



# SENDING MONEY HOME

SOUTH AFRICA TO SEKAKES FROM JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1973

Maseru

LESOTHO

Semonkong

Sekakes

SOUTH AFRICA

Matatiele

Letters sent to Sekakes are < 590 in 1973

## PURPOSE

A selection of covers are presented that were sent from various industrial centres in South Africa (mainly mines) to Sekakes in Lesotho.

## SCOPE

This exhibit focuses on mail containing money sent back to family members. During September 1973 the riots on mines had led to sending all mineworkers from Lesotho back home and the sending of money with registered mail ended.

## EXHIBITION PLAN

- ➔ Sekakes Postmark
- ➔ Route 1:  
Johannesburg -> Maseru -> Qacha's Nek -> Sekakes
- ➔ Route 2:  
Bloemfontein -> Maseru -> Qacha's Nek -> Sekakes
- ➔ Route 3: Matatiele -> Qacha's Nek -> Sekakes

Indicates personal research

## PHILATELIC SIGNIFICANCE

1. The Sekakes postmark shown in this exhibit has been introduced in 1931 and last recorded by philatelists in 1966. **Latest use recorded in this exhibit is 14 September 1973.**
2. **A selection of items are shown from all three routes entering Lesotho from South Africa.**
3. **Paid for land mail had sometimes been carried by airmail.**
4. **Paid for airmail had sometimes been carried by land mail.**
5. Same postal rates were applicable for domestic mail in South African and to Lesotho in 1973.

## LESOTHO POST OFFICES EN ROUTE

### SEKAKE(S)

- District: Qacha's Nek
- Postal code: 640
- Opened: 1931 (closed and re-opened 1 December 1954)
- Under control of Qacha's Nek post office until 31 May 1977
- Mail Routes from South Africa.
  1. Johannesburg - Maseru - Semonkong - Qacha's Nek - Sehapa - Sekake
  2. Bloemfontein - Maseru - Semonkong - Qacha's Nek - Sehapa - Sekake
  3. Matatiele - Qacha's Nek - Sehapa - Sekake

### SEHAPA(S)

- District: Qacha's Nek
- Postal code: 608
- Opened: 1938 (closed and re-opened 1950)
- Under control of Qacha's Nek post office

### QACHA'S NEK

- District: Qacha's Nek
- Postal code: 600
- Opened: 1892
- Mail Routes from South Africa:
  1. Johannesburg - Maseru - Semonkong - Qacha's Nek
  2. Bloemfontein - Maseru - Semonkong - Qacha's Nek
  3. Matatiele - Qacha's Nek

