GEMSTONES OF ZIMBABWE

Issued 23rd April, 2002

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 2 of 2002)[2]

$12. The Agate. The Agate is a *Chalcedony* and a Chalcedony is a group term for a waxy, smooth form of quartz often found lining cavities, filling cracks or forming crusts. Sometimes they are transparent but more often translucent with beautiful range of colours ranging from white to grey, blue to brown, or black. *Agate* colours may be wavy or parallel with a banded or irregular, variegated appearance. Petrified wood is usually an agatised wood. *Agate* is a very popular semi-precious but highly prized gemstone often with a very large variety of colours.lt is often cut and highly polished into a rounded form known among gemmologists as a *Cabochon.* Agate is found in many places in Zimbabwe but occurs mainly in Chivhu and Nyamandlovu.





$25. The Aquamarine. The Aquamarine is a light blue green to sky blue form of Beryl and is the only ore of the metal Beryllium. The best colour being of the sky-blue variety. It can also occur as yellowish golden beryl. It is found mainly in the Karoi area of Zimbabwe but is also found in the Somabhula area south west of Gweru. Aquamarine can often be found in very large transparent crystals, groups of which can weigh as much as several tonnes.

$35. The Diamond. Diamonds were first recorded in Zimbabwe in 1903 in the Somabhula gravel area 27 kilometres south west of Gweru. The diamonds from this source have a greenish tinge in the rough and occur as a detrital mineral in Karoo rocks with other minerals, including topaz, ruby and sapphire. The Somabhula gravels were worked extensively until 1914; the source of the diamonds a Kimberlite pipe has never been discovered to date. The largest uncut diamond recorded from Somabhula was 37.5 carats but generally they only average one carat.





$45. The Emerald, is a variety of Beryl, coloured green by traces of chromium. The main source of Emeralds in Zimbabwe is in the Buchwa greenstone belt other sources are the Filabusi and Masvingo areas. The first high quality gemstones recorded in the country were found in 1956 in the Mberengwa area; this find later became the world famous Sandawana Mine which was named after a mythical animal which was reputed by the local people to bring luck to those who see and greet it.

The Stamps









Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC[1]	Value	Description
1079	505	$12	Agate
1080	506	$25	Aquamarine
1081	507	$35	Diamond
1082	508	$45	Emerald

Technical details

Stamp size: All values 35 x 30 mm

Sheet Size: 50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet

Artist: Cedric Herbert

Paper: ZSC paper type H - another HS8 type paper. The paper is off-white and non-fluorescent front and back, PVA creamish gum. The shade intensity of the gummed side may vary occasionally under UV.

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:

$12	2,000,000	$25	210,000
$35	210,000	$45	210,000

Issue date: 23rd April, 2002

Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been noted.

Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds.



$12: Two strips of three and two pairs brought together showing an additional, out of sequence, strike of the comb perforator at an angle across two rows of stamps.



£12: Double black printing
(Courtesy Jefferson Ritson)

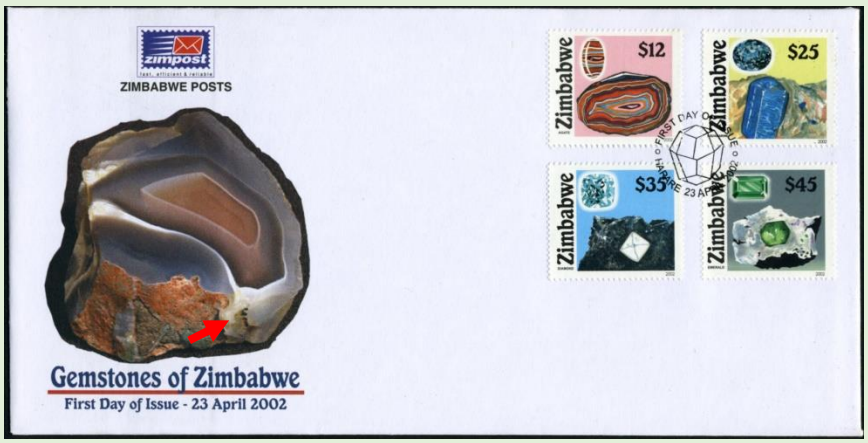
First Day Cover

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear.

A pictorial first day of issue canceller was produced for this issued and was used by the Philatelic Bureau. Other first day cover cancellers continued to be used at main post offices.



