

**ABRAHAM Q. LUSPO, JR. ---  
PATHFINDER IN PHILIPPINE PHILATELY**

He pursued many interests in his life – all with passion. He got to do what only a few of us dare to do – he chased after his hobby and made a living out of something he truly loved and enjoyed. Abraham Q. Luspo, Jr., or Abe, as he was called, died July 12, 2008, in Manila, of a lingering illness.



Abe was born on November 29, 1953, in Cebu City but raised up in Mambajao, Camiguin Island, located off the north coast of the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. He received a Bachelor degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of San Carlos in Cebu City. Early in his career, he pursued agriculture on family farmlands on Camiguin, and once had a petrochemical distributorship in Mindanao.

At an early age, Abe learned about Philippine stamp collecting from his grandfather, and ultimately inherited his superb Spanish period stamps and covers collection. Although this collection was lost in a fire at his home in San Andres in the late 1970s, Abe went on to establish his own fabulous collections, including a Spanish period revenue collection, which garnered a Gold Medal at a Federation Internationale de Philatelie regional stamp exhibition in Singapore in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s, Abe shifted from working on his collection to helping other collectors. He focused on helping the International Philippine Philatelic Society (IPPS).

He established a world renown IPPS auction, and provided a popular Philippine new issue service for collectors. Using his computer and organizational skills, he assisted collectors assemble fabulous world class Philippine exhibits that won numerous gold medals in Asia, Europe, and the United States. Beginning in 1999, Abe developed a Philippine philatelic website that evolved into perhaps the finest website of its kind in the world. He developed and operated it at an exceptional level of quality, with over 10,000 images on the website.

Although Abe's philatelic endeavors were superb, stamps were only a part of his interests. His middle initial "Q" for "Quisumbing, was one of his relatives, the eminent botanist Eduardo Quisumbing. Reinforced by that connection, Abe had an impressive knowledge and appreciation of botany and botanical art. He was an expert and collector of Philippine archeology and antiquities, and often surprised his guests with a centuries-old gift. Abe was a connoisseur of music, undoubtedly a link to his relative Pilita Corrales, Asia's Queen of Song. Abe had a huge phonograph record collection. Conversing with Abe was like conversing with dozens of University professors. He was an icon of Philippine history and culture. Many enjoyed his company, his vivacity for life, and extensive knowledge of Filipiniana. Abe was a primal and brilliant force in promoting Philippine philately -- a true pathfinder. On April 26, 2008, the International Philippine Philatelic Society awarded Abe the Society's highest tribute, the "IPPS Lifetime Achievement Award".

Abe once said, "kinukuha ng Diyos ng maaga ang mabait", meaning "God takes early those who are good." We will miss him.

Many collectors, through their letters and emails, shared their appreciation and love for Abe in contributing to this obituary. They include David Chiong, Douglas K. Lehmann, Mike G. Price, Lucy Miller, Eder Mutuc, Bram Hartendorp, Nigel Gooding, Richard Pounder, Ron Maineri, Geoffrey Lewis, Peter Harradine, Robert Yacano, Raymund Martinez, and Tommy Sim.

### *Don Peterson*

Please note the following single links to Philippine websites. The materials presented were the last philatelic interactions/discussions I had with Abe. He uploaded these items on July 7, 2008, a few days before he died.

### *Tommy Sim*

[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Postal%20Envelopes/envelope24.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Postal%20Envelopes/envelope24.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Phil\\_Islands/islands48.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Phil_Islands/islands48.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Phil\\_Islands/islands46.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Phil_Islands/islands46.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Phil\\_Islands/islands45.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Phil_Islands/islands45.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Phil\\_Islands/islands47.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Phil_Islands/islands47.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Commonwealth/Commonwealth43.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Commonwealth/Commonwealth43.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Commonwealth/Commonwealth44.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Commonwealth/Commonwealth44.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Commonwealth/Commonwealth42.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Commonwealth/Commonwealth42.html)  
[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI\\_Archives/Others/Miscellaneous7.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/USPI_Archives/Others/Miscellaneous7.html)  
<http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/JapOcc/japocc108.html>  
<http://philippinephilatelist.net/Archive/JapOcc/japocc109.html>

He finished David Chiong's USPI Airmail collection on June 30, 2008

[http://philippinephilatelist.net/Collections/USPI/Phil\\_Air\\_Mail/Contents.html](http://philippinephilatelist.net/Collections/USPI/Phil_Air_Mail/Contents.html)

