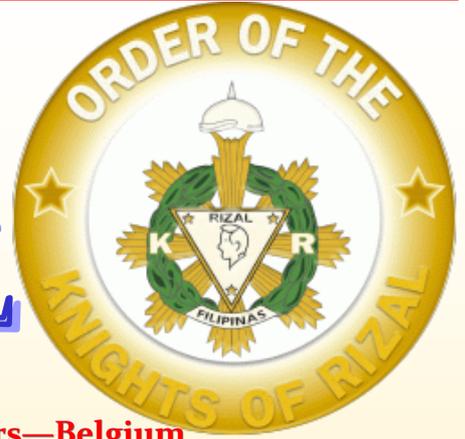




Newsletter Knights of RIZAL



Diamond Chapter Antwerp—Flanders—Belgium

Issue 35

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February 2013

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- **Introduction**
- **Report 13th Chartering Anniversary**
- **Article Sir Francis Ooms**
- **Invitations**
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Knights of Rizal - Diamond Chapter - Jan. 2013

Introduction

Dear Brother Knights of Rizal Diamond Chapter and affiliated chapters in Belgium, Europe and worldwide,

Dear friends of our organization,

On January 26th, we celebrated the 13th Chartering Anniversary of our Diamond Chapter of which you can read a more extensive report on one of the following pages.

The number 13 has opposite meanings depending culture and/or different attitude against superstition, but in many cases is inevitable to skip – unlike they usually do with airplane rows and racecar numbers. Around the age of thirteen, one is gradually leaving childhood to become adolescent. Also our chapter has been growing during this period of a dozen +1 years, thanks to the belief in Rizal's ideas of our members and their dedication in practicing this teaching. Automatically this creates a strong bond among the group but also towards other Filipino organizations that focus on the same objectives as us.

Also within Dr. Jose Rizal's family the number thirteen is to be found back: his father, Francisco Mercado, was the youngest of 13 off springs. He, himself, together with his wife Theodora Alonso and their nine children formed a family of 13, although he did not have the luck to see them all alive at the same time. (Conception died in 1865 at the age of three after which three

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more sisters were born).

Rizal's mother Theodora and his eldest sister Saturnina both died in nineteen hundred and 13, at the age of resp. 85 and 63. The influence of his mother's education, his parents' principles, his brother's practical help and the support of the whole family as well as of befriended compatriots is not to be underestimated. A growing tree can only become strong if its roots are simultaneously becoming stronger, is it not?

The fact that Rizal travelled around the world at that époque is already remarkable by itself. Just remember that Jules Verne's book 'Around the world in 80 days' was only published in 1873. Unlike the book story, Rizal took the time to observe, to study and to register, as much as he could, the different aspects of life, using the varied knowledge he gained before. Without disapproving any kind of community, he retained the various positive elements as a basis for a harmonious nation with equal rights (and duties) for groups with different views. Hence the fact that his opinions are still very actual and universal. Europe (the old world) was the continent by eminent to be studied by Rizal, so many cultures with histories going back millenniums. In the opposite case, it was more unlikely that a European showed much interest in the Philippines, but Dr. Blumentritt was such a person. Although he never visited the islands far away because of health reasons, he was very well aware of what was going on there. Therefore it must have been a great honor for him and Rizal to meet each other after a vivid correspondence. No wonder they became best friends for live.

Rizal studied, worked and lived in several European cities and visited at least 2 time 13 others. To follow some of his footsteps and to enforce the unity among the several Chapters of the Knights of Rizal in Europe, there will be a European Assembly this year. Exact time and place will be communicated in due time. I would like to encourage every knight to participate to this kind of events which create a unique opportunity to meet members of the Supreme Council and members from other chapters.

Our next chapter activity will be a Garden Party on April 13th in Aalter as already announced. Further details will follow as soon as finalized. Bring your camera and your widest smile because this is an ideal place to take your winning picture that you can enter in the 'Smile of the world' competition. See further in this Newsletter.

See you soon.

