1935 Brussels International Exhibition

This exhibition covered the largest area of any held in Belgium so far, being 105 hectares. It was sited adjacent to the Laeken public park at Heysel, where the exhibition hall (still in use) had been built in 1930 for the Centenary of Belgian Independence. The site was further enlarged for Expo58.

Interestingly, holding such an exhibition in Belgium in 1935 appeared to violate the agreement made at the Convention Relating to International Exhibitions (Paris 1928), which stated that two universal exhibitions - the largest type - could not be held within a decade in the same country. The 1930 Antwerp-Liège exhibition should have meant Belgium was debarred until 1941 from another. Such was the rivalry among Belgian cities that Brussels applied for permission to hold an exhibition in 1935. The Paris based Bureau of International Exhibitions bent to the pressure and Belgium was allowed to hold a universal exhibition. This exception led to the collapse of the agreement less than a decade after it was signed.

A major publicity and selling point, more than any other Belgian Fair, was King Albert being high patron. His very popular presence was everywhere, which gave Belgium a high profile, more so even than the 1930 centenary celebrations. Alas, Albert died in February 1934 during the planning. Thus it was left to his son, Leopold 3, to take over and officiate.

Principal foreign countries were Austria, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and USA. There were nine categories of exhibit from sciences and engineering to clothing, economics and tourism.

The site boasted some striking features, including the Monumental Palace, which contained the bulk of the Belgian exhibits, and the Palace of Art. Both were constructed from permanent materials. Luxurious parks, lakes and gardens were created specially. The architectural effect was art-deco rather than modern, the style of the 1925 Paris exhibition being everywhere. "Old Brussels" was built on the edge of the site and was mediaeval in style and costume.

In the Palace of Art, half was old art and half modern. A stunning display of art from all nations called "Five Centuries of Art, 1400-1900" was a runaway success. In this the modern included French works by Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Derain, Matisse, Picasso, Vlaminck, Maillot etc. This had political importance as the Germans recently had closed the Bauhaus. Britain's selection of art was also surprisingly modern.

Despite the lavishness of the site, Belgian architecture was confused. It was neither art-nouveau nor modern; it took a turn back toward classicism, which caused chaos. It was not until the 1958 Expo that a coherent design returned to architectural and industrial creations.

The Exhibition opened on 27 April and closed on 6 November. Despite problems, twenty six million visitors attended and a profit of some forty five million Belgian francs was made.

Two sets of stamps were issued, the first of 4 stamps on 1 July 1934 to advertise this exhibition, the second of 3 on opening day. The first was heliogravure printed by J. Malvaux, in sheets of 200 stamps of 4 panels (10 x 5 stamps) & p 14 x 13½. It was demonetised after two years on 1 July 36.
Registered double weight letter to UK

Bruxelles Exposition / Brussel Tentoonstelling 1935
special cds dated 13 Aug 35

Postage 1½ Fr (≤ 20 gm)
Additional postage 1 Fr (21 < wt ≤ 40 gm)
Registration 1½ Fr
Labels issued for 1935 exhibition showing 1930 built Heysel pavilion, which was used for this exhibition, for 1958.

Part of sheet of unknown size.
Trilingual cards normally available only in the Cantons of Eupen & Malmédy with Expo mechanical canceller

**Current internal card used 10 October**
with postman's small circular round stamp

**Current external card used locally 29 October**
Registered airmail letter from Brussels to Basel (Bâle)

Brussels Exhibition / office 1-c cds of 18 Aug 1935, 3 pm

Exhibition registration label 664

Postage 1Fr (≤ 20 gm)

Registration 1Fr

Airmail 0.50 Fr (≤ 20 gm)

Overpaid 25c

Reverse (part)

3. Basel 1 / letter acceptance office cds of 20 Aug 35, 8 am

1. Basel airport V cds of 20 Aug 35, 7 am

2. Basel 2 / letter centre V cds of 20 Aug 35, 7 am

1935 Brussels 3b.pub
Letter from Brussels to Stuttgart

**Brussels (QL) mechanical canceller of 30 Oct 35**

Postage abroad 175 Fr (≤ 20 gm)
Two letters with 1934 stamps advertising Brussels 1935

Registered Letter from Antwerp to New York

Antwerp 1 cds of 28 Jan 1935

New York NY Reg’y Div oval ds of 5 Feb (verso)

New York (Sta G) NY registered cds of 6 Feb 1935 (verso)

Postage 1.75 Fr Reg 1.75 Fr

Letter from Wetteren to Norman, USA

Wetteren pépinières - rose-raies boom-en-rosenkwekerijnen slogan cds of 25 July 1934

Postage 1.75 Fr
Airmail letter from Brussels to Sweden

Bruxelles Exposition / Brussel Tentoonstelling /1935 cds of 12 May 1935

Postage abroad 175 Fr (≤ 20 gm)
Airmail 1 Fr (≤ 20 gm)
Airmail private postcard to Asmara, Eritrea

Brussels 1K cds of 2 Oct 1935

Paris R.P.J.Avion cds of 2 Oct 1935

Postage 35c
(Imprimé)
Airmail 2 Fr/5 gm
(Fixed at this rate)

Imperial airways to Khartoum and then local airline from Khartoum to Asmara. 1st flight was 28 Sep. This was the 2nd flight.

Picture postcard to Australia of the Royal Theatre in Brussels

Brussels 1F cds of 16 Oct 34

Postage abroad 1 Fr

From the partial cancel on the LHS and lack of paper damage, it is evident that the 35c stamp was improperly affixed.

Postcard requests a couple of letters be sent on the inaugural 10 Dec 1934 Brisbane-London through flight. These will then be returned.

Card went from downtown Brussels 8-9 am to Paris airport by 3 pm by air.

Slogan says “Gain time replying by air”
Official picture postcard to Czechoslovakia

Special Brussels Expo mechanical canceller of 31 Aug 35
Hradek Kralove arrival cds of 2 Sep

Postage abroad 35c (≤ 5 words text)
Royal Palace in Brussels

Picture postcard to USA

Brussels (QL) mechanical canceller of 30 Sep 35

Postage abroad  1 Fr

Postage abroad  1 Fr
Boulevard du Centenaire (100 Year's Boulevard)

Avenue of the Large Linden tree
Boulevard du Centenaire
Main Boulevard in which the Atomium was built for the 1958 Expo

Picture postcard to Holland

Brussels 1 mechanical canceller of 27 Aug 35 (stamp removed)
Boulevard du Centenaire - view

Official picture postcard to Helsingborg, Sweden

Brussels Expo mechanical canceller of 21 Aug 35
Agriculture Pavilion

Old Brussels Exhibit off Boulevard de Centenaire
Old Brussels re-creation - 1 (a very rare set of prints)

Rue Courbe - Curved Street

The Archdukes' Bellone House
Old Brussels re-creation - 2

Hotel Rubempré, Place de Bailles (Buckets)

Two views of Old Brussels
RHS is R. Senne
Old Brussels re-creation - 3

Artisans' Court

Coudenberg Square
Old Brussels re-creation - 5

Fishmongers' Door

Satyrs' Fountain
Artisan's Court

View the other way
Main Courtyard

1st Fr stamp corresponded with the letter rate to Holland Postcard rate abroad was 1 Fr

Date of 13 December 1935 was after the Expo closed, but the canceller was that used at Expo

A case of using old stock after the event!
Fountain of the Three Virgins
Slogan next to cancel reads “Tourists, visit Parthenay & the Batine”

Postcard to Parthenay (Deux-Sevres) and forwarded to Vichy (Allier)
Vieux Bruxelles - Oud Brussel / 1935 Expo cds of 5 Aug 1935
T added. 35c stamp on card cancelled at Parthenay/Deux-Sevres (cancelling T)
Rate ok for imprimé as ≤ 5 words text.
Paris pavilion

Official picture postcard to Bruges

Brussels Expo special mechanical canceller
14 Aug 35
Postage 10c internally for ≤ 5 words of text
Registered triple weight letter to Berlin

Bruxelles-Brussel 12 relief cds of 13 May 1935

Postage 1 Fr (≤ 20 gm)
Additional postage 2 Fr (40 < wt ≤ 60 gm)
Registration 1 Fr
Val St Lambert glass works pavilion

Map on reverse showing some of the Expo 8layout
Denmark (LHS) & Austria (RHS) pavilions

Egypt's pavilion
Great Britain Pavilion  PPC to Wisconsin, USA

"The Fair is very pretty. They have a train, like the little one in Chicago, that goes all around the grounds...."

Holland pavilion

Corner of the Rosary - in the sunken garden
Catholic Life pavilion

Brussels (Nord) 5F cds of 5 May 35 to Hamburg
Hungarian pavilion

Lighting for the Paris Pavilion
Switzerland pavilion

Netherlands Pavilion
Old Brussels - flour mill

Textiles Pavilion
English pavilion - rear veranda

English pavilion - rear across garden
Lilliputian Village - staffed by children dressed as adults

Postcard with Lilliputian Village cds (2) of 19 May to Brussels
Mail Coach stamps. This set of three stamps was issued on 27 April 1935 to coincide with the opening of the International Fair. The design was from a lithograph print in the Postal Museum in Brussels. Heliogravure printed by J. Malvaux in sheets of 10 stamps (2 x 5), they were perforated 13½ x 14. They were demonetised on 1 July 1936.

Quantities released for sale were: 10+10c olive-black 497,898; 25+25c brown 433,430 and 35+25c green 436,872

10 + 10 c olive-black
25 + 25 c brown
35 + 25 c green
Brussels exhibition cancel on Mail Coach stamps 23 Jul 35

Heysel Centenary pavilion
While the Grand Hotel and Freetown have been deleted in red crayon, there are no instructions as to where the letter was sent. Maybe it was hand delivered to another address in Freetown. An unusual destination.