another unrelated matter, but also as a matter of some urgency, could you arrange to return ALL artworks, trannies et al you hold on our behalf.

Will you give me an estimated delivery date of our promotional lettercard, please. I would really like to have this project up and running as early in the new (Financial) year as possible.

On 10 August 1990 Ray wrote to Graeme checking the latin name for the Hibiscus on the aerogramme which did not appear on the black and white proof. He then modified the design to include the Latin name and to enlarge the flowers in the side panel. Mercury Walsh sent a quotation for printing the aerogramme on 27 June 1990 to Graeme Dennis. The Price 'ex works' was \$311.00 per thousand ie \$2,488. The 1990 Christmas aerogramme was released on 3 October 1990.

References

NAA: N7, 1989/155



PHILATELIC
SPECIFICATION SHEETS
AEROGRAMMES

PHILATELIC SPECIFICATION SHEETS AEROGRAMMES

Description:
Aerogrammes are lightweight lettersheets specifically designed for correspondence with overseas countries. There are two types of aerogrammes: Definitive and Commemorative and in each case the stamp design for both types must be compatible with the illustration and could be an extension of the theme.

Specifications:
Size: Overall: 128mm x 205mm
Folded: 102mm x 74mm
Printed: Offset, up to 5 line colours (including blue) plus Heliocol, or 4 colour process, plus blue plus Heliocol.

Layout:
The left hand illustration, which can be no larger than 68mm deep x 62mm wide (unless otherwise briefed) and must be positioned as indicated on layout sheet supplied. The stamp design must be located 4mm from the top and right hand edges. Refer to sheet No 1 for stamp size.

Typography:
All typography except for the stamp area, is fixed as shown on the laydown sheet supplied however type colour should be indicated on the overlay.

Stamp area:
The word "AUSTRALIA" and the postage rate must be included within the stamp design. The selection of type faces and type sizes should be based upon legibility and compatibility with the established type style.

Deflection Area:
There are 2 deflection areas on aerogrammes. The first is in the stamp area and its requirements are as detailed on sheet No 1. The second deflection area is the device which enables the machine to separate aerogrammes from enveloped mail. This second deflection area is fixed as per laydown sheet and both deflection areas should be indicated on a separate overlay.

Note: Effects, such as embossing, gold stamping etc, are not always practicable but may be considered under special circumstances. This, however, should be established before design is commenced.

ARTWORK
In the preparation of finished artwork the following points should be borne in mind:

- **Colour:** Colour swatches should be provided if non-standard colours are used.
- **Stamp area:**
 - **Size:** Exactly 4 or 6 times actual stamp size, as defined in Stamp Design Commission.
 - **Clarity of reproduction:** When preparing the design, the artist should bear in mind that the artwork to be substantially reduced, and therefore, the detail should be treated accordingly.
 - **Typography:** All type, which can be black coloured or white reverse, should be on an overlay. It is preferred that type be in a solid colour. Colours made up with stipples can reduce the clarity and sharpness of the type face. If white reverse type is required, use of 4 colours, semi-stiff type faces are preferred.
 - **Size:** Artwork: It is most important that the proportion and square of the image be precise. The image area should include 2 to 3 mm bleed of redaction as electronic marking will be used for final cropping. The addition of trim marks, keylines, bleedlines and centre marks is essential.
- **Illustration area:**
 - Can be either reflective or work or colour transparency in 10cm x 10cm format (5" x 4").
 - **Keyline art:**
 1. Use 1/8" base art laydown sheet supplied.
 2. Mount keyline on sheet on firm backing.
 3. On an overlay show keyline for Heliocol areas (refer sheet No 1).

Air Mail
June 1991

11

BY AIR MAIL PAR AVION
AEROGRAMME



TO _____

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION _____

CHRISTMAS ISLAND AEROGRAMMES 1990-1991: 1991 DEFINITIVE AEROGRAMME

Ian McMahon

Following the issue of the 1990 Christmas aerogramme (PSC February 2020), the Christmas Island philatelic services commenced work on the preparation of a definitive aerogramme to be issued in 1991. The file contains only a limited amount of information about this aerogramme.

1991 'Red Crab' Definitive Aerogramme

On 1 February 1991 Graeme Dennis wrote to the Administrator:

Herewith for your approval, please, are two definitive aerogramme designs prepared by Ms Elizabeth Innes using photographs from the collection accumulated by the writer.

