

FANHNS Sonoma County Filipino American National Historical Society

President's Message

This year I took two trips that reminded me why our organization is so important. In Spring 2007, I drove to Guadalupe, California with Lee Cachola and Alice Watson. Our purpose was to interview Joe and Marge Talaugon as part of our oral history project. Joe and Marge have been community and civil rights activists for many years. Marge was a community worker at the Filipino Community Center of Sonoma County in the 1970's and

Joe served several terms as president of the community. As I listened to their stories, I began to remember how vigorously they worked hand in hand with the manongs to sustain our community's identity. Their combined synergy led to the creation of legislation to identify Filipinos as a separate race demographic. Yes, it all started in Sonoma County. This enabled our community to qualify and apply for

funding that provided services to our community. Our manongs attended Sonoma County Board meetings, represented our community at Community Action Council meetings, served on the Council on Aging and met with various community and government agencies. They went to San Francisco to meet with well-known private foundation board members, and they were successful in their endeavors. In a way, they were unstoppable – perhaps, it was just the



Marge & Joe Talaugon

aura of those years. Everyone was working together to support Filipino Identity and community. I'm just thankful that we finally recorded this information. These are very notable aspects of Filipino American history.

Joe and Marge are in their 70s now. They are still very active in their community – the town where they grew up. They are still the dedicated,

humble and thoughtful individuals they have always been. They founded the Guadalupe Cultural Arts and Education Center to heighten cultural awareness and celebrate diversity, [<http://www.guadalupecultural-arts.com/>]. They are not far from the Morro Bay historical landmark that commemorates the October 18, 1587 landing of the Manila Galleon Nuestra Senora de Esperanza commanded by Pedro de Unamuno. A landing party was sent to shore which included Luzon Indios, marking the first landing of Filipinos in the continental United States. I encourage everyone to spend one weekend visiting their center and Morro Bay.

The second trip I wanted to write about is my May-June trip to the Philippines. Bear in mind that I had not been to the Philippines for over thirty years. I also went during the tag-init season. Of course, I had culture shock the first week. I had to get accustomed to seeing everyone from the farmer in the fields plowing behind a carabao to young school children walking in the streets using a cell phone to

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FANHNS is a non-profit organization.

Remembering Our Manongs in Pictures

The photos below are from the collection gathered to date by the FANHS Oral History Project team. Wherever possible, individuals in each photo are identified. However, the names of some individuals, designated below by '*unknown*', have not yet been identified or confirmed by the project team. If you recognize any of them, please provide their names to any of the FANHS Board members listed on Page 4 of this newsletter.



Four Men at the Ranch, circa 1940. Standing left to right: Joe Rivera, *unknown*, Paul Magdirila, *unknown*
Photo courtesy of Mariano Unciano Family



Three Men at Water Tower, circa 1945. Standing left to right: *unknown*, Ted Balbin, Robert Echalar
Photo courtesy of Mr. Molin Malicay

Letter to Joe and Marge

March will soon be here,
and even the old and bent,
will begin the yearly trek
to the fields, to bend
their parched joints
and weary backs to the soil.

Experiencing all at once
last year, this year,
hopefully next year.
What do they think about.
Our old people,
who should be living
the twilight of their years
under the mango trees
of Tagudin, Bicol, and Paniqui.
Long forgotten the bitter early
seasons of their first days
in a land where only
those who are not
hungry eat.
Where only those who
have money can borrow more.

"Things have changed," they say,
"Things are better",
yet our old are afraid of
SSI now, afraid they
will have to leave the land
of milk and honey.
In '34 when things were
bad, they gave Pilipinos
free trips home, remember?
Immigration is determined
to send back all the professionals.

Its the same old asparagus
happening all over again,
because its the season.
But, then again, its always
open season on Pinoys.

"When will the Americans
recognize us?" the Pinoy
speaker asks from the podium,
Damn fool, they already
recognize you, why do
you think you're having
the problems you have!

Seasons come and go
but our battle cry remains
the same,
"Hide the Bagoong,
The Americans are coming!"

How about attending the
Fil-American Community
Debating Society tonight,
the subject of the debate
will be:

"Shall we serve bread for
the Americans?", worth 6 hours
of prime boredom last month.
"Let us acculturate," advised
Sophia Sotanghon, graduate
Cum Laude, and
Master of Learn By Rote.

