



NEWS ITEMS 2009.4

The Journal of the Mauritius Philatelic Society

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

DECEMBER 2009

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

OCTOBER – The October meeting was held at College du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes at 14.00 hrs on Saturday 3rd October 2009.

The agenda for the afternoon was – More on the 20th Anniversary of Mauritius Philatelic Society, Revenue Stamps of Mauritius and Two Aspects of Mauritius.

A review of the past two decades was about the beginning, the early days, today, the ups and downs and a general follow-up on the September presentation by Tarkesswarnath Greedharrie. Photographs of exhibitions, several legal documents and press cuttings on the Society were displayed.

A couple of long serving members in the room contributed with anecdotes on the longest surviving and continuously active of any other known philatelic societies or stamp clubs of Mauritius.

Revenue stamps of Mauritius was in the main additional material not dealt with at the July meeting. These included some surprisingly impressive personal documents of the embossed *papier-timbrés* and Government of Mauritius watermarked paper era.

The Two Aspects of Mauritius display was made up of several album leaves prepared for the 20th Anniversary Exhibition such as The First Mongolfier in the Southern Hemisphere, postmarks and postal markings, slogan cancellations, and To Pay marks.

The lowest attendance for 2009 was recorded in October with 14 members present.

NOVEMBER – The November get-together was held at the usual venue and at the usual time in Quatre Bornes on Saturday 7th November 2009.

The Society's 20th Anniversary Exhibition was previewed for the privilege of members. Only 16 showed up. Several panels readied for 30th November were on display. These included a comprehensive explanation of philatelic terms, several specimen of postal stationery, some fakes and flaws as well as marginal inscriptions and printer's imprints plus souvenir sheets, miniature sheets and sheetlets. No less than seven panels composed of some 30 album leaves were devoted to aerophilately.

The World Post Day 9th October 2009 cachets on covers were shown as well as the latest *Webriposte* labels and the Aapravasi Ghat cover. An analysis of the farcical execution of the 2009 stamp programme was made. The tinkering at the whim and fancy of Mauritius Post deciders (a mockery of decisions taken and announced) has lowered the stamps and philatelic standards of the country to alarming proportions.

The never programmed "Mauritius – C'est un plaisir" pair of stamps issued on 9th October was reviewed by Dr. A.N. Maderbokus who has taken on the task of presenting all new issue, and he tore into this set of stamps. The generally hysterical, scurrilous and at times insulting local press reports on the new branding of Mauritius were overwhelmingly negative. India, Seychelles and other brandings and strap lines were compared with the new Mauritian brand such as "Incredible India" and "Sesel Sa" (This is Seychelles).

The Notice Board carried news on philately worldwide. Sales of stamps, covers and accessories were poor.

DECEMBER – The last meeting of the year was held, less than 24 hours after the closure of the 20th Anniversary Exhibition at the Mauritius Institute in Port Louis, on Saturday 12th December at Collège du St Esprit, Quatre Bornes at 2 p.m.. This meeting was rescheduled from the 5th December.

The agenda had three items – A Review of 2009, A Preview of 2010 and any other philatelic and Society business.

2009 was reviewed fully. Stamps, postal history and all aspects of the year were discussed whereas not much was previewed for 2010 because, apart from some loose talk, nothing of substance was known except for the World Cup and the Bi-centenary of the Battle of Grand Port commemoratives and some politically inspired nonsense. Lots of rumours and no official programme yet released at December 2009.

The Events and Anniversaries set of four stamps were presented by Dr. A.N. Maderbokus. Some very frank language was used and negative opinions were expressed by several members on the T. Callychurn stamp in particular and the other three stamps in general.

The President presented a brief and quick overview of the 20th Anniversary Exhibition and 32 album leaves prepared for but not used at the 20th Anniversary Exhibition titled “Dead Countries of Africa” were shown to members.

The Notice Board carried several ICAC covers, the Expo cover, the Quatre Bornes Post Office cover, Customs and Mauritius Revenue Authority cachets as well as some local philatelic snippets.

Magazines, catalogues, philatelic publications and other material surplus to Society needs were distributed free to members. Attendance was 18 for the last meeting of the year.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

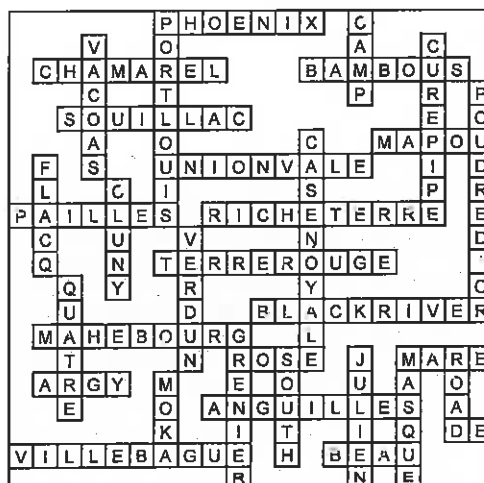
• The Management Committee of the Society met as follows at Collège du Saint Esprit during the fourth quarter of 2009: Saturday 3rd October, Saturday 7th November and Saturday 12th December at 13.00hrs. Attendance was 5, 7, 5; the quorum is 5.

NEW MEMBERS

The following members joined the Society during 2009.

Jean PRINS	- Roquebrune-sur-Argens	- France
John Peter WILSON	- West Sussex	- England
Thonyno Georges DIEU DONNE	- Eau Coulée	- Mauritius
Viraj RAMHARAI	- Albion	- Mauritius

SOLUTION TO “CANCEL THIS PUZZLE” OF SEPTEMBER 2009

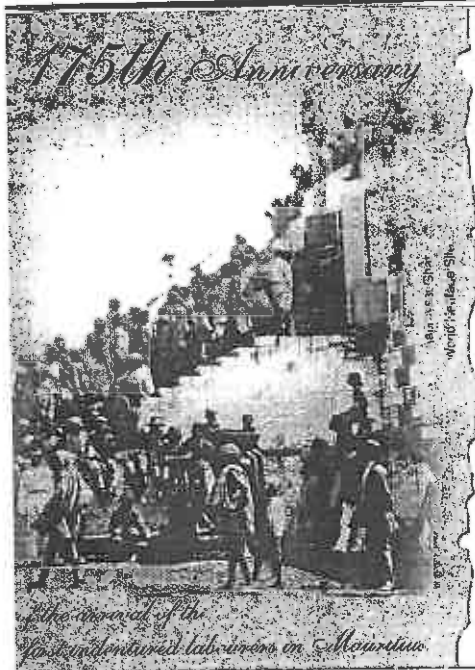


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SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE COVERS

175TH ANNIVERSARY....

To mark the "175th Anniversary of the arrival of the first indentured labourers in Mauritius" on 2nd November 2009, Mauritius Post Ltd produced a Special Commemorative Cover affixed with the Rs10 stamp from the Events and Anniversaries issue of 2007 depicting the Indian personality Manilal Doctor who came to Mauritius in 1907. The cover is illustrated with an "Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site" scene and the Rs10 stamp is cancelled with a special round cachet measuring 25mm in diameter and reading "175th Anniversary of the arrival of the first indentured labourers" with Mauritius / 02 November / 2009 in three lines within the centre. The logo of Mauritius Post is imprinted on the back flap to signal their proprietorship. 500 covers were produced. Some 300 plus were made available to the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund and less than 200 were put on sale at the Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis at Rs35 per unit.



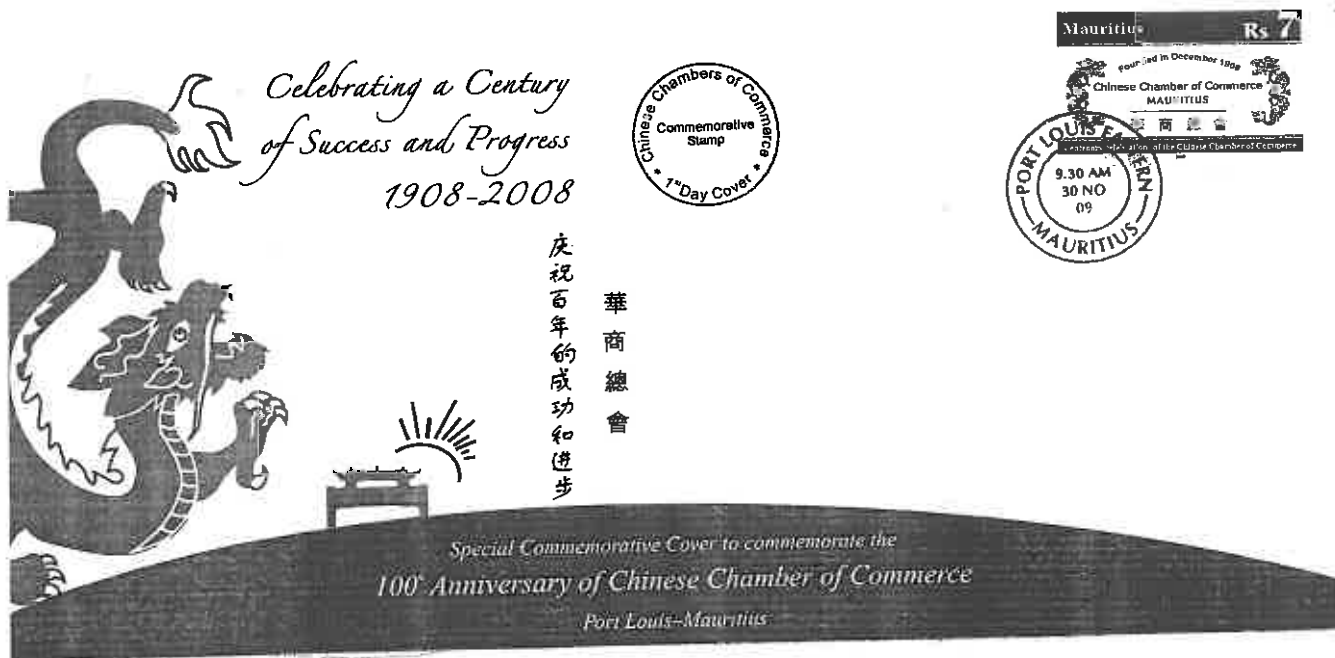
Special Commemorative Cover

(Reduced)

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A Special Commemorative Cover to acclaim the "100th Anniversary of Chinese Chamber of Commerce" was produced by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce on 30th November 2009 almost one year late. The cover is illustrated with a gold dragon and is inscribed "Celebrating a Century / of Success and Progress / 1998-2008" in three lines. The commemorative cover is marked with a special single circle circular cachet measuring 28mm in diameter reading Chinese Chamber of Commerce (top) 1st Day Cover (bottom) and Commemorative / Stamp in two lines in the middle in addition to a further cancellation cachet. The logo of Mauritius Post is not on this cover.

This additional special cancellation cachet, tying the stamp to the cover is **not** a datestamp. The device measures 30mm in diameter with Port Louis Eastern (top), lines at sides, Mauritius at base and 9.30 AM 30 NO 09 within the inner circle. The covers were not "postmarked" at Port Louis Eastern post office but were serviced at the Dumas Street Headquarters building. The cancellation cachet is a good imitation of a datestamp – it is however **not** one of the double circle circular datestamps in use at Port Louis Eastern post office. This device was manufactured for and used exclusively on the CCC covers. An insert gives a brief history of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce founded on 8th December 1908. 3500 covers were produced for the 30th November 2009 batch and these were put on sale at the seat of the Chamber at Jade Court, Suite 206, Jumamah Mosque Street, Port Louis at Rs25 per unit.



(Reduced)

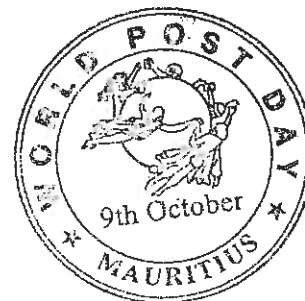
N.B. The Society has not been able to establish if other additional covers were produced privately for the CCC event nor the quantities of such covers.

WORLD POST DAY 2009

• To observe World Post Day separately and especially for the Universal Postal Union's 2009 propaganda slogan "a postal service committed to green growth", a special cachet measuring 40mm in diameter and reading Mauritius Post Ltd (top) Committed to Green Growth (bottom) was impressed with green ink only on (maximum numbers of) postal items at 23 post offices as well as the (Central Mail Office) Delivery and Sorting offices from 5th to 10th October 2009.

The list of offices were: CMO Delivery and CMO Sorting Port Louis, Goodlands, Quatre Bornes, Beau-Bassin, Rivière du Rempart, Bel Air, Mahebourg, Curepipe, Tamarin, Réduit, Petite Rivière, Floréal, Pamplémousses, Flic en Flac, Montagne Blanche, Rose Belle, Central Flacq, Rivière des Anguilles, Saint Pierre, Rose Hill, Chemin Grenier, Vacoas.

Source: Memorandum PS/HPO/44/2009 dated 02 October 2009.



WORLD POST DAY 2009

• The actual Universal Postal Union, World Post Day in Mauritius (9th October 2009) was commemorated by the use of special rubber stamps "postmarked" with "only violet ink" on "the maximum number of incoming and outgoing correspondence" on "9th October 2009". Mail has been seen with blue ink as well as with violet ink from Thursday 8th October through to Monday 12th October.

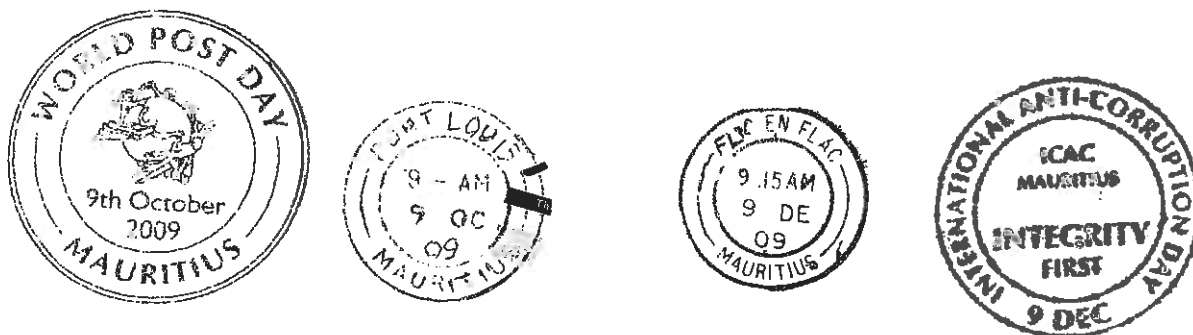
The standard World Post Day, Mauritius, 9th October (without the year) rubber stamps were issued to 22 post offices as well as to the Central Mail Office Delivery and Central Mail Office Sorting offices, a total of 24 outlets.

The list of offices were: CMO Delivery and CMO Sorting Port Louis, Quatre Bornes, Beau-Bassin, Rivière du Rempart, Bel Air, Mahebourg, Curepipe, Vacoas, Goodlands, Tamarin, Petite Rivière, Pamplémousses, Rose Belle, Souillac, Forest Side, Bambous, Chemin Grenier, Central Flacq, Rivière des Anguilles, Saint Pierre, Rose Hill, Triolet, Grand Bay.

Source: Memorandum PS/HPO/44/2009 dated 07 October 2009

WORLD POST DAY 2009

- Only one World Post Day cachet with Mauritius (at top) and 9th October / 2009 (at bottom) in two lines within the inner circle has the year indicated thereon. All the other 24 do not have the year and all the other 24 rubber stamps are around 45mm in diameter give or take a couple of mm. The special 2009 (year) rubber stamp is smaller at 40mm in diameter and was used only at the Philatelic Bureau in Port Louis. (Only the 2008 World Post Day cachet is similar in size and design to the 2009 cachet.) This special year 2009 rubber stamp was not announced and was not on the list of Memorandum PS/HPO/44/2009. Collectors were able to obtain the impression of this 2009 cachet on their "Mauritius – C'est un plaisir" covers and other private covers prepared or serviced at the Philatelic Bureau Port Louis upon request on 9th October 2009 only.



WORLD POST DAY 2009

Press notice of 30th October 2009 – Closing of Post Offices – In the context of WPD activities (9th October 2009) ALL post offices will be closed (in Mauritius, Rodrigues and Agalega) on Saturday 31st October 2009.

INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY 2009

To commemorate the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Day, Postmasters and Controlling Offices of Mauritius Post Ltd “ were kindly requested to have as many ordinary items of correspondence both inland and foreign posted at their office during the period 1st and 12th December 2009 impressed” with the standard ICAC double circle rubber stamp in red ink. The ICAC cachet measures 37mm in diameter and is dated 9 December – ICAC Day.

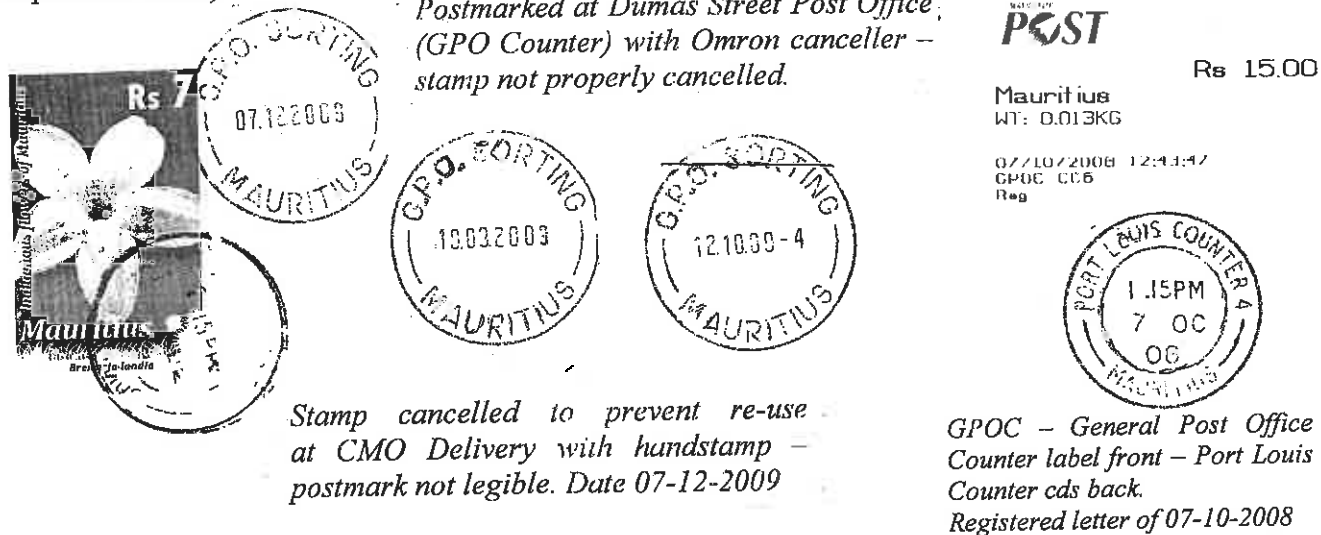
Nineteen post offices in addition to the (General Post Office) Sorting, the (General Post Office) Delivery and the (Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam) Office of Exchange were provided with ICAC rubber stamps.

The list of offices was as follows: GPO Sorting , SSR O/E, Rose Hill, Beau-Bassin, Vacoas, Triolet, Central Flacq, Mahebourg, Goodlands, Réduit, Floréal, Eau Coulée, Forest Side, GPO Delivery, Stanley, Rivière des Anguilles, Flic en Flac, Quartier Militaire, Pamplémousses, Plaine Magnien, Bambous and Saint Pierre.

Source: Memorandum PS/P/654/2009 dated 27 November 2009

Ed Note. Many pieces of mail have been struck with the ICAC anti-corruption message impressed in red ink. The more intensive use of the cachet in 2009 reflects the perceived increase of corrupt practices in Mauritius as well as the real increase according to the US State Department. More people are seeing the annual anti-corruption message, in red, in Mauritius and abroad.

Someone slipped up badly or simply went to sleep. Memorandum PS/P/654 of 27th November 2009 reverted to the use of GPO and SSR O/E. GPO Sorting and GPO Delivery are now known as CMO Sorting and CMO Delivery ; CMO being Central Mail Office. The "Office of Exchange" at the International Airport, Plaisance closed on 30th August 2008 and was relocated to Port Louis as from 1st September 2008 where it is simply known as the "Office of Exchange". (See News Items 2008.3 of September 2008)



N.B. the postmark has dots -- the labels do not

G.P.O. SORTING

The new Omron table top automatic canceller which was removed from the Central Mail Office (GPO SORTING) "sometime in September 2009" is now in use at the GPO COUNTER Post Office (Dumas Street Post Office) at the Bulk Posting enclosure with the same unchanged die reading G.P.O. SORTING (top) MAURITIUS (bottom) lines at side and the day, month and year in one line as shown. The earliest date seen so far is 03.10.2009.

Ed. Note. The device is used at a venue other than that indicated on all mail datestamped by this canceller at Dumas Street or GPO COUNTER. Note that the *Webriposte* labels from Dumas Street read GPOC for GPO COUNTER. Until such time as Mauritius Post either returns the canceller to the Central Mail Office (GPO SORTING) or changes the die to indicate the correct office of posting, (i.e.) GPO COUNTER all mails datestamped G.P.O. SORTING do not emanate from the office indicated by the postmark. Incidentally the last type D standard double circle cds introduced at Dumas Street read Port Louis Counter and not GPO Counter.

The temporary use of a datestamp at an office other than that indicated on the device is acceptable in cases of emergency e.g., the "theft" of the Sainte Croix datestamp in November 2004 when a special rubber stamp was used to replace the standard double circle circular datestamp. Temporary means a "short" period. In the case of Sainte Croix, under the corporatized Mauritius Post, this actually meant over six months from 8th November 2005 to 3rd July 2006 when new double circle circular datestamps were delivered from the UK.

The corporatized Mauritius Post has been taking liberties and flouting some fundamental postal practices in its reprocessing, reorganizing and reengineering strategies. For example G.P.O. (General Post Office) is anachronistic in a new 2009 datestamp when the office for which it was intended had been renamed Central Mail Office, CMO. The transfer of the equipment to an office other than for which it was intended on a "permanent" basis without the change of the name place die is fundamentally wrong for the reasons given above.

STAMPS

THE NEW BRAND IDENTITY LOGO OF MAURITIUS

“The new brand identity logo of Mauritius” is the ambiguous title of two stamps for the confusing new strap line of the island, **Mauritius – C’est un plaisir**, issued on 9th October 2009 by Mauritius Post Ltd. Both stamps bear the “deeply researched country’s brand” and the rhetorical exaggerations of the accompanying data extol the “articulations by professional graphologists of Brand Mauritius.”

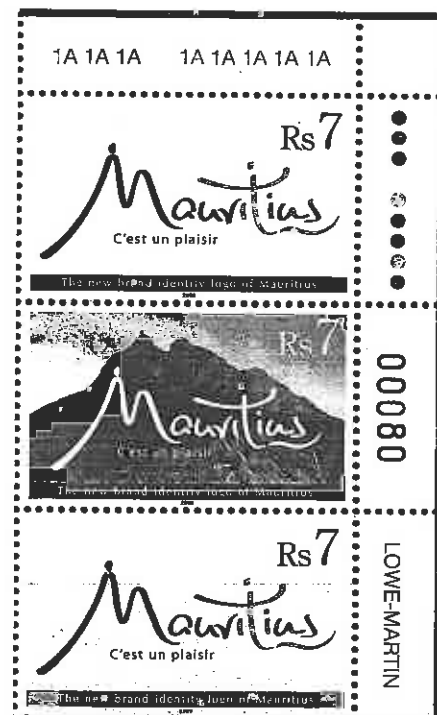
The conceptor of the new logo and strap line is *Acanchi* of the UK notwithstanding the claim by Mauritius Post that the stamps were designed by local talent. Both stamps have a face value of Rs7, the standard inland letter rate, thus they will be used extensively on local mail and in the process completely miss their logical target, overseas, where very few of them will be seen.

Stamp ‘A’ carries the island’s name **Mauritius**, in national colours, and **C’est un plaisir** in red against a lightly tinted orange background symbolic of sandy beaches. Stamp ‘B’ is the same logo and strap line in white against the dark green, black-grey background of Pieter Both Mountain, “revealing an intuitive and independent thinker,” the iconic rock of Mauritius.

The stamps were lithographed by Lowe Martin of Canada. The sheet composed of 50 stamps is divided into two panes of 25 separated by a central gutter strip of five and the Mauritius Post logo is printed on all the five gutters. The year imprint 2009, printed once only, is on the selvedge of the first gutter to the left of the sheet. The two stamps are printed on a single sheet with Stamp ‘A’ above Stamp ‘B’ in the upper pane and in the lower pane Stamp ‘B’ is above Stamp ‘A’. The stamps were printed in the horizontal landscape format and the size is 27.94mm x 44.45mm. The watermark is described as CASCO watermark, perforation 14, gum P.V.A.

The Official First Day Cover does not have the stamps affixed “se-tenant” (top and bottom) but detached and affixed separately (side by side) and are tied to the cover with a special cachet dated 09 October / 2009 in two lines in the centre of the 24mm circular handstamp reading “The new brand identity logo of Mauritius” (top) and “Mauritius, First Day of Issue” (bottom). The FDC is illustrated with “a seal of quality that has been specially designed to be applied on only packaging to be used by accredited Manufactured in Mauritius ... Made in Mauritius Made with Care”.

The manufactured “Made in Mauritius....Made with Care” FDC packaged with two stamps of a total face value of Rs14 was on sale at Rs35 per unit.



Some interesting marginal inscription from Lowe Martin

ANNIVERSARIES AND EVENTS

A set of four stamps were issued on 30th November 2009 to honour "*les personnalités célèbres*" and "*les évènements historiques*" of Mauritius is not titled **Anniversaries and Events**.

The individual stamps are inscribed as follows:

- Rs7 - Centenary celebrations of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce
- Rs14 - Birth centenary of Dr. K.Hazareesingh
- Rs20 - Bicentenary of the Capture of Rodrigues Island by the British (1809-2009)
- Rs21 - Birth centenary of T. Callychurn

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce was founded on 8th December 1908 – 101 years ago. No dates of birth and death of both personalities are given on the stamps but the year 1909 is mentioned in the data card for both. The British took possession of Rodrigues on 5th August 1809.

The stamp size of the vertical portraits of the two personalities is 27.94mm x 44.45mm and the two events horizontal landscape stamps are 44.45mm x 27.94mm. All four stamps were "designed" in-house by Mauritius Post and were lithographed by BDT International Security Printers of Ireland. Other technical details provided by Mauritius Post are: Perforation 14, Gum P.V.A and Watermark CASCO.

The sheet format is 50 stamps set in two panes of 25 separated by a central gutter strip of 5; each of the five gutters is imprinted with the logo of Mauritius Post for both the vertical and the horizontal stamps.

The Official First Day Cover is illustrated with a very poor scratchy black and white ox-driven cart transporting sugar cane with a turbaned Indo-Mauritian cart driver for which an "artist" gets an acknowledgement. The face value of the stamps affixed to the FDC is Rs62; the price of the FDC Rs100.

Ed Note. Bizarrely in the stamp pamphlet "Paul Laurent Edmond Icery (1824-1883) a great Mauritian scientist" gets recognition for his "immense contribution to the sugar industry" by association "with this stamp issue". He does not get a stamp in this issue nor in other previous issues although he was programmed for a stamp in 2008. He does not even get the right to sit, next to the driver, on the ox cart carrying sugar cane to a factory to produce sugar by "the process of converting raw sugar into white sugar with the addition of mono sulphate of lime" a process attributed to him. No stamp is equal to no recognition. No amount of unprincipled justifications will change that.

T. Callychurn was never on the 2008 or 2009 stamp programme. He "replaced" the announced "40th Anniversary of the first man landing on the moon" *sic* in the 2009 programme. No reasonable explanation has been proffered for the non-issuance of this stamp. B.I.O.T. (British Indian Ocean Territory) issued a set of five stamps and one miniature sheet to mark the occasion on 20th August 2009 – collectors of Mauritius can always get their "Mauritian" stamps from B.I.O.T.!

In the data card T. Callychurn former postmaster general is described as having "acceded to such a prestigious post when the country was still under British Rule" and in "Blue Penny News" of December 2009 he is described as someone "*qui a été le premier Indo Mauricien à gravir au poste de directeur dans le service postal après les Britanniques*".

Some Mauritians named "*après les Britanniques*" during British Rule who were holders of the "*poste de directeur*" (year of appointment in brackets) are Charles Lennon (1888), Louis Martin (1890), William Charles Rae (1905), Joseph Pilot (1914), Félix Croquet de Rosemond (1919) and Willy Boudet (1959) – all before Teeluckparsad Callychurn who was appointed on 14.9.1960. The first Mauritian is the first Mauritian. The seventh or even eighth or ninth cannot be the first Mauritian appointee to the "*poste de directeur*" whether Indo-Mauritian or whatever – queue jumping and blatantly ethnic considerations notwithstanding.

(See the complete list of Colonial Postmasters, Postmasters General and General Managers of Mauritius from 1811 to 2004 in the Society's "Mauritius 2004 Stamps, Cachets and Postal History")

BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY

STAMPS

The B.I.O.T. Post Office issued the following stamps during 2009. The dates of issue and other details are provisional and are from the post office website www.biotpostoffice.com/productlist.

Seafaring and Exploration	- 6 stamps, 1 ms	- 9-3-2009
100 Years of Naval Aviation	- 6 stamps, 1 ms	- 17-4-2009
Space Exploration 40 years	- 5 stamps, 1 ms	- 20-7-2009
New Definitive Stamp Issue	- 12 stamps, 1 sheetlet	- 5-10-2009
Fungi	- 4 stamps	- 7-12-2009



TROMELIN



STAMPS

Un carnet pour les Eparses. A special stamp booklet containing 16 stamps for the international letter rate of 20 grammes for mail posted from T.A.A.F. bases went on sale as from October 2009.

The booklet cover features a view of the island of Tromelin and the stamps were produced from photographs taken by Lucia Simion during the 2009 Spring Mission of *Marion Dufresne* to T.A.A.F. The stamps were presented at a special *colloque* on 5th October 2009 on *Les Iles Eparses* at the *Sénat* in Paris. 30,000 booklets were produced.

MAURITIUS POST PUBLICATIONS

BLUE PENNY FLASH INFO

- Blue Penny Flash Info: a new one-page recto/verso communication tool to enhance information flow towards staff of the organization was introduced in 2008. Edition No. 1 of 31 October 2008 contained such snippets as – Message from CEO; Re-engineering of mail processing (D+1); Summer Time; Scanner at Parcel Post Office; IPS and World Post Day Celebrations “Stay Connected”
- Blue Penny Flash Info: Edition No 2 – August 2009 contained Message from CEO; Grippe A H1N1; Assistant Postwoman; Visit of Chairman & Chief Executive Officer in Rodrigues; Employees Welfare; Official Visit; Quality of Service; Le “Junior Philatelic Club”; SAPOA Philatelic Task Force; Post Coding and Addressing System and Escher / Oracle financial Interface – crammed in a one-page recto/verso “updates on important topics”

BLUE PENNY NEWS

- The December 2009 Blue Penny News, the 16-page annal of Mauritius Post for the year under review is a very colourful promotional product. Pages 8-9 is titled “the new Post Office concept”... at Quatre Bornes, Central Flacq and Port Louis Eastern; page 10 is a report titled “World Post Day 2009...” and page 15 is about *Philatélie – les timbres poste émis en 2009*.... and pages 2 and 3 two messages, one from the Chairman the other from the Chief Executive Officer – one page per message with colour portraits of the communicators; the rest is about achievements, milestones, projects and general news.

EXCERPTS – BALLYHOOS – EDITOR’S NOTES

Blue Penny News - December 2007

« le Postal Tower qui abritera le Headquarters, le Central Mail Office, et un service comptoir sera érigé en plein cœur d’Ebène... On donnera le premier coup de pioche en Mars 2008... en fera la fierté de tout un chacun »

- Ed. Note: [Nothing on the Postal Tower in Blue Penny News - December 2009. If a *coup de pioche* was given in March 2008, that *coup* has reduced the initial land surface of 2004 substantially. The big land allocation ceremony was held on 10th October 2004 when a “foundation stone” plaque was unveiled on the site. See News Items 2004.1 of March 2004. Remember the New GPO Building, Port Louis, on SG 474 of December 1974? It was never built. The Air Mauritius “Paille-en-Queue Court” occupies that site today. History may yet repeat itself.]

Blue Penny News - December 2006

“In fact we want to be ready right in 2007 to face the challenges of 2009 with the liberalization of the Postal Sector.”

« Quant au “Road Map” ... travaillé sur un plan stratégique qui permettra à la Mauritius Post d’être coté en bourse. »

“Liberalisation of postal services in 2009 – a challenge for MPL” “Beware of Year 2009, says Mauritius Post Ltd”

Blue Penny News - December 2008

« Toutefois il ne faut pas se leurrer; l’année 2009 s’annonce difficile car le contexte économique international volatile ainsi que d’autres défis nous guettent. »

Blue Penny News - December 2009

« un autre Roadmap pour les années 2009-2012 a ainsi vu le jour ». Strategic Plan 2009-2010. Our Highway to Success – built around 3Ps, Profit, People, Plant.

- Ed. Note: [2009 came and 2009 went! No work started on the Postal Tower at December 2009. No liberalization in 2009. Not quoted on the Stock Exchange during 2009. Strategic Plans and Roadmaps?]

THE PRESS

Le Défi-Plus	03.10.2009	Mauritius: It's a pleasure
Le Matinal	07.10.2009	La Mauritius Post Ltd organise une collecte de sang
Le Matinal	08.10.2009	Branding; une nouvelle identité pour Maurice
Le Matinal	08.10.2009	Deux millions de Français contre la "privatisation" de la Poste
L'express	09.10.2009	La poste se réinvente grâce à l'informatique
Le Matinal	09.10.2009	Timbres commémoratifs pour Branding Mauritius
Le Matinal	10.10.2009	Mauritius Post se met au vert pour mieux promouvoir l'environnement
L'express	10.10.2009	Le musée postal ouvre ses portes
L'express	13.10.2009	Nouveaux timbres pour nouveau logo
Le Matinal	16.10.2009	Mise à prix Rs93 millions
Le Matinal	16.10.2009	Un timbre de Maurice en vente à plus de Rs90 millions
Le Défi-Plus	17.10.2009	La Poste se met au vert
L'express	03.11.2009	Philatéliste passionné comme son père
Le Matinal	01.12.2009	La poste lance un projet vert
The Independent	01.12.2009	"Poste verte" project launched
The Independent	03.12.2009	Stamps to commemorate historical events
L'express	11.12.2009	La Poste se met au vert
L'express	20.12.2009	4 millions de lettres à expédier
L'express	20.12.2009	La poste se réinvente

Ed. Note: The titles of articles listed in THE PRESS are reproduced "as is"... errors, if any, are from source.

YOUR NEWS ITEMS FOR 2010

Three "News Items" will be released during 2010, in April, August and December.

BLUE MAURITIUS

BLUE MAURITIUS is the title of member Helen Morgan's first book published by Atlantic Books in 2006. Helen hails from Melbourne, Australia and her book "traces in great detail the stories of the known 'Post Office' stamps in existence in a scholarly but very readable fashion". The original hard cover printing priced at £17.99 was launched by the author in Mauritius in 2006. The paperback version published in 2009 is now available in Mauritius at £8.99, or Rs450.

(See News Items 2006.4 December 2006)

MAURITIUS POSTAL HISTORY = MAURITIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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

Edited by **Mico W. Antoine**

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CORRIGENDUM

In News Items 2008.1 of March 2008, Page 8, the characteristics of a *Webriposte* label, Mauritius on the label is described as "Country of Origin". Mauritius is in fact the Country of Destination as the item to which the label was affixed was an inland letter. The appropriate description therefore should have been **Country of Destination** as a letter destined for Australia reads **Australia** not Mauritius.

P.S. Errors have been recorded such as an inland label reading **United Kingdom** and an **Australia** label reading **Austria**.

CUSTOMS CONTROL CACHETS

The parcels office of Mauritius has been using circular datestamps as from 1925 and only types C (single circle) and D (double circle) are known; type C from 1925 and type D since 1952 (Proud / Ibbotson).

The Customs Department has always had control over all parcels addressed to Mauritius at the Parcel Office in Port Louis and three different cachets are known to have been used between 1958 and 2009. Have you seen any other cachets? Let us know.



1958

RELEASED
H M CUSTOMS
PORT LOUIS



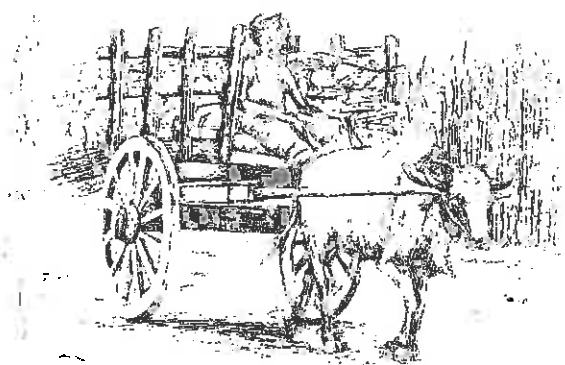
1998

POST OFFICE OF
EXCHANGE
MAURITIUS CUSTOMS



2009

MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY
CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT
PARCEL POST OFFICE



The scratchy Events and Anniversaries ambiguously inappropriate FDC "associated" illustration and the celebrated Indo-Mauritian PMG stamp (see page 8)

SOCIETY MEETINGS 2010

The monthly Society meetings of 2010 are scheduled as follows:

6 th February	8 th May	7 th August	6 th November
6 th March (AGM)	5 th June	4 th September	4 th December
3 rd April	3 rd July	2 nd October	

Venue: Collège du St Esprit, Sir Virgil Naz Avenue, Quatre Bornes. Time: 14.00 hrs.

THE BLUE PENNY PROJECT

The Escher Group *Webriposte* counter automation/computerization Blue Penny Project has at December 2009 been completed at some 52 post offices out of a total of 93. The corporation's target to computerize "all our Post Offices by the end of 2009" as forecast in "Blue Penny News" of 2008 has not been achieved hence the omission in the "Blue Penny News" of December 2009 of any reference to the matter and the extension of the project to Rodrigues is not mentioned. This project started in 2004 when on 8th November five counters at Curepipe post office were computerized.

At 31st December 2009 the Society can confirm that 44 post offices had been computerized in Mauritius by proving covers seen and verified by a member of the Management Committee. Actual sighting is the only criteria for listing.

Abbreviated identifications seen on proving covers at 31st December 2009

BAC	Bon Accueil	GOO	Goodlands	QMI	Quartier Militaire
BAI	Bel Air	GPOC	G.P.O. Counter	RDA	Rivière des Anguilles
BBA	Beau Bassin	LAL	Lalmatie	RED	Reduit
BRIT	Britannia	LES	L'Escalier	RHI	Rose Hill
CDM	Camp de Masque	MES	Mesnil	RNO	Roches Noire
CFL	Central Flacq	MHI	Monneron Hill	SOU	Souillac
CGE	Chemin Grenier	MLO	Montagne Longue	STA	Stanley
CMA	Cap Malheureux	NFR	Nouvelle France	SUR	Surinam
COM	Coromandel	PDO	Poudre D'Or	TAM	Tamarin
CUR	Curepipe	PLC	Port Louis Centre	TDO	Trou d'Eau Douce
DEP	D'Epinay	PLE	Port Louis Eastern	TRI	Triolet
ECO	Eau Coulee	PLW	Port Louis Western	TRO	Terre Rouge
FEF	Forest Side	PRA	Petit Raffray	VACC	Vacoas Counter
FLO	Flic en Flac	PRI	Petite Rivière	WTF	Waterfront
GBAC	Grand Bay Counter	QBO	Quatre Bornes		

N.B. The FEF and FLO (mis)identifications continue to remain unchanged at December 2009.

GPOC and WTF are located in Port Louis (respectively) at Dumas Street and Quay Street....

• 16 destinations including More Areas pop up on the counter computer screen when the clerk clicks his "Pick list of Destinations". These destinations are designated as:

F1	Mauritius	F7	China	S	Switzerland
F2	Rodrigues	F8	Italy	C	Canada
F3	United Kingdom	F9	South Africa	A	Australia
F4	London	F10	Germany	M	More Areas
F5	France	F11	United States		
F6	India	F12	Japan		

The most likely cause of the recorded Australia label reading Austria is that the operator touched **More Areas** entered **Aus** and got an **Austria** label, whereas, if he had simply touched **A** (without any other destination input) he would have got an **Australia** label.

• The claim that the "objective to deliver a better service is being attained with the computerisation of post offices" (Blue Penny News 2009) is laughable when the *Webriposte* labels from Forest Side read FEF and the ones from Flic en Flac read FLO since their computerisation in 2005. Up to 31st December 2009 Mauritius Post has simply not corrected these two "misnomered" post offices.

WEBRIPOSTE ABBREVIATED IDENTIFICATION

(as seen by Mico Antoine)

The allocation of three and four letter IDs to post offices by the Blue Penny Counter Computerisation Project is far from constant. The rationale is simple though at least that is what I understand.

Where the name place is composed of one word, irrespective of the number of syllables, the first three letters are used. CUR, GOO, LAL, MES, RED, SOU and TAM adhere to this principle, however COM does not. In the case of three Port Louis three words post offices the IDs are PLC, PLE and PLW but the main post office of Port Louis is designated GPOC for GPO Counter. The anachronistic three letter GPO for General Post Office is inconsistent with the other PL post offices. Since PLC is for Port Louis Centre the main post office of the island should have PLM as its ID and that is plain common sense as Plaine Magnien should eventually read PMA. For Port Mathurin, Rodrigues being another country the Pick-list of Destinations *dixit*, the ID could also be PMA!

For the record the ISO Standard **3166-2:MU** (*Codes for the representation of Mauritius and its subdivisions*) lists Port Louis as **PL** (the District) and **PU** (the City).

Two word name places whether apostrophed or not such as BAI, DEP, NFR and QMI have been designated by the first letter of the first word and the first two letters of the second word, e.g., Bel Air and D'Epinay but not Chemin Grenier which is designated as CGE. Where the place name is made up of three separate words (except for Port Louis post office names) such as Camp de Masque and Rivière des Anguilles, the IDs are CDM and RDA. In the case of Trou d'Eau Douce, with its apostrophe, the ID is TDO – first letter of first word and first two letters of third word. d'Eau, the second word, is ignored so it is neither TDE nor TDD.

FLO for Forest Side is an obvious misidentification as FLO can only be the ID for Floréal. FEF the current ID for Forest Side is another obvious error as it can only be the ID for three word Flic en Flac. However Flic en Flac, if the simple rationale is applied, should in fact eventually when corrected read FFL, but then Camp de Masque would have read CMA, however CMA was already correctly allocated to Cap Malheureux and Riviere des Anguilles would read RAN – Got it?

In the case of Vacoas identified as VACC and Grand Bay as GBAC, the general principle is not applied. The C is for Counter which distinguishes the post office itself from the Delivery Office sited in a different location from the actual post office. The additional C is however consistent with GPOC. One word Britannia is designated by the very British four letter BRIT even if it was computerised before two word Black River which will presumably be designated BRI. Britannia this far is the only four letter one word designation apart the three C IDs. Out goes the general rule once again – if any general rule does in fact exist!

Waterfront in my dictionary is one word of three syllables so its ID should be WAT, the first three letters of the name place. However the not so innocent use (in my opinion) of the first letters of each syllable for the only post office in Mauritius which begins with the letter W leaves this post office with the questionable WTF. BTW is the abbreviation of "By The Way" so the question is what "WTF" is going on?

BTW in the "Pick-list of Destinations" the countries in column 3 actually spell the word SCAM – someone got that one right!

Still want to know what is going to happen to philately the day computer labels replace postage stamps in Mauritius?

