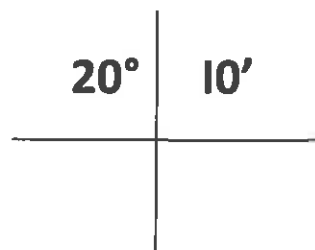


2010

Issue No. 5 – AUGUST 2011



THE JOURNAL OF THE MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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POSTAGE DUE



1937 Incoming taxed letter from UK with 14 cents (SG D2, D4) postage due collected in Curepipe.

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

MAY – The May meeting was held at College du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 14.00 hrs on Saturday 8th May 2011.

The main items on the agenda were more recent "Postage Due" by Dr A N Maderbokus supported by older Mauritius TO PAY marks on entires and very recent Rodrigues 'MORE TO PAY' marks on a range of items (covers, wrappers, aerogrammes) and MISSENT mail destined for Mauritius by Mico Antoine.

"Postage Due" on display was made up of a range of incoming postal items from abroad as well as inland mail charged with the three types of Postage Due stamps, namely the 1933-54 Waterlow, the 1966-72 De La Rue and the 1982 Harrison definitive J.W. Dunn overprints. The difficulty of collecting these items both on mail as well as loose used stamps is mainly because lots of current cacheted postage due or manuscripted taxed mail are delivered without the deficiency in postage collected.

Several inland taxed (T) covers, with and without the postage due indicated nor collected were shown. One was from Curepipe, postmarked 24.04.2006 upon arrival at the Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis, without any stamps affixed but with the circled T mark indicating Rs 4.25. How does the post collect postage due from itself? See illustration on page 2.

Taxed covers from France, England, Germany, the USA and several taxed inland items with and without the deficiency collected as well as some with the incorrect amount being charged were explained. The presenter, who is one of the Society's leading philatelists, gave much useful data on the workings of Postage Due. He also confirmed that in many cases it is the more knowledgeable philatelist who requests or insists on paying the Postage Due charges so as to obtain collectable examples of this aspect of Mauritian philately.

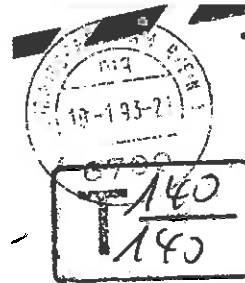
SURCHARGED OWING TO INSUFFICIENT POSTAGE. PLEASE ADVISE SENDER.



Ex UK July 1981. Tax collected R 1.00.



Ex South Africa April 1993. Inland Curepipe Dec 2000.
Tax not collected. Tax not collected.



Ex Germany Jan 1993.
Postage not paid.
Tax not collected.

Mico Antoine's "TO PAY" and "MORE TO PAY" display contained many entires addressed to Pipon Bell, Port Louis, Mauritius and items of mail destined for Rodrigues but returned to senders in Mauritius for additional postage.

The range of "TO PAY" items from the 19th century showed both the sterling and the decimal marks, some more difficult to obtain than others, with data



Ex UK Jan 2000. Rs 2.60 Tax collected Feb 2000



mainly from works previously done by Proud and Ibbotson. Pipon Bell (stamps removed and repaired) entires are not that difficult to collect being readily available in Mauritius at reasonable prices.

inland rate for the whole of the Republic. However during the 1980's and up to 2007 the mark was often seen. On the mainland of Mauritius the circled T mark is generally used to indicate (postage due) deficiencies; very rarely is the "MORE TO PAY" cachet used.

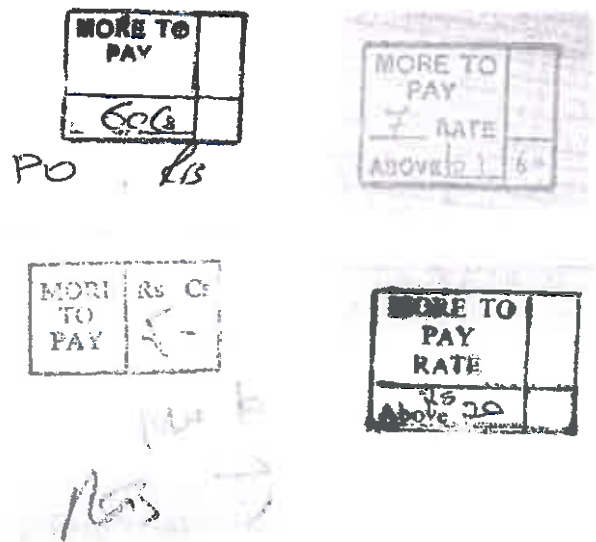


"TO PAY" marks from June 1864 and July 1868

"MORE TO PAY" marks on mail destined for Rodrigues adds something extra to any Rodrigues collection and many types of such cachets are in use in Mauritius. Items are generally returned to sender from the post offices of posting, from the Port Louis Sorting Office or from the SSR Airport often with a backstamp and the "MORE TO PAY" amount indicated within the handstamp mark on the front of the envelope. These Rodrigues items are relatively hard to come by and they are nearly always found on genuine items of mail. Most postal items are dispatched to Rodrigues without the deficiency collected – too much work!