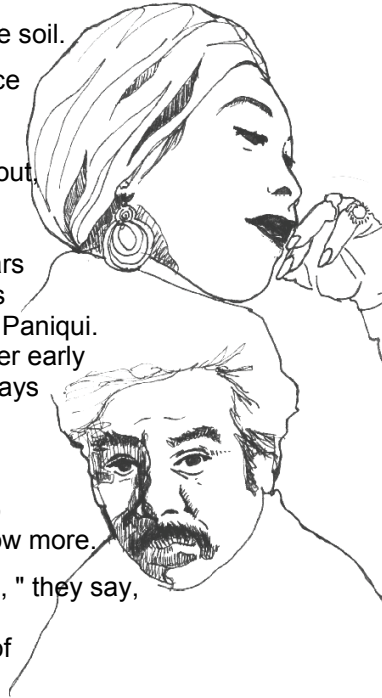
So our young grew Afro's
snapped their fingers and
said, "Yeah,man!"
Our community centers
are gathering places for the
old who are going to turn
everything over to the youth...
someday...when they die.

The young come to the
center once in a while,
like they did in May, 1979
to rob the old...
The whole world is coming to an end in
one town, nobody wants
to run for Queen.

Where are the best minds
of our people, who will
deal with the complex
issues that are confronting us?
For all of us there may not
be another season.
Who is identifying the issues?
Who is developing a strategy?
Where exists the task analysis?
Where are the selfless and the committed?
Who will make the sacrifice?
Who will give the Bagoong
a place of Honor at the table?
Who is brave enough to say,
"Let them eat rice."

Yes, it will soon be March,
and we all will begin the
yearly march to the peat soil fields,
These are burning thoughts,
the same thoughts that
come and go with each season,
Maybe next season will bear
a fuller harvest.

Juan Santos Lanuza
© February 1980



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*If you'd like to advertise YOUR Business
in the FANHS newsletter, please call
Karen Mejia Pennrich at 707.837.0883
for ad sizes & prices.*

FANHS Mission

The mission of the Filipino American National Historical Society shall be to promote understanding, education, enlightenment, appreciation, and enrichment through the gathering, identification, preservation, and dissemination of the history and culture of Filipino Americans in the United States.

FANHS Board of Directors

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New FANHS Members

FANHS proudly announces the following new members who have joined our organization since June:

Carmelita Higgens

Vanessa Kenyon

Raul Passamonte

Don & Gigi Whitt

Welcome to all - we look forward to working with you!

Thank You Supporters

FANHS Sonoma County extends sincere thanks and appreciation to the following supporters for their generous donations received during the second quarter of this year:

☞ John Luippold

☞ Marge & Joe Talaugon

☞ Sandy Ratliff

☞ Special Thank You to Robert, Noemi & Gracie Issel for sponsoring our successful July 28 *Little Manila* Social Mixer!

Your generous contributions will help support our mission to preserve and share Filipino-American history.

Your Assistance is Needed with the Oral History Project!

Assistance is still needed with interviews, filming, research, publicity, and fundraising. Already into the second quarter of the year, the project team, led by Alicia and Pat, affirm we have major catching up to do if we're to meet our projected completion date. The good news is that progress *is* being made, albeit small steps at a time.

Team members are diligently working to meet our Spring 2008 goal. However, additional assistance is needed, especially with research and fundraising efforts. New members, Lee Cachola, Loy Rayos, and Gigi Whitt, have graciously accepted the challenge to raise funds in support of our upcoming events, have formed a fundraising committee, but need your help! All team members agree

that the rewards of our work far outweigh the challenges.

If you want to contribute to a worthy project, we need you to join the team now. For more information or to sign up, please email or call Alicia, Project Lead, at avil@comcast.net or (925) 687-3423, or contact any Board member. We look forward to hearing from you!

Upcoming Events

- *Saturday, August 18, 2007, 12 p.m., Filipino American Association of Rohnert Park (PAARP) Picnic* Honeybee Park on Golf Course Drive, Rohnert Park, CA
- *Saturday, August 25, 2007, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., FANHS Picnic, Youth Park, 1725 Fulton Road, Santa Rosa, CA*
- *Saturday, August 25, 2007, 6 p.m., Filipino American Community of Sonoma County, Inc. Dinner* The Vineyard, Santa Rosa, CA
- *Sunday, September 30, 2007, 12 noon - 4:30 p.m., Race Equality Festival, Finley Community Center, 2060 W College Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA*



Please note: No FANHS meeting on August 25th - come to the Picnic!

President's Message *continued*

to text messages. I had to remind myself to ask for "mineral water" not bottled water. I had to remember not to look puzzled when I went to the palengke and saw locals wearing t-shirts that said Long Beach State, Welcome to Maine or Louisiana Shrimp Festival. (My companions later informed me that with so many clothes being sent to the Philippines in balikbayan boxes such sightings have been common for many years.) In addition, selling second hand clothing is also a means of making a living.

I acclimated to my environment during the second week of my stay. This is when I began to appreciate the innovativeness of those who make do with what they have, the generosity of our people and the beauty of the Philippines. The hospitality of our hosts was excellent. The hot bibingka on banana leaves in the early morning, fresh seafood and creamy mangoes were incomparable. We stayed in Pangasinan province near Lingayen. Lingayen is on the Lingayen Gulf coast that is part of the South China Sea.

Riding a tricycle to Lingayen one day, we experienced a flat tire. The driver pulled over to a small sari-sari store on the side of the levee. I bought sodas for all of us and the owner's

husband proceeded to patch the inner tube by using a patch from another tire, a flattened piece of a 7up can and an old flat iron that looked like an antique. We were back on the road in 10 minutes.

I noticed that although the young people wear all the accouterments of an Americanized society, (from Shaq basketball tank tops to baggy shorts and spoken word t-shirts – I like the one that said, "I only have eyes for you...and you...and you!") there is still a respect for elders and family that permeates their actions. They always acknowledge their elders and eating family meals together is still very much a part of everyone's day. Finishing college is still an important goal. There is a burgeoning middle and upper middle class in the Philippines. I am happy to see that many Filipinos are opting not to go abroad but instead stay to contribute their skills internally. There still are, however, many more that are eager to go abroad much like our manongs did in the early 1920s. The United States, Canada, and England are considered ideal destinations. As I spoke with the young people, one man asked me this question, "Is living in America really better than living in the

Philippines?" This question was asked by a young man who graduated with a degree in commerce. His wife is a teacher. They have one child and they are planning to immigrate to the United States. I told them, "Yes, life in America is better." In my mind, I thought, but you will miss your loved ones, you will miss the flavors and beauty of the Philippines. Then, I thought about our single manongs living alone in their 60s, 70s, and 80s. I thought about how lucky new immigrants are because they have the luxury of going home periodically. I thought about how important it is for our organization to continue to tell the stories of our manongs and our new immigrants as they adjust to living in the United States. I thought about what I love most about the Philippines, the people, the food (of course!) and the scenery. I highly suggest a trip to the Philippines to all my American born Filipino friends and acquaintances. I truly believe that it will help us in sharing our mission as we work together on our current history project and when we begin recording new immigrant history in the future.

Delia Lanosa Rapolla

FANHS Wish List

FANHS is in need of equipment and supplies to support its ongoing work on the Oral History Project and other educational and cultural endeavors. Donations of new or used equipment in good working condition and the supplies listed below are welcome and appreciated. All donations are tax deductible subject to IRS rules.

Equipment:

- LCD Projector
- Portable Photo/Document Scanner
- Microcassette Tape Recorder
- Laptop Computer with Windows 97 or later operating system

Supplies:

- USB Flash Drives
- Printer Paper
- Microcassette Tapes
- Mini DV Tapes
- Postage Stamps

Making donations of this type provides another opportunity for history buffs and FANHS supporters to contribute to our historical preservation work.

Filipino American National Historical Society of Sonoma County

FANHS SONOMA COUNTY

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES & RATES — 2007

Annual Membership

Individual \$25.00
Full/part time student \$5.00
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Decade

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Life Time

Individual \$250.00
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*Family category includes "dependent children" living at home.

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Videography

Research

Public Relations/Sponsorships

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For our newsletter: Tell us why you decided to join FANHS _____

I am unable to participate as a member. Enclosed is a donation to support your efforts. \$ _____.

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FANHS SONOMA COUNTY

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Preserving the History