NON OMNIS MORIAR

Sir Paul Verloo, KCR

Chapter Commander 2011-2013

Deputy Area Commander for Belgium 2012-2014

NOM

Board 2010-2012

Sir Paul Verloo, KCR, Chapter Commander Diamond—Antwerp

Sir Tony Guansing, KGOR, Regional Commander for Europe

Sir Dominiek Segaert, KGOR, Area Commander for Belgium

Sir Peter Van Bogaert, KGOR, Special Adviser to the Supreme Commander Manila

Sir Kris Van Thillo, KCR, Past Chapter Commander

Sir Roy De Mol, KCR, Deputy Commander

Sir Rik Van Tiggel, KCR, Deputy Commander

Sir Ronny Felix, KCR, Archivist, Editor newsletter

Sir Danny Vandenbogaerde, KOR

13th Chartering Anniversary – Diamond Chapter

13 A lucky or unlucky number? Definitely a lucky number for the KOR Diamond Chapter for our annual chartering!

We could welcome about 70 participants in a beautifully renewed “De Watermeulen”. The reception was held at the open second floor, overlooking the ground floor. Excused because of sickness was Sir Peter Van Bogaert and Sir Rik Van Tiggel could not be present because of work responsibilities outside the country. But both their wives did not want to miss the occasion and were present. Besides our members and spouses there were also a number of sympathizers who almost become regular participants to our gatherings. Every-



The reception area

one also appreciated the presence of our European Regional Commander, Sir Rudy Nollas and our Belgian Area Commander, Sir Abeth Arevalo.

The official ceremony part was held on the ground floor. Sir Kris Van Thillo gave the welcome word. Ms Christina Rola, Secretary & Consul of the Philippine Embassy read the message of the Philippine Ambassador Mrs. Victoria Bataclan. Sir Dominiek Segaert read the message from the Belgian Ambassador in the Philippines, Mr Christian Meerschman, honorary member of our chapter since 2010.



Ms Christina Rola and Sir Lucien Spittael

After the introductory speeches, Sir Paul Verloo led the ceremony for dubbing three new knights: Willy De Meyere, Luc Raes en Peter Uhrig. A very big welcome to our new knights!



Sirs Willy De Meyere, Luc Raes & Peter Uhrig

Sir Peter De Bruyn and Sir Andre Heyse were elevated to KOR by Sir Abeth Arevalo.

Sir Danny Vandenberg, our newest board member, was exalted to KCR by Sir Rudy Nollas.



Exaltation of Sir Danny Vandenberg

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Sirs Guy Waterloos, Peter De Bruyn, Geert Verhaegen and spouses

Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to Sir Geert Verhaegen, Sir Guy Waterloos and Sir Peter De Bruyn for their continued involvement in social projects in the Philippines.

No anniversary celebration is complete without the mandatory toast.

Dinner was already waiting by the end of the ceremonies. As always the food was delicious and sumptuous!



Sir Roy De Mol and Sir Eric Borghijs



Elevation of Sir Peter De Bruyn and Sir Andre Heyse

After the dinner, Marisa Van Thillo and some of the ladies surprised us in a very original way; they performed a play about the mother of Rizal.

The play, "Teodora" portrays our national hero's dying mother bereft of all that she valued: her wealth, her honor, her knowledge, her sight, and her beloved, Pepe. We see her here, in a dark corner, asking herself if it was all worthwhile, if her son had better not known too much, if she were to be blamed for all that had happened as she finally comes face to face with God. She realizes there is only one thing that she had become when all had been taken away. As she humbly asks for forgiveness for all her shortcomings, we witness slowly that Teodora's life had indeed become a gift for many Filipinos. With nothing else to hold on to but her faith, she unknowingly allows herself to become "a gift of God": TEODORA. It is the story of many Filipinos.

"Teodora" was originally written by Rene Villanueva as a monologue commissioned by the resident theatre of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), Tanghalang Pilipino in 1993. Mr. Villanueva is best described by the UP Alumni.net as "a playwright, who was among the leading figures in children's literature in the Philippines. He was in the hall of fame list of the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature." He is also known for having written the theme song lyrics of the



A view of the play

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Philippines' longest running children's educational TV program, "Batibot". However, Mr. Villanueva died in 2007 at the age of 53, leaving his country anthologies of children's books recounting well-loved stories, and theatre plays.

Much kudos to especially Marisa for choosing and directing the play and to the other ladies for their magnificent performance: Suzanne Guansing, Mayet Foloso, Faith Nunez, Felly Bustamante Facto, Rhieyah Van Tiggel, Gina Navea and Grace Almacen!

The evening was ended by the dansers...



Our trip to the homeland and the connection between Rizal and Balayan.

Sir Francois Ooms, KGOR

This article is written by Sir Francois Ooms during his stay in the Philippines. We invite others to write down and share their visits and impressions of the Philippines and the people.

As we do every year, we came to the Philippines to avoid the harsh winter in Europe. My Wife Minda and I left on 20th October via Etihad airways. On arrival in Manila we checked-in at the Manila Mansion for a couple of days, just to relax from the long trip. Being in Manila I took the opportunity to pay a courtesy visit to IHQ to greet and talk with the staff. After a couple of days we resumed our travel to Balayan, Batangas, the home town of Minda, which is located about 2/3 hours drive South of Manila, depending on the traffic.

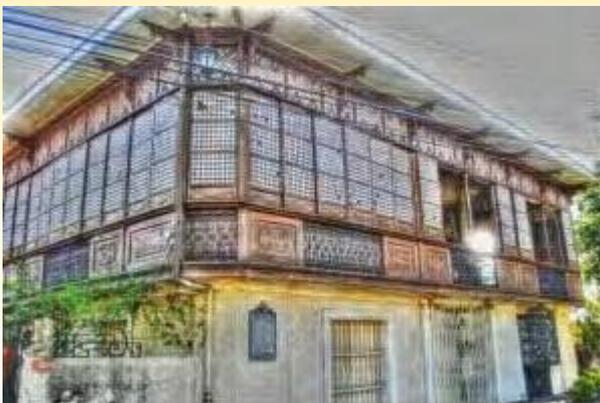
Balayan is one of the oldest, most prosperous and historical towns in Batangas Province.

Part of Balayan's beauty is its close affinity with its history. The town was one of the first settlements in the Philippines, with existing records of local residents exchanging barter goods with Chinese traders dating back to the mid-14th century.

The area around Balayan figured greatly in Chinese records as the centre of the country they called Mai-I, which was derived from the ancient word 'Bai', meaning 'house' or 'settlement'. Over time, the name shifted to 'Balay', after the Visayan, until the final name of Balayan was coined. Despite the presence of Spanish forces in the Philippines, a number of areas around the archipelago were often plagued by attacks from Muslims. In the mid-18th century Muslims were able to take over the town, keeping it under their control for two months. When they left, they burned-down the entire town. The event prompted local officials to construct a fort to prevent further Muslim attacks. With much of the town's life steeped in Spanish colonial culture, starting with the coming of Franciscan friars in 1572, it is not surprising that it values this part of its past.

Balayan is also the home town of the Lopez Family, a member of which, Don Sixto Lopez, was a good friend and supporter of Dr. Jose Rizal. Don Sixto Lopez became closely associated with Dr. Jose Rizal, the Philippine's National Hero. During the Philippine's uprising against Spanish authority it was Don Sixto Lopez who privately gave personal and financial aid to Rizal and his works and who later helped introduce and circulate Rizal's novels in the Philippines.

When Rizal was arrested, Sixto Lopez was likewise hunted down for incarceration, on the ground that he was "Rizal's most active agent". Later on he escaped Rizal's fate only when he accepted voluntary exile from his native land and soon thereafter, together with Dr. Regidor of London, endeavored to rescue his friend from the hands of his executioners during Rizal's memorable voyage from Barcelona to Manila.



Finally, following Rizal's death, it was Don Sixto Lopez who humbly took up the banner that had fallen from Rizal's dying hands and he continued to work unassumingly for the independence of his country, notwithstanding the swift political changes during those times and in spite of his personal family loss and misfortune.

The old house of Don Sixto Lopez is still standing and is well preserved by the family. A few years ago I visited the house together with my good friend Sir Don Brennock from Ireland and found some interesting artifacts there.

Lopez ancestral home in Balayan

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Name plate of Sixto Lopez

This photograph has a special interest owing to the attitude of the Manila authorities toward the dead and the living patriot: while the Members of the Civil Commission were each subscribing to the erection of a monumental statue to Rizal, they were at the same time excluding Lopez from his and Rizal's own native land. It is also interesting because of an incident, which occurred when the photograph was being taken. In response to the customary injunction to "look pleasant," Rizal is reputed to have said to Lopez, "Yes . . . imagine that you are about to be executed by the Spaniards!" These words proved prophetic for Rizal five years later.

That is a little snippet of the history of Balayan and its connection with Dr. Jose Rizal. For me it is an honor to be able to live here in this historical town of Balayan and I am proud also to be an official adapted son of this town.

Sir Francois Ooms, KGOR



View inside the house



A photograph of Sixto Lopez and Jose Rizal on Rizal's return from Europe in 1891

Invitation

Rizal Garden Party

Saturday 13th April at 4 pm



Kestelstraat 110, 9880 Aalter (in the garden of Sir Peter De Bruyn and Lieve)

Aperitif, spring buffet (cold & warm), desserts

Small quiz

25 € per person

Payment:

By bank transfer to our account no. 979 6095137 50 (IBAN: BE86 9796 0951 3750 - BIC: ARPSBE22)

Diamond Chapter Rizal – Venneborglaan 90 – 2100 Deurne

Reservations: paul.verloo@hotmail.com – Mobile 0486 565 806

Other Events



Join us celebrate history....
Inauguration of the Ladies for Rizal,
Prague Chapter

 May 17, 18, & 19, 2013
Prague, Czech Republic

May 17 - 7pm - Welcome Party, River Boat Cruise Dinner Buffet.
May 18 - 1pm - 11pm Inauguration of the Ladies for Rizal & Dubbing of new Knights at Obecni Dum, the former residence of King Wenceslas IV.
May 19 - 11am - Holy Mass Dedicated for the Rizalians at the famous Pilgrimage site, the Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague.

This local Czech event is supported by IKOR HQ in Manila.

All knights are invited to participate the inauguration of the Lady of Rizal and the dubbing of new knights.

For more details, contact the chapter directly at info@knightsofrizal.net.



On the 22nd February, Pinoy Radio Benelux was officially launched.

As it is only on the Internet, you can listen to it at <http://www.pinoyradiobenelux.com>



SMILES FOR THE WORLD

www.projectch.com
www.facebook.com/projectch

A photo contest on the Filipino's display of **Calidad Humana**

HOW TO JOIN

Submit a photo of Filipinos smiling along with a caption and a message. The contest is open to all Filipinos including Overseas Filipinos. For more information about the mechanics and submission, visit www.projectch.com. Submit before **April 30 2013**.

PRIZES

First place. \$1,000 + trip to CHILE and BRAZIL as **Philippine Ambassador of Calidad Humana**
Additional prizes. \$600; \$400 and Nokia phones for Filipino winners overseas

ORGANIZED BY. Embassy of Chile | Embassy of Brazil | CCP | Coca-cola | Mc Donald's | UST | UA&P | UP | ADMU | DLSU | The Philippine Star | Expats Travel & Lifestyle Magazine | Travelife Magazine | Bravo Filipino Magazine | Humaniti Network | Smart Communications

CALENDAR

- ◆ **13th April: Rizal Garden Party (At the house of Sir Peter De Bruyn in Aalter) and official launch of the new website**
- ◆ **2nd June: Philippine Independence Day celebrations in Brugge**
- ◆ **9th June: Philippine Independence Day celebrations in Brugge**
- ◆ **16th June: Philippine Independence celebrations in Brussels**
- ◆ **19th June: Birthday Celebration Dr. Rizal Brussels - Philippine Embassy**
- ◆ **29th September: BBQ Friendship for the Philippines - Knokke-Heist**
- ◆ **19th October: Autumn activity in “De Schuur”, Kruiseke**
- ◆ **30th December: Rizal Day - Philippine Embassy**
- ◆ **25th January 2014: 14th Chartering Anniversary Diamond Chapter in “De Watermeulen”, Kruiseke**

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Our next Newsletter will be published in May 2013.

Please feel free to forward this Newsletter to anyone who shows an interest in the Knights of Rizal! They are always welcome at one of our activities.

Also former members who wish to receive again news from our Chapter are free to request to put their email address again on our list. We respect the view of everybody!

Please send suggestions, articles (also from the OTHER BELGIAN CHAPTERS) to the Chapter Commander.

Lidmaatschap 2013

Voor de leden die het lidgeld nog niet betaald hebben, gelieve dit te storten op rekening:

IBAN BE86 9796 0951 3750, BIC: ARSBE22 op naam van KOR DIAMOND CHAPTER – Venneborglaan 90 – 2100 Deurne.

Het bestuur bedankt jullie alvast voor je blijvende ondersteuning van onze vereniging. Daarnaast wensen we onze nieuwe knights een hartelijk welkom en hopen hen nog vele malen te mogen begroeten op onze activiteiten.

Membership fee 2013

For the members who did not pay their contribution yet, please deposit this on the account:

IBAN BE86 9796 0951 3750, BIC: ARSBE22 in the name of KOR DIAMOND CHAPTER – Venneborglaan 90 – 2100 Deurne.

The board thanks you in advance for your continued support to our organization. Furthermore we wish our new Knights a warm welcome and we hope to be able to greet them many times at our activities.

THE BOARD OF DIAMOND CHAPTER - board@knightsofrizal.be

Sir Paul VERLOO, KCR – ☎ 03 5424411
CHAPTER COMMANDER 2011-2013 — DEPUTY AREA COMMANDER BELGIUM 2012-2014

Sir Dominiek SEGAERT, KGOR - ☎ 050 601320 – Mob. 0479 691 865
PAST AREA COMMANDER BELGIUM 2010-2012 — PAST CHAPTER COMMANDER 2008-2011

Sir Peter VAN BOGAERT, KGOR – ☎ 03 3257116
ADVISED – TRUSTEE – SPECIAL ADVISER TO THE SUPREME COMMANDER

Sir Tony GUANSING, KGOR – ☎ 03 2191491
TRUSTEE – PAST REGIONAL COMMANDER FOR EUROPE (2008-2012), LIFE TIME MEMBER

Sir Kris VAN THILLO, KCR – ☎ 03 6664385
CO-SECRETARY – PAST CHAPTER COMMANDER

Sir Roy DE MOL, KCR – ☎ 03 5419482
EXCHEQUER – DEPUTY COMMANDER

Sir Rik VAN TIGGEL, KCR – Mob. 0475 763663
DEPUTY COMMANDER

Sir Ronny FELIX, KCR – ☎ 03 252 77 81 - Mob. 0473 491 482
ARCHIVIST - LAYOUT & CO-EDITOR NEWSLETTER

Sir Danny VANDENBOGAERDE, KCR - Mob. 0478 420 404
CHANCELLOR

Sir Kristoff Mortier, KOR – Mob. 0486929628
Webmaster
webmaster@knightsofrizal.be

THE MEMBERS

MEMBERS (UPDATE SINCE Jan. 2011)

Sir Lucien Spittaet, KGOR

Sir Frank VAN OVERLOOP, KOR

Sir Marc WOUTERS, KR

Sir Gert MEEUWSEN, KOR

Sir Hugo SPEELMANS, KOR

Sir Sylvain HERREMANS, KOR

Sir Joseph SNEYAERT, KOR

Sir Guy WATERLOOS, KOR

Sir Marc HELSEN, KOR

Sir Martin HEMELAER, KOR

Sir Julien Kusé, KR

Sir Willy De Meyere, KR

Sir Albert BIJLOOS, KOR

Sir André FROHLINGER, KR

Sir Daniël ARKESTEYN, KR

Sir Pros SLACHMUYLDERS, KGOR, Chartering Commander (Hon. Member)

Sir Francois Ooms, KGOR

Sir Dirk VANDEWEGHE, KOR

Sir Geert VERHAEGEN, KOR

Sir Kris Ortmanns, KCR, Former Chapter Commander

Sir Frankie VERCAMMEN, KOR

Sir Eric BORGHUIS, KOR

Sir François VERRIJT, KR

Sir Willy Hermans, KOR

Sir Andre Heyse, KOR

Sir Peter De Bruyne, KOR

Sir Luc Raes, KR

Sir Peter Uhrig, KR

Sir Joeri VERTONGEN, KR

Sir Christian VANDERZEYPEN, KR

Sir Serge Vandenesse, KR

Sir Roland VAN REMOORTELE, KCR (Hon. Member)

Sir H.E. Christian MEERSCHMAN, KCR (Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium in Manila – Philippines – July 3, 2010)

Sir Grégoire VARDAKIS, KCR (Hon. Member)

Sir Fr. BAGO, KCR (Hon. Member)

Sir Fr. Paul ZWAENEPOEL, KCR, (Hon. Member)

Sir Thomas ROMAN (Hon. Member)

Sir Alain RENS, KCR (Hon. Member)