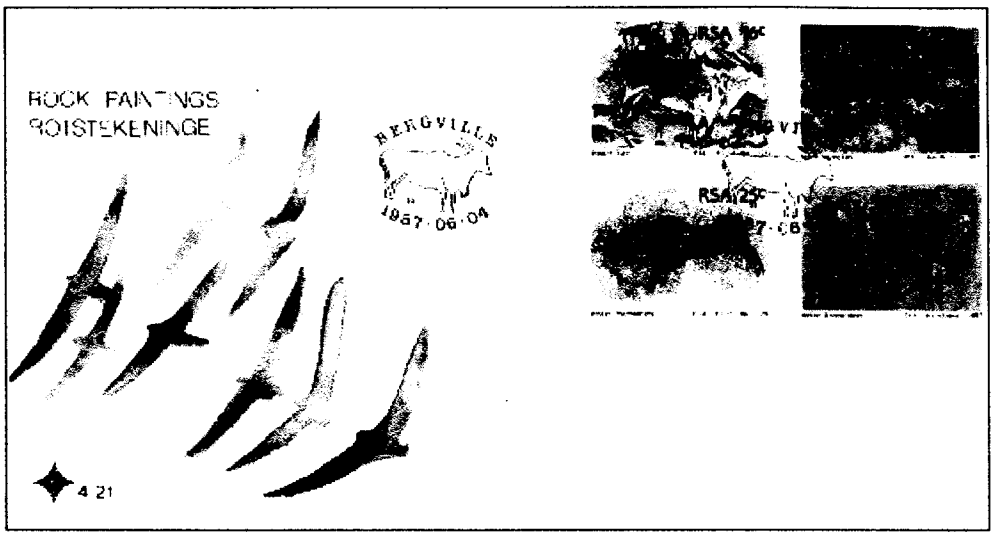
Rock Art in South Africa



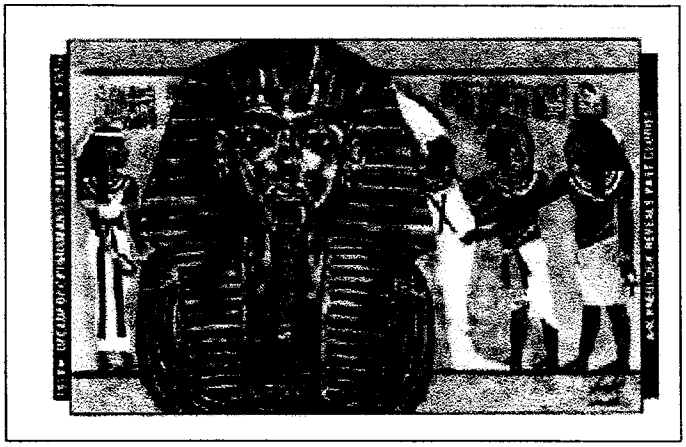
Can 21st-century electronics co-exist with the petroglyph art forms of communication used tens of thousands of year ago?

Well they do on the Internet at least. Well, maybe philatelically speaking anyway.

The Internet can be a good source for stamps and covers. One of the better features is that you can categorize your wants to a narrow degree and not have to look through a lot of unneeded items. The cover on the right was bid on by the editor in mid-November. It's a FDC for South Africa's issue in 1987 showing pertoglyphs at Sebaaieni Cave, Clocolan, uMhlwazini Valley, and Floukraal.

I happened to notice it while I was checking the South African set issued for Bartolomeu Dias in the next column over in the catalogue. I bid on the Dias cover, too. It goes with the explorers, seafarers, and charts project — you know, the projects we all have ready to start the next time we're not busy. Just like the things you saved up to do when you retired. Now they are waiting for you to re-retire!

But you can get burned a little bad on the Internet also. Pictured below is the famous Tutankhamen. This cachet shows the likeness of the actual stamp. It was issued just recently by Marshall Islands. Now that set is like the U.S. Celebrate the Century series. There is an even hundred stamps and therefore, a hundred FDCs. They should be readily available for almost face value from the issuing country or from most new issue dealers. I submitted a modest $2.00 for the cover and the next time I looked around the bidding was at $9.00. That's ridiculous for a cover that will be sitting in a dealer's 25¢ box in a year or less.



So you have to be a little careful.

Another interesting part of the Internet is the almost limitless resource material available. Basically the Encyclopædia Britannica is right below the active screen, but also on the net are thousands of other patrons who have spent time researching the same subject I'm interested in.

Several months ago I was looking at some Finland stamps and saw this structure on a Finland stamp (Scott 622). It shows an optical telegraph. I made a few queries on the Internet and by days end I had over 200 pages of information on the optical telegraph systems used in Europe.

Closely associated with the Internet is e-mail. This form of communication allows us to almost instantaneously send messages back and forth. My e-mail address is: gwhstamp@presys.com and if any member or reader of this journal wants to contact me at that address, I'll probably get the message within a few hours, since that's about how frequent I check my mail. In the future I would like to publish a list periodically of all OWASU members who would like to have their e-mail address published — for mutual support in searching out that illusive stamp.

In the next issue, we'll talk about Ancient Sites and my own home in Babylon, where I'm known as Mercatus Hammarabi and ancient ones are always welcome for a glass of grape (fermented or not).