



NEWS ITEMS 2007.4

The Journal of the Mauritius Philatelic Society

P.O. Box 89 - Quatre Bornes - Mauritius - Indian Ocean

DECEMBER 2007

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

OCTOBER – The October meeting was held at Collège du Saint Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 2 p.m. on Saturday 6th October.

The Members' Display attracted four participants only: Soorooj Ramdewor showed stamps and covers of Two Kingdoms – Nepal and Bhutan. Several of the Nepalese items were acquired during his visit to the country early in 2007. Judex Adrien showed several personalised covers on the Council of the Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA) meeting held in Mauritius during the month. [He had also exhibited 18 50x60 cm panes of covers, prepared over the years on the Anglican Church in Mauritius, at the Vacoas Anglican Church House, St Paul Road on 5th and 6th October 2007 with the support of the Society]. Patrick Kwan showed 12 panes of some excellent material reproduced in his "Mauritius Philatelic Mail Postmarks, Postal Stationery and Covers as a Thematic" pamphlet and Mico Antoine showed a wide range of recent commercial covers of Mauritius.

Miscellaneous Mauritian Material by Mico Antoine covered several aspects of Mauritian philately such as early inland mail, recent cacheted maritime covers including naval visits by the French Navy to Port Louis and 1950s First Flight Covers into and out of Mauritius. Also included were some postal stationery, postcards, postal markings and a range of aerogrammes.

The latest from the Notice Board covered local and overseas news on philately collated by the few usual regular contributors.

20 members were in attendance and lots from the Bid Board and covers and stamps from the Purchase List sold well.

NOVEMBER: The November meeting was held at Collège du Saint Esprit at the usual time on Saturday 3rd November.

Three items were on the agenda: · Fundamentals of Mauritian Philately · The UPU Stamp of 9th October 2007 · A Break Down of Mails.

The Fundamentals, in the main, a refresher course on collecting Mauritius was presented on the request of several members for the benefit of the Society's newer adherents. The topics covered such areas as sheet composition, catalogue prices and the local market, varieties, fiscals, commercial covers, Mauritius Post Ltd, the 2007 stamp programme and several other aspects of Mauritius.

The 9th October UPU Rs50 single stamp "set" and its FDC was discussed – and it was observed that the absence of an inland rate does nothing for the local promotion of the stamp, that the design attributed to a graphic artist cum "stamp designer" employed by the Postal Services leaves far too much to be desired, that the portrayal of easily identifiable officers and employees of Mauritius Post is an unwelcome feature, that acknowledgements to senior managers of the organisation on the data card of the FDC is most unfitting and belittling and that this poorly conceived and "promoted" stamp does nothing to enhance the status of

Mauritian philately; on the contrary....

The detailed analysis of over 600 inland commercial covers, handled by Mico Antoine during August and September 2007 from two Port Louis sources was presented to the members. The breakdown of the 600 covers into ordinary and registered covers with stamps, the same with *WebRiposte* labels and with metermarks, official paid frankings, free frankings, messenger delivery, office of posting lists and incoming covers from Rodrigues were tabulated and many of the items were shown including very desirable Mobile Post Office and Mauritius Society for the Deaf items.

The percentages of the mails under six main headings and another six sub-headings were analysed. The study showed that postage stamps are used on over 50% of inland mail, some 15% are posted at counters with *WebRiposte* labels, 30% are metermarked commercial covers and some 5% are mailed under other regimes.

An unscheduled topic was added to the afternoon's agenda, namely some colour photocopies of 10 album leaves from the collection of David Gibbon, Chairman of the Indian Ocean Study Circle, UK. These were sent to Mico Antoine for editing and comments however since several of the pieces were exhibition class material the subject was shared with the members of the Society.

Patrick Kwan's "Mauritius Philatelic Mail Postmarks, Postal Stationery and Covers as a Thematic" 12-page pamphlet was put on sale and promptly sold out. Sales from the Bid Board and Purchase List were very good. 26 members and 1 visitor attended the November meeting which ended much later than usual.

DECEMBER – The last Society meeting of year 2007 was held at Collège du Saint Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 2 p.m. on Saturday 1st December.

Only one item was on the agenda. Dr A.N. Maderbokus' presentation of many aspects of philately with items from his collection. Doc used up four of the large boards, units 2 to 5, to spread out the material he had brought along and he began at the beginning from early letter carriers, Roland Hill, the Penny Black and on to Mauritius the 5th country in the world to issue postage stamps. A brief history of Joseph Osmond Barnard, the primitives (a word he doesn't really like to use) the "Post Office", the "Post Pairs" and other locally printed classics, the Britannias, Perkins Bacon and Co and the Crown Agents, the Queen's Head, the King's Heads, the George VI pictorials and the Elizabethans – pre and post independence, errors and varieties, finally ending with today's postal history.

