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Tilebaldy uulu Eliizar

Corporate Secretary

and Legal Counsel

Agnes H. Maranan

Farewell, Chris Duke ASPBAE Secretary General (1972-1985)

ASPBAE and the adult education movement has lost another one of its own.

On 22 June 2023, Dr. Chris Duke, former ASPBAE Secretary General (1972-1985) passed on.

Chris Duke was a towering figure in the adult education movement. A significant part of what ASPBAE has accomplished and reached today is built on Chris' vision and exemplary work.

ASPBAE owes him a huge debt of gratitude.

Chris took on the role of ASPBAE Secretary General in 1972 when he was Director for Continuing Education at the Australian National University (ANU). It was then close to a decade after ASPBAE's founding when the organisation was struggling to survive. In our re-telling of the ASPBAE history during our 50th anniversary, we characterised the period when Chris steered ASPBAE as the era when ASPBAE "Dared to Grow". It was a period of expansion when the organisation truly flourished. Under Chris' leadership, national adult education associations, involving adult education professionals from universities and governments, were formed and thrived. Several of them in India, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand/Aotearoa, Japan, Sri Lanka, Korea as examples, exist until now. Chris successfully fostered the partnership between ASPBAE and DVV International – forging the decades-long international cooperation for adult education which commenced in 1977 and persists to date. With DVV support and Chris' determined efforts, South-South and North-South exchanges on adult education for capacity-development, advocacy and solidarity expanded – buoyed no doubt by the creation of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) in 1973 with ASPBAE as one of the founding organisations. ASPBAE's strong base in Australia and a widening of its communications work through a journal, the 'ASPBAE Courier', contributed well to adult education scholarship and in enhancing ASPBAE's regional and global profile.

Chris remained active within ASPBAE years after he stepped down from leading the organisation. He was a great source of encouragement and wisdom to successive ASPBAE Secretary Generals and leaders. He worked closely with ASPBAE in various CONFINTEA processes and continued to help nurture the ASPBAE-DVV partnership. He enthusiastically participated in our 50th anniversary celebrations - attended our General Assembly in 2012 when we were planning our 50th anniversary activities and framing our engagements in shaping the post 2015 global education agenda. He also hosted an ASPBAE 50th Anniversary Reflection Seminar in late 2013 in Hongkong which brought ASPBAE's past Presidents, SGs, and other EC members together.

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Over the last couple of years, much of ASPBAE's interactions with Chris have been through his strong involvement with PIMA – a global network of adult and lifelong learning educators, activists, and scholars. He was Editor of the PIMA Bulletin from its inception till late 2022 – moving on when it was evident that he had to focus more on his health.

In honour of Chris' immense contributions, a [Special Issue of the PIMA Bulletin](#) was released in April 2023. In this piece, readers will better appreciate Chris' different passions and his lifelong dedication to the causes ASPBAE promotes: the power of adult learning and education, inclusion, democracy, social and ecological justice.

We have lost a staunch champion of lifelong learning who will be much missed.

The ASPBAE Executive Council and staff are in discussion on suitable ways to commemorate Chris' life and contributions – especially as we plan ASPBAE's 60th anniversary in 2024. Recognising that he belongs to a wider ALE family we are connecting as well with others such as the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), DVV International, PRIA India, PIMA in this regard.

We shall inform ASPBAE members about concrete plans as soon as possible.

For now, please join us in offering our deepest condolences to his wife, Liz, his children and family. And our deep appreciation to them for sharing Chris' rich and meaningful life with us.

ASPBAE Executive Council and Staff

30.06.23

Manila