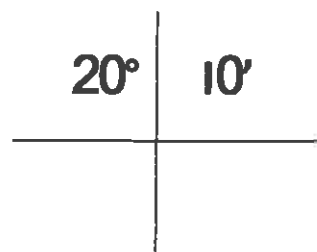


20° 10'

Issue No. 7 – APRIL 2012



THE JOURNAL OF THE MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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Postcard showing the devastation caused by the cyclone of April 1892

20°10' is a publication of the Mauritius Philatelic Society

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From the Editor's Desk

A Promise kept ... almost

Dear Members,

On 22nd November 2011, I sent a personal letter to every member of the Society explaining the reason for the delay in producing the 2010s of 2011. I also published the same letter in Issue No. 4 of April 2011 which was distributed locally in April 2012.

No. 5 and No. 6 will be published a bit late and are scheduled for distribution in June and August 2012 respectively. The promise was for No. 4 and No. 5 in the first quarter and No. 6 for the second quarter. Our overseas members will receive all three issues after September 2012... also a bit late.

I hope to redress the matter of late distribution in the future. The main cause was logistics, which turned out to be rather difficult to resolve. One particular irritation was the loss of the first draft of No. 5 in the post between Brisbane and Quatre Bornes. It has yet to arrive and it is not the first piece of mail from overseas addressed to P O Box 89 that failed to reach its destination.

Patrick Kwan in Australia and I in Mauritius have more or less eliminated the logistics problems. Future issues of the Society bulletins should reach you more regularly from now on. I am still waiting for your comments and suggestions; in the mean time I assure you of my best attention.

Mico W Antoine

P.S. You may have noted that the numbering sequence will keep increasing (4, 5, 6, 7, etc..) instead of being reset to 1 every year so as to facilitate referencing. I have also slightly tweaked the title from 2010 to 20¹⁰ to avoid confusion with the year 2010.

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

JANUARY – There was no Society meeting in January 2012. There was no Society lunch or other activity held in January apart than the Management Committee meeting. There was no known active overseas member reported to have visited the island either. If anyone did he/she kept his/her visit very private. The traditional inactivity of the Society is now well entrenched.

FEBRUARY – The first monthly meeting of 2012 was held at College du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 14.00 hrs on Saturday 4th February.

The notice of this meeting dated 25th January 2012 listed the afternoon's agenda as follows:

We will examine Mauritius 2011- Stamps, Postal History, Covers, Others.

- (1) Dr Maderbokus will present the Tea Stamps of December 2011,
- (2) The Society – an overview of 2011 and a preview of 2012 and
- (3) The Society Auction be held at the February meeting with the caution that if it receives the required support it will become a regular feature of future meetings. If not, it would be discontinued.

Members were also urged to support the Society by attending the monthly meetings.

An early reminder of the AGM of 3rd March was included together with a nota bene to the 11 local members who had not yet paid their membership for 2012.

The notice board was well garnished with a wide range of information such as letters from members, overseas requests for exchange partners, philatelic news from USA, Europe and Australia, press cuttings on local philatelic and postal news including that of two self proclaimed "founder members", stamps exhibitions, the 240th anniversary of Mauritius Post Ltd celebrations in 2012 to be held throughout the whole of the year, the 2012 stamp programme, Thynno Dieudonné's Christmas Island (the relatively unknown Canadian one, not the better known Australian one) and the new 'Post Office' News, the 2011 annal of Mauritius Post – lots of items.

Dr A Nasser Maderbokus presented the Tea stamps of December 2011 separately from the Mauritius 2011 material as these were not reviewed when they were released. His usually well researched presentation was well received unlike the

contribution of one member who tried to show his mettle about the subject by his over elaboration to the annoyance of quite a few at the meeting.

All known as well as some hitherto unknown aspects of the philatelic products, stamp issues and postal history of 2011 were shown. These included stamps and covers, metermarks, WebRiposte labels, cachets and datestamps impressions on commercial mail and on philatelic covers. Many shortcomings were noted. The consensus was that the quality of postal marks and datestamps impressions continue to deteriorate, that the decline in the execution and management of the various stamp issues accelerated in 2011. There was also some concern expressed regarding the cases of non-arrival of incoming overseas mail and packages.

The review of 2011 and the preview for 2012 were about the pluses and minuses of the past and the hopes for the future.

2011

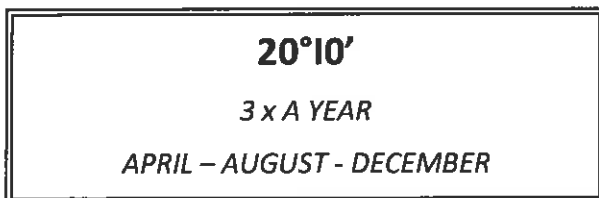
- The involvement of more committee members in the burden sharing of running the Society.
- The frustration and disappointment in getting any sense out of the website initiative.
- The failure of the College du St Esprit Philatelic Club.
- The reduction in unpaid subscription fees level from 22 to 11 during the two years.
- The eight new enrolments in 2011.

2012

- The Port Louis City Council Philatelic Club in 2012.
- The re-introduction of the Spot Auction.
- The resolution of the news bulletin problem.
- Finally an important development is expected before the middle of the year.

Other measures are envisaged with regard to the consolidation of the Society's position; a review of the monthly meeting procedures, greater discipline in time keeping and comportment at the monthly meetings, the total elimination of trading at Society meetings by two vendors.

19 members attended the first Society meeting of 2012.



MARCH – The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on 3rd March at College du St Esprit in Quatre Bornes at 14.00 hrs. The Rules and Regulations of the Society and all the provisions of the articles as laid down by the Registry of Association were strictly observed. The press notice published in *l'express* on Tuesday 14th February 2012 read as follows : “The Annual General Meeting of the MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY will be held at St Esprit College, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes on 3rd March 2012 at 2 p.m. to transact the following business: (1) To read and approve the minutes of proceedings at the last General Meeting, (2) To receive, consider and approve the report of the President and Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2011, (3) To consider and approve the Budget for the year 2012, (4) To elect the Committee Members and Office Bearers for the year 2012, (5) To appoint an Auditor for the year 2012. Any member wishing to serve on the 2012 committee should send his/her letter of candidature to the Secretary by latest 25th February 2012. By order of the Secretary.”

There was no supporting display of stamps and other material put up for the AGM nor was there any other activity such as the Purchase List or Spot Auction. The 2012 AGM was restricted strictly for AGM business. The notice board carried only AGM material such as letters of candidature, proxy forms, ballot papers, the audited accounts, the budget and the AGM convocation and agenda.

The eight outgoing Committee Members who stood for re-election and the one new member were elected by a show of hands. The items on the agenda were adopted unanimously by the 16 members present at the meeting and the 11 proxy votes held were used. The AGM ended at 14.50 hrs.

After the conclusion of all AGM business, the new Management Committee met. It was resolved that all those holding office during 2011 would be re-appointed to their former posts except for Albert Koenig who was appointed Vice Treasurer thus filling the vacancy created by the departure of Chrishnanand Cushmajee. Freshly elected Thonyno Dieudonné filled the post left vacant by Albert's Koenig's promotion. The departure of Chrishnanand Cushmajee is directly linked to the Society website project. It was resolved that Saoud Mauthoor would remain a member of the Management Committee notwithstanding the very late apology for his failure to attend the AGM and the opinion of the committee would be conveyed to him in no uncertain terms.

APRIL – The April Society meeting was held at 14.00 hrs sharp at the usual venue in Quatre Bornes on Saturday 7th April. There were three items on the agenda (i) Postal stationery and postcards of Mauritius – mint and used by Mico Antoine and Albert Koenig, (ii) The 2012 ‘Law Day’ commemorative stamps of Mauritius (iii) David Tarry’s Mauritius collection.

Albert Koenig showed an impressive range of black and white picture postcards that he had collected over some 20 years from outright bulk purchases, auctions and also as gifts from family members. These included the early picture postcards of 1901 up to the tinted colour postcards of the 1950s – an awesome half-century of 20th century pre-industrial Mauritius. Some 60 picture postcards were displayed and the lengthy presentation was rather exhaustive.

The postcards of historical value featured buildings, parks and gardens, the harbour of Port Louis, festivals, railways, mountains, ships, sugar factories, places of worship of the main religions of the island, rivers and bridges. The used postcards of which the vast majority were sent to France and written in the French language gave some insight of the nature of the correspondence from simple greetings to business disputes as well as demands for payment of goods and annoyance over delays in replying. The various stamps used over the period of 50 years was a study in the evolution of postal rates. André de Kervern’s (Indian Ocean Study Circle) 1992 postcard

catalogue and his ‘Historical Postcards – Mauritius’ book of 1991 were used for reference and guidance.

Postal stationery postcards from 1879 to 1950 included the first postcards of 1879 up to the George VI postcards of 1945. Mint, used, specimen, reply paid, registered envelopes of 1891, letter cards, wrappers, embossed and imprinted envelopes and a range of post 1950 aerogrammes, private postal stationery and wrappers were on show. Higgins and Gage listings were used as reference.

The popularity of the postal stationery postcards of Mauritius is evidenced by the high numbers utilised for amongst other uses, society and club convocations, recording of rainfall data by the sugar industry and also by the general public for short messages. The number of these postcards addressed to a certain Dr Edwards is impressive and the range of messages, data and private family affairs provided a very good if sometimes intrusive insight of the period. Almost every collector of Mauritius has at least one Dr Edwards postal stationery postcard in his/her collection. Modern picture postcards of Mauritius, Rodrigues and Agalega were also shown. Postcards produced for special occasions or by specific institutions such as those of Mauritius Post, Mauritius Institute (National History Museum) and Air Mauritius were also displayed. The tourist beach scene and other commercial postcards were excluded.



Picture postcard showing Port Louis harbour

Picture postcards of Diego Garcia, produced in California on the military, the fauna, the history as well as the BIOT 2004 Birds Definitive (SG 296-307) stamp postcards were included for good measure.

Dr A N Maderbokus, who presents all the new stamps issued by Mauritius, gave a talk on the set of the 'Law Day' commemoratives issued at the beginning of April. The merits and demerits of the theme, the design, the insert write-up and other relevant aspects were explained with hardly a murmur from those present, reflecting the lack of interest or enthusiasm for the first series of stamps of 2012.

Copies of David Tarry's 16 album leaves on 'Maritime mail' were on show. The Society will be showing various aspects of David's collection throughout the year.

In 1995 when the original and first Mauritius Postal Museum was inaugurated, David Tarry loaned his collection to the Government of Mauritius, through the Mauritius Philatelic Society, for six months. Photocopies of the whole collection were donated to the Society. It is hoped that our members will derive some benefit with regard to the arranging and writing up of a collection.

The Spot Auction offered 20 lots and the Purchase List some 40 items. Sales were moderate.

19 members attended the April meeting and a former UK based member on a visit to the homeland re-enrolled as a member. The Society's 2010 Issue No. 4 of April 2011 was distributed.



2 Cents Arms postcard locally addressed to Dr Edwards. Cancelled Riviere Seche on 29 AU 1905 with Curepipe arrival cds and re-directed to Curepipe Road on the same day.

Philatelic activities to mark the 240th anniversary of postal services in Mauritius

- Publishing of a book on areas not yet covered in our postal history
- Postage stamp exhibitions at the Postal Museum, post offices and schools
- Organisation of a great stamp exhibition during World Post Day
- Organisation of a 'Colloque' on philatelic topics
- International coverage with UPU, SAPOA and PAPU
- Issue of a First Day Cover on 12 December 2012
- Renaming of exhibition gallery at the Postal Museum as the Nicolas Lambert Gallery on 21.12.2012

Extracts from a 24 page document titled '240th Anniversary of Postal Services in Mauritius 1772-2012 Activities Organisation Plan – February to December 2012.'

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Management Committee meetings of the Society for the period January to April 2012 were held on Saturday 14th January at the residence of Hans Bigler, 45 Kiwis Avenue, Sodnac in Quatre Bornes at 13.00 hrs and at College du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue on Saturday 4th February, Saturday 3rd March and Saturday 7th April at 13.00 hrs.

The quorums were assured with 7, 8, 7 and 8 at the four respective meetings; a minimum of 5 members constitutes the quorum.

DELIBERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS

JANUARY

- The minutes of the meeting of 3rd December 2011 were approved on a proposition of Dr Nasser Maderbokus and seconded by Judex Adrien.
- The committee reviewed the December Society monthly meeting.
- The lack of movements and the non-performance of Chrishnanand Cushmajee on the Society website were discussed fully. A sub-committee of three was set up to monitor the situation.
- A quick overview of 2011 on subscriptions, membership, finance, the news bulletins and a few other topics was made.
- The Society's plans for 2012 and the Annual General Meeting were discussed

FEBRUARY

- The minutes of the meeting of 14th January were approved on a proposition of Dr Nasser Maderbokus and seconded by Ismael Kara.
- The agenda of the AGM scheduled for 3rd March 2012 was approved; the preparations and readiness were confirmed. The meeting arrangements were assured and all relative details examined.
- The agendas for the monthly meetings of April, May and June were tabled and adopted.
- The inauguration of the new Port Louis Municipal Junior Stamp Club on 11th February 2012 was confirmed and the fate of the College du St Esprit Philatelic Club sealed.
- Strict new procedures for the monthly Society meeting was adopted for implementation as from April 2012
- The decision to re-introduce the Spot Auction as from February 2012 was confirmed.

MARCH

- The minutes of the meeting of February 2012 were approved on a proposition of Hans Bigler and seconded by Ismael Kara.
- The February Society meeting agenda and material display were reviewed.
- The first Spot Auction of the year held during the February meeting was discussed.
- The reports, accounts, budget and all other matters concerning the AGM were scrutinized and approved for presentation and adoption.
- Premdath Hurlall of Vacoas was admitted as member of the Society

APRIL

- The minutes of the committee meeting of 3rd March 2012 were approved on a proposition of Albert Koenig and seconded by Hans Bigler.
- The AGM held on 3rd March was discussed and it was noted that (a) all business was conducted without any contestation, (b) that all documents, returns and other obligations were lodged or executed within the authorized time limits and (c) the composition of the Management Committee was confirmed.
- A report on the progress of the Port Louis Municipal Junior Stamp Club by the two members nominated to set up the club was made.
- The outing scheduled for June was discussed and three proposals were submitted for consideration. A final decision was postponed to the next committee meeting.

