

NATIONAL HEROES (4th Series)

Issued 5th August, 2008

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 3 of 2008)²

Z - Johanna Nkomo

Born: 18th September 1927 in the Matobo District; Died: 3rd June 2003; Buried at Heroes Acre on 7th June 2003

Johanna Nkomo was a princess of the Nguni Clan Royalty in Lupane District, although she was born in Matopos (Fort Usher). She adopted the name MaFuyana as an indication of her origin. She was a devout Catholic all her life. She married the "Father of the Nation", Joshua Nkomo on 1st October 1949, whilst working as matron of a children's orphanage run by the Dominican Convent in Bulawayo.

Johanna was an example of a steadfast mother maintaining traditional family principles. She supported her husband in every aspect of his life, despite being often separated physically from Joshua throughout his political life.



She was devoted to the children of Zimbabwe and beneath her quiet dignity was a figure who troubled the colonial authorities of Southern Rhodesia, and this made her a prime target of successive colonial regimes.

All her life she worked for the unity of all Zimbabweans, and as well for the welfare of the under privileged children through the Child Survival Foundation. Her steadfast commitment to the cause of the Zimbabwean people made her departure a sad loss.

(Her husband, Joshua Nkomo, was commemorated in a separate issue of stamps in June 2000)

A - Ruth Lottie Nomonde Chinamano

Born: 16th February 1925, Griqualand Cape Province RSA; Died: 2nd January 2005; Buried at Heroes Acre on 6th January 2005.

Ruth married Josiah Chinamano after meeting him in Port Elizabeth, in September 1950 in King Williams Town. After her return to S Rhodesia she became a teacher at Waddilove School in Marondera where she taught many of the original freedom fighters, notably Herbert Ushewokunze and Sidney Sekeramayi.



Throughout her life she highlighted racial and gender discrimination and was the first woman to be detained at Gonakudzingwa in April 1964 at which time her husband was the Vice-President of ZAPU.

At the first parliamentary elections in 1980, she became the first woman member of parliament for Lupane Constituency. Later she was chosen as a non-constituent MP- from 1990-1995.

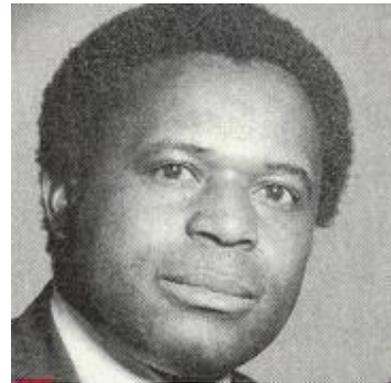
During her parliamentary career she put forward many motions enhancing the role of women both in the civil society and in leadership. She actively fought against the wilful spread of HIV/AIDS advocating the castration of rapists and much stiffer sentences for them. She passionately urged the Ministry of Home Affairs (Police) to employ more women in top positions. She advocated the elimination of beer arguing that it was the cause of many problems in breaking up families.

As early as 1991, concerned for a healthy nation Ruth fervently urged Government to adequately remunerate qualified health workers in order to curb the brain drain which was already affecting the Public Health Services, essential to the nation.

E - Swithun Tachiona Mombeshora

Born: 20th August 1945 in Mhondoro District; Died: 17th March 2003; Buried at Heroes Acre on 23rd March 2003

Dr Swithun Mombeshora completed his medical degree in 1972 at the University College of Rhodesia, Godfrey Muggins Medical School, which was at that time housed at Harare Hospital (Pagomo).



After doing his house jobs and being appointed Government Medical Officer, at Marandellas (Marondera), he found that by 1976 he could no longer remain employed by the Rhodesian Front Government. So, he set up surgeries in Mabvuku and Mbare, running secretive errands on behalf of the liberation struggle including the supply of medicines, clothing and sustenance for the four years prior to independence He treated injured comrades at considerable personal risk.

In 1980, he became MP for Makonde in Mashonaland West, a seat he held until his death. Because of his duties, first as Deputy Minister of Agriculture, he had to relinquish his ambitions in medicine.

He was appointed to successive Ministries - Agriculture, Lands and Rural Resettlement, Health; Local Government; Governor of Mashonaland West - each of which had its own difficulties impeding the progress of economic empowerment and landlessness.

He became Minister of Mines in 1996 and then Minister of Transport and Communications in 2000. He was made Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, the post he was holding at his death.