Today "MORE TO PAY" marks are very seldom seen on Rodrigues mail after the standardisation of the

One especially difficult to find "MORE TO PAY" cacheted mail is the Mauritius aerogramme. The mark has however been applied on this type of postal stationery after rate increases take place. The 'old' Rs 5 imprinted aerogrammes are returned to senders for the additional Rs 5 indicated by "MORE TO PAY" marks to make up the 2011 rate of Rs 10 for example.



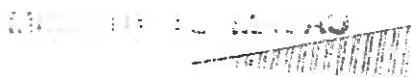
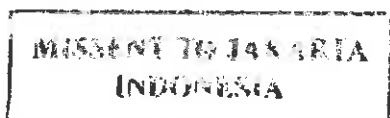
A range of MORE TO PAY cachets with values ranging from 60 cents to Rs 20.00.



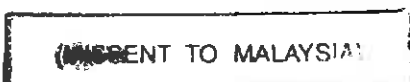
← A cover addressed to the Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis from Curepipe without any stamps taxed Rs 4.25 by a clerk at Curepipe.

Reduced to 75%.

MISSENT mail occupied one full display unit with a range of modern covers from many countries – none bore a “Missent to Mauritius” cachet. Much mail addressed to Mauritius are missent to Malaysia before finding their way to Mauritius – three different “Missent to Malaysia” covers were shown. Other missents went to Kenya, Macau, Mauritania, Mozambique, Panama, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia before being re-directed to Mauritius.



MISSENT TO MALAYSIA



CORRESPONDENCIA MAL
ENCAMINADA A PANAMA



Recibido en
Missent to
APO AE 09777

MISSENT marks from Indonesia, Macau, Malaysia (x3), Panama, Uganda, APO AE 09777

The USA in particular appears to have a problem getting mail destined to Mauritius into the correct mail bag, as proven by covers shown; Hawaii, FPOs within the USA and even FPO 96464 Diego Garcia as well as several of the countries aforementioned were some of the missents. Over 80% of the covers shown were relatively modern having been collected during the last three decades. A nice matching pair of

covers, one from Mauritius to Russia (15.06.2005) and the other from New Zealand to Mauritius (31.10.2004), got to their final respective destination via Indonesia, both struck with identical MISSENT TO JAKARTA/INDONESIA cachets in two lines.

A cover to Rodrigues (addressed to a priest in La Ferme) from Forest Side Mauritius postmarked 15/2/93 missent to Montreal Canada (1.III.93) before redirected was also shown.

The Notice Board carried the latest on Mauritian philately, stamps of a Royal Wedding and press cuttings on a stage play titled ‘Mauritius’.

JUNE – The meeting was held at 14.00 hrs on Saturday 4th at College du St Esprit, Quatre Bornes. Two items were on the agenda. The convocation dated 24th May 2011 firstly invited members to show and talk about their favourite stamp and secondly it announced the presentation and the distribution of the 2010 No. 3 of December 2010.

The general low level of the presentations and the too few members that participate has been a feature of this kind of meeting and nothing has really changed over the years. This is not because of a lack of interest, it is more a timidity and dread of our members facing their peers to talk about anything concerning themselves and there is always one or two bags of wind who are noisy when others show their material and who clam up when asked to show their thing. There are however the equally brave and loyal few who more than make up for others’ failings.

Dr A Nasser Maderbokus showed his 1898 Diamond Jubilee stamp (SG 133) together with several surcharged (SG 134/135) varieties. He presented these with his usual well researched attention to details.

Our local Swiss member, Hans Bigler’s favourite stamp has always been, is and will always be his Canton of Basel embossed “Dove” stamp of 1st July 1847 printed in three colours. He has shown this stamp on a couple of previous occasions and he seizes every opportunity to vent the sentimental as well as other values (including the catalogue value) of his “one and only” favourite stamp.

A very brave and rather bold explanation from Alain Louis on his slabbed King George VI 10c deep reddish rose stamp of 1943 (SG 256b) with an insignificant (difficult to find) dot and line unlisted variety – refreshing, amusing and most welcome. Several members had a closer look at the stamp with Alain’s

own magnifier (he cuts and polishes diamonds); some swore they saw the variety and some saw nothing.

Ravin Buchoo is one of our youngest members and his attendance of Society meetings is very regular. He clearly stated that he really did not have a favourite stamp but he wished to participate because he had just purchased a couple of Afghan stamps on the internet. He asked if he could show his 'favourite stamp of the day' and permission granted he showed the Afghanistan "Wanted Dead or Alive" stamp of a mug shot of Osama Bin Laden, telescopic cross-hairs *et al.* Most laughed, not at Ravin, but at the Afghan/American philatelic taste. Some offered to buy the stamp on the spot; Ravin did not sell.

Papering over any gaps and making up for any shortfalls is the job of the President, always has been always will be. He did not talk about nor show his own favourite stamp. Instead he showed and presented Peter Ibbotson's favourite stamps, the 1899 Birth Centenary of Labourdonnais (SG 136) together with its siblings the 1903/04 Express Delivery surcharges and a tear sheet from "The Stamp Lover" of November-December 1971.

He also showed and talked about the "Settlement on Rodrigues 1691" 25c stamp of 1978 (SG 532) with all the new printings and shades together with the "Story of a Stamp – François Leguat" article by Peter Ibbotson and he brought along Alfred North-Coombes book "The Vindication of François Leguat" from which he read.

The 2010 No. 3 was distributed several months later than usual and the reasons for the delay explained. The whole contents were reviewed.

The Notice Board was well garnished with information on and covers of La Flora Post Office and press cuttings on the stage play "Mauritius" by Therese Rebeck (in the Franco-Mauritian version) embellished with local interpretations of philatelic and dramatised historical "facts".

JULY – The July meeting was held at College du St Esprit on the first Saturday of the month at 14.00 hrs.

The mid-year review of the stamps, cachets and postal history of Mauritius, January to June 2011, was presented jointly by Mico Antoine and Dr A Nasser Maderbokus. The former dealt with stamps and covers, the latter with cachets, postal markings and historical issues. The official stamp year packs of Mauritius of 1995, 2002 and 2010 were presented by Mico Antoine.

The prepared and well researched talk on the Anniversaries and Events set of commemorative stamps issued on 30th June was full of relevant and pertinent details with some humorous comments only a few days after the stamps went on sale. The blurred illegible Population Census 2011 XIX Census Form, the portraits of Jean Ah Chuen and Dr Maurice Curé and the black and white view of Medine Sugar Estate were accompanied by the Official First Day Cover and the Special Commemorative Cover of Jean Ah Chuen as well as the International Customs Day cover of 26th January and the World Heritage set of four stamps, souvenir sheet and FDC of 18th April was all what was released by Mauritius Post during the first six months of 2011. A mixed bag of insular poorly designed, drab, pedestrian local commemoratives in vertical and horizontal formats simply to annoy collectors.

Postal history was about known cachets seen on proving covers, postmarks, WebRiposte labels and other postal markings recorded by the Society between January and June 2011. These were either on commercial mail, philatelic covers or on piece and included the second series of the 2011 Housing and Population cachets. The World Telecommunication and Information Society Day cachet of 17th May together with the circular Note No. 13/2011 and the "Brahma Kumaris" Forest Side cachet on covers concluded the known cachets recorded during the first half of 2011. Postmarks were about the Poste de Flacq/Mauritius Post datestamp impressions on cover, new automatic machine cancellation marks and slogans from Port Louis Centre, Grand Bay and Flic en Flac and WebRiposte labels from Flic-en-Flac, Forest Side and St Julien D'Hotman.

The glossy 16 page annal of Mauritius Post of December 2010 with two pages of messages accompanied by a toothy shot of the Chairman and a posed photograph of the C.E.O. plus in-house staff news and many more photographs of the C.E.O and Chairman with a page of philately here and a page of achievement there was passed around for members to have a closer look.

The three stamp year packs of Mauritius issued in 1995, 2002 and 2010 were analysed by Mico Antoine who had inside information on the first two packs having been involved in the production of the first and given advice on the second and who had nothing to do with the 2010 pack. Whilst some bias may have been inevitable in comparing the first two with the last there was no question about the quality and finish of the two earlier efforts when compared with

the 2010 pack. Everyone at the meeting, some of whom had never seen or known of the 1995 and 2002 stamp year pack, agreed that the 2010 pack was well below the standards set by the first two packs. The 2010 Stamp Year pack was reviewed in 2010 No.4 of April 2011.

Dr A Nasser Maderbokus digitally recorded the Mont Vert Outing and at the end of the meeting he made a powerpoint presentation of the occasion.

The Notice Board carried items from La Flora post office, new meter marks, Certificate of Posting covers, a *critique* from *Timbres* magazine on the now infamous SAPOA World Cup Gold Foil souvenir sheet. Hans Bigler the only member known to have actually gone to see the "Mauritius" spectacle staged by a group of Mauritian *amateur comédiens* gave a fairly balanced tongue in cheek (he is actually good at that) resumé of the play; the storyline, the acting, the crowd *et al*, supported on the board by local press cuttings on the play.

AUGUST – The August meeting was held at the usual venue and at the usual time on Saturday 6th. Two items were on the agenda.

Ah Lan Lam Yan Foon's talk on the UN Millenium Goals and Mico Antoine's aspects of Mauritian Philately:- *Poste Restante*, R.L.O., one aerophilatelic cover and Registry.

Ah Lan Lam Yan Foon's talk was supported by photocopies of three blocks of the UN Millenium Goals stamps and the accompanying data as well as more photocopies of other UN stamps – no actual stamp was shown. He was surprisingly very brief and incoherent.

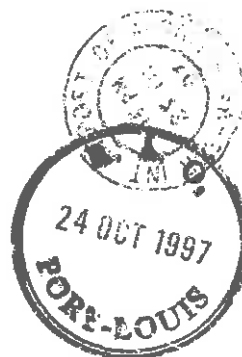
The follow up was an even bigger surprise totally unrelated to the UN or to philately and no stamps were shown of either Lincoln or Kennedy both past presidents of the USA. He announced his presentation "Coincidences" and this was not on the agenda. Lincoln and Kennedy were both assassinated, both were shot, both died... both were this or that and so on.

Mico Antoine put up material which occupied four display units – all relating to aspects of Mauritius philately as per the agenda.

Poste Restante cachets on mainly First Flight Covers from many countries some with manuscript instructions to the postal or airport authorities at the destination of the flights. Flights to and from

Mauritius which are still today popular with some German dealers in aerophilatelic material were shown together with the whole of the 1970 Lufthansa series of incoming and outgoing covers of the inaugural flights with all the stops *en route*. Several of the First Flight *Poste Restante* covers were from East Germany or more correctly the Deutsche Demokratische Republik era mainly to and from the communist world of the time. A couple of sea borne *Poste Restante* were also shown and the workings of this aspect of philately were explained.

R.L.O. or Returned Letter Office letters and covers were items that had been cacheted after examination at this department of the postal service. One exceptional example was an envelope that was returned to France twice with its letter and contents of 4x500 French Francs bank notes before it was finally recovered by the sender who had solicited the assistance of the Editor, hence his ownership of the cover. See illustration on page 12.



**R.L.O.
PORT-LOUIS
MAURITIUS
POST OFFICE**

↑ R.L.O. imprinted address

← R.L.O. handstamp

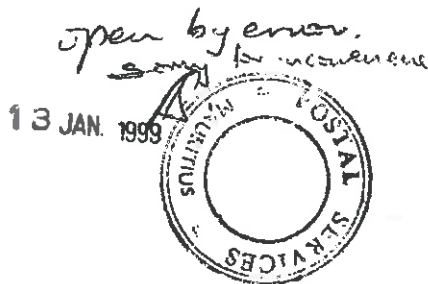
Dr Vaughn's 'Roland Garros' FFC of 1937 from Mauritius to London with a fictive address was the original owner's, (a clerk in the post office), way of getting a "Return to Sender" item and he did. The good doctor's notes, comments and cover are the property of the Mauritius Institute of which he was a past director from 1946 to 1960. In 2005, the cover and part of the doctor's collection was shown at the Society's philatelic and stamp exhibition. The Society wrote up the item for the institute and obtained a colour scan recto/verso of the FFC in return. The scan was what was shown at the August meeting. See illustrations on page 13.

REGISTRY. The registry of the post office is an office where registers of books, publications, documents and other records are received, examined or kept. Some letters that end up at this office are recorded before they are opened and examined after which they were either returned to the sender or forwarded to the appropriate addressee or worse. Since the

establishment of the correct addressee may entail the actual reading of the enclosures such letters or contents are sometimes impressed with the registry handstamp. Several examples of wrong or incomplete addressed envelopes and their contents with Registry marks were shown.



↑ Received Registry
↓ handstamps



The August meeting was slightly different than other normal Society monthly meeting.

A Not So Normal Society Meeting

The August meeting was a longer than usual meeting for several reasons; firstly a Notice Board full of news about philately. The agenda is planned well in advance and is normally strictly adhered to. What is on the convocation is what the meeting deals with.

Before the items on the agenda are presented there is always some light banter between the President and the members. Jean Auguste's desk is very busy during this period as he supervises the sale of members listed material to interested buyers. Some

thirty minutes later the meeting proper starts with the presentation of the items posted on the Notice Board.

The August Notice Board had the following affixed to it: a letter from Stanley Gibbons finally accepting and confirming the inverted watermark variety of the Constellations Rs 9 stamp (SG 1086w). This is in addition to the already listed R 1 (SG 1083w).



SG 1083w



SG 1086w

Press cutting on Bras D'Eau, the natural reserve in the north of the island, selected for the September Outing, several articles on and about Mauritius Post, a brochure of an exhibition that included wood carvings of several stamps of Mauritius, a 'Post Office' stamp expo in Berlin and local P.O. Box rental cachets.

BOX NOT RENTED
A 8/11c

Not For P. O. Box

Mauritius Post Box related cachets

During the Notice Board presentation, always made by the President, there is constant interaction between members and this often includes the silly, the irrelevant as well as the clever. The participation of those who have affixed something on the Notice Board is a normal feature of this part of the meeting. This is usually followed by a short break when members take a second and closer look at the items posted on the board and at the display units of the topics of the day. The sales table also gets busy again with late comers and slow deciders spending their remaining cash on what is left to buy. After the break, the presentation of the topics on the agenda begins in the order in which they are listed. The August meeting which had one of the lowest attendance of the year surprisingly lasted longer than usual notwithstanding the unusual departure from the strict adherence to the agenda of the day.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Management Committee Meetings of the Society for the period May to August 2011 were held as follows : Saturday 7th May, 4th June, 2nd July and 6th August at College du Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes.