### SEMONKONG

- District: Maseru
- Postal code: 120
- Opened: 1892

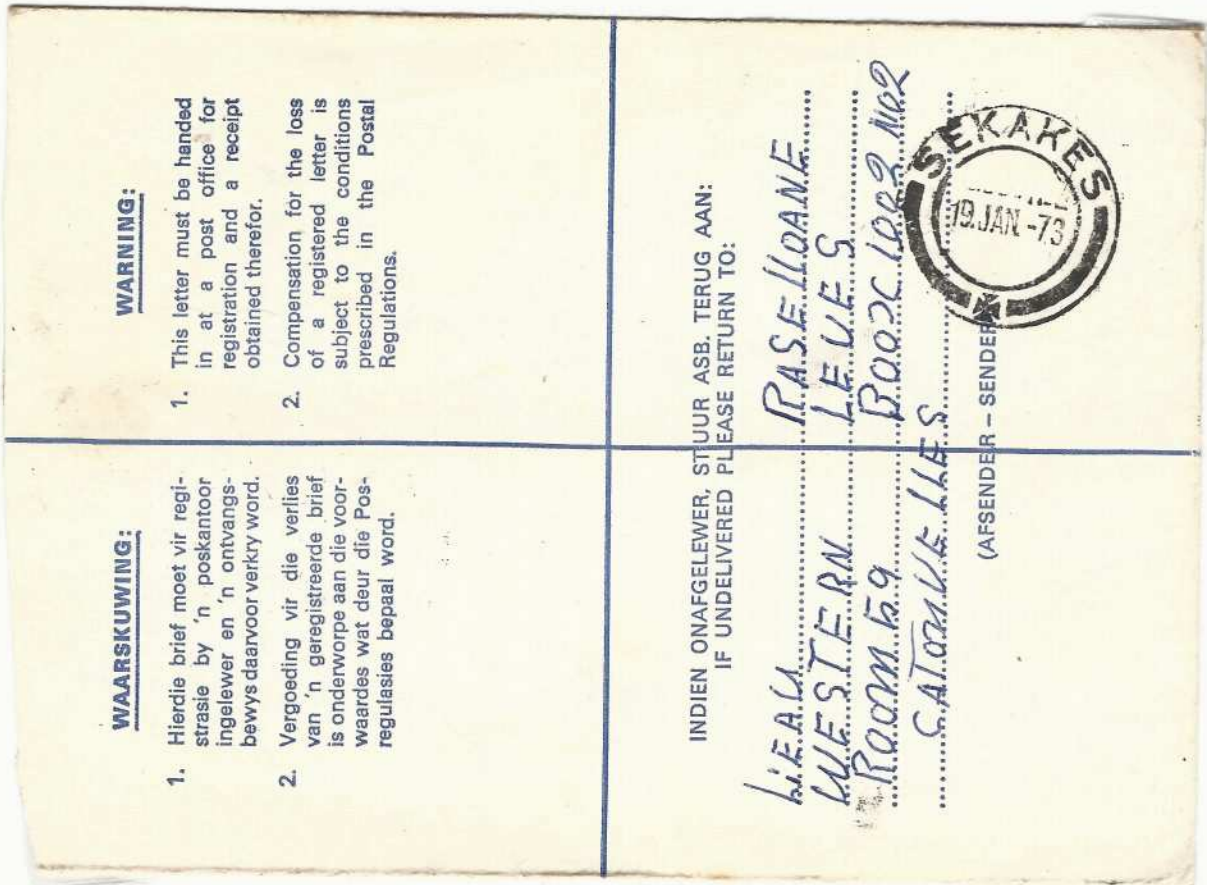
### MASERU

- District: Maseru
- Postal code: 100
- Opened: 1 January 1872
- Mail Routes from South Africa:
  1. Johannesburg - Maseru
  2. Bloemfontein - Maseru

Indicates rare items

## REFERENCES

- Erasmus, L, "Sending Money Home, South Africa to Sekakes, Lesotho During 1972 and 1973", *The SA Philatelist*, pp 152-155, October 2021
- Harington, JS and McGlashan, ND and Chelkowska, "A Century of migrant labour in the gold mines of South Africa", *The Journal of The South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy*, p 65-71, March 2004.
- *Post Office Bulletin*, No 55(Special), 3 March 1971, Pretoria: Public Relations.
- Scott, AH, *The Cancellations & Postal Markings of Basutoland/Lesotho Post Offices & Their Historical Background*, Sea Point, South Africa: Collectors Mail Auctions (Pty) Ltd, 1980
- *South African Stamp Colour Catalogue*, 36th Ed. 2019 - 2020, Sandhurst: Tracinda Publications Pty Ltd, 2018.

