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The Circuit

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Intensity 8: Notes on the July 16th Earthquake in Cabanatuan, Philippines

By Ed Jacinto (# 168)

Back to the Classroom: Exactly two weeks after the killer quake struck, classes in Philippine schools had resumed on a regular basis, except in those institutions whose buildings had been declared unsafe for occupancy. School doors had opened the previous week actually, but very few students showed up. The break gave school authorities the opportunity to do inspections of premises and repair work, where considered necessary. Here at the Araullo University, the buildings were still usable, although to the faint of heart, the cracks on many walls could be unsettling. My students were back to their animated selves. No report from them of casualties, but there were some property damage reports.

All of a Sudden, the Building Looked Menacing: The school's driveway is at the side of the 4-story administration building. We had been passing by that building hundreds of times. During sunny days, we pass by close to take comfort in the long shadow that it casts; on rainy days, it provides shelter against being drenched. Before the school gymnasium had been built, most of the social and cultural activities of the academic community had been held there. When the quake struck, a small portion of its facade was detached and fell down. On our way out, our instinct was to be as far away as possible from the building. Somehow, the building looked frightening at that time.

We are Alright: I felt the strength of the tumbler while I was conducting a class. We were on the second floor of the 2-story Commerce/High School Building. When the students felt the building shaking, they made a run for the door. I advised them to stay calm, not to panic, the quake will stop any moment. But it seemed it would never end. (Actually, it stopped, then resumed again. We were to learn later that there were possibly two earthquakes that occurred one after the other; or the second one could have been a strong after-shock.) Only a handful were left with me, holding tight

to their teacher (most of my students are young ladies). One could hear the ceiling creaking, as if a giant were trying to rip it apart. The standing blackboard fell down with a crash. We could hear the shouting and screaming going on from all parts of the building and the grounds. One could see the students and teachers of other classes running by. Then the shaking stopped. There was calm. I was alone in the room. I picked up my things and went down. My thoughts were of home (wife Cora and my 70-year old mother were there) and of my children who were in school.

My wife was doing some writing when the quake hit. She was not able to move at once, but when she heard the sound of a pot cover hitting the floor, she decided it was time to leave the house for open space. The same with my mother, who was not able to immediately leave the house, but was able to do so a little bit later. The kids were still in school, but out of their classrooms, waiting for the tricycle driver that would take them home. According to the children, they did not feel afraid. Soon after, they were home.

Bedlam: All the people were out in the streets. Those near their residences were afraid to go inside buildings for the after-shocks continued to be felt. People in schools, offices, etc., were of one mind — to go home. So the streets were jammed with vehicles and people. Somehow traffic managed to move, albeit at a turtle's pace. As soon as I could, I was out of the school premises looking for a means of going home. The telephone lines were cut. On the street, I learned from some students that a colleague who seemed on the verge of collapse, was left in his classroom. I rushed back, to see if help was indeed needed. Thankfully, other teachers had already helped him, and he was already composed by the time I was able to return.

My wife's thoughts were of her family. She went to the kids' school, then returned home to confirm that they were already home,

Continued Page 2



Earthquake (Continued)

safe. Then they went to fetch me. Since the traffic was so heavy, I was no longer there when they reached AU grounds. It was a happy reunion when they reached home again.

A colleague was kind enough to take me home. On our way we saw how the vehicles and people clogged the streets. All faces wore masks of anxiety and concern.

The street before the Philippine Christian College compound was already closed to traffic as we made our way. They detoured us to the back of the compound. At that time, we did not yet know that the 6-story building had collapsed, so we did not ascribe much significance to some men we met carrying sledge hammers and other digging tools.

Dead or Alive: The horror slowly began to sink in. Over the radio, the local station reported on the collapse of the CCU building, the rescue efforts, the survivors, the dead. By the evening, electrical service had been restored and the TV stations carried the news. Efforts were centered in Cabanatuan, particularly the building where an estimated 250 students and teachers were buried by the debris and rubble. There were also reports that Baguio had been hit hard, too. As the hours and days passed, we learned that more areas had been severely affected by the earth's convulsion. As more reports came in, it became only too clear that so many provinces and towns had been damaged. Cabanatuan, the epicenter, almost escaped unharmed! In some areas, the earth opened up, swallowed a whole section of a road!, buildings sank, the earth spewed gravel and water, buildings and bridges collapsed, coastal barangays "claimed back" by the sea, landslides . . . The fact that this was the rainy season worsened conditions and hampered rescue efforts. The toll would probably reach the 2000 mark, the damage in property was incalculable. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, had sustained damages. There will surely be rehabilitation, but it will take some time.