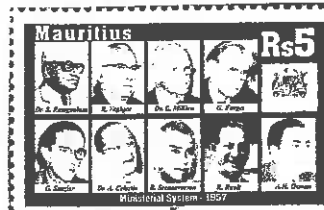
Every subject touched was supported with either illustrations or the real thing including some very nice primitives – one of which was a very rare Dardenne and a good range of several Barnard's Post Paid impressions; postal stationery UPU postcards, revenues, fiscals, postal receipts, labels, 1950s stamp booklets and the recent (see News Items 2007.3) "Stamp Packs". Postage Due covers of the 1980s and other philatelic paraphernalia added much to a very wide and truly interesting presentation.

The Notice Board was well garnished with some 2007 issues from several countries; the provisional and unofficial 2008 stamp programme was disclosed, Steve Pendleton's "Iles Eparses" 24-page monograph was presented and note was taken of the most expensive stamp in the world at December 2007, the yellow Swedish "Treskillig" and the most expensive "letter" in the world the "Bordeaux Cover", all of this from the few usual contributors.

The Bid Board and the Purchase List offered a wide range of material and sales were good. 22 members including the November visitor, now a member, attended the last meeting of 2007.

MONTHLY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Management Committee met at College du St Esprit to discuss Society matters on Saturday 6th October, Saturday 4th November and Saturday 1st December at 13.00 hrs. The quorum is 5 and the attendance was 7, 8 and 9 for the three meetings.



MEMBERSHIP

The following joined the Society during 2007.

Local:

Michael MARTINE	of	Rose Hill	Mauritius
Tasneem TEGALLY	of	Phoenix	Mauritius
Krishna GUNNOO	of	Vacoas	Mauritius
Keshav GOPAUL	of	Quatre Bornes	Mauritius
Jean Marc di COSTANZO	of	Roches Brunes	Mauritius

Overseas: Nil

The following were removed from the membership list during 2007.

Local:

Bernard CHAN LIN FAT	of	Grand Bay	Mauritius
Pierre FLUSIN	of	Beau Bassin	Mauritius
Eshan A. MAHMAUD	of	Pailles	Mauritius
Mahmad G. NAHABOO	of	Beau Bassin	Mauritius
Ismail L. OUMAR	of	Port Louis	Mauritius
Rajiv LUTCHMIAH	of	Port Louis	Mauritius
Hilary YIP TONG	of	Quatre Bornes	Mauritius

Overseas: Michel CRIBIER, Jean Yves FARAUD, Claude SCHOUFLIKIR and Patrick STEUER of France. Richard WILSON of Singapore, Keng Lee TEO of Malaysia and Richard MILLAR of the USA.

We regret to announce the demise of local member Bernard Young Ten.

WHAT? – QUOI 1

In the December 2007 annal of Mauritius Post, **Blue Penny News**, under the Planning Department's rubrique "*Les grands axes du développement pour 2008...*" this appeared:

· Le transfert de notre succursale de Quatre Bornes, qui est sous la tutelle de M. I. Lutchmun, dans le bâtiment de Quatre Bornes sera un autre fleuron pour Mauritius Post

Have you understood this? If you think you have and your French is good, then read it again! Also, guess who M.I. Lutchmun is? Well, he is the only postmaster of the only post office in Quatre Bornes.

WHAT? – BANKING JARGON – QUOI 2

After creating the new post of **Teller** and Quatre Bornes post office becoming a branch (*succursale*) the simple withdrawal from sale of the Rs5 Ministerial System 1957 stamp was announced by way of a communiqué as the "retrieval" from "circulation". What next?