The meeting began at 13.00 hrs with the attendance of 7, 8, 7 and 7 members for the months under review.

DELIBERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS

MAY

- The minutes of the April 2011 meeting were approved.
- The April monthly meeting was discussed viz: the topics displayed, the Society sales, members' interest. The misguided interruption of one was noted.
- The College du St Esprit Philatelic Club first three meetings of April and early May and the donation of Official First Day Covers from a long standing member received a special mention.
- The Society website project.
- The Mont Vert Outing and the topic of the June Society meeting were raised.
- A guest speaker for the second half of 2011 and a member's private exhibit project for the end of the year, with the Society support but without the Society's participating, were examined.

JUNE

- The minutes of proceedings of the May meeting were approved.
- The favourable reaction by members to the May Society's meeting's range of topics as well as the quality of material on display was noted.
- The lack of progress on the Society website project was the subject of some debate.
- The Mont Vert Outing was finalized and fixed for Saturday 11th June. Brochures on the nature park and details of a recce were examined.
- Jean Claude Montocchio, based in Paris, was accepted as a member of the Society.
- Four local members were to be notified of their status.
- Note was taken that the College du St Esprit Philatelic Club was not operating as planned.

JULY

- The minutes of the June meeting were approved.
- The June Society meeting "My Favourite Stamp" participation was poor with only four members taking part.

- An Outing to Bras D'Eau was proposed for September and the planned Long Mountain visit rescheduled to sometime in 2012.
- Two of the four members notified of their status in June were delisted.
- The question of a member and an accomplice dealing on the premises during Society meetings was raised.
- No real progress on the Society's website project have been realised to date.
- The College du St Esprit Philatelic Club did not meet in June; the Society is blameless.

AUGUST

- The minutes of meeting of July 2011 were approved.
- The July monthly meeting was reviewed and the range of topics covered and the high level of the contribution of the participants were noted.
- A report on the Mont Vert Outing was made and the powerpoint presentation by Dr A.Nasser Maderbokus received a special mention.
- The Bras D'Eau Outing was confirmed for 10th September.
- Note was taken that two meetings of the College du St Esprit Philatelic Club had been scheduled for 10th and 24th August.
- Some tangible progress was reported on the Society's website project and the domain name had been registered.
- Mohammed Swaleh, based in London, was accepted as a member of the Society.

OVERSEAS MEMBERS

STEPHEN ANDRE from Biel/Bienne, Switzerland visited Mauritius from 16th July to 5th August. He met with the President on three separate occasions. He also managed to get a couple of items missing in his collection.

DAVID GIBBON of the UK and his wife Carole were in Mauritius from 16th August to 29th August, after visiting Reunion and Rodrigues. He met with the President on several occasions at Quatre Bornes and in Port Louis and they both visited the National Archives in Coromandel. A lunch for David and Carole laid on at the residence of the President on Saturday 27th August was attended by six local members.

JOHN NG WONG HING, of Verdugo Viego, California visited Mauritius for a short convalescent holiday. He got in touch with the President as he was unable to meet anyone from the Society. He promised to make amends in 2012.

THE MONT VERT OUTING

On Saturday 11th June 2011, seven members of the Society, Dr A. Nasser Madebokus (Doc), Mico Antoine, Takeswar Nath Greedharrye, Ah Lan Lam Yan Foon, Ismael Kara, Albert Koenig and Saoud Mauthoor accompanied by non-member Harry Gaspard, a well known *randonneur*, and exceptionally three special invitees took part in the Society's Mont Vert Outing. One member who had signed up, Thonyno Dieudonné, was unable to make it.

The meeting point was the Mont Vert Nature Park carpark and Mauritius being Mauritius, most of the participants arrived after the scheduled time of 9 a.m. On a cool cloudy morning with the promise of rain the group started out for the first Outing of 2011. They called in at the Visitors Interpretation Centre, an unusually clean, airy, well maintained building with two rooms of photographs, posters and data on the local flora as well as information on the park. This was followed by an easy stroll through the fenced up Fernery of ferns and orchids and a walk around the well tended arboretum of some 150 indigenous and endemic plant species some of which are critically endangered. From the vantage point of the multipurpose kiosk one has a very good view of the extent of the grounds and of the trash around – plastic bottles, foil wrappers and other rubbish. The neon tubes were burning brightly at 9.30 a.m.

Many photographs were taken with lots of chat with Doc, a keen horticulturalist, providing more details where the plant name plates did not.

