

More about **British Guiana Air Mails**

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The British Guiana Philatelic Journal used to be published in June and December each year.

During a recent visit to the library of the Royal Philatelic Society, I came across two neatly bound volumes containing several issues from 1919 to 1931.

And I found the following references to an Air Mail Service.

No. 26 of June 1919 p. 4.

An article reviewing the experimental service parts says *“that the West Indian chain of Islands is particularly adaptable to an Air Service.”*

No. 30 of June 1921, under aerial mails, amongst other things says *The prospects of a British Guiana. West Indies – Great Britian air service are remote without a large subsidy from the British and Colonial Governments. The inauguration of a trial service for a year or two is a matter which should be taken up promptly by the British Guiana and West Indian Governments and merchants, in the present slow and unsatisfactory steamer mail service. The advantages to the colony would be great and widespread and cannot be reckoned in the mere cost of such a service.*

No. 32 of June 1922 under Air Mail describes how Albermail stamp collector under the caption of British Guiana have got hold of a wrong idea with regard to an Air Mail to this colony and the West Indies.

What occurred was that the Government of British Guiana arranged with the Bermuda and West Atlantic Aviation Co., who were engaged for many months in an Aerial Survey of the Oronoco delta in Venezuela, to give a week's demonstration in British Guiana of the possibilities of making a complete aereal survey of the Colony. The seaplane delayed for weeks by rains and winds, eventually made a few trial flights, and in the flight to the hinterland came to grief by striking a submerged rock in attempting to rise. One or two parcels and letters were carried through the courtesy of Capt. Cochrane – Patrick, the aviator, to some officials in the district, but nothing went through the Post Office.

A British Guiana and British West Indies Air Mail is in a very nebulous state; all we have seen of it are schemes on paper.

‘French Guiana’ – In French Guiana aerial transport has been more progressive. Early in 1920 a company named ‘The Transport Aerienade Guyanais’ with two Machines started operations carrying freight and passengers from Cayenne to St. Laurent and to Iuiui, the

gold fields of French Guiana. About a year ago the Company issued stamps to be affixed to all mail carried by aeroplane.

No. 37 December 1925, states that B. Guiana may be having an aerial post of the diamond field before long.

No. 101 June 1931.

Among other things says that '*Curacao to British Guiana*' – *On the 13th May last a first flight despatch from Curacao was received at Georgetown containing 21 letters made up of 9 registered and 12 ordinary articles. No special cachet was applied at Curacao but all the letters were dated on the 7th May, and in all events show proof of hasty preparation. Mail was backstamped "Air Mail G.P.O BRITISH GUIANA 13 MAY 1931" with usual circular dates stamp. The Service which was operated by the Pan American Airways, Inc., was discontinued at the end of June.*

'Salvador, C.A., to British Guiana' – From Salvador, Central America, there was received at Georgetown on the 15th inst. a first flight air mail comprising about 30 pieces. The entire mail had a special cachet applied.

From 1930 onwards reference in mark is made to Vol 31/1 of the PSM Journal, and B. Proud's Postal History of British Air Mails p. 219.