Both have been recommended by the Stamp Advisory Committee for adoption, for consecutive issues, not simultaneous release.

The first to be issued will be the design showing the view from Murray Road across Flying Fish Cove to Government House. This will carry the current aerogramme rate of 65c. The stamp area features a stylised drawing of the common red crab, which was rendered by Mr Rick Innes.

The second design shows the gorge at the foot of Hugh's Dale during the 1990 swell season in an almost ethereal image. Whilst the committee has recommended it for adoption, I would prefer to see another image within the stamp area and if you are agreeable, will pursue this track. In the meantime, I will hold the design in reserve for the next tariff change whenever that might be.

Graeme Dennis wrote to Liz Innes on 1 February 1991 regarding the approval of the two designs plus a request for a replacement stamp design for the 1991 aerogramme as the design supplied 'seems to have disappeared':

Both aerogramme designs have now been approved, although the first to be issued (view across the cove to the Administrator's residence) seems to have disappeared, for whatever reason.

As I propose to issue the first one on 1 May 1991, Mercury Walch will need the Finished art [straight away].

As mentioned, the 'Gorge' scene will be reserved until the next tariff increase or our next definitive stamp issue in April 1992, whichever comes sooner, although that depends hugely on the mood of the moment.

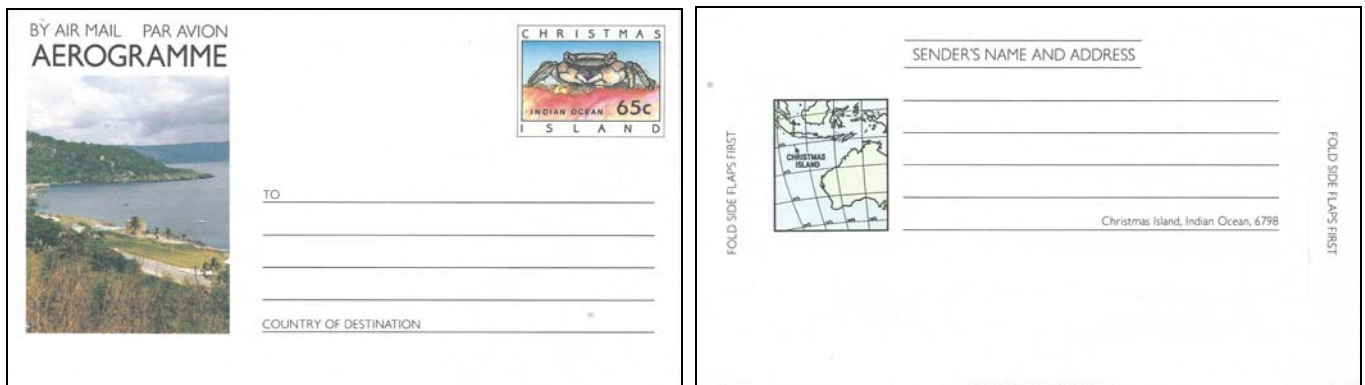
Whatever, I will need a replacement stamp design for the aero, so it would be nice if you can arrange some prompt action on that front. I'll fix a design commission, if you need one. Photoprints for the two approved designs, together with the only layout we can locate are enclosed. As you suggested, it should be a simple matter to get F/A off to Jim Atkinson for the 1 May issue.

On 8 February 1991 Graeme Dennis wrote to Mercury Walch asking for a quote for the 1991 definitive aerogramme:

PS: I also need a quote on the production of 14,500 x 1991 Definitive aerogrammes, printed 4-colour process plus 2-line colours. Other Specs are as usual. Origination will be by base art plus two artworked images (reflective copy). Distribution will be Xmas Isle: 10,200; Oz Post: 3250; Crown Agents: 1050. First Day of Issue will be 1 May 1991.

On 1 March 1991 Liz Innes checked with Sam Chhetri what is current aerogramme rate 60c or 65c we are doing an aerogramme for Christmas Island to be issued May 1st.

On 18 April 1991 an invoice was provided from Mercury Walch, Hobart for the printing of 14,500 1991 Definitive aerogrammes in 8 cartons at a cost of \$2,175.



On 23 April 1991, Sam Chhetri, Christmas Island Postal and Philatelic Services, wrote to the Crown Agents with details of the new aerogramme:

New definitive aerogrammes: on 1 May, the philatelic bureau will release its new 65c pictorial definitive aerogramme. Designed by Liz Innes of Melbourne, the aerogramme has been printed by Mercury Walch of Hobart Tasmania.

Technical details:

Issue date 1 May 1991

Designer Rick Innes of Melbourne

Process lithography

Printer Mercury Walch of Tasmania

Size (flat) 328mm x 205 mm

(folded) 102mm x 174 mm

Paper aerogramme white 65 gsm

The stamp area features a stylised drawing of the common red crab and the face design shows the view from Murray road across flying fish cove to government house.

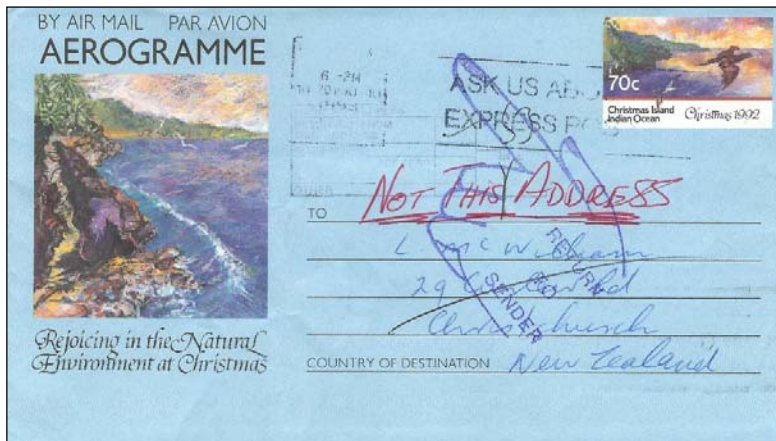
I have faxed the front of the aerogramme, and have posted today by airmail one aerogramme.

The 65c Red Crab aerogramme was released on 1 May 2020 with the design panel showing the view *Murray Road across Flying Fish Cove to Government House*. Rufous Barnes states: *Aerogrammes used on the first day of sale were postmarked with a special datestamp produced for the occasion.*

In the minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Island Stamp Advisory Committee of 20 June 1991, attended by Mike Soding (Chairman), Peter Collins and Sam Chhetri, there is a reference to a proposed 1992 definitive aerogramme:

New Definitive aerogramme 1992 Mr Collins advised that there could be a mix up with the photograph of the chick shown on the stamp panel as the name seems to be incorrect. Mr Collins will make further checks with the National Park officials. Also, the stamp panel does not have the word 'Indian Ocean'. It has CHRISTMAS ISLAND only. Therefore, the word 'INDIAN OCEAN' should be incorporated.

It is unclear to which aerogramme this was referring to as no 1992 definitive aerogramme was issued. The next aerogramme issued was a 1992 Christmas aerogramme. Rufous Barnes states:



The Island's fourth Christmas aerogramme was released on 7 October 1992. This 70 cents value mirrored the theme of that year's Christmas stamp issue by depicting Booby birds against the rugged coast-line of the island. Jane Moore of Christmas Island produced the initial design, whilst the finished artwork was prepared by Elizabeth Innes. The aerogrammes were printed by Mercury Walch using the lithographic process. An unknown number were postmarked on the day of issue, using the same datestamp used to postmark first day covers of the stamp issue. The aerogramme was withdrawn from sale on an unknown date in 1993. There is no record of the numbers printed or sold.

The design panel on the left of the aerogramme may be the second design showing the gorge at the foot of Hugh's

Dale during the 1990 swell season in an almost ethereal image' referred to in Dennis's memo of 1 February 1991. The stamp shows a Brown Booby.

References

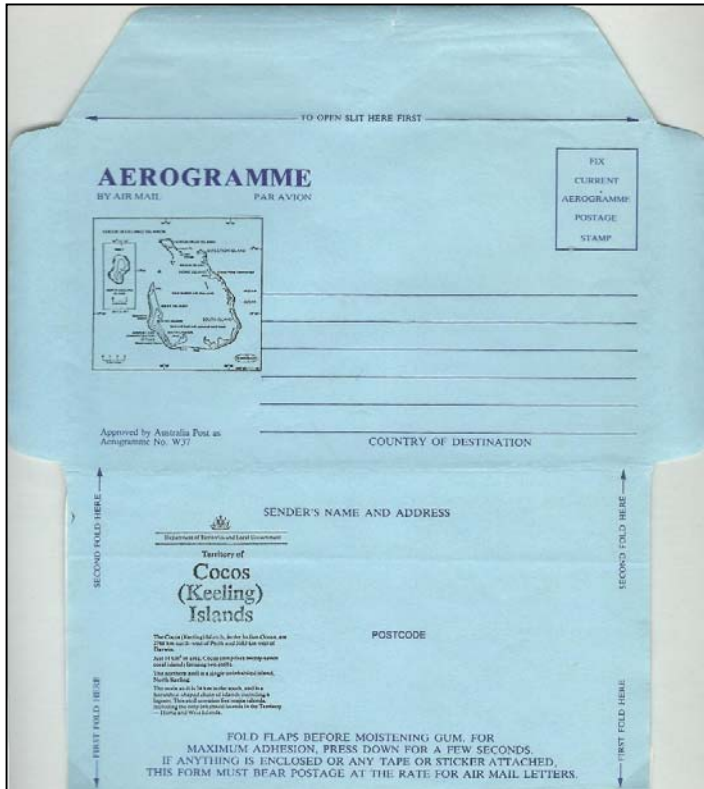
Rufous Barnes *Aerogrammes of Christmas Island (Indian Ocean)* The Pacific Islands Study Circle of Great Britain, 1995
NAA: N7, 1991/6

COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS AND CHRISTMAS ISLAND AEROGRAMMES: AN UPDATE

Ian McMahon

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Formular aerogramme

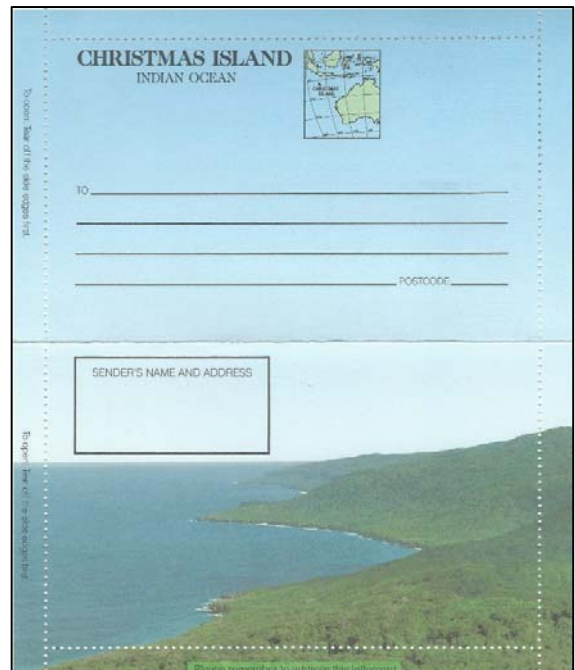
My article on Cocos (Keeling) Islands 1987 Pictorial aerogrammes in the November 2019 issue of the *PSC* made mention of a formula aerogramme being sold at the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Post Office before the issue of the pictorial aerogrammes with the issue of these aerogrammes being in part justified by the number of formular aerogrammes sold: *I believe this to be justified in postal terms by the sale, through the Post Office, of up to one hundred blank aerograms per month to residents, and up to four hundred per month during yachting season.*



My article on Cocos (Keeling) Islands 1987 Pictorial aerogrammes in the November 2019 issue of the *PSC* made mention of a formula aerogramme being sold at the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Post Office before the issue of the pictorial aerogrammes with the issue of these aerogrammes being in part justified by the number of formular aerogrammes sold: *I believe this to be justified in postal terms by the sale, through the Post Office, of up to one hundred blank aerograms per month to residents, and up to four hundred per month during yachting season.*

Judy Kennett replied to the article with a likely candidate for the formular aerogramme, an Australian 'permit' aerogramme, Permit No W37, which has been overprinted for the Territory of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. (Derek Brennan was Philatelic Officer on Cocos from October 1988 to October 1990 and Philatelic Officer on Nauru from August 1986 to September 1988).

Has any of our readers seen a used copy?



Christmas Island Formular Lettercard

My article on Christmas Island aerogrammes in the February 2020 issue of the *PSC* made mention of a formular lettercard in a letter from Graeme Dennis, Christmas Island Philatelic Officer, to Mercury Walch dated 26 June 1990:

Will you give me an estimated delivery date of our promotional lettercard, please. I would really like to have this project up and running as early in the new (Financial) year as possible.

This may be the formular lettercard shown on the right.