



MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

News Items

2003.3

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SEPTEMBER 2003

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

JULY - The July meeting was held at Collège du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 2.00 p.m. on Saturday 5th July 2003.

The main item on the agenda – **Trochetia – All you need to know on the National Flower** by Dr A N Maderbokus was not dealt with as the presenter did not prepare his display. The second item **Mauritius Government Railway** by M Antoine was enhanced with charts and maps received from Stephen Spark of London. Colour printouts, provided by Gaetan Bouchet of I.B.L., of a visit to the former Port Louis Railway Goods Shed (and former Tuna Canning Factory) by Harry Gaspard, a retired Mauritius Railways locomotive fitter, Mico Antoine and Gaetan Bouchet showed the demolition works underway on the shed premises with a view to returning the building to its original state. Harry Gaspard was at the meeting and he gave a short talk on his railway career. Helen Morgan from Australia attended the July meeting. She told us about Postal Clerk Mootosamy Appavou and the research she intended to do on this personality and on Stuart-Brownrigg as well as on Lady Gomm with a view to publishing a book about this particular period of Mauritian postal history.

The newly introduced Barcode Label on several foreign registered items were shown and explained.

Attendance was very good. Sales were satisfactory with many items on offer from the Bid Board and Spot Auction being snapped up.

AUGUST - The August meeting was held on Saturday 2nd August at 2 p.m. at Collège du St Esprit.

Mico Antoine gave a talk on “**The Challenge of Collecting Used Stamps**”. He drew members’ attention to the problems faced by those whose used stamp collections distinguish them as serious philatelists from those who simply mount mint stamps in their albums. Collectors were put on guard against cancelling their sets with special cds such as those in use at the Philatelic Bureau and the Postal Museum as well as against wavy lines cancels and cancelling machine obliterations. The most preferred and appreciated used stamps are those in very good condition cancelled partially with the postmark at one of the bottom corners leaving the rest of the stamp clear, the partial postmark identifying the post office and the postmark struck with either the mails or counter datestamps. Perfect examples of used stamps were displayed. Stamps on cover or piece were not included in this talk.

Green Labels, the Customs declaration label and the regulations governing its use was the second item on the afternoon’s agenda. One particular member had raised the alarm as his packets were being systematically detained by the Customs Department. The consensus was that someone in the Customs Department does not like the face or attitude of the member whose packages were being systematically detained.

Attendance continues to be on the high side and sales were very good. Many interesting items were offered in the Bid Board, the Spot Auction and the Purchase List.

Join the MPS News Group at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mauritius_philatelic_society

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SEPTEMBER – The September meeting was held at the usual venue and at the usual time on Saturday 6th.

Randhir Mungra put up a display of inland commercial registered covers including some very nice material from Rodrigues. He explained how he got into this aspect of collecting, something he knew absolutely nothing about until he joined the Society.

Other matters discussed were the latest development at the Postal Services, Government Free Frankings and the Presidential Wedding Invitations and Thank Yous. The “Anniversaries and Events” set of stamps released on August 20th were shown and relevant information shared.

H. Ramcharitur, President of Union of Post Office Workers Branch No. 1, was the special guest of this meeting. He spoke on the future of the Postal Services. A grim future unfortunately and some startling revelations and figures. H Ramcharitur has also bravely led the fight to save the Port Louis Post Office building with very little support from the many NGOs and supposedly concerned civil organisations. He thanked the Society for its stand, support and for the invitation to address the members.

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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Monthly Management Committee meetings were held at 1.00 p.m. on Saturdays 12th July, 9th August and 13th September at the residence of the President at 88 Club Road, Vacoas.

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MEMBERSHIP

The following have joined the Society during the period July-September:

Dr Tamraize HUSNOO – Quatre Bornes
Willem HERBST – Floreal and South Africa

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VISITORS TO MAURITIUS

Overseas members who visited us during the quarter under review include:

Markku HARKONEN of Norway who was here in June with his wife Calina on the occasion of their Silver Wedding Anniversary

Helen MORGAN from Australia was here during the months of July and August. She attended the July and August meetings, met some members of the Committee on several occasions and did lots of research on certain aspects of the postal history of Mauritius.

David GIBBON and his wife Carol were here for two weeks in the second half of August after visiting Reunion and Rodrigues. They returned to the UK at the beginning of September.

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2002 YEAR PACK

The Mauritius Post Ltd issued an attractive year pack for year 2002, the last year pack having been produced in 1994. The year pack is on sale at Rs 200 and the stamps and a souvenir sheet have a face value of Rs 120. 1000 year packs were produced.