2012 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee of the Society was constituted on Saturday 3rd March 2012 after the Annual General Meeting.

The members for 2012 are:

President – Mico Wilfrid Antoine

Vice President – Nasser Ahmad Maderbokus

Treasurer – Judex Leu Adrien

Vice Treasurer – Albert Koenig

Secretary – Tarkesswar Nath Greedharrye

Vice Secretary – Assenje Ismael Kara

Members – Hans Christian Bigler

– Saoud Mauthoor

– Thonyo Dieudonné

CORRESPONDENTS

RAY SHEPPARD
41 PRIORSFIELD ROAD
KENILWORTH
WARWICKSHIRE CV8 1DA
UNITED KINGDOM

Email: barbara@dragonsoft.co.uk

He wishes to obtain from Mauritius local datestamps on S.A.E envelopes. He will provide the S.A.E (self addressed envelopes) and will pay all the costs.

Interested members are advised to contact the above and agree on the conditions under which the exchanges will operate. The Society will not get involved in any manner whatsoever. The arrangements must be strictly between exchange partners.

GREGORIO F PAREDES
SAN FERNANDO CITY
2500 LAUNION
PHILIPPINES

He seeks exchange partners in Mauritius, Seychelles, the Comores and Reunion Island. Topicals : used and mint, music, costumes, dances, flags, maps, royalty, religion (Xmas, Popes, Saints). He offers stamps of Philippines in exchange.

STAMP PROGRAMME 2012

At the ministerial cabinet meeting of 27 January 2012 the Government of Mauritius took note of the stamp issue programme of Mauritius for the year viz 'stamps would be issued on the following themes',

1. Law Day
2. Events and Anniversaries
3. Government Institutions and Past Eminent Personalities

One newspaper carried a (verbatim) report on the three themes on 28th January 2012 as the fourth item under the heading 'Cabinet Decisions'.

The stamp programme was made available by Mauritius Post, upon request, at the Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis as from 6th January 2012. Scant details were listed on an undated and unheaded sheet of paper without any indication of the source and this paper was subsequently withdrawn until after the cabinet decision when it again became available.

Theme	No. of stamps	Proposed date
1. Law Day	4	March 2012
2. Bic. Of Turf Club	4	June 2012
3. MRA (Customs Dept)	4	August 2012
4. Centenary of Scouting in Mauritius	1	October 2012
5. Int. Year of Cooperatives	1	October 2012
6. Past Eminent Personalities	5	December 2012

The footnote forewarned that 'the dates of issue are tentative and may be subject to change'. No mention is made of the possible changes of themes.

Erratum – Issue No. 6 - December 2011

Please note on page 23, Cachets – Marks – Franks – Others, paragraph 1 reads "... the only stamp of Mauritius denominated 2011, issued in 2011...". This should read "... the only stamp denominated Rs 11, issued in 2011...".

COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS

Law Day

A set of four postage stamps was released on 4th April to commemorate the 'accomplishments of the World Jurist Association' on the occasion of the Mauritius celebration of the event on 4th March every year "because on that date in 1968, the Mauritian Independence Order was passed, thereby giving birth to the Constitution of Mauritius".

The four stamps are titled 'Law Day' whereas the official First Day Cover, the cover cancellation cachet and the data card heading are all titled 'Law Day in Mauritius'.

The inscriptions on the stamps are as follows:

- Rs 7 - Grand Port District Court
- Rs 8 - Interior of Court of Justice
- Rs 15 - Sir Michel Rivalland, Chief Justice (1967-1970)
- Rs 20 - The Gavel

The first stamp is a painting, the second a photograph of a court room with several dummy like images – some faceless, the third a black and white portrait of the bi-wigged Chief Justice, the fourth the most unimaginative of the lot – a hand and gavel poised to strike "JUSTICE" carved into a block of wood.

The FDC is illustrated with a black and white "Lady Justice" (sic) blindfolded with a scale in one hand balanced by a sword in the other hand. The special cancellation handstamp is a triple circle device. Two

outer and one inner 30mm in diameter with "Law Day in Mauritius" top and Mauritius bottom between the outer and the inner circles. A gavel and the date 04 April 2012 occupy the inner circle. The logo of Mauritius Post is imprinted on the ungummed back flap.

