

NEWS RELEASE

Vanuatu Uncovered Pt.1



MYSTERY ISLAND

In this, the first series of stamp issues on "Vanuatu Uncovered", Mystery Island is the perfect introduction to the more unusual destinations in this astonishing archipelago.



raged throughout the South Pacific. The "mystery" is said to have derived from the fact that the air strip is impossible to see from the sea and therefore it took some time for the Japanese to determine where all the planes were coming from.

Today Mystery Island's guardians welcome tourists as friends and these locals from nearby Aneityum enjoy the attention and the income from travellers who arrive by plane and ship. They provide string band music and lots of stalls selling souvenirs, handicrafts and food as well as the more unusual things like story telling and hair braiding. Visitors that want more than markets, can snorkel in turquoise waters, photograph the unusual flora and fauna or just stroll amongst the palm trees while enjoying the surf breaking on the surrounding reef.

Nobody lives permanently on Mystery Island although short term bungalow stays are possible. The Island is deliberately kept this way to ensure that tourism in this unspoilt paradise, remains bouyant. On average Mystery Island hosts three cruise ship visits a month. It's just enough to give the local economy a boost without ruining the traditional way of life... and this is just what the ni Vanuatu and the visitors want.

Known correctly as Inyeug, this tiny island measures only a few hundred metres wide and about 1km long and is the airstrip for Aneityum, Vanuatu's southernmost island. Air Vanuatu services the island from Port Vila and Tanna and this service plus the many cruise ships that visit during the season, have seen Mystery Island's location become less of a mystery. During World War II, this small, uninhabited island was used as a landing strip for the allied forces. US troops built the runway for their air force in the 1940s as World War II



Collectors' Notes

Designers: Denise Durkin, Wellington, New Zealand
Printer: Southern Colour Print, Christchurch, New Zealand
Photography: John Nicholls Mini Sheet and 90 and 100 stamps, Robert Mulligan 130 stamp, Tiffany Carroll 200 stamp.
Process: Offset lithography
Stamp Size: 42.58mm x 28.45mm, two vertical and two horizontal.
Miniature Sheet Size: 196mm x 83mm. Stamps exclude International Post bars.
Panels: 2 panels of 20 stamps per sheet
Denominations: 90, 100, 130, and 200 vatu. M/S is 520 vatu.
Paper: Tullis Russell Yellow Phosphor 103gsm
Period of Sale: 28 March 2009 for a period of 2 years

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