

1st ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF SIMON VENGAI MUZENDA (1922 – 2003)

Issued 20th September, 2004

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 4 of 2004)²

Stamps to commemorate the 1st Anniversary of the Death of Dr. Simon Vengai Muzenda, Co-Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

Cde. Simon Vengai Muzenda was born in Gutu on 28 October, 1922 and died on 20 September, 2003 in Harare. He was declared a National Hero, and laid to rest at the national shrine.

The history of nationalism and the struggle for freedom is incomplete without the consistent and persistent efforts of Cde. Mzee, sometimes against powerful Western objectives, towards the ultimate goal of true independence for Zimbabwe and Africa.

In 1950, he married his childhood sweetheart, Maud Matsikidze, and then settled in Bulawayo. They had eight children, two of whom predeceased him, one in childhood and another at the notorious Chimoyo massacre thought up by Bishop Muzorewa when he was trying to curry favour with the Smith regime.

In Bulawayo he met up with other notable figures of our revolution, in particular James Dambaza Chikerema, George Silundika and Rev. Mutero. At this time the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was mooted, and the young Simon turned his energies and skills on that colonial rule to keep Africans subjugated.

Trade Unionism, which Mzee's mentor in South Africa, Rev Michael Scott, had demonstrated was a powerful political weapon involved him deeper in the struggle in Barbourfields, Bulawayo, where he opened his own workshop in the 1950s, and became a member of one of the earliest bodies to champion the concerns of African urban residents.

His national political career started in 1953, when he was a contributor and Secretary General of the BANVA commonly known as the African Voice which he joined on March 24, 1951 of which organisation Benjamin Burombo was the President. From that time till his death Cde. Muzenda was, in the words of President Mugabe, "the man and the legend of our liberation".



He moved to Umvuma in 1955 and he was active in all nationalist movements which were banned in succession by the then Southern Rhodesia government, - the Southern Rhodesia Native Congress, the National Democratic Party and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU).

In 1962 he was banned from the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs) because he read out entirely the African prayer (Nehanda Nyakasikana). He was defended by the late Herbert Chitepo, regarding the high court decision, and cautioned and discharged. Yet history had been made, the African Nationalist showing that colonialism feared creative words.

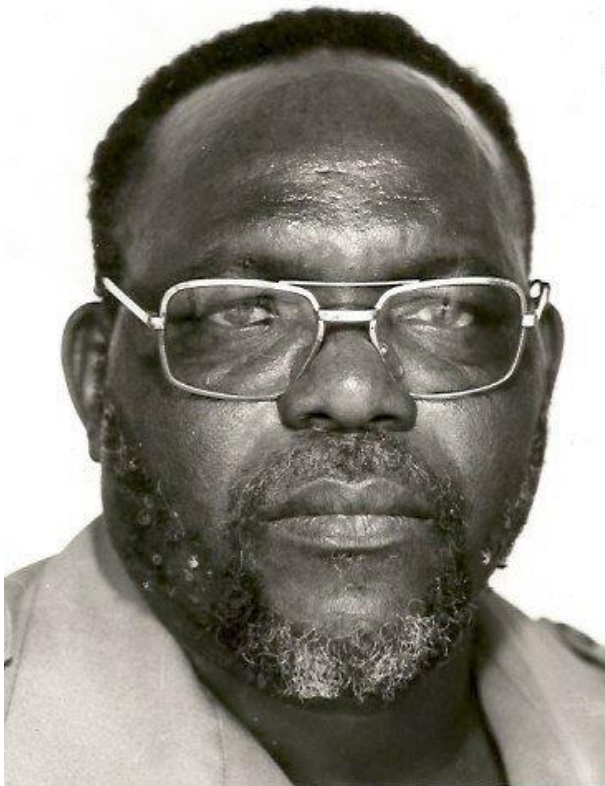
Inevitably in September 1962 the late Co-Vice President was arrested in Zvishavane (Shabane) for what was alleged as insidious a speech organizing a riot in the asbestos mines. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison and instead of becoming depressed he used his time in prison

productively helping to start Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and studying for GCE. He was released from Salisbury in 1964 and elected Deputy organising Secretary of ZANU which was inaugurated in August 1963 at its first conference in Gwelo. Soon after that event he was arrested for possessing a small starter pistol and convicted of the offence of illegal possession of a firearm. He served his term at WhaWha prison between Umvuma and Gwelo and later Sikombela where he reunited with President Cde. R. Mugabe.

It was clear that the only language the Rhodesian Settler understood was the language of the gun and Cde. Muzenda was in the forefront of recruiting young people for military training in Ghana, China, and other friendly countries.

Again, the British colonialists tried to rescue the Rhodesia impasse with the infamous Pearce Commission in 1971. That Commission was rejected, although only 6% of the people were canvassed. He is on record that the proposals will be tantamount to asking the nation to commit political suicide.

In 1972 he was appointed to a post in Zambia as Deputy Administration Secretary for the ZLC (Zimbabwe Liberation Council) and in 1974 organised young recruits again in Refugee camps in Zambia and Tanzania to co-ordinate Guerrilla activities. Despite the attempts of the colonial authorities to infiltrate and destroy the organisation Cde. Muzenda was resolute.



In 1975 he moved to Zambia and then to Mozambique where he reunited with Cde. R. Mugabe. The two formed a formidable force, which eventually exposed the falsehood of the so-called 'Détente' thereby rescuing the armed struggle and increasing its intensity.

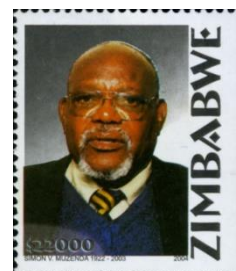
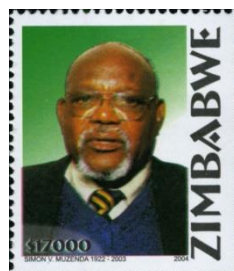
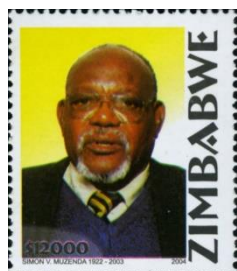
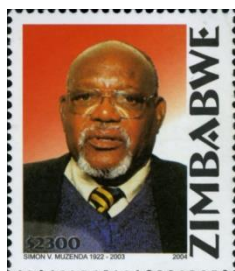
In 1977, Cde. Muzenda was elected Vice President of ZANU PF, the umbrella body (including the Co-President Dr. J. Nkomo of ZAPU) at this congress-in-exile held in Chimoio Mozambique. From that date nobody questioned his leadership and outstanding organisation abilities and he has remained true to the cause of ZANU PF until his untimely death in September 2003.

The Lancaster House agreement though imperfect gave us political independence in 1980. Cde. Muzenda was outspoken about the collusion between the British and Rhodesia UDI rebels to play down the fruits of the people's war, which brought the British and Rhodesians to their knees.

He always maintained that nobody should be rewarded for the liberation of our country. It was a duty. As he said earlier in 2003, "The land is in the hands of foreigners. We should get it back. We will be happy after achieving this." Like many of his political colleagues in the struggle, Dr. Muzenda understood the need to free the land in order to deliver economic independence to masses. After all, land was the *raison d'être* for the execution of the armed struggle.

The rich legacy he leaves behind will continue to be cherished. Zimbabwe will be defended against all forms of exploitation, whether direct or indirect.

The Stamps



Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
1139	565	\$2,300	Muzenda with red background
1140	566	\$12,000	Muzenda with yellow background.
1141	567	\$17,000	Muzenda with green background
1142	568	\$22,000	Muzenda with grey background

Technical details

Stamp size:	Sheet stamps: 30 x 35 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (5 rows of 10 stamps), two panes per printed sheet
Artist:	Gideon "Saint" Mahaka
Paper:	ZSC paper type J: paper described by Zimpost as "Chancellor Litho PVA Gummed Postage Stamp Paper". This paper is produced by Tullis Russell Coaters of Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland. Under UV there is no fluorescence either front or back, the stamp appears to be very dark
Print colours:	Cyan, magenta, yellow & black
Perforations:	SG 14 x 14½, ZSC 14 x 14¼ Left margin: Perforated through Other margins: Imperforate
Printer:	NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe
Printer's Imprint:	Bottom Margin, below Row 5 Columns 5 & 6. Imprint printed in black

Cylinder numbers: Bottom margin below R5/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Colour register: Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R5/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Sheet Value: Bottom margin, below R5/10, printed in black

Sheet Number: Type SN 7 with printed ‘ZIMPOST’ prefix, right margin opposite R5/10, reading down

Print numbers:

\$2,300	1,366,500	\$12,000	229,100
\$17,000	177,300	\$22,000	147,000

Issue date: 20th September, 2004

Postal Rates

Unlike the previous two issues, these stamps reflected the correct postal rates at the date of issue.

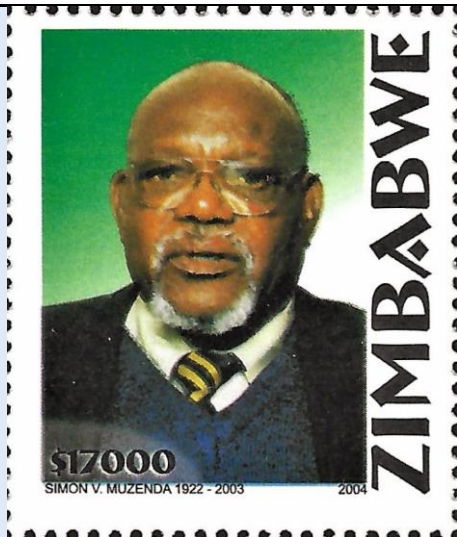
Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been noted.

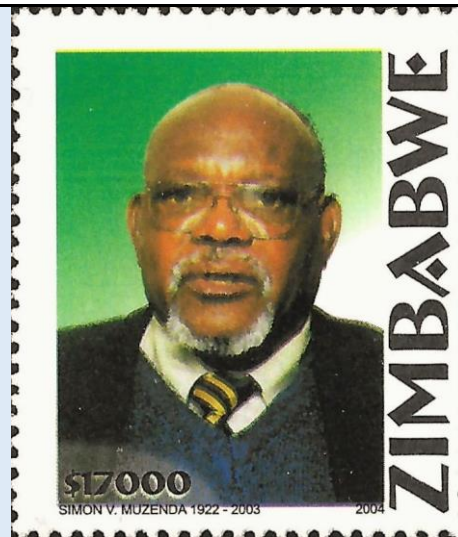
Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds.

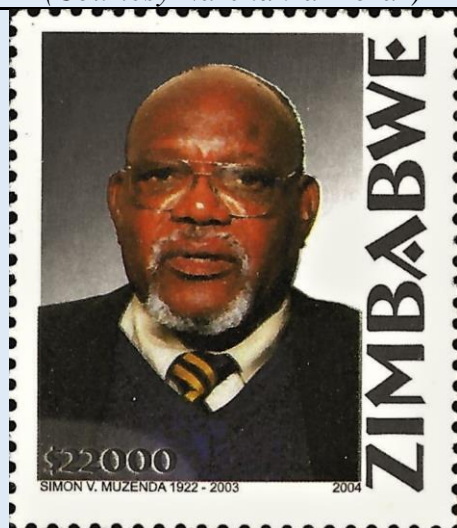




\$17,000: Shift of black plate to right, giving white shadow to value
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)



\$17,000: Shift of yellow plate up and black plate down.
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)

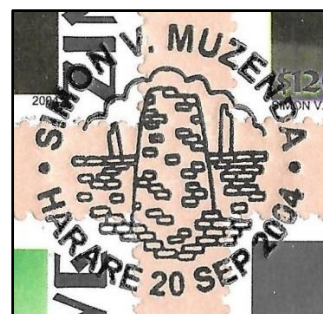


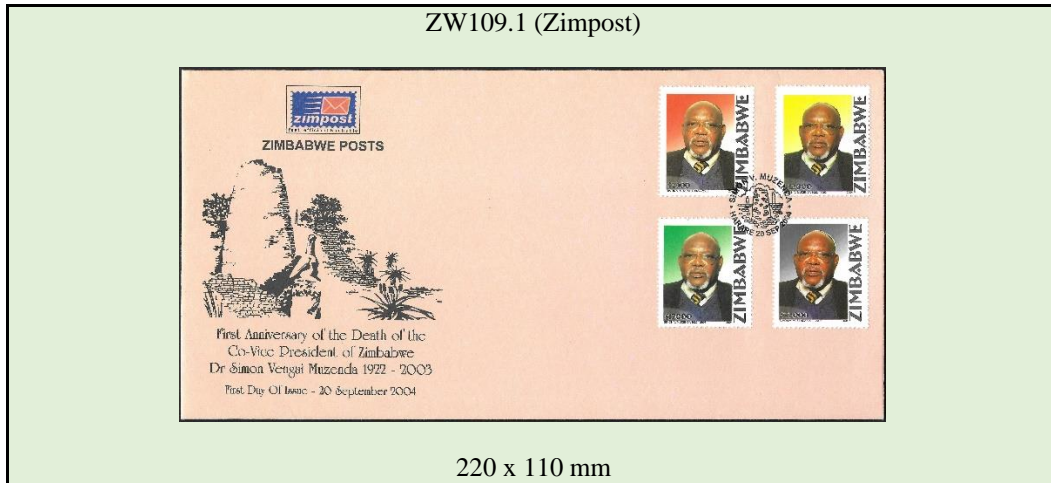
\$22,000: shift of black plate, giving the value a ghostly outline
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)

First Day Cover

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear.

A pictorial first day of issue canceller was produced for this issued and was used by the Philatelic Bureau. Other first day cover cancellers continued to be used at main post offices.



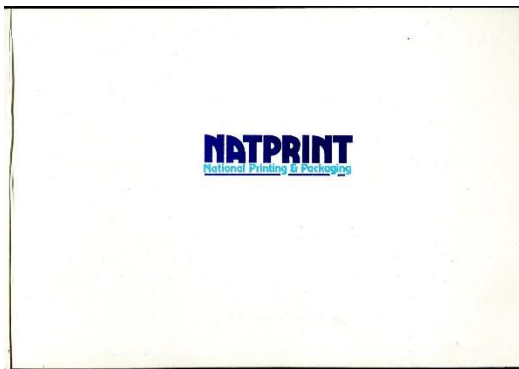


Related Material

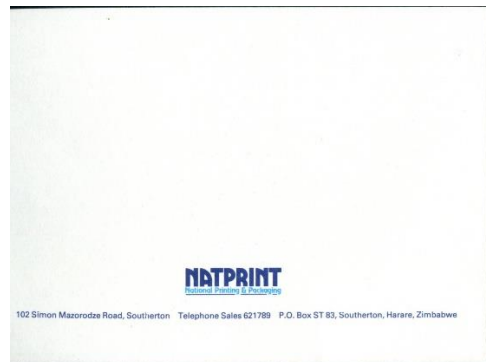
Natprint Proof Presentation Cards

Presentation cards produced by Natprint with imperforate proofs of the stamps to be issued. The presentation cards were forwarded to the PTC for approval of the final product.

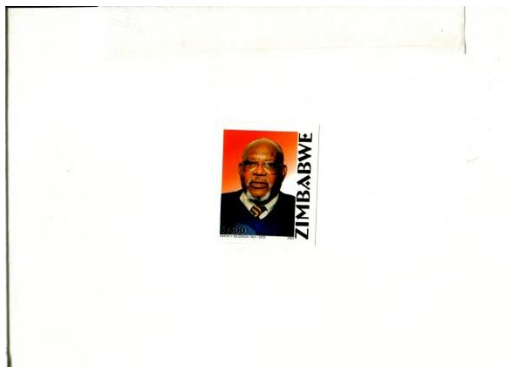
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



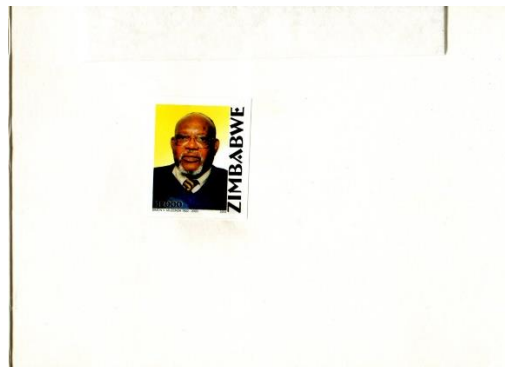
Front cover



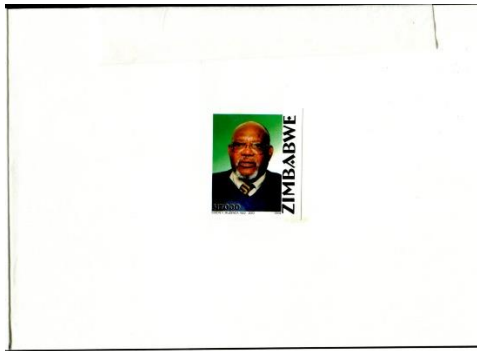
Inside front cover



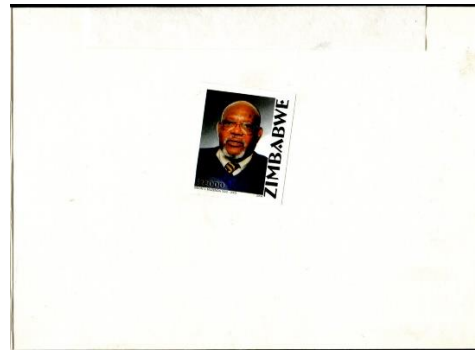
\$2,300 stamp



\$12,000 stamp



\$17,000 stamp

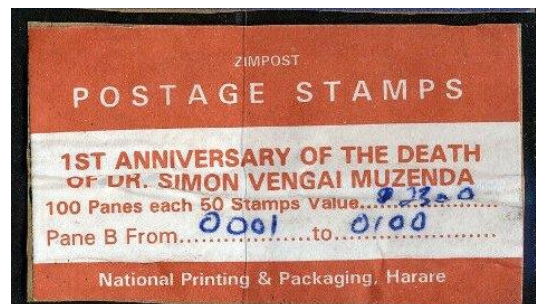
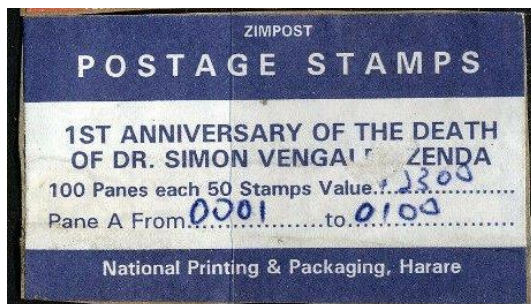
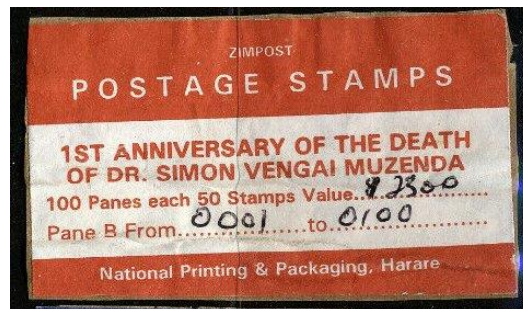
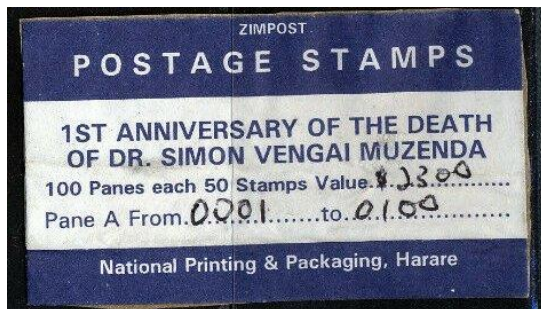


\$22,000 stamp

Delivery labels

Delivery labels from packaging containing 100 sheets. These labels have been found for all values (only illustrating the \$2,300 below). There are a pair of 1A blue labels and a pair of 1B brown labels for each value. Each of the pairs has the handwritten value and the sheet numbers 0001 to 0100, see below, the top pair is in black ink and the bottom pair in blue ink. Uncertain why all labels have the same sheet numbers in unknown, possibly each package has two labels attached.

(Source eBay)



Bibliography:

1. "The Zimbabwean Concise Postage Stamp Catalogue", published by Harare Stamp Company, edited by Ken Allanson, Mike Amos and Geoff Brakspear. The catalogue continues to be updated and expanded by Geoff Brakspear
2. Zimbabwe Post, Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 4 of 2004