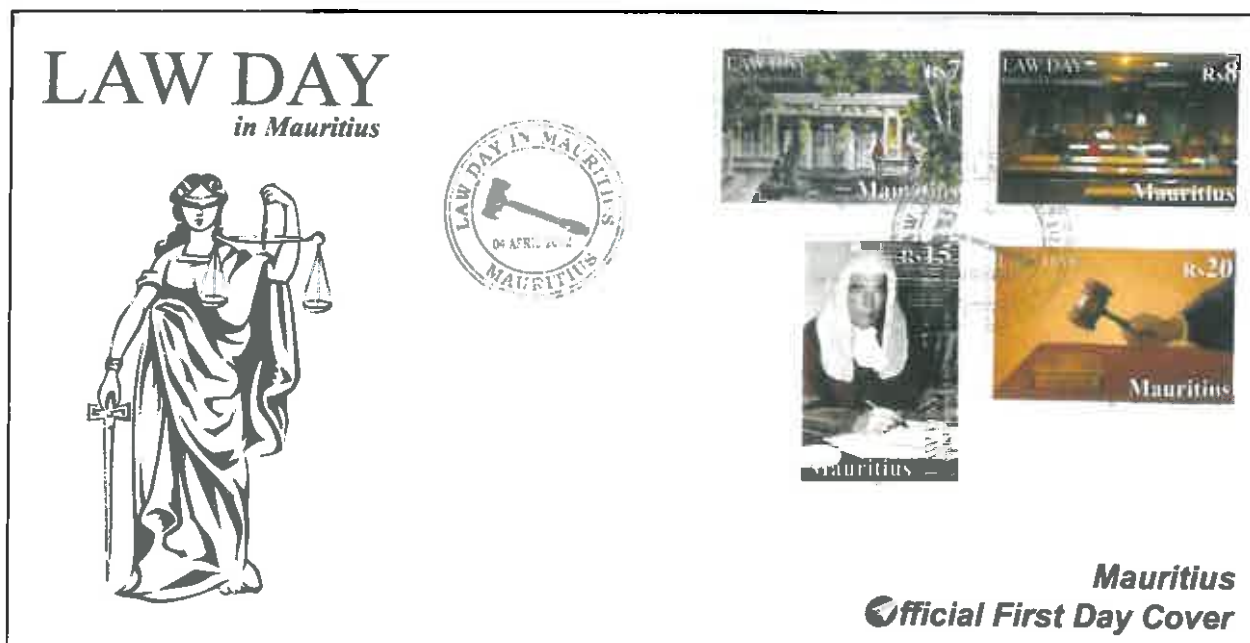
The insert titled 'Law Day in Mauritius' contains something on democracy, constitution, independence, jurisdiction, esteem and other legal literature.

The technical details are :

- Stamp size – 44.45 mm x 29.94 mm
- Printer – Cartor Security Printers (France)
- Process – Lithography
- Number per Sheet – 25/ 50
- Watermark – CASCO large crown
- Perforation – 14
- Gum – P.V.A.
- Designer – Mauritius Post Ltd

Courtesy is extended to the owner of the painting of the Grand Port District Court and the Rivalland family.

The official FDC with a face value of Rs 50 for the four stamps was put on sale at Rs 100 at the Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis as from 4th April 2012 whereas at all post offices in Mauritius and Rodrigues the cover was supposedly on sale on 4th April 2012 only.



'POST OFFICE' NEWS

THE 2011 ANNAL OF MAURITIUS POST

(A review by Mico Antoine)

The renamed and restyled 'Post Office' News is obviously an improvement over the Blue Penny News of the past nine years. The condescending naivety of those who "by an overwhelming majority" in 2003 imposed the copycat Mauritian philatelic misnomer as their annual's banner have at long last and at the very least corrected their earlier 'error'.

The front cover of the new in-house magazine begins with the senseless heading "Celebrating 240 years of Communications – 1772-2012". When 250 years come around (in 10 years time) the current top brass will have long since disappeared and most probably been forgotten. So another bunch will have another celebration to mark their more appropriate 250th year with the opportunity to reflect on the egotism and egregiousness of the premature 240th bash.

The oddly balanced bi-lingual 15 page annual has been the Chairman's message on page 2 facing the CEO's message on page 3 with their portraits. Both full page messages are in French. This is followed by the Operations Manager's Corner (sic), Infrastructure (new and revamped post offices), IT News and two pages on Human Resources. The centre fold is a photo-op on World Post Day 2011 in "images"; the Chairman and/or CEO are overexposed in no less than 9 "images".

On pages 10 and 11 the financial performance is well presented in clear precise English with graphs, pie charts and notes on profitability, revenues, operating expenses, revenue from sales of postage stamps and diversification into non-postal products and services. The stunning revelation is that, notwithstanding the 3.5% drop in sales of postage stamps in 2011, this item alone represents 72% of total revenue for the year. The remaining 28% makes interesting reading – 10% is from EMS, terminal dues, parcels and SAL, 2% other postal income, 6% agency collection, 4% pension payment, 1% banking services, 1% rental income and 4% other non-postal services.

One page on Brand and Communication and another on Business Development in French gets the pass over as they contain nothing but wind. This is followed by *Evenements et CSR*. The page is crammed with no less than 11 photos, many with the photogenic CEO and very little text. By the way CSR has got something to do with corporate social responsibility.

The last page is in French on *philatelie* where the CEO is in all four "images" and the Chairman in two. The 6 FDCs and 8 SCCs get very little exposure or space. The by-line reads : "2011, une année très riche en activités philatéliques" and a desperate sales pitch " Et si chaque employé de la poste achète un First Day Cover (FDC)". BTW the French for FDC is *enveloppe du premier jour*.

The most revealing feature of the rich year of philatelic activity is the admission that "il en existe un bon stock du FDC des années 80 et 90". In 2011 Mauritius Post Ltd is still trying to unload official First Day Covers of the last millennium. This is really rich. The back cover is a full page advert and on pages 2 to 15, but not 8 and 9 (the centre fold), the motto "Celebrating 240 years of Communication (1772-2012)" begs for attention.

◇ ◇ ◇

During the year a 'Post Office' *Page Speciale* was released to mark the occasion of the 150 years of postal services in Rodrigues (1861-2011). This undated colour recto verso A4 page is full of photographs and has an interview with the CEO plus his portrait. The two pages are in French.

The 'Post Office' *Flash* of October 2011 is a folded A3 sheet on *Journée Mondiale de la Poste dimanche 9 octobre 2011*. The title misrepresents the contents as it is much more than World Post Day. Apart from the "Message de notre CEO" under his portrait there are headings such as "Innovations, Récompense, Social, Sports, Formations" and the back page is headed "Philately and Postal Museum".

General comments by Mico Antoine

The postal services have always been a paying and receiving agent of the government of Mauritius for pensions, banking and parastatal organisations fees collection. The 10% of the four listed items under revenue existed before Mauritius Post was created. Clearly therefore well over 80% of 2011 revenues came from sources other than the 60 odd newly "diversified segments".

The question that goes begging is - what is the real contribution of all the chairman's "plus de 60 produits et services visant de nombreux segments de clients"? - 4% or less! The "More than just Letters" motto incorporated into the official logo, seen on nameplate post office signboards, posters, billboards and the back of buses is nothing but wind. Without

letters (on which stamps are gummed, computer generated self adhesive labels stuck and metermark impressed) Mauritius Post is virtually nothing.

The core business of Mauritius Post is letters. In 2004, after the corporatisation of Mauritius Post the normal inland letter rate was Rs 2.00, in 2011 it is Rs 7.00, an increase of 250%. Today Mauritius Post is financed, overwhelmingly, by letters and if there is a decline of 3.5% of postage revenue between 2010 and 2011 one contributing factor is the relatively high postal rates which is also the direct cause of the 13% drop in terminal dues earnings.

Another reason for that drop in the core business earnings is the abysmal service at post offices counters, none of which provide the full range of postal services in the major towns or larger post offices. Long queues form at strictly postal business counters and there are usually no queues at electricity, water and utilities counters except on "last day of payment" peaks. At Quatre Bornes post office for example a *commissaire* herds the public to three designated postal counters, out of the eight dealing with strictly postal business, whilst several of the five others are closed or unstaffed.

IT News makes mention of the use of internet access points at 100 post offices. The IT assistants at these post offices are hopelessly underemployed and with the idle time at utilities counters as well as the high costs of the corporate office no wonder that 75% of total operating expenses is staff costs. This single cost item alone is 3% higher than the 72% revenue item generated from the sales of stamps.

The diversification into some 60 other products which incidentally includes the sale of a government lottery ticket, the sale of insurance by a state insurer and photocopying service amongst other marginal items. The latest craze is the signing of mediated MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) for selling books, pickles as well as joint ventures with two major courier services which are in direct competition with the Mauritius Post owned EMS.

The historical business of the postal services is therefore letters. The marginal earning from all the much less than 60 other products and the excessively high costs entailed in generating any real income for these supposedly new revenue sources is simply bluff, bluster and ballyhoo, is not outright bull.

◇ ◇ ◇

• The Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis is an absolute disaster. The service is archaic. It sells stamps and poorly conceived FDCs and SCCs. Nothing else of

philatelic worth is offered. Postage stamp themes are over politicised and the performance of the whole set up from the Stamp Advisory Committee down to the graphic artist cum stamp designer very unprofessional.

The far too many launchings, viz the cost of refreshments, the publicity (banners, press notices theatricals) is absurdly overdone for a total of less than 3000 FDCs and 1000 SCCs (and less) that are subsequently sold. These events are unproductive.

Mauritius Post advertised the availability of FDCs of the last millennium (which were produced in much larger quantities then) as well as their own unsellable overpriced FDCs or SCCs of the new millennium. A once profitable department of the postal service is today a very poor image of the formerly accessible bureau that previously provided customer friendly facilities to its customers.

• The number 240 is an oddity and the senseless celebration of the 240th Year of Communication 1772-2012 is just one of the many strange events in the calendar of the corporatized Mauritius Post Ltd since 2004. The bad habit of commemorating odd events with even numbers include the 106th and 110th birthdays of the first prime minister of Mauritius with a special cover in 2006 and a special 22 carat gold foil stamp in 2010.

Mauritius Post is also adept at getting dates wrong. In 2012 alone the Law Day stamps were issued on 4th April to mark an event that occurred on 4th March 1968. The joint Sino-Mauritian reciprocal commemorative covers to mark a 40 year event on 15th April 2012 is unusually bizarre. The Chinese issued their single cover on 15th April, because according to the Chinese diplomatic relations were established on 15th April 1972, whilst Mauritius Post will wait until 17th May to issue their double digit ten (10) covers. This disjointed diplomatic idiocy will be commemorated in Mauritius on 17th May 2012 with a grand total of twelve (12) covers. Nothing could be weirder.

Philatelically Mauritius Post is pathetically inept and the Philatelic Bureau is a disgrace.

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE COVER

INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DAY

The SCC dated 26 January 2012 was released in Port Louis. More information will be published in 20¹⁰' No. 9 - December 2012 together with the Customs Department stamps.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

Extracts from Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 3rd March 2012 at St Esprit College, Quatre Bornes.

- Approval of minutes of 2011 AGM

The minutes were approved on a proposition of Krishna Gunnoo seconded by Jean Auguste.

- Report of the President for the Year 2011

The President summarized the position of the Society and gave a brief account on the main aspects of Society affairs since the last Annual General Meeting.

He began by welcoming the members and thanked them for providing the required quorum for the 23rd AGM. He informed those present of the Society's record in holding all the AGMs on time since 1989 without any manipulation of the attendance. Not once was an AGM postponed and he criticized Saoud Mauthoor, a candidate for a post on the committee for 2012 who was not present due to another last minute funeral.

- Financial position. The deficit of Rs 6,286.75 is less than the budgeted Rs 10,000 and for 2012 the budget should be balanced. The Society's net worth is still high at Rs 53,540.43. Expenses have been strictly controlled, turnover has been higher and payment of subscriptions has improved.

- The Management Committee. Eight of the outgoing members of the Management Committee are standing for re-election. Only nine candidates submitted their letter of candidature and their names are on the ballot paper. The President thanked the 2011 committee for a job well done.

- Membership. Applications for membership showed an improvement over the previous two years. Eight members signed up during 2011 against three in 2010 and four in 2009. However during the year there were four non-renewals, two resignations and one death so the net gain is only one. The Society must continue to attract new members during 2012.

- Activities. Much happened during 2011. The average monthly attendance was 18, an improvement of 1 over 2010. The News Bulletin situation was explained in a letter of November and all the 2011 bulletins should be distributed before the middle of 2012. Two outings were organized, one to Mont Vert and one to Bras D'Eau. The Society's efforts to promote philately at College du St Esprit has failed because of the lack of support from the Rector and the Dean; the Society is absolutely blameless. The Municipality of Port Louis has solicited

the Society's assistance in reviving their philatelic club. The Society's website project initiated by Chrisnanand (Vicky) Cushmajee has turned out to be unworkable and Vicky Cushmajee is no more a member of the Committee. The Spot auction will be re-introduced at monthly meetings.

- Mauritian philately. There was no Stamp Year Book for 2011 and the "Gold Foil" stamps were not re-printed" as correctly forecast in the President report of 2011. 17 stamps, 1 miniature sheet, 6 official FDCs and 8 'Special Commemorative Covers' were released during 2011. The 2012 stamp programme announces 19 stamps in six issues.

- Two members of the Society staged their personal stamp exhibitions under the aegis of Mauritius Post at the Postal Museum in October and December without any Society involvement.

- Details of stamps, covers and philatelic material issued during 2011 have been made available to the Society mainly by Jean Auguste.

- Conclusion. With the relative successes and the obvious setbacks during 2011, lessons have been learnt.

- Approval of Accounts ending 31st December 2011
The Treasurer presented the audited accounts, a copy of which was affixed onto the Notice Board. He went through the accounts item by item and no questions were posed. The accounts were approved on a proposition of Thonyno Dieudonné seconded by Mamade Junglee.

- Approval of Budget for 2012

The budget of Rs 90,000 Income and Rs 90,000 Expenditure for the Year 2012 was presented by the Treasurer and was approved on a proposition of Dr A Nasser Maderbokus seconded by Albert Koenig.

- Elections of Committee Members and Office Bearers for 2012

The following were elected unanimously by acclamation (16 members and 11 proxy votes) as members of the Management Committee for 2012: Mico Wilfrid Antoine, Judex Leu Adrien, Hans Christian Bigler, Thonyno Dieudonné, Tarkesswar Nath Greedharrye, Assenje Ismael Kara, Albert Koenig, Dr Ahmad Nasser Maderbokus and Saoud Mauthoor.

- Appointment of Auditor for Year 2012

Man Fan Lam Hang, FCCA, was appointed as Auditor for 2012 on a proposition of Mico Antoine seconded by Krishna Gunnoo.

AUDITED ACCOUNTS

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2011		
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
	Rs	Rs
CASH RESOURCES		
Cash in Hand – 01.01.2011	500.00	500.00
Cash in Bank – 01.01.2011	<u>44,092.18</u>	<u>53,691.18</u>
	<u>44,592.18</u>	<u>54,191.18</u>
RECEIPTS		
Entrance Fees	800.00	300.00
Subscriptions	22,500.00	19,800.00
Sales	39,850.00	24,735.00
Donations/Sponsorships	0.00	10,000.00
Others	<u>100.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	<u>63,250.00</u>	<u>54,835.00</u>
	<u>107,842.18</u>	<u>109,026.18</u>
PAYMENTS		
Cost of Sales	40,354.50	19,179.50
Newsletters/Bulletins	5,249.00	4,737.00
General Expenses	<u>32,183.25</u>	<u>40,517.50</u>
TOTAL OUTFLOW	<u>77,786.75</u>	<u>64,434.00</u>
BALANCE AT END	<u>30,055.43</u>	<u>44,592.18</u>
 REPRESENTED BY:		
Cash in Hand – 31.12.2011	500.00	500.00
Cash at Bank – 31.12.2011	<u>29,555.43</u>	<u>44,092.18</u>
	<u>30,055.43</u>	<u>44,592.18</u>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES @ 31 DECEMBER 2011		
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
	Rs	Rs
ASSETS		
Furniture & Fittings	7,735.00	7,735.00
Stocks	7,500.00	7,500.00
Debtors	8,520.00	0.00
Cash in Hand	500.00	500.00
Cash at Bank	<u>29,555.43</u>	<u>44,092.18</u>
	<u>53,540.43</u>	<u>59,827.18</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	0.00	0.00
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Balance @ 01.01.2011	59,827.18	65,926.18
Deficit for Year	<u>6,286.75</u>	<u>6,099.00</u>
	<u>53,540.43</u>	<u>59,827.18</u>

BUDGET 2012			
Income	Rs	Expenditure	Rs
Subscriptions	20,000	Cost of Sales	35,000
Donations & Sponsorships	20,000	Postage	10,000
Society Sales	45,000	Stationery	5,000
Other Income	5,000	Catalogues & Magazines	5,000
		Cost of monthly meetings	10,000
		Other expenses	10,000
		Printing of News Bulletins	15,000
Total Income	<u>90,000</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>90,000</u>

THE PRESS

The Independent	28.01.2012	Stamp programme for the year 2012
The Independent	17.02.2012	Mauritius Post inaugurates Ebene branch...
l'express	21.02.2012	La Poste : plus des services accessibles en un clic
The Independent	27.02.2012	MPL to offer automatic forex facility
The Independent	03.04.2012	Mauritius Post hosts job listing service
The Independent	06.04.2012	Stamps issued to honour late Chief Justice.
The Independent	10.04.2012	Delegation from China visits capital's postal museum
Le Matinal	10.04.2012	Sang Gouwei visite le Musée postal
Week End	15.04.2012	Des ballots des lettres adressées à Amnesty toujours à la poste.
The Independent	27.04.2012	SMEDA Mauritius Post join hands.

Hiroyuki Kanai 1925 – 2012

One of the greatest philatelists has left us - Hiroyuki Kanai, the only one in the modern era to have had 6 'Post Office' stamps in his collection as well as the Bordeaux cover.

In his book 'Classic Mauritius' published in 1981, he wrote in the preface "I am very much in love with Mauritius stamps".

At the 1993 David Feldman sale of his collection in Switzerland, two 'Post Office' stamps came back home largely thanks to a consortium led by the Mauritius Commercial Bank. The two stamps are now on display at the "Blue Penny Museum" in Caudan.

MAURITIUS POSTAL HISTORY = MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY