



MI, Inc. 7th Grand Reunion

August 2005

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Prologue



By: Lito Quiazon

It all began in Disneyland in 1993. No, it wasn't a Mickey Mouse event; it was the First Grand Reunion hosted by the Marinduque Association of Southern California. Many of you I'm sure still have fond memories of the welcome party, the picnic at the beach and the Gala Night at the Disneyland Hotel. This landmark event was much more than a big party; it marked the formation of Marinduque International. Our founder and moving force, Dr. Hector Sulit served as President from 1993 to 1997; Celso Mataac from 1997 to 1999; Dr. Rudy Jao from 1999 to 2001; and Steve Sosa from 2001 to 2003. Macrine Katague, the first woman President, is currently serving her term 2003-2005.

And so the tradition continued. A grand reunion was held every two years. MACUSA (Chicago) hosted in 1995. This occasion marked the first cooperative undertaking of MI Inc. A decision was made to send a joint multi-purpose Marinduque mission comprised of three teams: a medical mission team, a business and economic team and an educational team. More grand reunions followed: 1997 in New Jersey (MESA), 1999 in San Francisco (MANC), 2001 in Toronto (MCSC) and 2003 in Washington D.C. (MACA).

And now, we present the highlights of the 2005 7th Grand Reunion held in Vancouver, Canada and hosted by the Marinduque Association of British Columbia (MABC).

Schedule of Events

The packed six-day schedule only required stamina and staying power. Here it is:

Thursday, August 4: Welcome Night (Hawaiian)

Friday, August 5: Golf at McCleery, Picnic at Stanley Park, Vancouver

Continuation Schedule of Events

City Tour, and Sunset Dinner Cruise (all in one day?)

Saturday, August 6: MII Meeting and Election of Officers, Gala at the Westin Bayshore

Sunday, August 7: Despedida brunch hosted by Annie Jalac Miles, President of MABC, Vancouver North Shore Tour

Monday, August 8: Whistler resort tour

Tuesday, August 9: Victoria excursion tour

If you haven't left by now, you probably already bought a condo in Vancouver. And why not, Vancouver has always been rated highly as one of the best livable cities in the world.

Welcome Night



Dr. Rudy Jao calls on Wednesday and asks, "we're arriving before noon on Thursday, puede ba tayong mag-golf before the welcome night". Now this is a man who knows his priorities. Thursday afternoon at the Plaza 500 hotel there were already out-of-town guests eager to play golf. Who were these Tiger Woods wannabes, you ask? Noly Ricohermoso (MASC), Al Molato (MESA), Msgr. Rey Nunez, Steve Sosa (MESA) and Dr. Jao. On the way to the golf course, Willie Leano (the ultimate golf fanatic) calls asking where we were (you see he was due to arrive at 6pm). I said we were on our way to play golf (he-he). Needless to say, he was overcome with jealousy.

The welcome night was held at the historic Vancouver Heritage Hall, just a few blocks from the hotel. MABC officers were nervous and excited. And did they ever prepare for this event.

The transportation team shuttled guests from the hotel. George Villaruel was the head chef, assisted by Linggo Almonte and Ponce Estrella. The three amigos prepared the roast beef and dinuguan with puto. The dedicated Ponce Estrella made the long trek to Langley (an hours' drive one way) to pick up the homemade desserts from Cenna Malimata. Alice Manguera Tibay cooked her special ginataang mackerel (or is it tuna?), Olga brought green mangoes and bagoong, others brought pancit and lots of dessert. Bert Morelos (a relative of the Boac Montellanos) was the DJ. It was an all-out effort by the locals.

Joseph and Evelyn Fajardo Luarca, Editha Rejano de Rama and Butch Maano Mori were at the entrance ready to distribute name tags (and more important to collect money). Guests started to arrive after 6pm in colorful Hawaiian attire. The Katagues and Sores wore coordinated Hawaiian outfits.



The evening's program included a performance by the Paul Latta Polynesian dance troupe arranged by our tireless leader Annie Miles. A welcome night would not be complete without a rendition of My Way by Monsignor Rey Nunez.

The main event was the introduction of the out-of-town guests. We counted around fifty guests from various locations; Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, New Jersey, Maryland, New York, Toronto, Houston, San Diego, Winnipeg, and Cleveland. But I bet you can't beat this this duo. Eddie Lim came all the way from Abu Dhabi and Nenette Rivamonte Hylander all the way from Oslo Norway. Nori Muslih Lim (MABC Regional Director) earned the distinction of having two guests who earned the most air miles.

