



NEWS ITEMS 2008.1

The Journal of the Mauritius Philatelic Society

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

MARCH 2008

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

JANUARY – The Society did not hold a monthly meeting in January 2008. The Management Committee took this decision at its December 2007 meeting in order that everyone, especially those that do very little, could take a break.

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

The Vijay Ramharai Presentation, A Review of 2007 Stamps and Postal History and the Rs5 “Ministerial System 1957” errors were the three items on the agenda.

Vijay Ramharai’s Presentation was composed of an assortment of modern Malaysian stamps, covers, postcards, photographs, postal receipts, aerogrammes, airmail tags and other Malaysian philatelic paraphernalia amassed over several years. His interest in Malaysia began not too long ago when as a police officer he first visited the country on a Commonwealth officer’s training course and later on private visits. For his first ever presentation the display was a very interesting and well-prepared effort. The limited range of stamps and covers was compensated by photographs and postcards on the many facets of Malaysian history and culture enhanced with Vijay’s first hand personal knowledge and encounters.

Mico Antoine reviewed the **Stamps and Postal History of 2007**. The four series of stamps; Corals, The Dodo, 24th UPU Congress and Events and Anniversaries; all the known and proven postmarks and cachets introduced and used during the year; snippets from the 2007 Mauritius Post annal as well as a detailed recapitulation of every known or published philatelic and postal related matters of the year whether adverse or positive.

The Rs5 value of the Events and Anniversaries “**Ministerial System – 1957**” stamp featuring the wrong Osman, the wrong initials of R (Vaghjee) and G (Millien), its withdrawal, its replacement and the manner in which the matter was handled were disclosed to the members, including some relatively sensitive inside information such as the number of FDCs made and “sold”, the quantities of the two Osman stamps printed, the supposed quantity of the wrong Osman stamps “sold” and the subsequent blame game. The Stamp Advisory Committee’s communiqué, the data published in the insert and the reckless philatelic politics of Mauritius Post were also scrutinized.

An interesting year-end range of frankings from various central government departments, local government municipalities and state controlled parastatal bodies were on display. Christmas greeting covers with some interesting cachets and frankings from the various offices falling under the Prime Minister’s responsibility struck in blue, mauve or red were also shown.

The Notice Board was well garnished. The Bid Board and Purchase List offered a very good range of first class material and sales were on the high side. 26 members attended the February meeting, a very good start to 2008.

MARCH – The **Annual General Meeting** was held on 8th March 2008 at 2 p.m. at College du Saint Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes.

The convocations were sent out on time; all notices were published in conformity with the Rules and Regulations; applications were vetted and registered accordingly and all other AGM related procedures were scrupulously respected.

24 members were present at the AGM, 5 proxy votes were registered, and the AGM was conducted with the Society's usual discipline and consensus. After all AGM business had been concluded News Items 2007.4 of December 2007 was distributed and the high quality backdrop display was retained for the April meeting by special request.

Sales from the Purchase List and Bid Board were excellent and some very good 19th century stamps sold on behalf of an overseas member were snapped up.

The attendant went away a happy man as his remuneration was increased by 25% over the 2007 figure. See Page 6 and 7 for the 2007 audited accounts, the budget for 2008 and a synopsis on the AGM.

MONTHLY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The January Management Committee meeting was held exceptionally at the residence of the Secretary, La Louise Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 13.00 hrs on Saturday 5th January 2008.

This was the last meeting chaired by the President Patrick Kwan Cheung as he had decided to emigrate to Australia. He joined the Society in March 1992, was the Secretary for many years, served as President since 2005 and he left Mauritius on 14th January 2008 after more than a decade of loyal service.

The February and March meetings were held on the 2nd February and the 8th March at Collège du Saint Esprit at 13.00 hrs, one hour before the monthly Society meeting. Attendance was respectively 6, 6 and 8.

MEMBERSHIP

The following applied for membership and were admitted to the Society during the first quarter of 2008.

Kavish S. GOPAUL	of	Quatre Bornes	Mauritius
Pravin GOPAUL	of	Quatre Bornes	Mauritius
Clarel Ivan DALAIS	of	L'Escalier	Mauritius
Monique C. FOK-SHAN	of	Pointe-aux-Sables	Mauritius
Marc Gabriel SAMINADEN	of	Quebec	Canada

ON THE MOVE

On 2nd February 2008 a solemn historical event was held at the entrance to the Mauritius Postal Museum on the site of the former second "*bagne*" (convict prison), the place where captured runaway slaves were detained. According to a commemorative plaque unveiled on the day the second "*bagne*" occupied the site of the Mauritius Postal Museum from 1816 to 1839 before the existing building, the former Civil Hospital and later G.P.O. HQ, was erected and that the first "*bagne*" was on another site between 1772 and 1816.

The decaying façade of the Postal Museum was wiped down and washed clean, the faded gold letters against the dirty blue background Mauritius Postal Museum sign repaired and repainted and the museum entrance was spruced up for the occasion – a ministerial visit requisite!

For their effort the Honourable Etienne Sinatambou who graced the event together with two of his cabinet colleagues jointly and in turn announced that the Mauritius Postal Museum must relocate as the present locale will become part of a "*parcours historique*". In addition to the "*bagne*" site plaque a second plaque, the ceremonial unveiling plaque with three ministers' names, now adorn the Museum entrance.

The Postal Museum is supposedly scheduled to move a few yards away to the former "Poste Centrale" building in or around May 2008. The building is already occupied by various departments of Mauritius Post including the Philatelic Bureau, the Stores and the Waterfront Post Office. Something, sometimes referred to as the Postal Academy or the Philatelic Academy, is also to be housed in the same locale.

EXHIBITION

The 40th Anniversary of Independence Stamp Exhibition

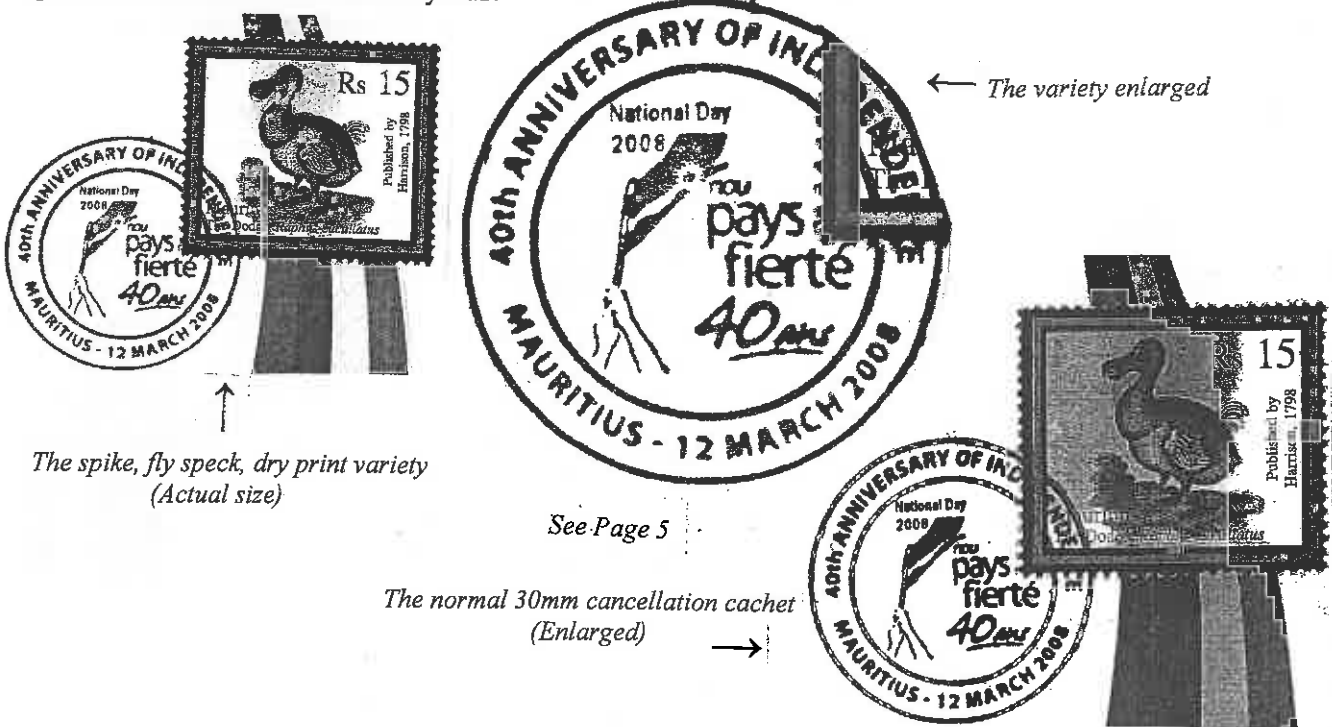
The "exhibition" inaugurated by the Hon. Etienne Sinatambou and the Hon. Mahendra Gowressoo on Monday 11th March 2008 was a pitiful sham that lasted up to the 18th March 2008.

A sham because two display units in the main gallery and four display units in an adjacent gallery were denuded of their usual contents, in the case of the first an almost permanent colonial period stamps presentation and in the second a here today and gone tomorrow colourful haphazard assortment of common modern foreign thematics.

The main gallery's fixed wall mounted Mauritian stamps stopped with the March 1995 (SG916/19) "Spices" commemoratives when the museum was inaugurated in that year. The collection has never been updated since 1995. Not a single stamp of Mauritius issued between March 1995 and December 2007 was ever added to the Mauritian collection – too much work and effort for those involved – until March 2008.

So "pour se mettre à l'ère des festivités" Mauritius Post updated the Mauritian collection in six display units with a temporary chronological array of mint stamps, miniature sheets, sheetlets, stamp booklets and Official First Day Covers issued from May 1995 to December 2007. This effort was then trumpeted either as Mauritius Post's contribution to 40 years of history or their stamp exhibition to mark the 40th Anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Mauritius. The "exhibition" was about as insignificant as the almost invisible quarto size directional notice stuck to one of the display units.

What was significant and very noticeable is the neglected and deteriorating conditions in the Museum; peeling wallpaper, damaged by exposure to direct sunlight panes of stamp, broken showcases, filthy posters and copies of old post office notices as well as accumulated messiness and general lack of care, repair and maintenance over 12 years.



The spike, fly speck, dry print variety (Actual size)

See Page 5

The normal 30mm cancellation cachet (Enlarged)

The variety enlarged

STAMP PROGRAMME 2008

In the absence of any announcement or any officialisation or any approval of the 2008 stamp programme for Mauritius at 31st March 2008 as well as the non-issue of any postage stamps for the year to date the series of stamps from the minutes of the Stamp Advisory Committee meeting of 18th December 2007 (before the members were "revoked" on 21st January 2008) are listed hereunder as provisional information for the benefit of members.

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|------|
| 12 th March 2008 | – Flowers (New Definitives) | – Independence Day | (14) |
| | - Magnolia / Gustavia / Lys / Allamanda / Dahlia / Marygold / Rose / Pensée
Hibiscus / Azalea / Tournesol / Marguerite / Saponair / Glâteul | | |
| 23 rd April 2008 | – Mauritius in World Literature | – World Book Day | (4) |
| | - Alexandre Dumas / Charles Baudelaire / Joseph Conrad / Mark Twain | | |
| 5 th June 2008 | – Extinct Tortoises | – World Environment Day | (4) |
| | - No details | | |
| 9 th October 2008 | – Streatfield (Watercolours) | – World Post Day | (4) |
| | - Pont Souillac / The Barachois, Mahebourg / Bridge at Réduit / View of the
South-East from Grande Rivière. | | |
| - December 2008 | – Anniversaries and Events | | (4) |
| | - Plaza - 75 yrs / Civil Code - 200 yrs / Seeneevassen - 50 yrs / Icery -175 yrs | | |

NATIONAL DAY 2008 – 40 ANS CACHET

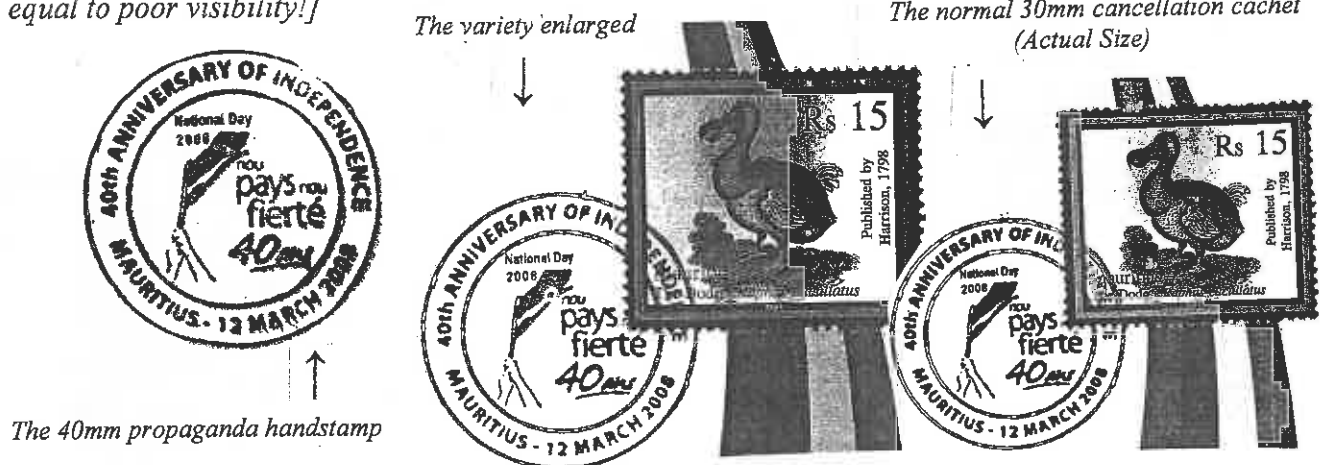
In response to a request from the Ministry of Arts and Culture to have postal correspondence "datestamped" with a special cachet, Mauritius Post reacted positively by distributing special rubber handstamps to fifteen offices in Mauritius only; Rodrigues was positively excluded.

The circular propaganda handstamps measuring 40mm, identical to but 10mm bigger than the commemorative cover obliterator, were issued for application onto ordinary items of correspondence, both inland and foreign, posted from 8th to 11th March 2008.

The offices were – GPO Sorting, GPO Delivery, SSR Office of Exchange, Triolet, Quatre Bornes, Rose Hill, Curepipe, Vacoas, Mahebourg, Chemin Grenier, Petite Rivière, Goodlands, Central Flacq, Saint Pierre and the Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis.

Postmasters were advised to obtain a high visibility of the operation and to ensure the success of Mauritius Post's participation before returning the rubber stamps to HQ under registered cover on 14th March 2008.

Ed Note. [To-date several commercial covers postmarked Port Louis only have been seen and this is equal to poor visibility!]



MAURITIUS POSTAL HISTORY = MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

SPECIAL COVER

40th Anniversary of Independence of Mauritius

A Special Commemorative Cover was presented to the media on Tuesday 11th March at the Mauritius Postal Museum by the Honourables Mahendra Gowressoo, Minister of Culture and Etienne Sinatambou, Minister of Information Technology to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Independence of Mauritius.

The cover is illustrated with “two photos” – one “the hoisting of the National Flag” and the other “SSR with Sir John Shaw Rennie” taken at the Champ de Mars on 12th March 1968.

The National colours on the right side of the envelope are partially covered over which the Rs15 value of the Dodo stamp of June 2007 which is cancelled with a special cachet. The circular 30mm cachet reads “40th Anniversary of Independence” at top with at bottom “Mauritius – 12 March 2008” in the outer circle. The inner circle is illustrated with the former “*nou pays nou fierté*” * logo, two hands waving a flag to which “National Day 2008” and “40 ans” were added.

The data card or insert enclosed in the cover has a brief write up on the “History of Mauritius” from 1500 to 2008 with this opening sentence – “To mark the 40th anniversary of Independence and the 16th Anniversary of the Republic” (*sic*). No mention of the Republic is made on the cover as the emphasis placed on Independence or Republic depends on which of the two alternating coalitions are exercising political power.

2000 covers were produced; 1500 were ordered by the Ministry of Arts and Culture for official use and 500 were sold by Mauritius Post, 250 at the Postal Museum and 250 at the Philatelic Bureau on 13th March 2008 at Rs50 per unit.

A distinct and constant variety has been seen on several covers within the upper half of the flag of the cancellation cachet and on the outer circle just after 12 o'clock on a continuous series of ten covers. Apart from the ink being less dense there are two constant flaws, a big “fly speck” on the flag and a spike on the outer circle.

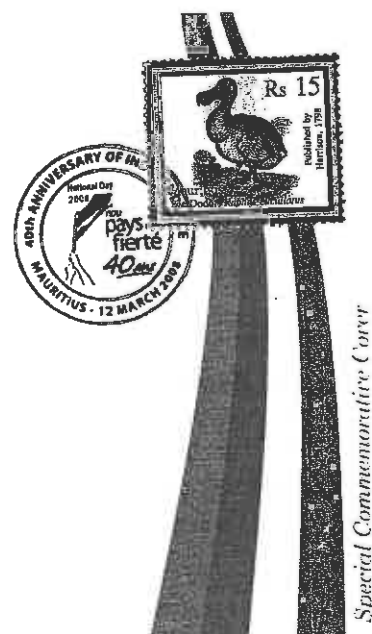
Ed Note. [*Jean Wesley Jeannot, Assistant Postman, who serviced all the 2000 covers, had assured the Editor that only one rubber obliterator was used. The device appears to have deteriorated as the work progressed in addition to some dirt getting stuck to it as the ink pad dried up!*]

*our country our pride (a loose translation)



Independence of Mauritius

(Reduced)



Special Commemorative Cover

AUDITED ACCOUNTS – 2007

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2007

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
CASH RESOURCES		
Cash in Hand - 1.1.2007	1,500.00	1,500.00
Cash in Bank - 1.1.2007	<u>24,649.76</u>	<u>9,484.64</u>
	<u>26,149.76</u>	<u>10,984.64</u>
RECEIPTS		
Entrance Fees	500.00	700.00
Subscriptions	22,900.00	20,900.00
Donations/Sponsorship	0.00	0.00
Commission on Sales	5,417.00	17,252.00
Interest Received	287.39	206.52
Others	<u>800.00</u>	<u>198.60</u>
	<u>29,904.39</u>	<u>39,257.12</u>
	<u>56,054.15</u>	<u>50,251.76</u>
PAYMENTS		
Newsletters/Bulletins	3,807.00	4,980.00
General Expenses	<u>22,839.00</u>	<u>19,112.00</u>
TOTAL OUTFLOW	<u>26,646.00</u>	<u>24,092.00</u>
BALANCE AT END	Rs <u>29,408.15</u>	Rs <u>26,149.76</u>
REPRESENTED BY:		
Cash in Hand - 31-12.2007	1,500.00	1,500.00
Cash at Bank - 31.12.2007	<u>27,908.15</u>	<u>24,649.76</u>
	Rs <u>29,408.15</u>	Rs <u>26,149.76</u>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES @ 31 DECEMBER 2007

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
ASSETS		
Furniture & Fittings	7,735.00	7,735.00
Stocks	4,000.00	4,000.00
Cash in Hand	1,500.00	1,500.00
Cash at Bank	<u>27,908.15</u>	<u>24,649.76</u>
	<u>41,143.15</u>	<u>37,884.76</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	Rs <u>41,143.15</u>	Rs <u>37,884.76</u>
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Balance @ 1.1.2007	37,884.76	22,719.64
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year	<u>3,258.39</u>	<u>15,165.12</u>
	Rs <u>41,143.15</u>	Rs <u>37,884.76</u>

BUDGET 2008			
Income	Rs	Expenditure	Rs
Subscriptions	20,000	Postage	7,000
Donations & Sponsorships	10,000	Stationery	7,000
Commissions & Society Sales	7,000	Catalogues & Magazines	7,000
Interest	500	Cost of monthly meetings	7,000
Advertising Revenue	0	Other expenses	7,000
Other Income	<u>7,500</u>	Printing of News Bulletins	<u>10,000</u>
Total Income	Rs <u>45,000</u>	Total Expenditure	Rs <u>45,000</u>

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008

Extracts from Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 8th March 2008 at St Esprit College, Quatre Bornes.

- **Approval of minutes of 2007 AGM**

The minutes were approved on a proposition of Soorooj Ramdewor seconded by Assenjeer Kara.

- **Report of the President for the Year 2007**

The Vice-President presented his report for the year in which he covered the main aspects of the state of affairs of the Society and he paid tribute to the President, Patrick Kwan Cheung, who emigrated to Australia in January 2008.

- **Approval of Accounts ending 31st December 2007**

The audited accounts, a copy of which was affixed onto the Notice Board was presented by the Treasurer and the accounts were approved on a proposition of Idriss Nujjoo seconded by Tarkesswarnath Greedharrye.

- **Approval of Budget for the Year 2008**

The budget of Rs45,000 Income and Rs45,000 Expenditure for the Year 2008 was presented by the Treasurer and was approved on a proposition of Idriss Nujjoo seconded by Pascal Chan You Fee.

- **Election of Committee Members & Office Bearers for the Year 2008**

The following were elected as members of the Management Committee for Year 2008: Mico Wilfrid Antoine, Judex Leu Adrien, Georges Gérard Louis, Ahmed Nasser Maderbokus, Saoud Mauthoor, Vikash Rupear, Assenjeer Ismael Kara, Soorooj Ramdewor and Kaliparsad Ramharai.

- **Appointment of Auditor for Year 2008**

Man Fan Lam Hang, FCCA, was appointed as Auditor for 2008 on a proposition of Mico Antoine seconded by Judex Adrien.

The Management Committee

The Management Committee was constituted on the same day as follows:

President – Mico Wilfrid Antoine	Vice-President - Nasser Ahmad Maderbokus
Treasurer – Judex Leu Adrien	Vice-Treasurer – Saoud Mauthoor
Secretary – Georges Gérard Louis	Vice-Secretary – Vikash Rupear
Members – Assenjeer Ismael Kara, Soorooj Ramdewor and Kaliparsad Ramharai	

WEBRIPOSTE ABBREVIATIONS

On 8th November 2004 five counters at Curepipe Post Office were computerized with the Escher Group *WebRiposte* counter automatic system. At 31st March 2008 a total of 26 post offices have been identified by their abbreviations on the self-adhesive labels on proving covers **seen** and **confirmed** by a member of the Management Committee of the Society.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A WEBRIPOSTE LABEL



The abbreviated identifications are:

BAI	Bel Air	MLO	Montagne Longue
BBA	Beau Bassin	PLC	Port Louis Centre
CDM	Camp de Masque	PLW	Port Louis Western
CMA	Cap Malheureux	PRA	Petit Raffray
CUR	Curepipe	PRI	Petite Rivière
FEF	Forest Side	QBO	Quatre Bornes
FLO	Flic-en-Flac	RDA	Rivière des Anguilles
GBAC	Grand Bay Counter	RED	Reduit
GOO	Goodlands	SOU	Souillac
GPOC	G.P.O. Counter	STA	Stanley
LAL	Lalmatie	TAM	Tamarin
LES	L'Escalier	TRI	Triolet
MES	Mesnil	WTF	Waterfront

N.B. The FEF and FLO (mis)identifications remain unchanged at March 2008.
 GPOC and WTF are located in Port Louis (respectively) at Dumas Street and Quay Street.



NEWS ITEMS is a publication of the **Mauritius Philatelic Society**
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