ZW095.1 (Zimpost)



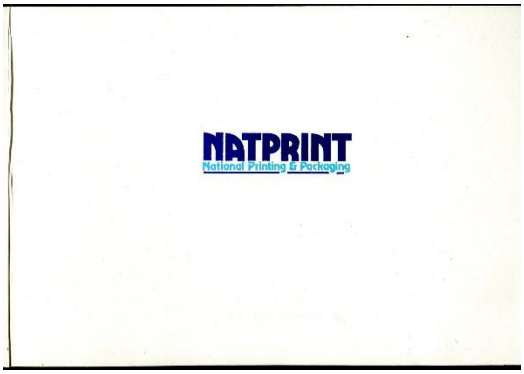
220 x 110 mm

Related Material

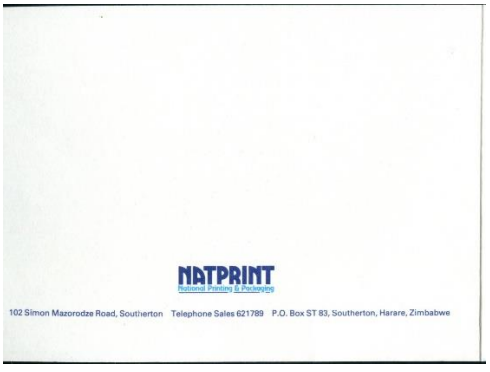
Natprint Proof Presentation Cards

Presentation cards produced by Natprint with imperforate proofs of the stamps to be issued. The presentation cards were forwarded to the PTC for approval of the final product.

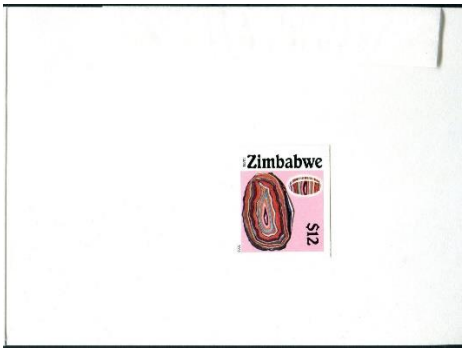
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



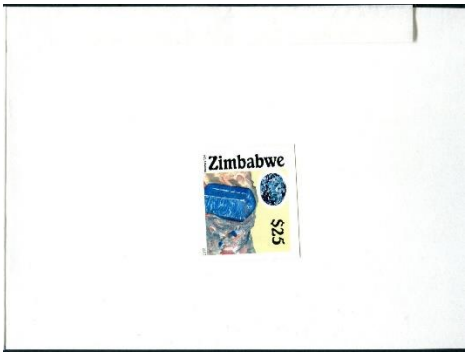
Front cover



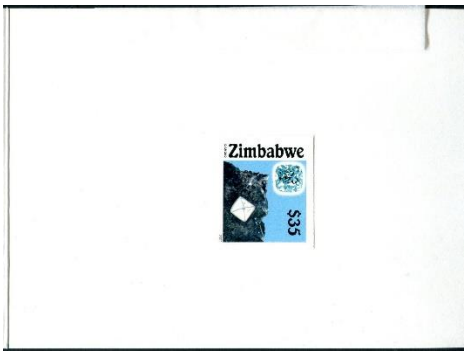
Inside front cover



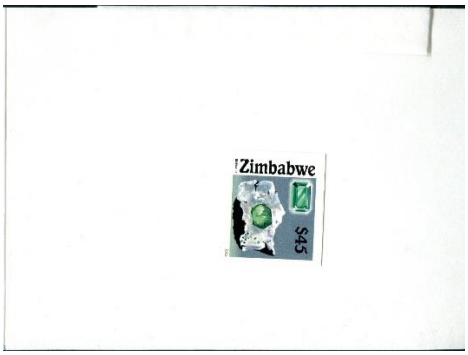
$12 stamp



$25 stamp

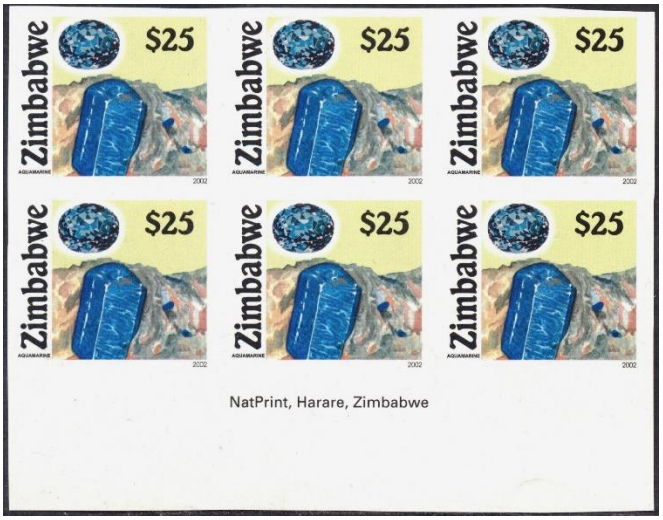


$35 stamp



$45 stamp

Proof material



$25: Imprint imperforate proof
(Source eBay December 2023)

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
2. Zimbabwe Post, Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 2 of 2002

Additions/Changes since December 2020	
4/2024	$25 proof imprint block