The welcome night would not be complete with the compulsory dancing and picture taking. Unfortunately, the party had to end at midnight. All in all, everyone had a terrific time. And more was yet to come...

Golf, Picnic, Sunset Dinner



Early morning golf tee time at 6am. The excited golfers were already waiting at the hotel lobby at 5am. The magnificent seven included Dr. Rudy Jao, Steve Sosa, Willie Leano, Noly Ricohermoso, Al Molato, Msgr. Rey Nunez and Lito Quiazon. We formed two groups. Group 1 (Rey, Steve and Lito) tee off at 6am. Group 2 (Rudy, Al, Noly and Willie) tee off at 6:08am. We talked about having this East vs. West tournament. But we actually don't know who won, it's probably best that it's tied. Congratulations to Al Molato who had the day's low score of 83.

What were the ladies doing while the guys were golfing? Little did we know that there was a lot of interest in lanzones. We heard Tessie Agana Jao beat everyone to Chinatown. Vi Magsino and sister Glen Luz-Frayna even took a cab to Chinatown. Now that's real passion for the fruit.

Stanley Park is an evergreen oasis of 400 hectares close to the heart of Vancouver's downtown core. Its natural west coast atmosphere offering a back drop of majestic cedar, hemlock and fir trees embraces visitors and transports them to an environment rich in tranquility. The Miniature Railway area was the site of the picnic. It wouldn't be a picnic without great food. MABC provided two lechons. Ang sarap daw sabi ni Flo. Kalimutan na muna natin ang cholesterol, sabi ng karamihan. George Villaruel was grilling hamburgers. What a feast! The food kept coming and coming. Satisfied ba ang mga visitors? You bet. Who else but Flo Apeles, the entertainer, with his ever-present karaoke kicked off the festivities inviting everyone to show off their singing talents(?) Msgr. Nunez needed no coaxing – he gets everyone worked up. Tessie Agana Jao sang "Crazy". Willie Leano showed off with Elvis Presley songs. And many more performed. It seemed like the "Marinduque International Idol" contest. Everyone won! And finally, the picture taking session which seemed to never end.

And then it's off to the sunset dinner cruise.



The unstoppable Annie Miles managed to sell enough tickets to get us our own private yacht for the dinner cruise. If you want to get something done, give it to Annie. Over fifty people were looking forward to enjoy the 2.5 hour dinner cruise from Coal Harbor, around Stanley Park, under the Lion's Gate Bridge and along False Creek and the West Vancouver Skyline. It's like dining at a restaurant with all of Vancouver's finest views. Manang Paz Sulit said it all, "This is the best – great food, great views and great company." And there was live music too. Can't beat that.

MI Inc. Meeting



Everyone was there by 9am, despite Joseph and Evelyn Luarca bugging each attendee for their fifteen dollar contribution at the door. Seated at head table were the MII Executive Council (current MII officers, Chapter Presidents and past MII Presidents). Over thirty Chapter attendees were seated in tables around the room. Some attendees looked like they haven't had breakfast. But just in time suman was served. And later, Olga Nieva Luarca (Lito's girl friend) and Linggo Almonte went to each table serving ensaymada.

Macrine Katague congratulated everyone for being on time and called the meeting to order. The meeting kicked off with introductions. Macrine asked everyone to say something about themselves (where they're from and other interesting trivia). You all should have been there, it was a real hoot. It was a terrific start, it got everyone energized. The agenda included: Welcome address from Annie Miles (MABC President), Invocation led by Monsignor Rey Nunez, Approval of Minutes Chicago Meeting July 9, 2005 Thelma Santos, Treasurer's Report Vi Magsino, Chapter President or Representative Report, New and Old Business and finally the Election Of Officers. Gawad Kalinga made a video presentation about housing projects in the Philippines. Much healthy debate took place but Houston, Texas was conditionally accepted as the eighth Chapter of MII. They were also elected as hosts of the 8th Grand Reunion, just barely by one vote over MESA.

Here are your MII officers for 2006-2007:

President: Thelma Munoz-Santos (MESA)

Vice President: Noli Ricohermoso (MASC)

Secretary: Alma Sosa (MESA)

Treasurer: Vi Magsino (MACUSA)

Auditor: Lita Alandy (MANC)

Press Relations Officer: Cugie dela Santa (MACA)

Executive Director: Grace Regan (MASC)

And last but not least, MII unanimously endorsed the Mission of Love 2006. Mark your calendars: February 5-11, 2006 is the date of the next medical mission. If you haven't attended, you are missing the "service" opportunity of a lifetime. And if you cannot attend, you can do your part by pledging your financial assistance.

Gala Night



The 5-star Westin Bayshore was the site of the evening's formal affair. The grand ballroom had room for four-hundred. It was a wonderful sight with all the beautiful women of MII dressed in their long gowns

and the men in formal attire. Dinner was a lavish buffet (salads, salmon, roast beef, chicken, fish). Even with all-you-care-to-eat, there was enough food for fifty more people.

The evening's program started with a welcome speech from Annie Miles. This was followed by a speech by current MII President Macrine Katague. Her compassionate plea for support was very sincere and hit the heart of everyone there.

His Worship Mayor Wayne Wright of New Westminster is a huge supporter of MABC. He visited Quezon City last year and had much to say about the experiences, especially the balut eating incident.

The next speaker, Consul Robespierre (Obis) Bolivar, was just recently assigned to Vancouver. His last posting was in Moscow. He said there were 150 Filipinos in Moscow and there were also 150 associations! He then went on to say the MII epitomizes "unity" and suggested that others should emulate our model.



We then honored Macrine Katague, Mayor Wright and Consul Bolivar with a putong. Thanks to the participation of the MACA folks (they're the putong experts), we managed to do it right the first time.

Board Member Mel Go made it just in time. He was still recovering from jet lag.

The rest of the evening people danced and reconnected with friends and family. And of course, the gala would not be complete without the traditional picture taking.

Despedida Brunch

Steve Sosa said after we got off the van, "malapit na tayo, may nagpipirito ng daing." And so we arrived at Annie's place for the Despedida Brunch. It was Butch Maano Mori frying the daing.



It was time to reflect on the week's festivities. Msgr. Rey Nunez said Mass. Brunch followed. Ang damping pagkain - it seemed like the food was multiplying every hour. Reylar (owned by the Largas of Boac) catered the main dishes. More singing performances followed. Marinduque Provincial Board Member Mel Go provided a quick update on the Marcopper situation. We discovered a group of talented pianists (Eddie Lim, Joseph Luarca and Butch Mori). Macrine was on her way to the ladies room and heard the Eddie playing the piano in the living room. She quickly formed an impromptu singing group.



Thank you Annie for hosting the brunch for out-of-town guests.

Tours and Other Happenings

The North Shore Vancouver Tour crosses Lions Gate Bridge to the North Shore. The tour highlights the Grouse Mountain Skyride, which rises to a viewpoint of 1,300 meters (3,700 feet) above the city and the Capilano Suspension Bridge.



Whistler – site of the 2010 Winter Olympics. This scenic tour starts with a relaxing trip up the Sea to Sky Highway which overlooks majestic Howe Sound with its panorama of mountains, lakes and glaciers. Upon arrival in the quaint alpine village of Whistler, shop till you drop, stroll or have lunch at one of the many fine restaurants (Dave Katague had a nose for the finest restaurant). Enjoy Shannon Falls, one of North America's waterfalls in the Squamish Forest.

Many guests joined the Whistler resort tour. In fact, the Marinduquenos had the whole bus to themselves. Flo took this opportunity to get the ball rolling with his unending array of jokes. I heard one that goes like this. Name three fast ways to communicate. Tele-phone, tele-vision and tell-a-woman. But what really is the fastest way to spread the word. Sirit na. Tell a woman not to tell anyone. My apologies to all the ladies.

But do tell everyone about your experiences at the 7th grand reunion. Nineteen people joined the Victoria excursion tour. This one-day tour is the tour of all tours. Guests were picked up at the hotel at 9am for the bus ride to the ferry terminal. Then, a 90 minute ferry ride through the Gulf Islands. First stop was at the world famous Butchart Gardens, where more than 50 acres of magnificent gardens awaited. Muntik nang maiwanan ng bus si Hector. He was so absorbed shopping for flower seeds that he forgot the time. Dave Katague just couldn't resist. He bought another book to add to his collection.

Next, a scenic ocean-side drive with vistas of Juan de Fuca Strait and the Olympic Mountains, followed by the Royal Victoria Yacht Club and Beacon Hill Park. Upon arriving in Victoria, they explored the world-famous Empress Hotel, shops and boutiques, the provincial Parliament Buildings and other attractions around the Inner Harbour. Guests experienced "a bit of olde England".

Something "funny" happened during the Victoria tour. Apparently, a female MII executive walked into the men's restroom. Sabi ni Toots, "kahit saan naman sinusundan mo ako!". Is this true love or what?

While guests were enjoying Victoria, a business of another kind was taking place. Mel Go (accompanied by Lito at Flo's request) met with executives of Placer Dome (the Vancouver-based corporation

responsible for cleaning up the Marinduque environmental disaster.) It's a long and complicated saga and there have been many articles that have been written about this. Mel wanted Placer Dome to re-focus their attention to the problem, which evidently has been conveniently "forgotten". All in all, the task was accomplished, but there is much more to do.

Guests were back at the hotel at 9pm. Mel Go, Annie, Lito, Olga joined the Katagues and Sulits for late-night dessert and refreshments at the White Spot across the hotel.

Acknowledgements

The 7th Grand Reunion would not be successful without the commitment and cooperation of the six Chapters and the host Chapter MABC.

We thank all who made the special trip to Vancouver; over seventy guests not only from the six Chapters but also those from Abu Dhabi, Oslo, Ohio, Winnipeg, and Toronto.

We congratulate the officers and volunteers of MABC for a terrific job.

See you all at Marinduque Medical Mission 2006.

And finally, we present the Guest List. Marinduquenos who traveled to Vancouver, BC, Canada for the 7th Grand Reunion.

Agnes Lardizabal Apeles	MASC
Al Molato Jr.	MESA
Alma V. Sosa	MESA
Anjanette Jalac	MESA
Antonio R. Permejo	MASC
Art Hernandez, MD	MASC
Benjamin (Moy) Solomon	MACA
Benjie Sosa	MESA
Betty Jalos	MANC
Celso T. Mataac Sr.	MACA
Cesar Alino	MANC
Charlie Santos	MESA
Ching Jao Manalo	MACUSA
Christian Regan	MASC
Cora Fausto	MANC
Corazon dela Santa	MACA
Cugie dela Santa	MACA
Daisy Bardelosa	San Diego
Dall Solomon	MACA
David B. Katague, Ph.D.	MANC
Didi Lim	New York
Dinah Alino	MANC
Eddie Lim	Abu Dhabi, UAE
Edgar Alandy	MANC
Edith Sotto Espiritu	Los Angeles
Eleanor Sabalbaro	MACA
Emily Capistrano	Philippines
Ernie Milambiling, MD	Winnipeg, Canada
Fe Leano	MASC
Flo Apeles	MASC
Florian Jalac	MACA
Florida (Ford) Jalac	MESA
Gaudioso (Dio) Sore	MACA

Gaudioso (Dio) Sore	MACA
Gerardo Mantaring	Houston
Glen Luz-Frayna	MACUSA
Grace Regan	MASC
Ligaya Milambiling, MD	Winnipeg, Canada
Hector Sulit, MD	MASC
Inday Santo Domingo Tiangco	Philippines
James Santos	MESA
Jess Espiritu	Los Angeles
Jimmy Bardelosa	San Diego
Jing Santo Domingo	MESA
Joan Sosa	MESA
Jojie Sosa	MESA
Jomar Bardelosa	San Diego
Kit Solomon	MACA
Larry Fausto	MANC
Linda Permejo	MASC
Lita Alandy	MANC
Lorna Mantaring	Houston
Loyda Sore	MACA
Luz Licop	Cleveland, Ohio
Macrine Katague	MANC
Marita Nieva	Toronto, Canada
Marivic Rivera Padolina	MESA
Martha Molato	MESA
Mary Ann Rivera Curiba, MD	MESA
Mel Go	Philippines
Mike Miciano	MASC
Mila Miciano	MASC
Nannette Pamfilo-Jalac	MESA
Nenette Ricohermoso	MASC
Nenette Rivamonte Hylander	Oslo, Norway
Ningling Nepomuceno	MESA
Noly Ricohermoso	MASC
Nonoy Santo Domingo	MESA
Paul Regan	MASC
Paz Sulit	MASC
Pete Licop	Cleveland, Ohio
Rene Padolina	MESA
Rey Nunez, Monsignor	MESA
Rod Curiba Jr.	MESA
Rod Rod Curiba	MESA
Rudy Jao, MD	MACUSA
Steve Sosa	MESA
Terry dela Santa	MACA
Tessie Agana Jao	MACUSA
Thelma Munoz Santos	MESA
Tom Tom Curiba	MESA
Toots Santos	MESA
Totoy Nepomuceno	MESA
Vilma Mataac	MACA
Violeta Luz Magsino	MACUSA
Virgilio (Bill) Magsino	MACUSA
Willy Leano	MASC