His most important activity in later years was with the local Red Cross Society. In 1988 he joined the Zimbabwe Red Cross as a volunteer, being elected as Provincial Chairperson for Mashonaland West in the same year. In 1998 he became the National President of the Red Cross Society of Zimbabwe and was re-elected to the same position in 2001.

R - Willie Dzawanda Musarurwa

Born: 24th November 1927 in the Chinhoyi District; Died: 3rd April 1990; Buried at Heroes Acre on 7th April 1990

Willie was one of 15 children born in the Chinhoyi Communal area (TTL). After an early conflict with his father, Jack Musarurwa he worked as a tobacco grader with his brother Morris on a commercial farm.

Educated at Goromonzi Secondary School, the first co-educational African Government school, he then went to St Augustines, Penhalonga. Later he taught at Epworth Mission in 1952, contributing journalistically to the African Weekly Newspaper. Eventually he went to Princeton University in New Jersey USA as a parvin fellow, and he became a professional journalist of international standing.



He was detained from 1964 -1974 in Gonakudzingwa because of his activities as a promoter of several African Nationalist movements. He attended all the meetings aimed at bringing about unity between the various political movements between ZAPU and ZANU, as well as all major conferences aimed at ending the Rhodesian conflict, culminating in the Lancaster House Conference where he was co-spokesman of the Patriotic Front Alliance.

He travelled a very long road from the days he edited the African Weekly, the Bantu Mirror, and the Parade in the 1950's to being editor of the Zimbabwean People's Voice, the Home News and Zimbabwe Review during his detention.

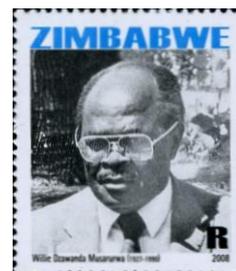
In 1981, after failing to be elected to parliament in Mashonaland West he was appointed editor of the Sunday Mail, being supplanted by Charles Chikerema in 1985. His renowned work of the review of the press in Zimbabwe was published in the Parade magazine in April 1990.

Willie Musarurwa was a vigorous opponent of opportunists and a fighter for human rights standing for the truth at all costs. He especially hated the exploitation of little girls used as peace offerings in an attempt to appease vengeful spirits and at the time of his death he was the chairman of the Children's Protection Society of Zimbabwe.

Willie emerged through his in-depth articles as a journalist par-excellence. What he wrote, and what he said reflected the society of his dreams and many Zimbabweans identified with his ideas.

His widow, Elizabeth, who died in 1999, was the first Director of Child Welfare in the Zimbabwean Government and took an active role in formulating the National Plan of Action for children with UNICEF, later becoming the focal point secretary for the implementation of the National Plan of Action and of children's rights.

The Stamps



Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
1262	674	Z	Joanna Nkomo
1263	675	A	Ruth Chinamano
1264	676	E	Swithun Mombeshora
1265	677	R	Willie Musarurwa

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:	Lucia Marisamhuka
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:

Z	600,000	A	100,000
E	100,000	R	60,000

Issue date: 5th August, 2008

Postal Rates

The postal rates applicable at the date of issue were those effective from 18th May 2007, as follows:

Z \$2.50 A \$10.00 E \$20.00 R \$30.00

The reason for the above rates being lower than the last issue is the decimal point of the currency had been moved ten places to the left from 1 August 2008. Thus, the new \$1.00 was previously \$10,000,000,000.

Indeed, the Bulletin shows the postal rates as being:

Z \$250 million A \$50 billion E \$90 million R \$110 billion

Clearly Zimpost also took the opportunity to increase postal rates to external destinations, and the removal of the ten noughts should have produced rates of \$5.00, \$9.00 & \$11.00 respectively.

The order form in the bulletin had printed that the cost of a set of stamps as being \$250,250.000,000 and the first day cover at \$795,250,000,000! This was manually changed in writing to \$93,50 and \$693.50 respectively. The postal rates as at date of issue was \$62.50, the price of \$93.50 was due to a projected increase in rates from 13th August to:

Z \$2.50 A \$16.00 E \$33.00 R \$42.00

Print colours

The print colours shown in all the stamps had cylinder numbers and traffic lights with the usual four colours of cyan, magenta, yellow and black. But the stamps themselves, under magnification, show that not all the colours were used in the stamps themselves.