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GOVERNMENT MAIL – FREE FRANKING PRIVILEGE

Free Franking Privilege enjoyed by Government Departments and Ministries was withdrawn as from 1st August 2003. The new system of postage caused some problems at its introduction before procedures were straightened out. This gave rise to some Government Departments using postage stamps on mail before the 'Postage Due Invoice' listing was adopted by all Government Departments and Ministries.

Free Franking Privilege still exists for certain organisations but the whole system is under review as it is one of the most abused and misused privileges in Mauritius. Some NGOs, several socio-cultural organisations and most religious bodies will have their free franking privilege reassessed.

The 'Postage Due Invoice' is an A4 schedule of items handed over to a Postal Officer – ordinary inland mail, registered mail, express delivery letters and other items. The form, in triplicate, serially numbered, bears the name and signature of the authorised (Government) officer and the seal of the Ministry/Department. The 'Postage Due Invoice' is 'checked and found correct' by the Postmaster and the dues are collected from the Ministries/Departments through the Ministry of Finance.

The 'temporary measure' will be phased out as Ministries/Departments acquire Franking Meter Machines. Some interesting 'returned-for-postage' covers, official covers with postage stamps affixed (e.g. Income Tax Returns free return postage) and other items have turned up during this transition period.

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STAMPS

ANNIVERSARIES AND EVENTS

A set of four special stamps featuring four separate "Anniversaries and Events" was released on Wednesday 20th August 2003.

The stamps commemorate:

- Rs 2 6th Indian Ocean Games – Mauritius – 2003
- Rs 6 The Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture – 1853
- Rs 9 Visit of Abbé de la Caille – 1753
- Rs 10 Mauritius Sugar Industry Research Institute – 1953

The stamps were designed by Derek Miller and printed by BDT International Ltd, Ireland. Apparently the Mauritian designer designed the "reference material" only. (See News Items 2003.2)

The Official First Day Cover was priced at Rs 35.

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NEXT STAMP ISSUE

A set of four special stamps is scheduled for December 2003. The stamps are to feature:

- Donjon St Louis
- Fort Adelaide
- Martello Tower
- Battery of Pointe du Diable

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OOPS

None of the Trochetia stamps of June have the year imprint 2003 in the bottom (white) stamp margin, nor do the Anniversaries and Events set of August have the year imprint 2003 on any of the four stamps even if these stamps do not have white margins. The Rs 2 stamp where the year 2003 appears refer to the year of the Island Games. Did you notice this before you read these lines? Watch the Fortifications set of 10th December 2003.

BANKING SERVICES AT POST OFFICES

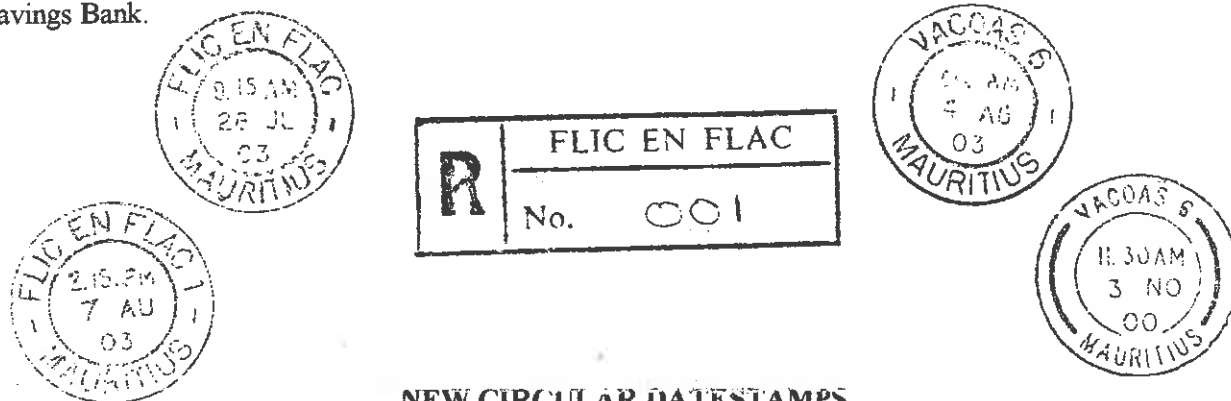
The transfer of the business of the Post Office Savings Bank to The Mauritius Post and Cooperative Bank Ltd has led to the re-organisation of the banking services offered by the Postal Services Division. In a press notice dated 8th July the bank's customers and the public were informed that Savings, Current Accounts, Fixed Deposits and Application for Advance, etc were available at fifty Post Offices. The hours of business were Monday to Friday: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

1. Beau Bassin	14. Rose Belle	27. Plaine Magnien	40. Bon Accueil
2. Central Flacq	15. Rose Hill	28. P Louis Eastern	41. Cap Malheureux
3. Curepipe	16. Triolet	29. P. Louis Western	42. Grand Bois
4. Eau Coulée	17. Vacoas	30. Quartier Militaire	43. Lallmatie
5. Forest Side	18. Bambous	31. Réduit	44. L'Aventure
6. Goodlands	19. Bel Air	32. Riv des Anguilles	45. L'Escalier
7. Grand Baie	20. Chemin Grenier	33. St Pierre	46. New Grove
8. Mahébourg	21. Floréal	34. Solférino	47. Nouvelle France
9. Phoenix	22. Moka	35. Souillac	48. P. des Papayes
10. P Louis Centre	23. Mt. Blanche	36. Stanley	49. St J. d'Hotman
11. PL GPO Counter	24. Mt. Longue	37. Terre Rouge	50. Surinam
12. Quatre Bornes	25. Pamplemousses	38. Black River	
13. Riv. Du Rempart	26. Piton	39. Bois Chéri	

FLIC EN FLAC POST OFFICE

A press notice dated 23rd July 2003 from Post Office Headquarters, Port Louis informed the public of the opening of a new Post Office at Flic en Flac on 28th July 2003. The new Post Office is situated on the Coastal Road near the Police Station.

It provides the full range of postal transactions, normally available at any standard Post Office including Savings Bank.



NEW CIRCULAR DATESTAMPS

The two double circle circular datestamps in use at Flic en Flac are new types of cancelling devices manufactured in Mauritius by Metal Cast Ltd. These new devices will be introduced gradually as the need for new cancellers arise. Strikes of the new cancellers have also been seen from Vacoas and Goodlands and it is believed some thirty of these new cds have been produced.

N.B. There are now two VACOAS 6 double circle circular datestamps in use at Vacoas, one the "old" type D the other the "new" Metal Cast type D; someone can't count.

The Mauritius Philatelic Society, PO Box 89, Quatre Bornes, MAURITIUS

Edited by Mico W Antoine.

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THOSE MISSING YEARS

Remember "Those Missing Years" on the Rs 9 value (SG 1047) of the "Famous Mauritians" (Personalities) set issued on 13th December 2000? In News Bulletin No. 18 we asked our members if anyone knew the exact date of Anjalay Coopen's birth. Nobody knew because nobody told us they knew.

In August Pyneesamy Padayachy, a local researcher, released the following particulars as recorded on her (Anjalay Coopen's) death certificate.

Surname: Pavatdram
Name: Soondrom
Age: 32
Place of death: Belle Vue Harel Camp
Date of death: 27.09.43

He also disclosed the following as recorded on her birth certificate.

Surname: Pavattan
Name: Soondrun
Place of birth: Esperance Estate
Date of birth: 17 February 1911

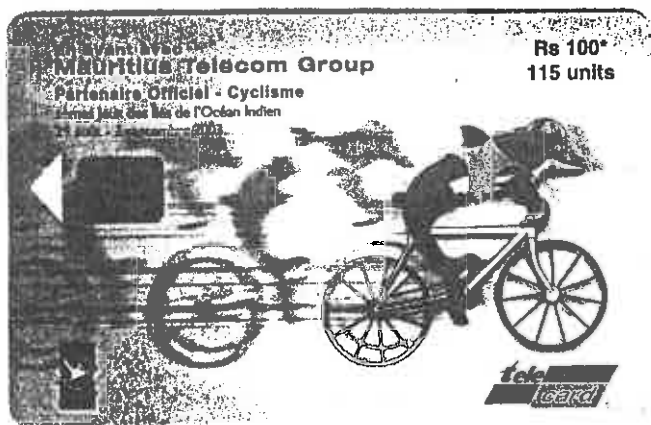
Now we know that Anjalay Coopen was born Soondrun Pavattan, died Soondrom Pavatdram and was 32 years old. Any wiser?

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JIOI

The Mauritius Post Ltd opened a temporary post office in the Games Village at Ebène during the duration of the Island Games, including Sundays. A Rose Hill circular datestamp and a Rose Hill registration handstamp were used. A special cachet reading in five lines /6eme JEUX DES ILES/ De L'OCEAN INDIEN/ 29 août - 7 sept 2003/ Village des Jeux/ Ebène - Maurice/ was applied to items posted at the Village Post Office. Services including sales of stamps and philatelic items (FDCs, Stamp Postcards, 2002 Year Packs) and local and foreign registration service.

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6eme JEUX DES ILES
DE L'OCEAN INDIEN
29 août - 7 sept 2003
Village des Jeux
Ebène - Maurice

THE PRESS

<i>Le Défi Plus</i>	05.07.2003	Un exercice de promotion est source de frustration.
<i>L'express</i>	27.07.2003	Lutchmenarraidoo pourrait quitter la poste.
<i>L'express</i>	28.07.2003	Le bureau de poste opérationnel.
<i>L'express</i>	02.08.2003	Un grave conflit entre direction et personnel secoue la poste.
<i>Le Défi Plus</i>	02.08.2003	Cinq cadres démissionnent du syndicat.
<i>L'express</i>	12.08.2003	La poste célèbre les JIOI.
<i>L'express</i>	16.08.2003	Début satisfaisant pour la MPCB.
<i>Le Mauricien</i>	16.08.2003	Le timbre-poste des JIOI émis le 20.
<i>Le Défi Plus</i>	16.08.2003	La Poste Centrale émet quatre nouveaux timbres.
<i>Le Défi Plus</i>	16.08.2003	La poste a ses limites.
<i>L'express</i>	21.08.2003	Dépôt de Rs 1000 pour la gazette.
<i>Le Mauricien</i>	26.08.2003	Kishore Pertab à la présidence.
<i>L'express</i>	26.08.2003	Kris Lutchmeenaraidoo se retire de la poste.
<i>Le Défi Plus</i>	13.09.2003	Menaces de licenciement.
<i>Le Défi Plus</i>	13.09.2003	Les employés refusent d'intégrer la <i>Mauritius Post Ltd</i> .
<i>Le Mauricien</i>	13.09.2003	Mauritius Post Ltd: la modernisation enclenchée.
<i>L'express</i>	18.09.2003	Codes barres à la place de timbres.
<i>L'express</i>	18.09.2003	Kris Lutchmeenaraidoo ex-Chairman de la <i>Mauritius Post Ltd</i> .
<i>Sunday Vani</i>	21.09.2003	Ne détruisez pas le vieux monument de la poste centrale.
<i>Sunday Vani</i>	21.09.2003	Le monument de la Poste centrale devient un simple centre culturel.
<i>Sunday Vani</i>	21.09.2003	Reproduction of Yvan Martial's article from 'Business Magazine' of 25 September 2002.
<i>L'express</i>	25.09.2003	Mauripost.net.Ltd se lance dans l'Internet.

Le bulletin d'Information de La Mauritius Post Ltd

The first bulletin of The Mauritius Post Ltd, eight glossy pages, all in French, numbered *N. 1 Septembre 2003* contains an Editorial, Messages from the Minister, the Chairmen (the old and the new one) and the Postmaster General and five pages on the development of the Postal Services. Three of the five pages on development list fifteen separate realisations of the last few months. *Projets réalisés ou en cours de réalisation* make interesting reading – especially the unrealised and the unrealisable *réalisations*.

MAURITIUS TELECOM PHONECARDS

6eme Jeux des Iles de l'Océan Indien

A 115 units Smart Card featuring "Momo", (the dolphin) the official mascot of the *6ème Jeux des Iles de l'Océan Indien*, zipping along on his bicycle was released in August to mark the Inter Island Games held from 29th August to 7th September 2003. The Mauritius Telecom Group was the *Partenaire Officiel - Cyclisme*. The price of the card is Rs 100 plus VAT. 50,000 units were produced and they bear the manufacture date of August 2003.

Chamarel Waterfalls

Another batch of the Chamarel Waterfalls Smart Cards bearing the manufacturing date of July 2003 were put on sale as from September. The new card is of 55 units; is priced at Rs 50 plus VAT, the same price as the first batch of cards of April 2003. 50 000 units were produced. The new card carries the scenic view as on the old card but is of a less detailed hazy close up view of the falls. Other differences from the older card are the white arrow is larger, a new logo not on the older card has been added and the card has a white border. On verso the cobalt blue of the text area is darker, the text itself is in white (black on the old card) and the card has a white border on top, bottom and on the left.