The Good and the Bad: Media (print and TV) started fundraising campaigns soon after the probable wide-spread extent of the damage was realized. The outpouring of aid was simply awe-inspiring. In the short span of two weeks, money raised and value of donations of food, clothing and medicine probably total more than the equivalent of US\$ 5 million. People from all walks of life gave.

American soldiers from the US Subic and Clark military bases were quick to respond. They pitched camp in Cabanatuan, and helped in the digging until the last body was found. They were also there in Baguio. In that place, the heroes were the miners, who did not give up digging even after experts had declared that there was no more hope of anyone being alive still. They were able to save at least three people almost two weeks after the quake. Aid came from many lands, in all forms: rescue teams, money, materials.

There were many acts of heroism. Persistence. "Miracles." Here in Cabanatuan, the story of "Rodrigo" was told. He was supposed to have saved at least seven persons at the risk of his own life. Many persons had seen him in action. He claimed to be a student of CCP. After the rubble had been cleared, attempts to find him, in order to give him recognition. It turned out that there is no such student in that school, nobody knew him, nothing. And despite the many TV footages of the rescue activities, he appeared in not one of them. (He was finally found a couple weeks later.)

Of course, there is the negative side. There was some looting reported in Baguio, here some pilfering. Politics reared its ugly head, and politicians tried to capitalize on their efforts to aid the

victims, by being visible in media, grabbing credit for goods being distributed, etc. Relief goods were packed by government agencies in yellow bags - yellow being the color associated with the Philippine President Corazon Aquino when she was campaigning for office. Insinuations of diversions and substitution of relief goods and complaints of "favoritism" in their distribution were also aired. And government's efforts were deemed slow-footed and grossly inadequate by some quarters.

Like the Bamboo: One of our noted writers made the observation that the Filipino has one outstanding characteristic among others: he is pliant like the bamboo. He bends with the winds of misfortune, but when the tempest is over, he'll rise again and stand tall. This is true, but this observation can be made of humanity as well. We shall survive, as we have learned to cope with so many slings of misfortune hurled our way.

Slowly, the country is going "back to normal." News about the disaster and rescue efforts no longer merit headlines. Now we talk about the impending increase in oil prices, whether we should declare a moratorium on our debt payments. Soon, talk about the elections of 1992 will be hot copy once again. And yes, rumors of the next coup (bigger, better organized) are rife again.

And life goes on . . . To most of us, the concerns of eking out a living are big enough. •••

Member Solicits Donations for Veterans

I am very interested in helping and donating to Veteran Administration hospitals for our veteran stamp collectors. I have recently received some correspondence from a club that works with vets and from a decorated veteran seeking Yugoslavia stamps.

Mr. Robert (Bob) Krueger is a member of the Temple Stamp Club of Milwaukee. He writes: "We, at the Temple Stamp Club, try to show the interested patients at the VA Hospital how to collect, sort, catalog and mount the various stamps that we receive from donations. However, we do have some difficulties in that some are very hard of hearing, some have poor eyesight, and others have such poor coordination that the stamps will just not go where they are supposed to. None-the-less, we feel that we are doing some good because it gives them something to do instead of just sitting around feeling sorry for themselves. Further, it gives them the feeling that they are not forgotten, but remembered by those who are giving the stamps." Donations of stamps and used albums would be most welcome. Contact Mr. Krueger at 4773 N. Sheffield Ave., Whitefish Bay, WI 53211-1109

Mr. Armand P. Hebert writes: "If you have any extra stamps anytime I will be glad to get them. I am looking for some Yugoslavia stamps. I was decorated by King Peter II of Yugoslavia for helping them out in WW II. I do a lot of volunteer work at the VA Hospital and some on the outside for veterans and the handicapped. I often help with their stamp projects." Contact Mr. Hebert at 31 Durand St., Plattsburgh, NY 12901.

Besides stamps, paperback books of all kinds are welcome donations at VA Hospital Libraries. Apparently VA libraries are not allowed to purchase paperback books . . . maybe because they don't stand up well to heavy use. Thank you for any help and/or donations you can give to our veterans. ••• Joe Palko (# 421)

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

There are a few announcements for this edition of *The Circuit* that may also appear elsewhere, but here goes anyway. Dalene Thomas (# 101) contacted me a few months ago and volunteered to start a swap circuit of the sort that was suggested in "Raech's Ruminations" in the Sept.-Oct. issue of the newsletter. Consider it done. The details of how to participate should be elsewhere in this newsletter, but if they did not make the deadline, just drop a note to Dalene.

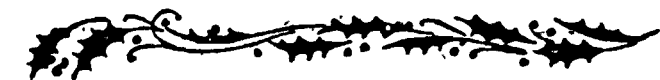
We have a new sales circuit manager, Willie Dow (# 418), of Jacksonville, Florida. Our thanks goes out to him for taking the job and also to Bruce Negryz (# 331) for his efforts these past few months. It is a big job for someone with a full time job and a family, and Bruce did not feel that he could give the response time the members wanted.

I have noted that some membership applications come in with only initials or with names that could be either masculine or feminine. How about identifying yourself. I am not a male chauvinist, but I would like to be able to address a person or letter to Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Mz., whatever you prefer. Also, if Herb does not have a phone number on record it would be appreciated. I like to call members and chat when I am traveling and I am sure some others would too if the number was available in our directory.

The mailing to APS members should be underway by now. Dave has tried to separate the current members from the prospective members but some may slip through. If you receive one, please just give it to another prospective member.

A suggestion was made in the Sept.-Oct. issue of *The Circuit* that an International gift membership program be initiated to gain new and young members. Thanks for the idea, Carol Cervenka (# 498). Members, let me have your ideas on this. My own thoughts are, why limit it to young people of other countries? I am sure we have many young prospective members right here in the US. Promoting youth collecting is one of the basic objectives of ISWSC. Since you should be reading this in early December, I shall take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy holiday season and I hope that the Thanksgiving turkey in all its forms is gone by now.

••• Ken Jenkins (# 15), President



New Member Ready to Trade But Has Some Questions

Congrats and welcome back to the editor—I'm a new member and enjoyed the two issues of *The Circuit*. I'm going to write Herb to see if he has any back issues available.

Under "Member's Interests" I'd like members to know that I have used and mint Japan available, trade or buy, and that I'd like to purchase Russia and Worldwide mint.

I've written to Bruce and Tom for information on exchanging and circuits. I've never enjoyed exchanging and wonder if a short paragraph could be arranged that would explain how it works. Is it stamp for stamp or-catalog values, etc.?

Also duplicates — I enjoyed your piece about collecting/exchange friends in New Zealand. But how did you reach the point of having material to exchange? Buy collections? Or packets?

Thanks, ••• Jim Pike (#504)

VICE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Although an above average number of requests for stamp donations were filled during the previous two months, the stamp donation part of the dues have continued to come in at a fairly steady pace so that there is still a large box of stamps on hand for distribution.

I have received letters from other members with suggestions for sending stamps to organizations that support children's programs and need stamps. These have been followed up on and stamps provided. I have also received suggestions for sending to Veteran's Administration organizations. While that may be a worthy cause, the ISWSC charter specifically supports children's programs, so I have not responded to those requests.

Does ISWSC have members who also have an interest in computers? I fall in that category myself, and would be interested in hearing about stamp inventory programs and computer generated album pages, among other things. Also, I am a subscriber to the Prodigy computer on-line service, and I think it would be nice to establish contact with other ISWSC members by that means, if there are any of you who are also subscribers to that service. (My ID # on Prodigy is HSFK48A. Leave a message!) ••• Ken Costilow (# 142)

Down Under Report

It gives me much pleasure to write these few lines to inform you all as to how the ISWSC is progressing in this part of the world.

Allen Soule and myself have been busy recruiting new members as you will have noted by your newsletters of late, and it is pleasing not only for ourselves but also for the Directors of ISWSC, to the response we had to our recent advertisement in the publication, *Stamp News Australia*. Not only have we enrolled members from Australia but also from our neighboring country, New Zealand. Queries have also been received from Malaysia and Denmark!

Both Allen and myself think this is a good idea for the club to have more foreign members, as we have noted that up to recently, members listed were nearly all from the USA and Canada. By having a broader scope of countries listed, members have a greater choice both for exchange and correspondence purposes.

Another point we would like to see introduced is that particular interests be listed under a code symbol for each hobby they are interested in, such an idea being favored by several members here.

May we both wish ISWSC continuing success for the future. More news later! ••• Karl Steinberg and Allen Soule, Australian and New Zealand Membership Chairmen

The "J's" Have It

As I was entering member's names on my computer list, I was struck by the thought that many members had the initial of "J" or "R" for their given name. To test my computer skill or lack thereof, I had the computer run out the list by first initials. For trivia buffs, the following came out:

A - 31; B - 21; C - 20; D - 29; E - 23; F - 14; G - 22; H - 15; I - 6; J - 67; K - 10; L - 26; M - 40; N - 9; O - 1; P - 16; Q - 0; R - 52; S - 13; T - 13; U - 0; V - 2; W - 23; X - 0; Y - 1; Z - 1.

••• Tom Ginsberg (# 76)

Deadline Next Issue ••• January 5th, 1991

LETTERS: Info for Kids' Clubs

Welcome, Welcome to all the new members of our Club. We appreciate you. If any of you work with a Ben Franklin Stamp Club or other children's club and would like to have some stamp game ideas, I'd be glad to send you the game ideas I used when I had a Ben Franklin Club.

Since moving here to the Greenville, North Carolina, area where there are no BF Stamp Clubs, I really miss them.

... Arlene Futrell (# 2)

Bangladesh Stamps for Sale

An ATA member from Bangladesh has written to one of our members asking help in distributing his name as someone who can supply mint Bangladesh stamps for reasonable prices. He indicates that he suffered a major illness which left him partially paralyzed and forced his early retirement on disability. Being only 50 years old and having a large family to support, the disability payments are not enough and he is hoping to supplement his income by selling stamps he has collected and saved over the years.

Mr. Quader has been an ATA member (# 42674-2) for six years and lists Mr. Garabrant, the ATA Youth Activities Director, as a good friend and reference. If you are interested in purchasing mint stamps, write to Mr. N. A. Quader, GPO, Box 358, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh. ...

Butterfly Stamp Collectors Wanted

Anthony Witkowski, a collector interested in Butterflies on stamps has written to ISWSC in hopes of finding others interested in butterflies. He indicates he has a large surplus of duplicates for trading. Mr. Witkowski is a member of ATA (#45241-7) and APS (# 153532). If you'd like to trade butterfly stamps, write to: 92 Jasper Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 0766.

*Remember the International Troops
serving in Saudi Arabia this Holiday
Season by sending an unknown soldier
a Holiday Greeting card.
Pray for Peace*

Needs New Trading Partner for Friend

I would like to find a different trading partner for a collector who I have been exchanging stamps with for a few years.

He is a good trader and always sends good stamps. Also, he corresponds in very good English.

At the end of November, I am retiring from the position of Postmaster from the Gratiot Post Office. As my income will go down, I'll not be able to trade stamps unless they can trade used stamps. Most Eastern European nations do not allow that.

Any ISWSC member interested in trading mint stamps should write to:

Leopold Sipinski
SKR Poczta 590
00-950 Warszawa 1, POLAND

Thank you and best wishes.

... Della Burmeister (# 97)

ISWSC Has Much To Offer

To All Officers: This paper just keeps getting better. Imagine! \$5.00 dues per year — out of that postage alone would be about \$2.00. A lot of people are doing a labor of love.

ISWSC has so many good features. Almost everyone has or can get 250 different world stamps to be distributed to youth; Another Good idea. Even have one member who will accept mint stamps in lieu of dues for those countries where foreign exchange (money) is difficult. Another Plus! Keep it up. ... S. E. Rutxim I

Classified Ads

NEW TRADING PARTNERS WANTED. Let's trade on CV for CV approval basis. I am an advanced BC and Western Europe collector and have plenty of good material to trade. Prefer high value trades. Prompt responses. SASE first trade only. (ISWSC # 434) Please write: Arthur Clarke, Box 133, Whittaker, MI 48190

(3/1)

LOOKING FOR WINTER TRADING PARTNERS — each keeping what we need. Send 100 different postally used foreign. I'll set up the form. A. Futrell, R.D. # 1, Stokes, NC 27884-9714 (1/1)

Officers, Chairpersons, & Managers

President: Ken Jenkins (#15), Box 42271, Las Vegas, NV 89116-2271 USA

Vice President: Ken Costilow (#142), 621 Virginia Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23452 USA (Send Required Stamps for Dues for Youth Stamp Program to the Vice President)

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Auction Manager: Dr. Wallace D. Johnson (#212), 302 Stanaford Drive, Beckley, WV 25801 USA

OMNI Exchange Manager: Tom Allison (#42), Box 252, Wilmette, IL 60091-0252 USA

Co-Managers: Dave Paul (#59), Dr. Isaac Tannenbaum (#163), & Jerry Gross (#429)

Board of Directors: Aubrey Dunn, Past President (#1); Dave Nelson (#25); John Hotchner (#62); Hal Erickson (#173) and the Elected Officers.

Enjoyed Flying Tigers Article

I was so impressed with your article on General Chennault that I wanted to thank you for putting it in *The Circuit*. He must have been quite a man.

I worked in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, during 1963-66 at the Exxon (then Humble Oil) refinery. I am a chemical engineer currently working as an Environmental Engineer.

I am writing to Herb Holland to get some membership applications to give out at our local stamp show. Happy stamping. ... Jim Hanley

**Happy
Holidays**