Z & A	Magenta not used
E	All colours used
R	Cyan and black only used

Proofs



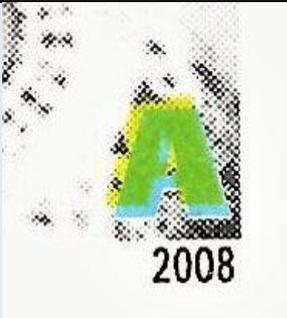
Sample proof set on single card printed for Zimpost
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)

Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been noted.

Unlisted Varieties

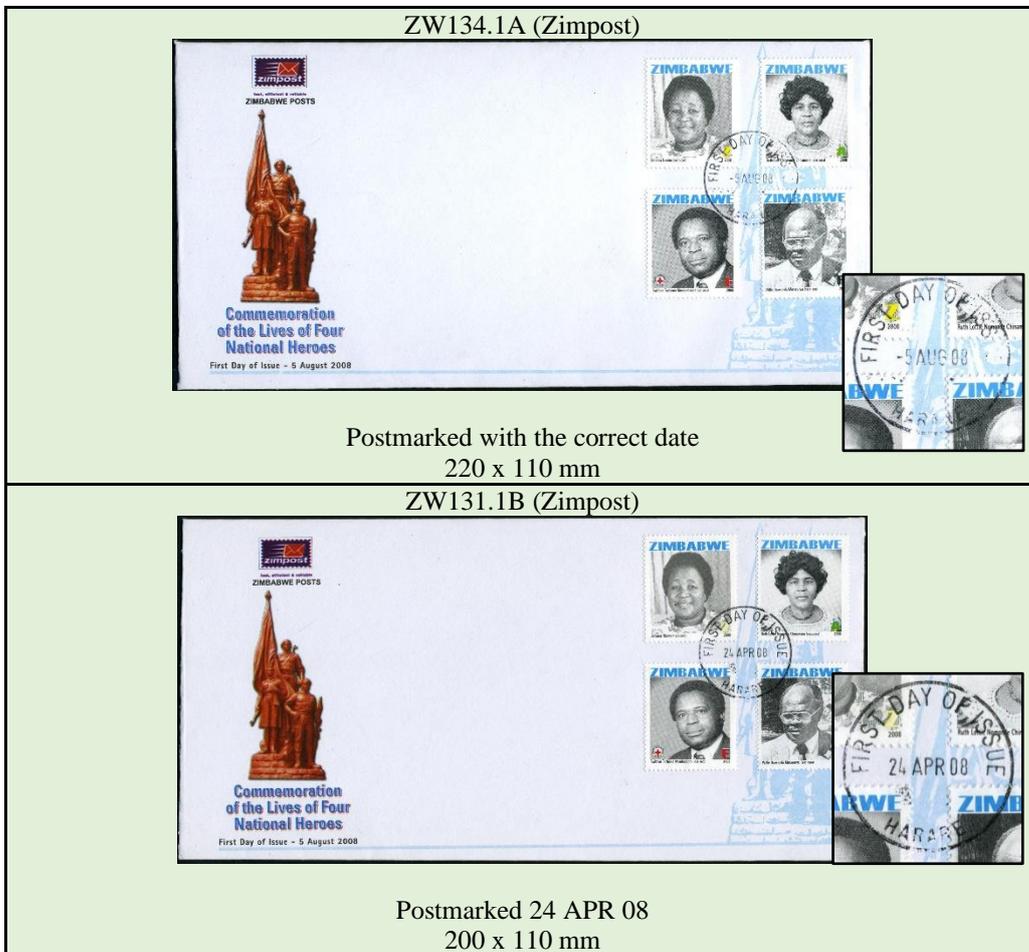
There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds which are more noticeable with the solid colours.

 <p>Z Value: Whitish splash to side of head. (Courtesy of Malte Luebker)</p>	 <p>A value: Movement of yellow plate upwards. This only affected the Value. (Courtesy Narendhra Morar)</p>	
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First Day Cover

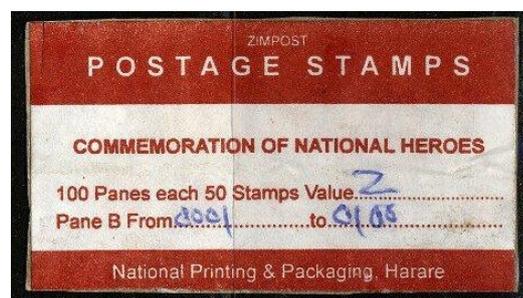
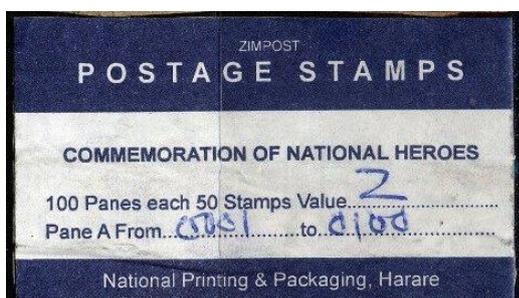
The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear.

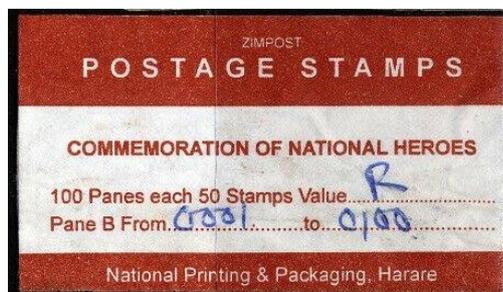
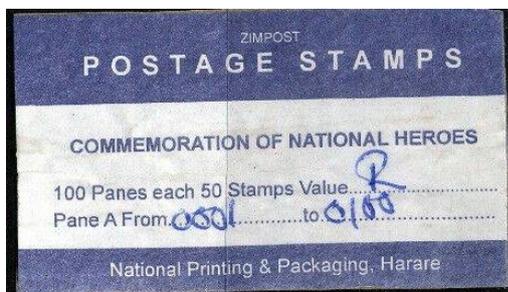
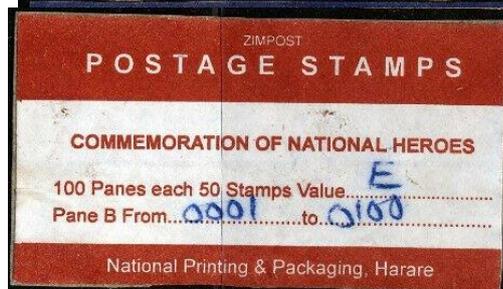
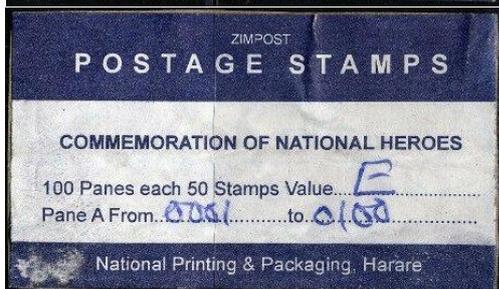
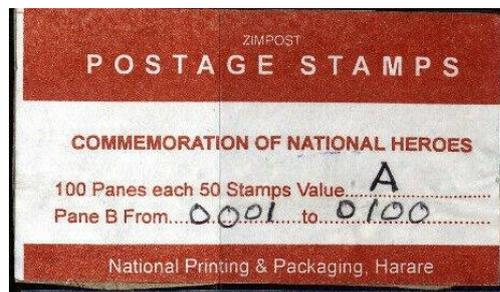
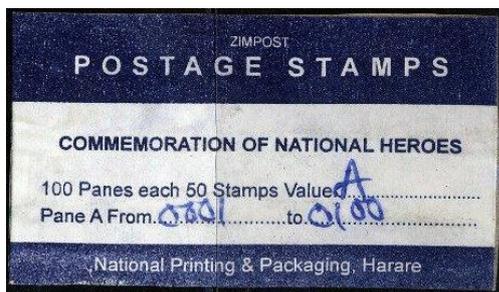
Although the bulletin showed a printed postmark for this issue, no covers have been seen with it. First day covers have been cancelled with the “First Day of Issue/Harare” canceller. However, a number of this issue’s first day cover have been cancelled with the date of 24 APR 08, which was the day of release of the Rats and Mice issue.



Related Material

Delivery Labels from packaging containing sheets of 100 stamps. Labels for all the values are shown below, with the Cylinder 1A on blue labels and 1B brown. Labels are for sheet numbers 0001 to 0100. (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 3 of 2008