THE PRESS

Le Défi-Plus	6.10.2007	L'Internet à la poste
Le Matinal	6.10.2007	La poste lance une nouvelle famille de timbres
Week-End	7.10.2007	Mauritius Post commémore le 24ème Congrès de l'UPI
Le Matinal	8.10.2007	World Post Day 2007
L'express	9.10.2007	Une ère nouvelle / La poste en chiffre / Cessidee exportera à travers la poste / Questions à... / Mr Postman.
Le Matinal	10.10.2007	Mauritius Post réalise des profits de Rs55 M / Stay connected on Mauritius Post / Arnaud Godère veut côter la Poste à la Bourse
L'express	11.10.2007	Les timbres rares, une valeur sûre
L'express	12.10.2007	Pensions : Pagaille à la poste
Le Défi-Plus	13.10.2007	Poste : profits de Rs55 M
Week-End	14.10.2007	Les dates qui fâchent....
Le Matinal	15.10.2007	Des profits des Rs55 M pour Mauritius Post
Le Matinal	17.10.2007	La poste prête à affronter la libéralisation
Le Défi-Plus	20.10.2007	La poste juge injustes les critiques
Week-End	18.11.2007	Paiement de pensions par la poste
Week-End	25.11.2007	Post Office stamps subject of successful New York play
Week-End	2.12.2007	La poste lance quatre nouveaux timbres, ce mardi
Le Mauricien	3.12.2007	La Mauritius Post Ltd se prépare à la libéralisation
Le Matinal	7.12.2007	Nouvelle émission de timbres-poste
Le Matinal	15.12.2007	Les cartes de vœux résistent au Net
L'express	16.12.2007	Profil bas – La bévue du "Stamp Advisory Committee"

MAURITIUS POSTAL HISTORY = MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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STAMPS

24th UPU CONGRESS · KENYA 2008

Mauritius Post Ltd released a single stamp of Rs50 on 9th October to mark the holding of the 24th UPU Congress in Nairobi Kenya sometime in 2008. The large stamp 35 x 48 mm is crammed both with much detail and a lot of wasted space; computer screen and stand and on the screen a globe with a bottom – heavy deformed map of Africa and the Kenyan flag “which symbolizes the universal dimension of the Post Office” *sic*. The globe with a yellow dot to denote Mauritius is encircled by a couple of rings and an outline of Mauritius encapsulates a “Postman performing physical delivery”. The receiver of the delivery is the in-house “philatelic expert” of Mauritius Post Ltd, Iswarnath Govind (Officer-in-Charge – Mauritius Postal Museum) and the name of the delivering postman is Steve Legallant.

This single Rs50 issue was designed by Mauritius Post Ltd and the yellow and blue stamp is in the corporate colours of the organisation. The data card does not give any date of the 2008 UPU Congress but it is capped with acknowledgements to the CEO Giandev Moteea, the HPO Giandeo Bissessur and an OIC Iswarnath Govind of Mauritius Post Ltd for whatever contribution they may have as officers of Mauritius Post rendered to the Postal Services or to themselves! No inland denomination was issued so the stamp will not be seen on mail within Mauritius.... unless one posts a brick to oneself.

The Official First Day Cover priced at Rs85.00 is illustrated with the 2008 24th UPU Congress logo. The stamp was printed by Lowe-Martin of Canada. The sheet format is of 50 stamps in two panes of 25 with a central gutter strip, and the middle gutter is imprinted with the logo of Mauritius Post Ltd. The cover was officially launched by Hon. Etienne Sinatambou at Flic-en-Flac Post Office on 9th October 2007 at 9.30 a.m.

[Ed. Note: The 24th UPU Congress is scheduled from 13th August to 3rd September 2008 in Nairobi, Kenya. This information is not on the data card.]

ANNIVERSARIES AND EVENTS

A set of four commemorative postage stamps was released on 4th December 2007. The stamps are titled as follows:

- Rs 5 Ministerial System - 1957
- Rs 10 Arrival of Manilall Doctor - 1907
- Rs 15 Centenary of Scouting - 1907
- Rs 25 First Meteorological Observatory 1832

All the anniversaries and events shown on the stamps occurred in months other than December, the Rs5 event in June, the Rs10 event in October, the Rs15 in August and the Rs25 in January. The stamps which were not listed when the initial approved programme was released, displaced the scheduled “Mauritius in World Literature” commemorative which has been re-programmed for January 2008.

The stamps were designed by Mauritius Post Ltd and printed by BDT International Security Printer Ltd of Ireland. Two stamps are in portrait (Rs10 and Rs15) and two in landscape formats (Rs5 and Rs25). The Official First Day Cover priced at Rs85.00 is illustrated with the “First Artificial Satellite: Spoutnik I (1957)”. The removal of the “Press Censorship 1832” stamp initially announced in January 2007 was subsequently deposed by the “Centenary of Scouting – 1907” stamp without any prior notification. The sheet of 50 stamps is set in two panes of 25 stamps with a central gutter strip and the middle stamp bears the logo of Mauritius Post Ltd.

AN INVITATION

[The Society received an invitation to the official launching ceremony of the Anniversaries and Events FDC at Port Louis Centre Post Office at 8.45 a.m. on 4th December. The invitation, by Express Delivery, was posted from Port Louis G.P.O. Counter at 3.15 p.m. on 3rd December 2007 and received at Quatre Bornes at 9 a.m. on 4th December 2007. Addressed to P.O. Box 89 it was recovered in the post box at 2 p.m. on 4th December 2007. *Le cachet de la poste fait foi*. Hon. Etienne Sinatambou, Minister responsible for the Postal Services, graced the launching (occasion) by his presence, little knowing that within four days, on 8th December, the Rs5 stamp would be withdrawn because one of the Ministers shown was an imposter. Another one bore an incorrect initial G instead of E for Edgar and yet another bore the initial R for Ranchordass instead of H for Harilall].

