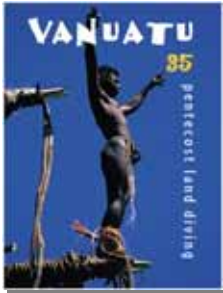


Pentecost Land Diving



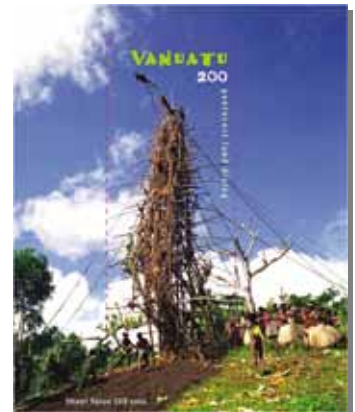
Pentecost is famous for the death defying Pentecost jump, a thrilling and spectacular custom ritual known as "Naghol" and performed in April and May each year in order to guarantee a bountiful yam harvest. Deeply rooted in the legend based on a mistreated woman who with the aid of vines, jumped from her hiding place in a tree to escape her husband, the act of jumping demands much courage and it is thought that boys become men and men continue to prove their right to manhood.

The jump tower can be up to 35 metres in height and each jumper builds his own platform and selects his own vines considering his size and weight. Constructed around a suitable tree, the entire structure is built by traditional methods using only saplings and vines without the aid of sophisticated mechanical equipment or materials.

In the preceding weeks before the jump, each diver undertakes to purify himself to ward off evil spirits as danger is ever present and injuries and death have occurred. Up to 20 "Land Divers" take turns in a strictly established order. Each jumper is inspired in his dive by chanting and singing and encouraged by the dancing women nearby who whistle their appreciation for a successful dive.

The Western World has adopted the Land Diving of Pentecost in the form of Bungy Jumping, but to most this modern activity pales when compared with this original custom ritual.

Vanuatu Post welcomes the opportunity to release this issue of stamps to raise awareness of this remarkable ritual. The stamps, miniature sheet (with 200 vatu stamp) and First Day Covers are available from the Vanuatu Post Philatelic Bureau and its appointed agents worldwide.



Collectors Notes:

Designer: typeface, Wellington, New Zealand
 Printer: Joh Enschede Printers, The Netherlands
 Photographers: 35 and 80vt Steve Dickinson, 80, 110 and 200 vt Ron Huban
 Process: Offset Litho
 Perforation Gauge: 13.00 per 2 cms
 Stamp Size: 45mm x 34mm (3 vertical stamps), 90mm x 34.80mm (1 vertical)
 Mini Sheet Size: 110mm x 102mm containing large stamp.
 Denominations: 35, 80, 110 and 200 vatu.
 Paper: 110 gsm, PVA gum stamp paper.
 Period of Sale: 26 March, 2003 for a period of 2 years.

**For more information
please contact:**

**The Manager,
Philatelic Bureau,
Vanuatu Post,
Port Vila, Vanuatu.
Tel. + 678 22000,
Fax + 678 23900
E mail
vanuatupost@vanuatu.com.vu**