

MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

News Items 2006.1

P.O. Box 89 Quatre Bornes Mauritius

MARCH 2006

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

JANUARY – The Management Committee decided at its December 2005 meeting that the Society meeting of January 2006 would not be held as many members of the Committee would be either out of Mauritius or otherwise committed – a well-earned rest for all our members too.

FEBRUARY – The February monthly meeting was held at Collège du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 2 p.m. on Saturday 4th February.

The agenda was composed of four items:

(1) A complete review of the Stamps of 2005 – All aspects (2) Postal Markings of 2005 – Postal History 2005 (3) Aerophilately – Quirin's FFC ex Vaughan (4) Philatelic News Worldwide

The first, second and fourth items concerned topics that had already been dealt with during the year as they occurred. These were now collated and presented chronologically and absolutely. The aerophilatelic item was a First Flight Cover made by Michel Quirin, Postal Officer, and carried on the return flight of the *Roland Garros* from Mauritius to a false London address in 1937. This highly desirable cover from Dr Reginald Edward Vaughan's collection is today owned by the Mauritius Institute. Mico Antoine presented scanned imageries of the cover (a couple of members thought the real cover was on show) together with the write-up he had done on behalf of the Institute. 27 members attended the meeting.

MARCH – The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 11th March at 2 p.m. at Collège du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes. Originally scheduled for 4th March the AGM was not held on the appointed date because of a Class II cyclone warning having been proclaimed when *Diwa* was evolving north-west of the island over the Indian Ocean. Cyclonic conditions did not prevail over Mauritius on that day.

The quorum was assured with 22 members in attendance. The agenda was:

(a) Approval of the Minutes of 2005 AGM (b) Report of the President for the Year 2005 (c) Approval of the Accounts ending 31st December 2005 (d) Approval of the Budget for 2006 (e) Election of Committee Members and Office Bearers for the year 2006 (f) Appointment of the Auditor for the Year 2006 (g) Any Other Business.

All the items were presented and approved in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Society. Note was taken of a very successful year; a net increase in membership, an exhibition of the highest standard, good exposure outside Mauritius, very good attendance at the monthly meetings, well supported Society activities and other positive achievements that enhanced the profile of the Society. The success was attributed to the Management Committee and the members.

Elected to the Management Committee for Year 2006 were:

Patrick Kwan Cheung – President	Indradev Curpen – Member
Jean Auguste – Vice President	A Nasser Maderbokus – Member
Judex Adrien – Treasurer	Soorooj Ramdewor – Member
Vicky Cushmajee – Vice Treasurer	
Mico Antoine – Secretary	
Gaëtan Bouchet – Assistant Secretary	

Mico Antoine put up a supporting display of miscellaneous philatelic material. News Items 2005.4 of December 2005 was distributed.

MONTHLY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Monthly Management Committee meetings were held on Saturdays 14th January, 4th February and 11th March at 1 p.m. at Collège du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes.

The March meeting scheduled for 4th March was not held as nobody from the Committee turned up when cyclonic conditions were not prevailing over Mauritius despite the attendant being on duty after having made all the necessary arrangements. He at least turned up!

POST OFFICES

WATERFRONT POST OFFICE

Counter services were “re-opened” with effect from 25th January 2006 in “the historical stone Post Office building at Caudan, Port Louis under the name of Waterfront Post Office” (*ex Circular Note No 02/2006*)

The standard range of normal counter services (excluding some new non-postal business) are provided at the Waterfront Post Office located in “*La Poste Centrale*” sited off Quay Street, Port Louis and **not** at Caudan. Caudan Waterfront is the privately owned region of the waterfront and Port Louis Waterfront is the state owned region of the waterfront.

VACOAS POST OFFICE

The counter service of Vacoas Post Office was transferred back to “Maison des Loisirs” from Jhugroo Bros Building, St Paul Street, Vacoas on 13th February 2006 thus terminating an abusive and wasteful move motivated by a political decision of 2003. Then, the counter service of Vacoas Post Office was transferred **from** “Maison des Loisirs” **to** Jhugroo Bros Building on 2nd June 2003 at a very high monthly rental charge.

The two sites are almost opposite each other on either side of St Paul Street. If one threw a stone from either building the stone would hit the other building.

The furniture, fixtures and fittings ripped from the Jhugroo Bros building (Vacoas) are currently stored in “*La Poste Centrale*” (Port Louis) – in the empty main hall!

[One Jhugroo brother sat on the Government bench in the Mauritian National Assembly in 2003. In 2006 he still sits in the National Assembly but on the opposition bench – this, of course, has absolutely nothing to do with the **to** and **from** of the counter service of the Vacoas Post Office].

STAMP PROGRAMME 2006

The official and provisional stamp programme of the Postal Services Division of Mauritius Post Ltd for 2006 is made up of five separate "commemorative" issues. These are: -

- Bicentenary of Mahébourg – four stamps, one souvenir sheet, five stamp postcards and one FDC, date of release 4th February 2006
- Birth Centenary of Basdeo Bissoondoyal – one stamp and one FDC, date of release 15th April 2006
- Ecology – four stamps and one FDC, date of release 5th June 2006
- Non-marine Crabs – four stamps, one souvenir sheet and one FDC, date of release 9th October 2006
- Traditional Games – four stamps and one FDC, date of release 15th December 2006

Further details of the five sets of stamps will be published in the **News Items** only after the stamps have been released.

STAMPS

Bicentenary of Mahebourg 1806 - 2006

The **Bicentenary of Mahébourg 1806-2006** (the title on every stamp) commemorative set of four stamps was released on Saturday 4th February 2006. The stamps depict:

Rs2 The Market
Rs7 Regattas

Rs8 Le Lavoir
Rs16 Pointe des Régates

A souvenir sheet bearing two values of Rs16 portray Mahé de La Bourdonnais (full portrait) and Decaën (head and shoulders) with his head twisted out of position. A set of five postcards replicating the subjects on the stamps and the s/s were also issued and priced at Rs5 each card. The locally produced First Day Cover illustrated with "extracts" of a plan of the period and a modern day plastic framed magnifier is cacheted with the head of Labourdonnais (another way to spell his name) and priced at Rs60 per unit. The stamps, souvenir sheet and postcards were produced through the Crown Agents and printed by BDT International Security Printing Ltd. The design and photography are claimed by and attributed to a graphic designer and an amateur photographer – both employed by Mauritius Postal Services.

MAURITIAN "BLUE PENNY" NONSENSE

Another "Blue Penny" has been added to the list of Mauritius Blue Pennies, namely the "Blue Penny Café" of the Belle Mare Plage – The Resort – Hotel (*See News Items 2004.4 of December 2004 for other "Blue Pennies"*).

SPECIAL COVERS

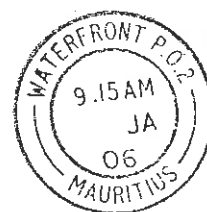
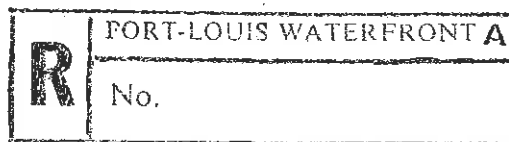
Waterfront Post Office

An "Official Special Cover" was put on sale by the Postal Services on the occasion of the "Opening of Waterfront Post Office Port Louis" on 25th January 2006. Franked with the Rs2 and the Rs7 values of the 2005 **Postal Services** commemoratives the cover is illustrated with "the General Post Office Building in a coloured stamp shape ... an automated counter service and sorting of mail respectively" (sic). The stamps are cancelled with a single strike of the Waterfront P.O. at top, Mauritius at base and two lines at sides type D standard double circle circular datestamp at 9.15 am on 25 JA 06.

The data card titled "Waterfront Post Office (ex General Post Office)" contains some superficial information. 1200 covers were produced and were priced at Rs30 per unit.



PORT-LOUIS WATERFRONT



[Three double circle cds are in use at the new post office one without a numeral and two with numerals – 1 and 2 respectively]

Life Insurance Corporation of India

On the occasion of its Golden Jubilee Year, the Life Insurance Corporation of India prepared a Special Commemorative Cover. The cover is franked with three low values of three different commemoratives (40c Inland Transport, 60c Petits Métiers and Rs2 Vagrant Depot) cancelled with a Port Louis Mauritius type D standard double circle circular datestamp on 2nd March 2006.

On verso the cover bears the logo of the Corporation and some slogans; on recto the Company's emblem, address and the logo of the Golden Jubilee. 500 covers were produced and were distributed within Mauritius as well as abroad.

STAMP BOOKLETS

With a view to expanding their postal products the Mauritius Postal Services launched a new product on a pilot project at two postal outlets and in several supermarket chains. The new product is dubbed "**Stamp Packs with R2 and R7 stamps respectively**". The launching was made on 25th October 2005 with specific instructions to "target customers". The Rs2.00 booklet contains 10 x Rs2 stamps "postage of the first 50g" and the Rs7.00 booklet 10 x Rs7 stamps "for overseas postage of postcards max. size 140 x 90mm". The Booklets are simple 6cm high x 18cm long folded cards containing 10 stamps torn out from normal sheets of the current Fishes definitive. Four different Rs2 "stamps pack" covers are known to have been produced but only one type illustrated with a simulated computer keyboard has been released. Only one type of the Rs7 stamp booklet illustrated with the Rivière Noire Post Office is known to have been produced.

The pilot project is just that – a pilot project. The Rs2 and Rs7 values of the Fishes definitive are in short supply, with no new printings planned ... because a new definitive is envisaged for 2007. The new product known as **Stamp Booklets** worldwide are branded and marketed as **Stamp Packs** in Mauritius; an indication of the philatelic knowledge of those aiming at targets!

THE PRESS

L'express	2.1.2006	Teeluckparsad Callychurn une vie exemplaire (II)
Le Matinal	23.1.2006	L'avenir de la poste est dans la modernisation
Le Mauricien	24.1.2006	Le Waterfront Post Office opérationnel
Week-end	5.2.2006	Sous le signe du bicentenaire de Mahébourg
Le Matinal	7.2.2006	Savons-nous encore faire des timbres ?
Le Matinal	8.2.2006	La Mauritius Post célèbre le bicentenaire de Mahébourg
Le Matinal	6.3.2006	Seeking first class return ? Try stamps
Financial News	17.3.2006	Postal workers want their bank back

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Edited by **Mico W Antoine**

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