UPDATE 1 – SCOUTS

In News Items 2004.3 of September 2007 it was stated that “Mauritius did not issue stamps for the centenary of the scout movement during 2007”. At that date no scout stamp was on any of the 2007 programmes nor was any scout stamp announced. It was only at the 1st December 2007 Society meeting when a poster was shown that our members became aware of the **Centenary of Scouting 1907** stamp.

UPDATE 2 – THE OSMANS

The Rs5 Ministerial System 1957 stamp released on 4th December in the four stamp set **Anniversaries and Events** has three errors:

- (1) A.H. Osman was the wrong Osman – A.M. Osman, the right Osman, should have been shown.
- (2) Dr G. Millien should read Dr E (for Edgar) Millien
- (3) R. Vaghjee should read H (for Harilall) Vaghjee instead of R for Ranchordass

On 8th December the three errors A.H. Osman, Dr G. Millien and R. Vaghjee Rs5 Ministerial System 1957 stamp was withdrawn from sale.

On 27th December a new partially corrected Rs5 Ministerial System 1957 stamp was put on sale. This stamp features A.M. Osman, Dr G. Millien instead of Dr E (for Edgar) Millien and R. Vaghjee instead of H (for Harilall) Vaghjee – one out of three is a very poor show!

INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY

ICAC, the Independent Commission Against Corruption held a series of activities from 5-12-2007 to 11-12-2007 to mark International Anti-Corruption Day 2007 by enlisting the collaboration of various stakeholders in the public sector, the education sector and NGOs – the slogan for this year “Corruption, Your NO Counts”.

Mauritius Post Ltd participated by issuing its ICAC rubber-stamps to the following offices: G.P.O. Delivery (3), G.P.O. Sorting (3), SSR Office of Exchange (2) and one each to the following post offices: Beau Bassin, Central Flacq, Eau Coulée, Flic-en-Flac, Floréal, Forest Side, Mahebourg, Pamplemousses, Plaine Magnien, Quartier Militaire, Réduit, Rivière des Anguilles, Rose Hill, Stanley, Triolet and Vacoas. Postmasters and Controlling Officers were instructed to apply the cachet in red ink on inland and foreign mail for the period 3rd December to 10th December 2007. Proving covers have been seen from Rivière des Anguilles, Forest Side, Beau-Bassin, Flic-en-Flac and GPO Delivery on mail addressed to Port Louis posted from Mesnil and Tamarin. All were struck in red as per the instructions issued.

WORLD POST DAY

Only two new special rubber stamps were used in Mauritius on the occasion of World Post Day on 9th October 2007 only and at two venues only. No other World Post Day cachets were applied to any mail at any post office in October 2007. The offices where the new special cachet was applied being the Philatelic Bureau and the Postal Museum in Port Louis. The cachet reads World Post Day, Mauritius and is dated 9th October 2007. No ordinary commercial mail has been seen (to date) with the 2007 cachet and only philatelic mail including direct mailings to Philatelic Bureau subscribers and some Official First Day Covers were stamped with the cachet upon request on the 9th day of October 2007 only. If the cachet is found on any other type of mails then such items have been manufactured. No logical explanation has been given for the non distribution of World Post Day rubber stamps for the usual wider utilisation of World Post Day cachets in October 2007.

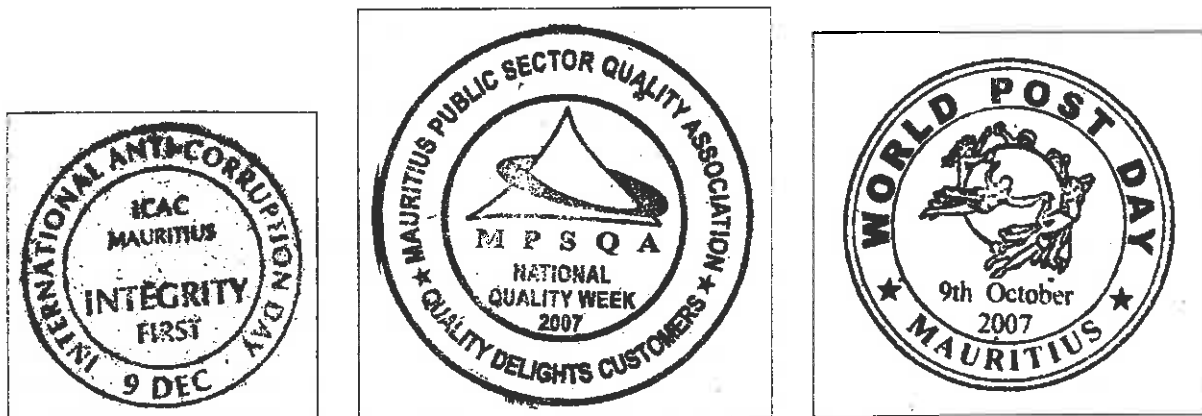
M P S Q A

A couple of commercial covers have been found cacheted with a new 50mm circular handstamp during the period 20th to 24th of November 2007.

A handwritten memo PS/PMG/398A dated 20th October sanctioned its use at three post offices only. Very few of these have been seen on mail however proving covers have so far been recovered from Curepipe, Vacoas and Quatre Bornes only.

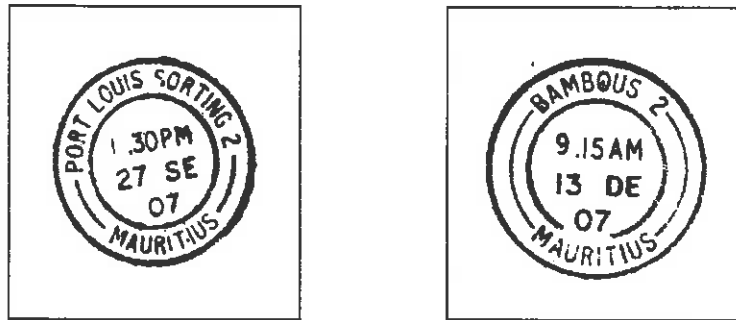
The outer circle bears the following: - Mauritius Public Sector Quality Association at the top and Quality Delights Customers at the bottom and within the centre circle the letters MPSQA/National/Quality Week/2007 in four lines beneath a logo.

Apart from the above notes the editor has not been able to obtain any other data about this cachet.



NEW DOUBLE CIRCLE CIRCULAR DATESTAMPS

New Type D 26mm Double Circle Circular Datestamps have been introduced at the G.P.O Sorting Office on a date that has not yet been established. Two of these datestamps reading Port Louis Sorting 1 and Port Louis Sorting 2 are currently in use at the Sorting Office in Port Louis and specimen strikes were obtained by the editor on 27th September 2007 after he had seen a partial cancellation on an August 2007 commercial cover on which that date and the numeral of the canceller cannot be determined because of the very poor postmark.



(Not to scale – slightly enlarged)

Other new 26mm double circle cds seen on proving covers in the second half of 2007 are Bambous 2, Bel Air 2, Camp de Masque 1, Petite Rivière 1, Port Louis Center 4, Port Louis Registered 1, Quartier Militaire 1 and Surinam 1, all with Mauritius at base.

[Ed. Note: See News Items 2007.1 of March 2007 and update your list of these new datestamps]

Confidential

STOP PRESS

Confidential

FACT I...

At the Stamp Advisory Committee meeting of 18th December 2007 the 2008 Stamp Programme of Mauritius was established as follows:

- MARCH 12th – Flowers (Definitives) – Independence Day
- APRIL 23rd – Mauritius in World Literature – World Book Day
- JUNE 5th – Extinct Tortoises – World Environment Day
- OCTOBER 9th – Streatfield (Watercolours) – World Post Day
- DECEMBER – Anniversaries and Events

Flowers "definitives" will feature common garden flowers from a list of some 20 species. At the time of going to press (early March) this stamp programme has not yet been "officialised" nor published; the SAC minutes of meeting, however, have been seen by the Editor.

FACT II...

As a direct result of the "Osman Error" from the 4th December **Anniversaries and Events** commemoratives all the "sitting" members of the Stamp Advisory Committee were "revoked". The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications, in a letter Ref. MITT/8/102 dated 21st January 2008, under the cover of Section 33(i) of the Postal Services Act 2002 advised the members "individually" that they had been effectively "revoked".

...AND SOME PALABRES

One source has it that the "Osman Error" was a godsend, a golden opportunity to get rid of SAC whose sin was its blinkered vision. SAC forgot to propose a set of commemoratives for the **"40th Anniversary of Independence"**.

Now a special cover franked with the very dead and famously extinct Dodo bird is scheduled to mark that auspicious day. And the Flowers "definitives" may yet become the bouquet for the 40th birthday commemoration on 12th March 2008.