Sometime after 10 a.m. and behind schedule the group walked the asphalt road towards the park, then on the unpaved road up to the gated park entrance where a bill board with a map of the park provided helpful information on the lie of the land. The main features of the Nature Park proper are two walks or trails named *Parcours Bois de Natte* of 2.8 km and *Parcours Bois d'Ebene* of 2.5 km.

Harry Gaspard chose the *Bois d'Ebene* trail and later switched to the *Bois de Natte* trail. The walk was easy over board walks, well maintained natural paths and some man made tracks of slippery basalt rocks. Arrows painted on small boulders ensures that no one gets lost. Many species of plants were identified by Doc; some tasted the *café marron*, *goyave de Chine* and local wild 'blackcurrant'. However no one took any chances with several types of brightly coloured berries. An endangered orchid was observed, some rare *l'herbe anglais* and other

species of flora were spotted. The walk finally ended at the covered elevated platform from where a good view of the park green canopy extended in every direction marred only by the white Bigara satellite dishes. During the lunch break the heavens opened up – fortunately the outers were under cover.

Beneath the platform there is a ditch with very little water which on the map is identified as marshy land. It was full of plastic, paper, foil, discarded factory garbage, textile cut offs and miscellaneous rubbish. This trashy habit of Mauritians was evident at far too many places in the park.

The group then took a short walk back to the main access road where those who went on to Mare-aux-Vacoas and those who did not split up. The brave who continued to walk were Takeswar, Albert, Saoud, Mico and Harry the guide.

The hike was of some 10 km plus and ended at La Marie. The group followed the forestry department tracks all the way to Mare-aux-Vacoas turning right at the forest guard's *maison* where the Society gave the guard's wife some provisions. Within the happy hunting grounds of a fenced *chassée* to the left hunting dogs bayed, gunshots popped and someone even blew his hunting horn – Mauritian big game hunters were shooting and missing Javanese deer or Mauritian *cerf*. One member suggested that we should all duck at the sound of every shot because the hunters were missing their targets more often than not, he could tell by the many no-hit loud bangs.

The longest stretch of the hike was along a very straight track in an area of mainly tall re-forested non-endemic pine and eucalyptus trees planted after the native forest had been logged. Some of these trees were currently being logged to make way for a wind farm – so the wood cutters said. The invasive *goyave de Chine* shrubs were common and even in June the fruit was easily reachable along the way.

Several low flying aircraft screamed overhead on their way to the airport and there were some amusing moments of a Mauritian version of plane spotting. Intermittent showers meant the unfolding and folding of umbrellas. Overall however the weather was not bad - in fact it was good hiking weather.

Turning left and then right at the end of the long stretch of tall grassy tracks the hikers ended up behind and to the west of Mare-aux-Vacoas. Scrambling over the south dam wall the group ended up in the almost dry bed of the most important

reservoir of the island. According to one week-end paper of 12 June 2011, the reservoir was at the dangerously low level of 33.3% of its capacity with only 8.62 million cubic metres of water. The water level could be read on the watermark lines of the small islands and dam walls of the reservoir... without magnifiers! Many photographs were taken. After climbing over the east wall of the dam the group left the reservoir and walked the three kilometres to La Marie along the safer face-the-traffic side of the road. Many stops along the road were made to identify and collect ornamental garden plants. After a short stop at the Matthew Flinders monument the group broke up at the La Marie bus stop and everyone went home at around 3 p.m.

Mont Vert named after Chevalier Antoine de Montvert, is located in the region of Forest Side, some two kilometres from Curepipe off the Curepipe-Nouvelle France main road. It extends over 73 hectares and it is managed by the Forestry Department of the Government of Mauritius. Conceived in 1999, the conservation and recreational project was completed in mid-2006.

A small black dog

There was one little black dog that began to follow the group as soon as the hike began. The dog wore a collar and a red ribbon and it just would not go away despite the many attempts to get rid of it. It disappeared when chased only to reappear later. Just before the La Marie road, after leaving Mare-aux-Vacoas, there was some yelping in the cane fields; the little black dog went to join a pack of Mauritian strays. The Mauritian stray dog problem is very real.

Philatelic note

The photographs of the flowers of Mauritius, indigenous and endemic in the Visitor's Interpretation Centre, are vastly superior to those depicted on the Flowers definitives stamps of 2009. The accompanying information is precise and error free. That cannot be said about the amateurism and the quality of the photographs of the in-house philatelic expert, photographer and museum 'curator' of Mauritius Post.



From L to R – M Antoine, A Lam Yan Foon, T Greedharrye, S Mauthoor, Dr A N Maderbokus, A Koenig, I Kara.

POST OFFICES / POSTAL AGENCY

New post offices were inaugurated at La Flora on 1st June 2011 and at Glen Park on 17th August 2011 with Henrietta Postal Agency ceasing to operate in August 2011. Details, photos and postmarks will be published in the next 2010.

ANNIVERSARIES AND EVENTS

Mauritius Post released a set of four commemorative stamps on Thursday 30th June 2011 at the Postal Museum, Port Louis Waterfront, during a function graced by the presence of the Hon. Tassarajen Pillay Chedumbrum, Minister of Information and Communication Technology in the presence of eminent personalities headed by the Chairman and CEO of Mauritius Post. The four stamps are supposed to pay tribute to the persons and institutions that have contributed to the economic, political and cultural advancement of the Republic hence the marked presence of heads of several institutions and the families and hangers on of those philatelically honoured.

The stamps feature one institution, one occasion and two personalities as follows:

Rs 7 – Population Census 2011

Rs 14 – Birth Centenary of Sir Moilin Jean Ah Chuen

Rs 21 – 125th Birth Anniversary of Dr Maurice Curé

Rs 25 – Centenary of the Medine Sugar Estate.

The technical details are:

Designer – Two graphists of Mauritius Post doubling as in-house stamp designers

Printer – Cartor France

Process – Lithography

Stamp size 27.94 x 44.45 (Rs 7 and Rs 25) vertical portraits

44.45 x 27.94 (Rs 14 and Rs 21) horizontal landscapes

Perforation – 14

Gum – PVA

Watermark – CASCO large crown

Sheet format – 50 stamps in two panes of 25 stamps separated by a gutter strip.

The Rs 7 Census stamp is a poor, blurry orange brown reproduction of a 19th Century census form, the two personalities are from black and white (one with some yellow!) photographs and the Medine Sugar Estate stamp is a black and white overhead view of the Factory area – all pedestrian and boring locally ‘designed’ efforts.

The Official First Day cover illustration is dominated by green cane fields with the coastal village of Flic en Flac and the western coastline in the background. The faces of Maurice Curé and Jean Ah Chuen and the logo of the population census are overlaid in descending order to the left of the overwhelming sugar cane fields. The four stamps are affixed to the right of the cover and cancelled with a cachet measuring 30mm in diameter; a smaller cachet of similar design but of 25mm diameter is struck to the top centre of the cover cancelling nothing. Both cachets are double circle devices have ‘Anniversaries and Events’ at the top, Mauritius at base and the date 30 June 2011, is in a straight line in the middle of the inner circle. The logo of Mauritius Post is imprinted on the back flap of the FDC.

The covers were on sale at Rs 85 per unit at the usual outlets throughout Mauritius on the day of issue and thereafter at the Philatelic Bureau, Port Louis as well as at several designated post offices until they sell out or get eventually withdrawn.

N.B. “The Stamp year programme 2011” (sic) announced six stamps for this May/June “Events and Anniversaries” (sic) commemoratives. One personality “G.M.D Atchia” and one institution “Customs” were not honoured with postage stamps in this issue despite their listing on the official 2011 programme.



CACHETS AND POSTMARKS

?KNOWN-UNKNOWN?

WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DAY

World Telecommunication Day restyled World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) in 2011 and themed "Better life on rural communities with ICT" was celebrated in Mauritius in mid - May 2011.

A double framed rubber stamp 60mm x 40mm as shown was used at 20 post offices, 15 rural and 5 urban, from 13th May to 20th May 2011 to be used for impressing on postal domestic letters.

The cachet bears the date 17 May 2011 and identifies the propagandist as Mauritius Post Ltd at the base. The simpler former World Telecommunication Day cachet was not used in 2011. The cachet was not extensively used thus very few covers have been seen. The proving covers recorded have been struck with various shades of violet and red ink.



To mark the event many activities were held by Mauritius Post Ltd. Apart from the cachets; free access to Internet at 83 post offices, an open day on 17th May at Goodlands, Central Flacq, Rivière des Anguilles and Petite Rivière post offices and on 17th May at 9 a.m. the official launching of the celebrations was done by the Hon. T.Pillay Chedumbrum, Minister of Information and Communication Technology.

2011 HOUSING AND POPULATION CENSUS

The use of the Central Statistical Office Housing Census cachet, as described in 2010 No. 4 of April 2011, has been confirmed by proving covers during the second campaign carried out between 27th June and 6th July 2011. All the covers recorded bore cachets impressed with red ink.

Two commercial covers dated 23rd June 2011 and 29th June 2011 have been seen postmarked with the spaced double circle circular datestamp of Forest Side (Forest Side is in two words) and impressed with a rectangular cachet in violet as shown.

The whole of the unequal four-section cachet measures 60mm x 15mm. The four boxes contain the following: FOREST SIDE/POST OFFICE in two lines and VALUE in capital letters in the upper half with MIDLANDS and POSITIVITY in lesser fonts in the lower half as per the illustrated specimen. There is no indication of the user or the reason for the use of this propaganda cachet for it is a propaganda cachet promoting values and things positive.

FOREST SIDE POST OFFICE	VALUE
MIDLANDS	POSITIVITY

It has been confirmed that this cachet was officially authorized by Mauritius Post. It has not been confirmed however whether or not this sectarian-cum-religious slogan propagates the positive values of the *Brahma Kumaris* spiritual movement.