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## Remembering Abe

Dear friends,

the news of the death of the number one scholar on Philippine philately ABRAHAM LUSPO JR last July 2008....came as a shock. He dies as a lonely man, alone with nobody to turn to in a small condominium with only the driver of a friend to ask help from. He shares the same birthday with me and last year November 29 2007...our circle of philatelic friends led by FIP GOLD MEDAL AWARDEE and JURY for AIRMAIL and CHINA....construction magnate DAVID G CHIONG (FIP GOLD EL SALVADOR plus many others collections ) decided to spend one night with him to celebrate his birthday on the island of CEBU.

David called me. He said "Raymond I hope you have time tonite..our friend ABE Luspo is dying and we have to fly by plane over to CEBU CITY to celebrate his birthday with him for the last time" I of course said yes. ABE as we fondly call him is related to the famous chemist inventor QUISUMBING who invented among other things the fountain pen ink we know as QUINK.

He is a collector and in 1985-87 was among the first Philippine stamp collectors who had at his stamp room...a computer. I stayed long hours with him in a small garage space which he converted into a STAMP ROOM. He collected everything from long playing records to old watches to fountain pens to old maps on the Philippines and postage stamps to old excavated plates and jars.

The good thing about him was that he CHRONICLED everything on his computer and was staunch reader and researcher.

He amassed the greatest treasure on PHILIPPINE REVENUES at a time when FIP or FIAP didn't even recognize a revenue exhibit class. He was never into THEMATICS and as he saw me exhibit my collection on the BICYCLE he told me..."I can collect anything except thematics, you have to be a passionate cyclist to be able to stick to JUST ONE bicycle theme. So I wont go into thematics anymore Ray. that is your forte". In 1991 to 1995 he was part of our group of friends of DAVID G CHIONG and company and we were travelling to south East Asia to buy and sell stamps and exhibit overseas.

In 1995 as I was selling my bicycle stamps exhibit to a Taiwan buyer in Singapore he was also selling his famous REVENUE collection. When we got back he saw me sulking inside the plane and he told me "we have to get over our material possession Ray. Stamps we cant be attached to stamps. When the opportunity arises. we have to sell our stamps. You and me we don't gamble so I'm sure you will put your money to good use."

I built my house. ABE built one beautiful Spanish inspired house from his sale and when I saw him again he was in a very large STAMP ROOM with classical music playing on his brand new stereo. He also purchased the latest computer system and began accepting jobs as researcher and exhibit research for persons. So he got so many clients in the Philippines, ASIA and USA and he did the mounting and research on the exhibition pages and he made so many Asian collectors win GOLD.

His lasting legacy should be the research he made and published on his website which won a GOLD from stamp2.com. The website had been taken over by Dr. Tommy Sim from the USA. I was surprised to see he didn't erase his 23 years of research from the WORLD WIDE WEB ..ABE , was responsible for uploading my 2nd collection..my bicycle stamps exhibit to the CZECH ONLINE SITE EXPONET, he has kept my other collection of RISE AND FALL OF PRESIDENT FERDINAND MARCOS on the REPUBLIC portion of the PHILIPPINE PHILATELIST website.

Abe...he will always be remembered as a PIONEER researcher and greatest Philippine webmaster. The Philippine philatelists will be forever indebted to him.

***Raymond See, postage stamp collector on the bicycle theme  
Manila, Philippines***

## **From One Webmaster to another Webmaster (Unpublished)**

Abe never produced average work; he only operated at the exceptional level. He set a goal for 10,000 images for his website. In November 2006, he was at 9,791 images. At that point, I decided to give him 23 images that he made into 10 pages (he had 2,978 pages before this). Twenty of these images were Provisional Customs Revenue documents. I gave him my write-ups but he went beyond them using his incomparable philatelic knowledge. I learned from him things I did not know before including exactly how many of each were reported, which were unique, and which were gems. On one email submission he answered me in real time at about 3 AM Manila time. He was reveling in the absolute quiet and solitude of that hour and to be able to bring about something that he absolutely loved. He was at his creative best combining graphic arts, computing, and philately all together into one product. All who are parts of that "10,000" share one characteristic in common with Abe's legacy, we will never forget how each of us was exposed to his genius and touched and imprinted with his generosity.

**Doug Lehmann**