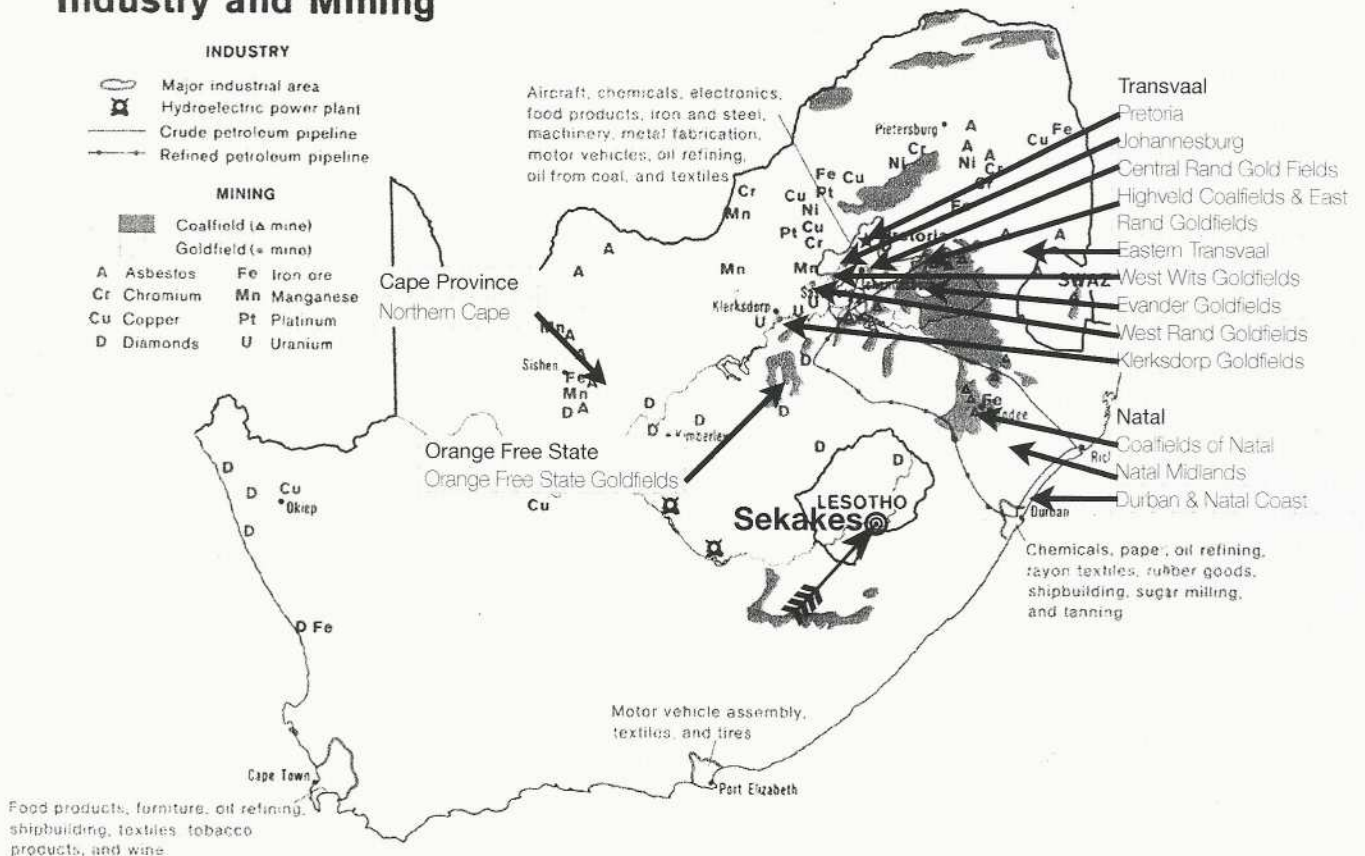


On arrival in Sekakes, letters received most of the time an arrival postmark at the postal agency. In 1973, the canceller issued in 1931 was still in use.

**Most of the covers sent by mineworkers and factory workers are dirty and reflect the harsh and unhygienic conditions that workers endured in 1973. These conditions contributed to the September 1973 mining strikes. An attempt to clean these covers actually would destroy the social and political evidence of that time, so they were not cleaned at all in this exhibit.**

AREAS WHICH ITEMS HAD BEEN SENT FROM

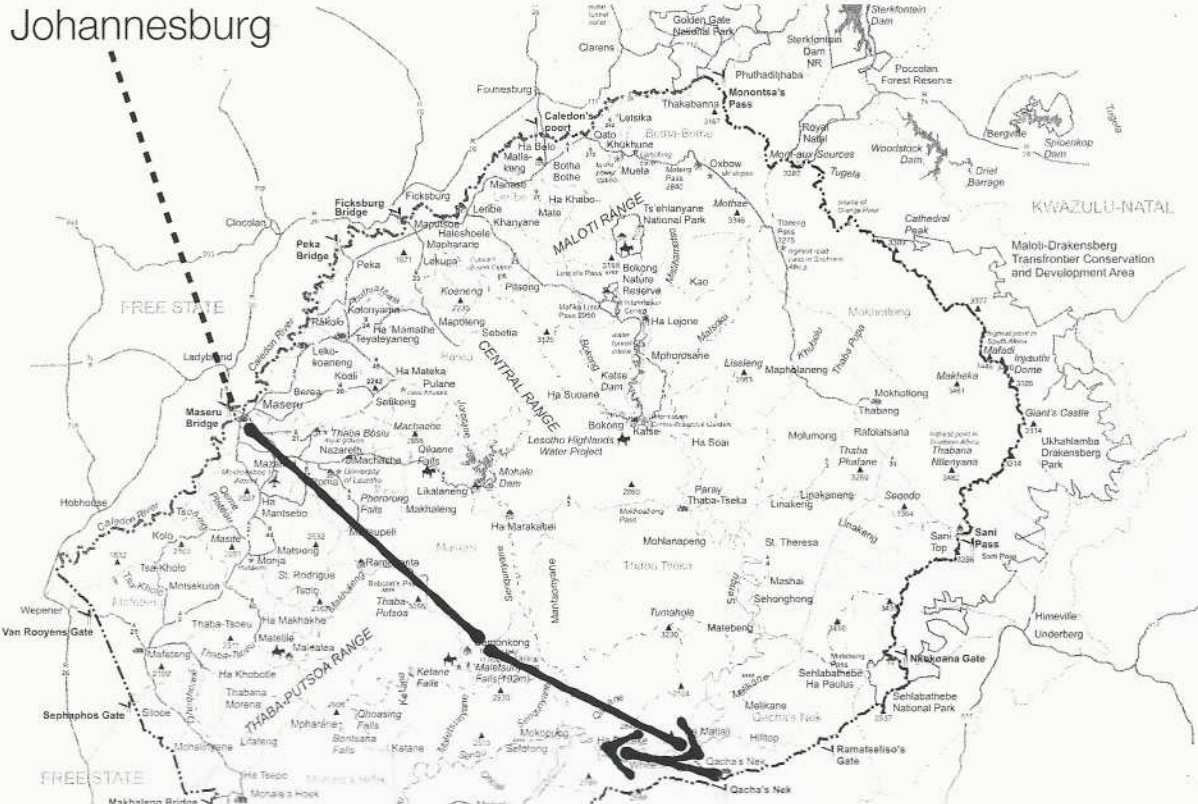
Industry and Mining



**ROUTE 1: JOHANNESBURG MASERU QACHA'S NEKSEKAKES**

The first route on which mail arrived to Maseru from South Africa was by airmail from Johannesburg with South African Airways on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Mail was then flown to Qacha's Nek from Maseru via Semonkong by aeroplane on Wednesdays and Fridays. Twice a week, Sekakes received mail from a private contractor using the bus service via Sehapa from Qacha's Nek.

**From a study of 191 covers sent in 1973, nine were identified that could have been carried on this route. All were flown by airmail at land mail tariff. Estimated maximum of 28 covers where carried in 1973.**



**NATAL**

**NGAGANE**

Registered Mail purple hand stamped block and written no. 01760 on front (scratched out) and back

Delivery 9 days

Amount sent: R15,00

Industry:  
• Coalfields of Natal  
• Kilbarchan Colliery

Sekakes postmark on back

Internal postoffice filing no: 5162



Post Office	Ngagane	Maseru RLS I	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Wednesday	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code		C	A	
Date	10 Jan 1973	15 Jan 1973	17 Jan 1973	19 Jan 1973

Registered Mail Label no. 1747  
 Delivery 12 days  
 Amount sent: R10,00  
 Industry:  
 •Evander Goldfields  
 •Winkelhoek Mines  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 6800



TO/AAN: *6800*  
*RD-00*  
 .....MALI PHOLO MOLEKISANE.....  
 .....MOTSEKACA NA NTQANE.....  
 .....P.O. SEKAKES VIA QACHASNEK.....  
 .....LESOTHO.....

Post Office	Motse-Motse	Maseru RLS II	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Thursday	Monday	Friday	Tuesday
Time Code	A	C	A	
Date	26 April 1973	30 April 1973	4 May 1973	8 May 1973

NORTHLANDS

Registered Mail Label no. 219  
 Delivery 13 days  
 Amount sent: R14,00  
 Industry:  
 •Johannesburg  
 •LTA Diepsloot  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 6802



AAN: TO: *6802*  
 .....Matoebe Lefatle.....  
 .....P.O. 219, Sithaal.....  
 .....P.O. Sekakes.....  
 .....Qacha's Nek, Lesotho.....

Post Office	Northlands Johannesburg 6	Maseru RLS II	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Wednesday	Friday	Friday	Tuesday
Time Code	C	C	A	
Date	25 April 1973	27 April 1973	4 May 1973	8 May 1973

**ROUTE 2: BLOEMFONTEIN MASERU QACHA'S NEK SEKAKES**

With the second route, mail arriving in Maseru from South Africa was from Bloemfontein by train on the rail link from Marseilles over the bridge crossing the Caledon River daily. Mail arrived in Qacha's Nek from Maseru via Semonkong by aeroplane on Wednesdays and Fridays. Twice a week, Sekakes received mail from a private contractor using the bus service via Sehapa from Qacha's Nek. **From a study of 191 covers sent in 1973, three were positively identified to be carried on this route with a Bloemfontein postmark. Estimated maximum of 9 to 10 covers. The rest of the covers arrived on days in Maseru, when airmail was expected.**



**NATAL**

**CORONATION**



Registered Mail Label No. 1171 on back  
 Delivery 10 days  
 Amount sent: R 10,00 on back  
 Industry:  
 • Coalfields of Natal  
 • Hobane No. 2 Mine  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 0941

Post Office	Coronation 2	Vryheid	Bloemfontein 29	Maseru RLS I	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Friday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	C	A	11?M	C	A	
Date	17 July 1973	18 July 1973	20 July 1973	20 July 1973	25 July 1973	27 July 1973



Registered Mail Label no. 7943  
 Delivery 9 days  
 Amount sent: R10,00  
 Industry:  
 • Orange Free State Goldfields  
 • Tweedemyn No.2  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 6635

Post Office	Tweedemyn 1	Bloemfontein 29	Maseru RLS I	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Wednesday	Friday	Saturday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	A	7:00	C	A	
Date	4 April 1973	6 April 1973	7 April 1973	11 April 1973	13 April 1973

TRANSVAAL

BLYVOORUITSIG



Registered Mail Label no. 9115  
 Delivery 7 days  
 Amount sent: R10,00  
 Industry:  
 • West Wits Goldfields  
 • Blyvoor Mine  
 Sekakes postmark on back  
**Without Bloemfontein cancellation**  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 3472

Post Office	Blyvooruitsig	Maseru RLS II	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Friday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	B	C	A	
Date	2 June 1972	6 June 1972	7 June 1972	9 June 1972

PENGE



Registered Mail Label no. 1602  
 Delivery 14 days  
 Amount sent: R20,00  
 Industry:  
 • Eastern Transvaal  
 • Weltevreden Section  
**Without Bloemfontein cancellation**  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 0941

AAN/TO:

*R20-02*

*PELAELO KOLDBE:  
 LUMALUME, SKAKE STORE  
 P.O. QACHA'S NECK  
 LESOTHO*

Post Office	Penge 2	Pretoria GBA 2 RLS	Maseru RLS 3	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Saturday	Saturday	Sunday	Friday	Saturday
Time Code	B	14:30	C	A	
Date	10 Feb 1973	10 Feb 1973	11 Feb 1973	16 Feb 1973	24 Feb 1973

MARIESHAFT



Registered Mail Label no. 9002  
 Delivery 9 days  
 Amount sent: R10,00  
 Industry:  
 • East Rand Goldfields  
 • M.C.M.  
**Without Bloemfontein cancellation**  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 6636