Apart from the two proving commercial covers in the possession of the Society no other covers have been reported to date nor has the Society been able to obtain more data on this rather mystical hush-hush cachet.

The World Communication Day cachet absolutely identifies Mauritius Post as the user, the 2011 Housing and Population Census cachet absolutely identifies the Central Statistical Office as the responsible institution, the nameless (Value and Positivity) cachet conceals the identity of the user!

Any comments or additional data? Any other covers out there?



THE PRESS

l'express	21.05.2011	Théâtre – MAURITIUS trame autour d'un timbre
l'express	21.05.2011	Braquage de Bambous : deux suspects arrêtés
The Independent	02.06.2011	La Flora post office opens
Le Matinal	02.06.2011	Un bureau de poste à La Flora
L'Hebdo	11.06.2011	Une production américaine de notre patrimoine
L'Hebdo	19.06.2011	Prochain jumelage de Port Louis avec Durban
The Independent	20.06.2011	Philatelic exhibition promotes cultural heritage of 21 nations
Le Matinal	21.06.2011	Un exemplaire du 'Two Pence Blue' en vente
The Independent	30.06.2011	Mauritian stamp sells for £1 million in UK
The Independent	01.07.2011	Post Office stamps, 1 st day cover
Le Matinal	02.07.2011	Timbres-poste : Hommage aux figures emblématiques
L'Hebdo	03.07.2011	Hommage à quatre tribuns
The Independent	08.07.2011	Swaziland Post seeks MPL expertise
The Independent	19.07.2011	Vehicle owners can pay road tax at MPL
The Independent	13.08.2011	Blue, Red Penny stamps on display at Berlin in Sept.
l'express	14.08.2011	Les reines bleues et rouges s'exposent
The Independent	18.08.2011	New Post Office at Glen Park to offer various ICT services
Le Journal du Samedi	20.08.2011	Mail Delivery Centre

R.L.O.

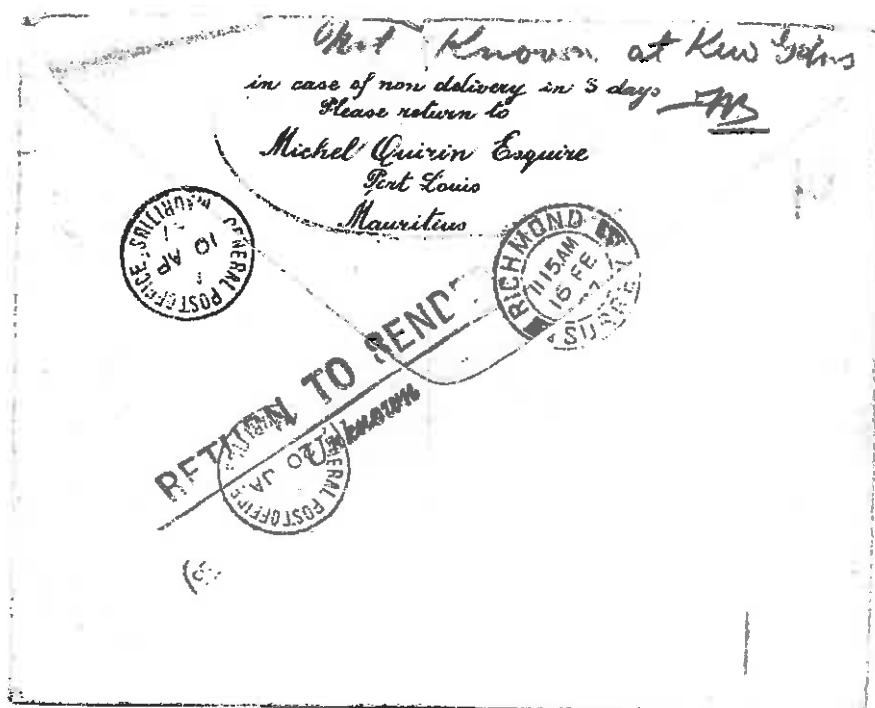


Back of cover with R.L.O. handstamp shown at the August 2011 meeting – see page 5

ROLAND GARROS FFC



Reduced to 75%



Front and back of 'Roland Garros' 1937 First Flight Cover sent to a fictitious address in London. The cover was eventually returned to the sender (same name as addressee). The cover is the property of the Mauritius Institute, also known as the Museum of Natural History.

SUPPORT THE SOCIETY - SHOW UP AT THE MONTHLY MEETINGS

PREVIEW OF 2010 – ISSUE NO. 6

- ❖ New Post Offices at La Flora, Glen Park, Pailles, Trou aux Biches, Ebène – photos, postmarks and much more.
- ❖ Closure of Henrietta Postal Agency
- ❖ Contemporary Rodrigues.
- ❖ Bras D'Eau Outing.
- ❖ World Post Day 2011 cachets.



MAURITIUS POSTAL HISTORY = MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY