

CULTURE (HUTS) OF ZIMBABWE

Issued 29th November 2011

(Extracted from *Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 3 of 2011*)²

Zimbabwe is a multi-culture nation, the largest ethnic group being collectively known as the Shona which consists of the Manyika, Zezuru, Karanga, Korekore, Rozvi and Ndau groups. The second largest ethnic group is the Ndebele, consisting of the Ndebele, Khalanga and Zulu groups.



25c

Shona Hut

Shona Village

The traditional Shona dwelling is the conical-roofed circular huts. Variations were on construction and decoration which identify the cultural groups. The Shona type of hut was built from straight poles about three metres in height. The walls were plastered with mixture of ant heap and cow dung. The doorway would usually face west, away from prevailing wind. In the centre of the hut would be a dish-like hollow in which fire would be made, known as "*choto*" in Shona. Around the fireplace would be hearth stones or "*mapfiwa*" and a small immovable seat upon whom no one would seat but the husband

The floors were of hard beaten clay and a ledge or skirting board that ran round the hut. Grass was used to thatch the huts. There were no beds in the huts, but mats or "*hukwe*". Over the fireplace hangs down from the extreme apex of the roof a strip of bark rope or "*mutariro*", from this is hung meat for drying and smoking.

Some of the huts were used as bedrooms, granaries and kitchens. Boys would usually sleep in the granaries till they reach marrying age then they would build their own huts. The granaries were usually built on large granite rocks or "*ruware*" to prevent grains from termites and moisture from wet ground.



30c

Ndebele Hut

Ndebele Village

The Ndebele brought the beehive style of hut from Zululand but later adopted the Mashona type of hut, around the mid-18th century. It was also during this same period when the Ndebele introduced art design on walls of their huts which were mainly in triangular shapes. The designs were done mainly by women as a way of facilitating communication between subgroups of the Ndebele people. Unlike the Shona huts, the designs on walls of the Ndebele huts was their secret code disguised to anyone but the Ndebele.

85c

Manyika Hut



Manyika Village

The Manyika huts were not much different from the general Mashona type. Their huts were also used for appeasing the ancestors- *kupira mudzimu* (for rain to fall - *mukwerera* or cleansing ceremonies). Beer was brewed and put in these huts for fermentation and spirit mediums would occupy these huts whilst people sang and dance and drank beer. The huts were usually in shapes known as the *guta* and surrounded by poles and a gate or entrance. Such would be called *musha* or village under the headman.

\$1.00

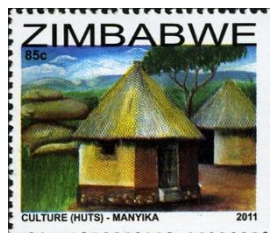
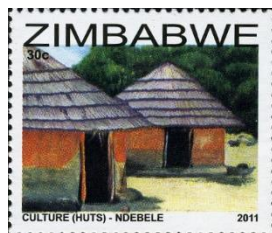
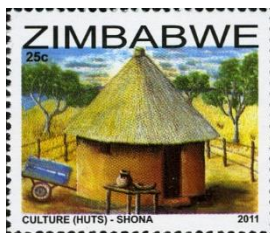
Tonga Hut

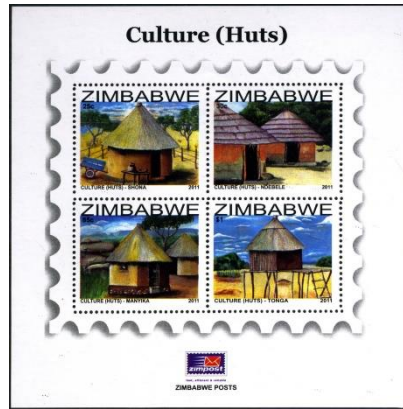


Tonga Village

The fourth and final type of culture hut is from the ethnic group called the Tonga. They built their grass thatched mud huts on stilts for fear of crocodiles and other wild animals. They lived on the fertile banks of the river. The huts were also built high to avoid floods. Mostly, the huts that were built high are either bedrooms or granaries.

The Stamps





(reduced to 50% of size)

Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
1322	729	25c	Shona Hut
1323	730	30c	Ndebele Hut
1324	731	85c	Manyika Hut
1325	732	\$1	Tonga Hut
MS1326	MS28		Miniature sheet with se-tenant block of each stamp

Technical details

Stamp size:	Sheet stamps: 35 x 30 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet
Artist:	Fredy Tembo
Paper:	ZSC paper type J: paper described by Zimpost as “Chancellor Litho PVA Gummed Postage Stamp Paper”. This paper is produced by Tullis Russell Coaters of Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland. Under UV there is no fluorescence either front or back, the stamp appears to be very dark
Print colours:	Cyan, magenta, yellow & black
Perforations:	SG 14½ x 14; ZSC 14¼ x 14 Top margin: Perforated through Other margins: Imperforate
Printer:	NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe
Printer’s Imprint:	Bottom Margin, below Row 10 Column 3. Imprint printed in black

Cylinder numbers: Top margin above R1/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Colour register: Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R1/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Sheet Value: Top margin, above R1/5, printed in black

Sheet Number: Type SN 7 with printed ‘ZIMPOST’ prefix, right margin opposite R1/5 reading down

Print numbers:	25c	600,000	30c	600,000
	85c	20,000	\$1	20,000

Issue date: 29th November 2011

Postal Rates

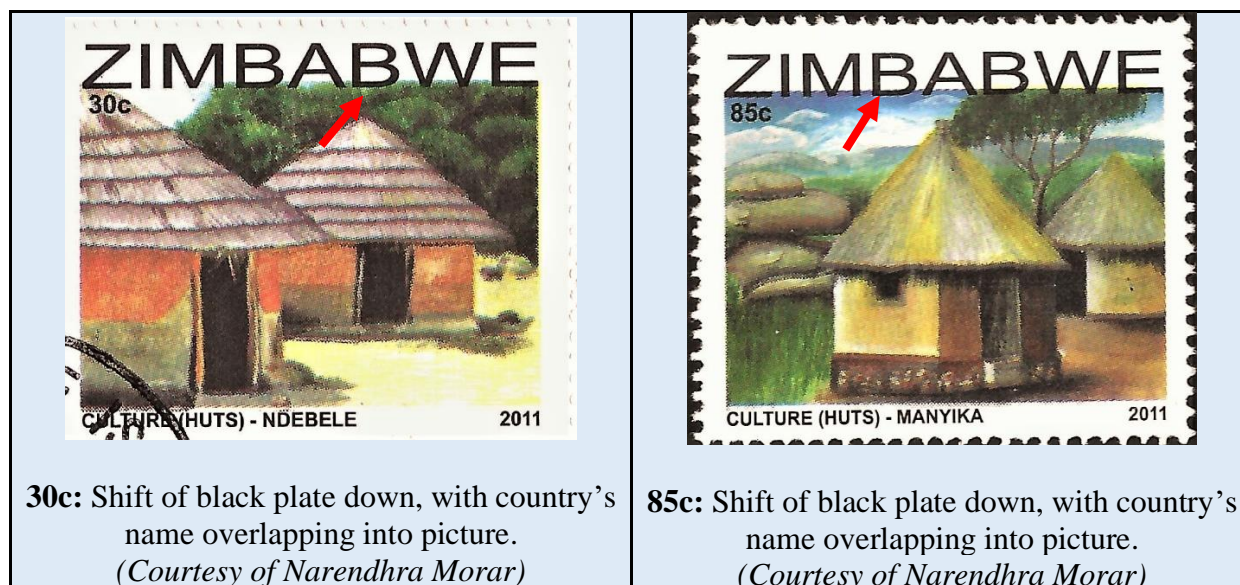
The postal rates applicable at the date of issue were those effective from, 11th July 2011 and quoted in United States dollars. Whilst the 85c (Europe) and \$1 (Rest of the World) rates were included, there was still no stamp for African destinations (75c). The rates were local postage rates for box (25c) and street (30c) delivery.

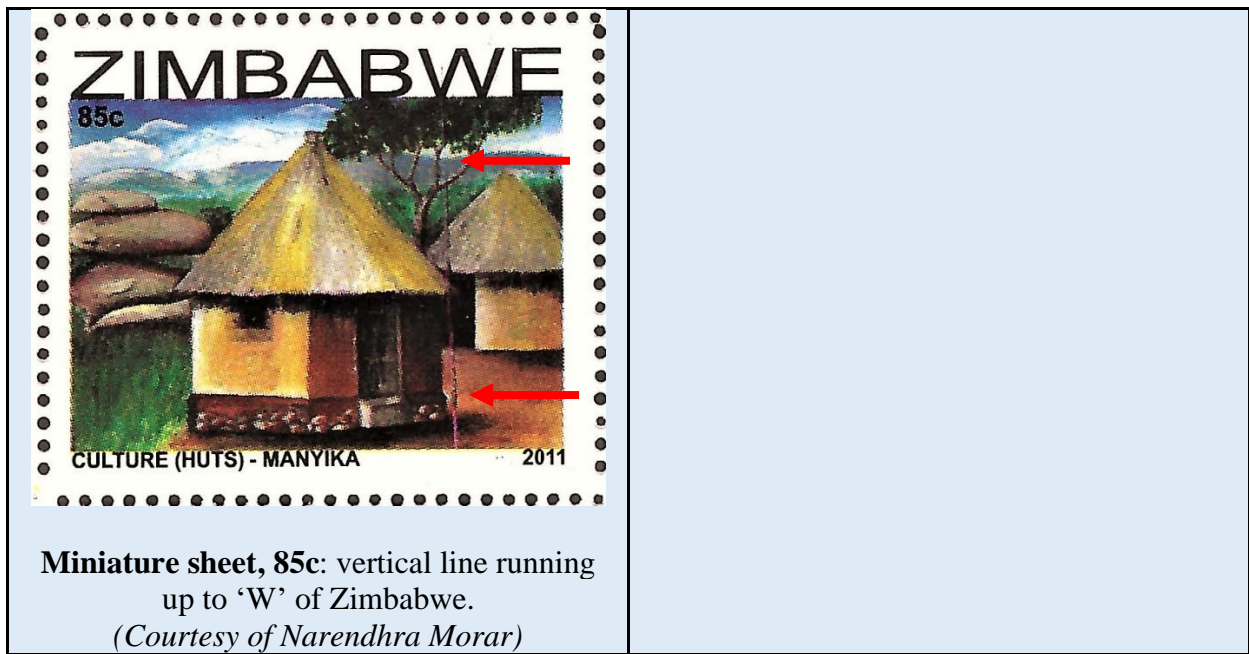
Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been reported.

Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds which are more noticeable with the solid colours





First Day Cover

No first day covers were made available by the Philatelic Bureau, covers can, however be found with the Harare First Day of Issue canceller on plain covers and Bureau manila stationery.

Bibliography:

1. "The Zimbabwean Concise Postage Stamp Catalogue", published by Harare Stamp Company, edited by Ken Allanson, Mike Amos and Geoff Brakspear. The catalogue continues to be updated and expanded by Geoff Brakspear, and is now published on the Rhodesian Study Circle website.
2. Zimbabwe Post, Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 3 of 2011