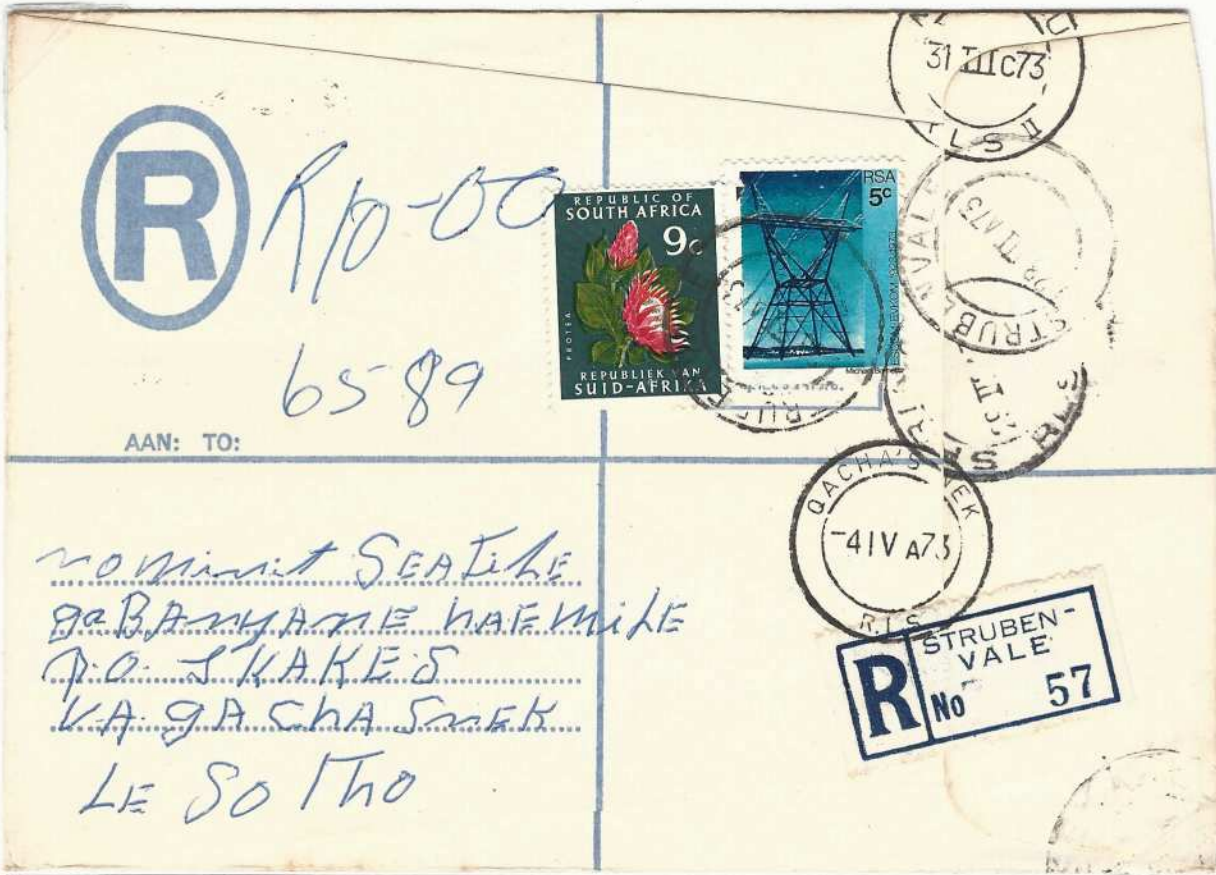
AAN: TO:

*R10-00 6636*

*N. Loukile Sono  
 Qabane Ha Makafu  
 P.O. Sekakes - Qachasnek  
 Lesotho*

Post Office	Marieshaft	Nigel	Maseru RLS II	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	B	B	C	A	
Date	4 April 1973	5 April 1973	7 April 1973	11 April 1973	13 April 1973

STRUBENVALE



Registered Mail Label no. 57  
 Delivery 9 days  
 Amount sent: R10,00  
 Industry:  
 • Highveld Coalfields or East Rand Goldfields  
 • VJPM  
**Without Bloemfontein cancellation**  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 6589

Post Office	Strubensvale	Springs RLS - GBA	Maseru RLS II	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	A	A	A	A	
Date	28 March 1973	29 March 1973	31 March 1973	4 April 1973	6 April 1973

TORNAKA

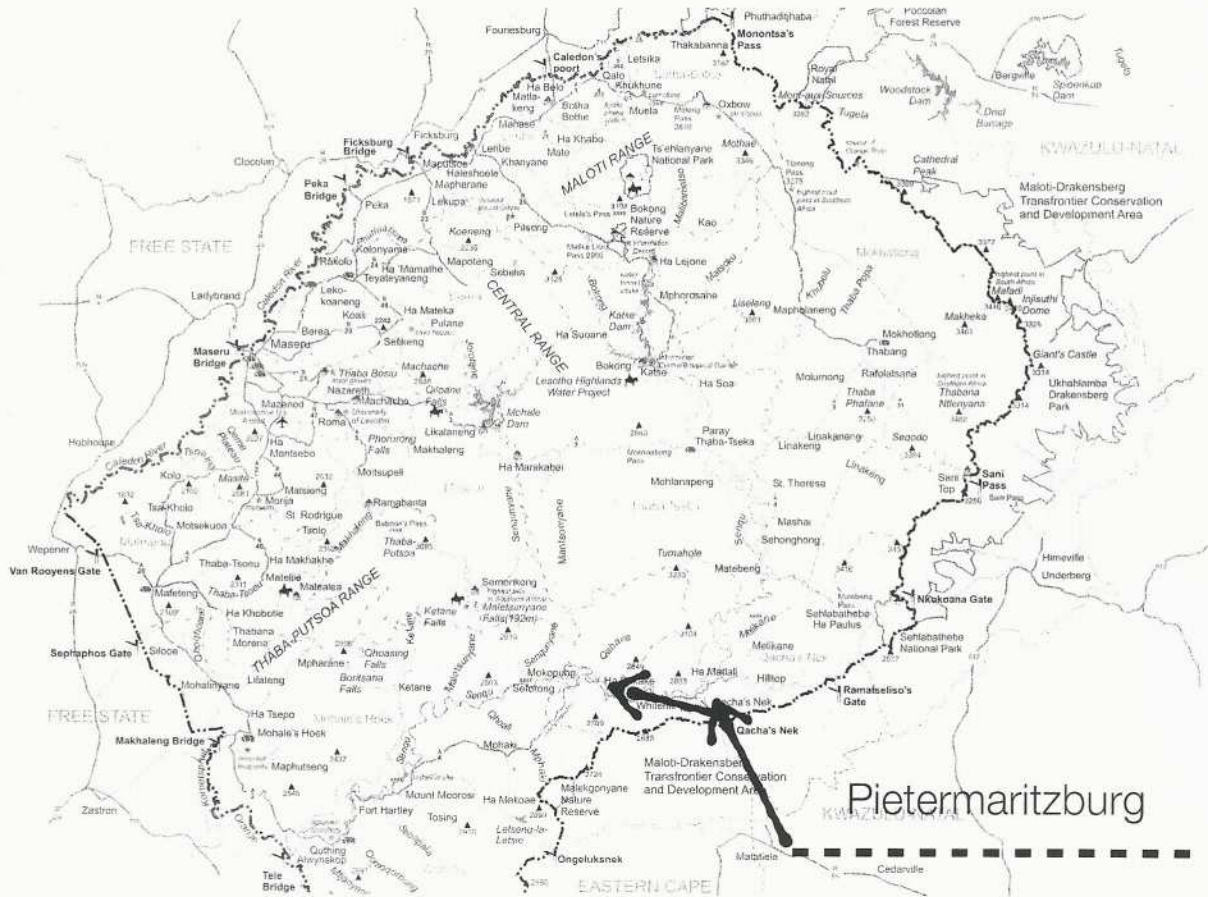


Registered Mail Label no. 2747  
 Delivery 13 days  
 Amount sent: R16,00  
 Industry:  
 • Evander Goldfields  
 • Bracken Mines  
**Without Bloemfontein cancellation**  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 6970

Post Office	TornaKa	Maseru RLS II	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Wednesday	Saturday	Wednesday	Tuesday
Time Code	A	C	A	
Date	16 May 1973	19 May 1973	23 May 1973	29 May 1973

**ROUTE 3: MATATIELEQACHA'S NEKSEKAKE**

The third way mail arrived at Qacha's Nek from South Africa was through Pietermaritzburg and the Matatielie railhead by Newman's bus every day. Twice a week, Sekakes received mail from a private contractor using the bus service through Sehapa from Qacha's Nek.



**NATAL**

**BALLENGEICH**

Registered Mail Pink hand stamped block and written no. 990

Delivery 8 days

Amount sent: R8,00

Industry:  
 • Coalfields of Natal  
 • Natal Cambrian Collieries Ltd

Internal postoffice filing no: 0851



Post Office	Ballengleich 1	Ladysmith Natal	RLS-GBA	Pietermaritzburg	RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek	RLS	Sekakes
Day	Thursday	Saturday	Monday	Monday	Monday	Monday	Friday	Friday
Time Code	A	A	A	A	A	A		
Date	5 Jul 73	7 Jul 73	9 Jul 73	9 Jul 73	9 Jul 73	9 Jul 73	13 Jul 73	13 Jul 73

MTUBATUBA



Registered Mail Label no. 7700

Delivery 6 days

Amount sent: R30,00

Industry:

- Sugarcane
- South African Sugarcane Research Institute

Internal postoffice filing no: 0402

Post Office	Mtubatuba	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBS 94	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Saturday	Monday	Tuesday	Friday
Time Code	A	A	A	
Date	1 Sept 73	3 Sept 73	4 Sept 73	7 Sept 73

MUSGRAVE ROAD DURBAN



Registered Mail Label no. 3847

Delivery 4 days

Amount sent: R20,00

Industry:

- Durban area
- Cannot determine

Latest known use of this Sekakes canceller

Internal postoffice filing no: 2001

Post Office	Musgrave Road Durban I	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	A	A	A	
Date	10 Sept 1973	11 Sept 1973	12 Sept 1973	14 Sept 1973

CAPE PROVINCE

LIME ACRES

Registered Mail Label no. 308

Delivery 10 days

Amount sent: R18,00

Industry:  
 • Northern Cape  
 • Daniëlskuil Cape Blue Asbestos

Internal postoffice filing no: 0890



Post Office	Lime Acres	Kimberley	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Tuesday	Wednesday	Sunday	Monday	Friday
Time Code	A		A	A	
Date	10 Jul 1973	11 Jul 1973	15 Jul 1973	16 Jul 1973	20 Jul 1973

LOHATLHA

Registered Mail Label no. 208

Delivery 10 days

Amount sent: R8,00 on back

Industry:  
 • Northern Cape  
 • SA Manganese LTD

Internal postoffice filing no: 0667



Post Office	Lohatlha	Kimberley	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Saturday	Monday	Wednesday	Friday	Tuesday
Time Code	A	0:00	A	B	
Date	9 June 1973	11 June 1973	13 June 1973	15 June 1973	19 June 1973

EERSTEMYN 1



Registered Mail Label no. 75

Delivery 11 days

Amount sent: R12,00

Industry:  
 • Orange Free State Goldfield  
 • St. Helena Gold Mine No. 4

Internal postoffice filing no: 6700

AAN/TO: *Homandele matla ma*

*Dabaneane Hamuso*  
~~*Gachas Nek B. X*~~  
~~*P.O. Sekakes*~~  
~~*Lesotho*~~



Post Office	Eerstemyn	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Gacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Monday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Time Code	C	A	A	
Date	16 Apr 1973	18 Apr 1973	19 Apr 1973	27 Apr 1973

WELKOM 2



Registered Mail Label no. 3336

Delivery 6 days

Amount sent: R10,00 on back

Industry:  
 • Retail  
 • Orange Free State Goldfields  
 • Fee State Geduld No 1

**Date is wrong for Gacha's Neck**

Internal postoffice filing no: 0968

Internal Welkom postoffice filing no: 654

TO/AAN: *654*

*Miss: Matai... makhethi...*  
*... Ha... Khama Khama... school...*  
*... P.O. Sekakes...*  
*... via Gachas Nek...*  
*Lesotho.*

*0968*



Post Office	Welkom 7	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Gacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Saturday	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	A	A	A	
Date	25 Aug 1973	27 Aug 1973	01 Aug 1973	31 Aug 1973

Registered Mail Label no. 510  
 Note spelling mistake on label  
 Delivery 11 days  
 Amount sent: R20,00  
 Industry:  
 •Orange Free State Goldfields  
 •Western Holdings No. 3  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 0538

Post Office	Waterskag 2	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Gacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Friday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Tuesday
Time Code	A	A	A	
Date	25 May 1973	29 May 1973	30 May 1973	5 June 1973

TRANSVAAL

Registered Mail Label no. 838  
 Delivery 9 days  
 Amount sent: R10,00  
 Industry:  
 •Klerksdorp Goldfields  
 •Cannot determine  
 Internal postoffice filing no: 5463

Post Office	Befula	Stilfontein GBA - RLS	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Gacha's Nek	Sekakes
Day	Thursday	Friday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Saturday
Time Code	A	A	A	A	
Date	15 Feb 1973	16 Feb 1973	20 Feb 1973	21 Feb 1973	24 Feb 1973

DUNNOTTAR 2



Registered Mail Label no. 3058

Delivery 7 days

Amount sent: R10,00

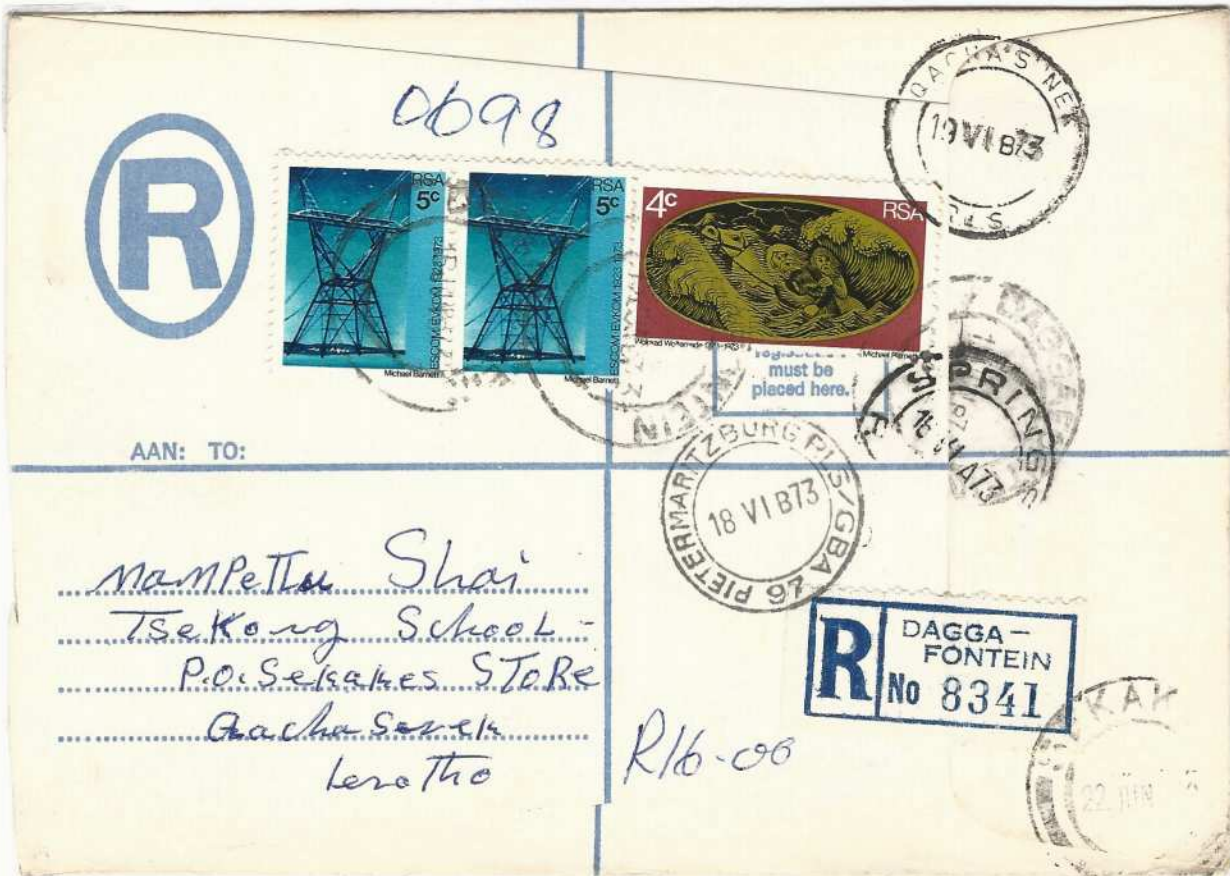
Industry:  
•Highveld Coalfields or East Rand Goldfields  
•Vlakfontein Goldmine Co.

Latest known use of this Sekakes canceller

Internal postoffice filing no: 0473

Post Office	Dunnottar	Springs RLS - GBA	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek	Sekakes
Day	Friday	Friday	Sunday	Tuesday	Friday
Time Code	B	A	A	A	
Date	07 Sept 1973	07 Sept 1973	09 Sept 1973	11 Sept 1973	14 Sept 1973

DAGGAFONTEIN



Registered Mail Label no. 8341

Delivery 7 days

Amount sent: R16,00 on back

Industry:  
•East Rand Goldfields  
•East Daggafontein Mine

Internal postoffice filing no: 0698

Post Office	Daggafontein	Springs RLS	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 97	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Friday	Saturday	Monday	Tuesday	Friday
Time Code	B	A	B	B	
Date	15 Jun 1973	16 Jun 1973	18 Jun 1973	19 Jun 1973	22 Jun 1973

Registered Mail  
Label no. 91

Airmail label

Delivery 9 days

Amount sent:  
R7,00

Industry:  
• Cannot determine  
• Soweto

One of only two known letters with airmail labels, but this cover were carried by surface mail

Internal postoffice filing no: 0394



Post Office	Khotso	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Wednesday	Monday	Monday	Friday
Time Code	B	A	A	
Date	29 August 1973	3 September 1973	3 September 1973	7 September 1973

Registered Mail Label no. 8583

Delivery 8 days

Amount sent:  
R12,00

Industry:  
• Klerksdorp Goldfields  
• Vaal Reefs No. 2

Note the purple stamp of Vaal Reefs Exploration and Mining Co. LTD. "post office" at compound No. 2 - date struck out by pen

Internal postoffice filing no: 0251



Post Office	Vaal Reef	Orkney GBA/RLS	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Thursday	Thursday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday
Time Code	A	A	A	A	
Date	09 Aug 1973	09 Aug 1973	14 Aug 1973	15 Aug 1973	17 Aug 1973

WESTERN LEVELS



Registered Mail Label no. 3507

Delivery 8 days

Amount sent: R10,00

Industry:  
 • West Wits Goldfields  
 • Western Deep Levels No. 2

Note the relieve canceller used in Western Levels

Internal postoffice filing no: 6806

Post Office	Western Levels	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Monday	Friday	Monday	Tuesday
Time Code	B	B	A	
Date	30 April 1973	4 May 1973	7 May 1973	8 May 1973

ZUIPING



Registered Mail Pink hand stamped block and written no. 828

Delivery 11 days

Amount sent: R22,00

Industry:  
 • Klerksdorp Goldfields  
 • Vaal Reefs South.

Internal postoffice filing no: 5257

Post Office	Highgold	Orkney GBA/RLS	Pietermaritzburg RLS/GBA 94	Qacha's Nek RLS	Sekakes
Day	Friday	Saturday	Thursday	Friday	Tuesday
Time Code	A	A	A	A	
Date	19 Jan 1973	20 Jan 1973	25 Jan 1973	26 Jan 1973	30 Jan 1973